

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones (1762-1843)**

First Edition 1812  
Fourth Edition 1819  
Fifth Edition 1826



*Catholic authorities burning a separatist Christian in the fifteenth century*

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## **THE LIFE OF WILLIAM JONES (1762-1846)**

Rev. William Jones was born in the county of Denbigh, in Wales, June 17, 1762. When young he removed to Poulton, in Cheshire, where he received a classical education. In October, 1786, he was baptized by the Rev. Archibald McLean, of Edinburgh, then on a visit to Chester, in the river Dee.

In 1793 he established himself in Liverpool as a wholesale bookseller and publisher. In that city he began to hold meetings in his own spacious drawing-room, at first for his own family, for prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, exhortation, and

exposition. These assemblies were speedily frequently by neighbors and others, and soon they were transferred to a chapel, when a church was formed, and Mr. D.S. Wylie and Mr. Jones were appointed pastors.

Mr. Jones left Liverpool for London, and in 1812, soon after he went to the metropolis, he began his "History of the Waldenses and Albigenses."

In 1815 he started the *New Evangelical Magazine*, in London; this periodical, subsequently called the *New Baptist Magazine*, was conducted by Mr. Jones with great success for eleven years.

He spent three years in preparing a "Dictionary of the Sacred Writings," the first edition of which, consisting of 2000 copies, was quickly sold.

His Church History, of which his "History of the Waldenses and Albigenses" is not quite a half, is a work highly creditable to the research and candor of its author and worthy of a conspicuous place in every Baptist library.

Mr. Jones was the author of biographies of Rowland Hill, Edward Irving, Adam Clark, and of several other works.

He was a writer of great industry and conscientiousness; and in the latter part of his life his works were very popular among Baptists.

In 1843, when his means were very limited, the queen offered him a place in the Charterhouse, where all his wants would be cared for during the rest of his life; but, as the acceptance of it required him to become an Episcopalian, he declined the royal offer. The queen on learning the fact ordered £60 to be paid Mr. Jones in three annual installments. He died in January, 1846.

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In his classic *The History of Romanism* (1853), John Dowling gave the following testimony to Jones' church history: "This valuable work is very full on the subject of the Waldenses. It was originally written as a 'History of the Waldenses,' and afterward enlarged, and republished under the title of a 'History of the Church'" (Dowling, p. 585, f. 2).

## **IS WILLIAM JONES' HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES ACCURATE?**

The following extract from *The Western Baptist Review* (Vol. IV. No. 5, Frankfort, Ky., January, 1849) examines the charge which has been made by pedobaptists that William Jones' history is inaccurate in its portrayal of the Waldenses --

Jean Paul Perrin was a Pedit-baptist--a French Presbyterian--who flourished about the beginning of the seventeenth century. He was anxious to make it appear that the Waldenses were Pedit-baptists and Presbyterians. He admits that they were charged with being opposed to infant baptism; that this accusation was brought against them at the very beginning of their career, and was reiterated all the time of their persecutions. He denies its truth, and pronounces the charge a calumny. He remarks:

"The fourth calumny was concerning baptism, which it is said they denied to infants. From this imputation they quit themselves as follows: 'Neither is the time or place appointed for those who must be baptized; but charity, and the edification of the Church and Congregation, ought to be the rule in this matter;--yet, notwithstanding, we bring our children to be baptized; which they ought to do to whom they are nearest related; as are their parents, or those whom God hath inspired with such a charity'" [Ut Supra].

If the charge that the Waldenses denied infant baptism be a "calumny," it was one of the full six hundred years standing when Perrin wrote his history; and during that time was repeated and published in every generation, as we shall show hereafter. Why then did not our author show from some accredited document that it was untrue? He quotes here from a work called the "Spiritual Almanac," of very questionable authority, to say the best of it--of which no one knows either the date or author! There are abundance of their writings put forth when they were persecuted in consequence of this charge--writings of undoubted antiquity and genuineness--which do not deny this charge, as will be fully shown in due time. These are the documents that should be appealed to. If the charge was false and injurious, in these documents it would have been so declared. But they contain no denial and make no complaint of misrepresentation on this point. Besides, this "Spiritual Almanac" is no ecclesiastical document. It bears the name of no author, and is without date. Who the writer or writers were, and by what right he or they spoke in the name of the Waldenses, Perrin has not told us, nor does any one know. The denial, therefore, was wholly unauthorized so far as any evidence in the case appears. And our historian felt that his proof was insufficient, and hence sets up another distinct defense in the very next paragraph. He there says:

"True it is, that being for some hundreds of years constrained to suffer their children to be baptized by the Romish priests, they deferred the doing of it as long as possible, because they detested the human inventions annexed to the institution of that holy sacrament, which they looked upon as pollutions of it. Their pastors, whom they called Barbs, being often in travels abroad for the service of their churches, they could not have baptism administered to their children by their own ministry. They therefore sometimes kept them long without baptism, upon which delay the priests charged them with that



reproach. To which not only their adversaries have given credit, but many of those also who have approved of their lives and faith in all other points" [Perrin, p. 3].

These are Baptist facts and Pedo-baptist reasons. The facts are, that for "some hundreds of years," the children of the Waldenses were not baptized, either by the Romish priests or their own Barbs or pastors: and by consequence, as their infants were not baptized, the Papists and many Pedo-baptist Protestants, ("who have approved of their lives and faith in all other respects,") have supposed them to be Baptists. Those, we say, are the facts as stated by our author. They were too stubborn to be removed by the "Spiritual Almanac." Whatever they might be in theory, it was too palpable to deny that for "some hundreds of years" they were Baptists in practice--their infants were not baptized either by priests or barbs. Our author, we repeat, felt that here was a knot that an Almanac without a known author or date could not enable him to untie. Hence he was constrained to cut it by offering the singular and startling reason, that they would not let the priests baptize them, and that their own ministers being from home "some hundreds of years," could not of course baptize them!! If it is sinful to doubt the reason here assigned, the Lord help our unbelief! Besides, how did Perrin know that this was their reason for neglecting infant baptism? He refers to no authority. He quotes no book or record of any kind. By what light he was guided to this conclusion, he gives no intimation. He was evidently in great difficulty. He felt that the quotation of so doubtful a document as the "Spiritual Almanac" did not move, nor meet even, the fact well known to Papists and Protestants, that for "some hundreds of years," the Waldenses did not practice infant baptism. This was too notorious to be denied. Hence his desperate effort to explain it away. Hence the monstrous supposition that during 'some hundreds of years' they were without ministers to attend to the administration of the ordinances! Now this may be proof "perfectly plain" to Dr. Miller's eyes, that the Waldenses were Pedo-baptists; but if so, we insist that it is equally plain, that he has more respect for Perrin's logic than for Perrin's facts.

We do not mean to impeach Perrin or to endeavor to discredit his history. When he wrote, the Baptists were under the ban of every state in Christendom, and abhorred and anathematized by the Papal and Protestant churches. Then it was esteemed to be doing God service to put them to death. Perrin was, therefore, anxious to remove this reproach from the Waldenses. He felt, no doubt, that it would be a benefit conferred upon the cause of religion in general if this injurious impression could be effaced. And then who would attempt to vindicate the cause of a people every where pursued and persecuted? Who would stand up on the side of the Baptists, oppressed and trodden upon by the iron heel of church and state? And perhaps too, like the great mass of his contemporaries, he could not see how pure Christianity and the baptism of only believers, could be associated. He might have supposed that it would shock the common sense of the men of his generation, to affirm, in one breath, that



the Waldenses were holy and orthodox; and then to announce in the very next, that they were Baptists. In fine, it must have been in some such way--either misled by a mistaken benevolence or blinded by prejudice--that he failed to draw correct conclusions from premises which he admitted and from facts which he could not deny.

Some discrepancies between Jones and Perrin, in their histories of the Waldenses, have been pointed out by the Pedo-baptists, and the former has been severely denounced, criticized and censured in consequence. Dr. Miller, in a note to his "Recommendatory Letter" of Perrin, says: "William Jones, an eminent Baptist, in his 'History of the Waldenses,' has so mutilated and perverted the plainest documents of those pious witnesses of the truth, in order to make them speak the language of anti-pedobaptists, as to place his character as an honest historian in a most undesirable position" [Perrin, p. 36]. It is a matter seriously to be regretted that the venerable doctor did not esteem it worth while to mention a few examples of the mutilations and perversions, or at least the "documents" alluded to.

His charge is most emphatically denied. We challenge the production of a solitary instance to justify this unmeasured condemnation. The only instance of perversion and mutilation that the most diligent have been able to allege, was of Perrin, but not of any Waldensian document. Revelation N.L. Rice, in his Debate with Revelation A. Campbell in Lexington, charged Jones with a most "glaring falsification of history?;" and we step aside to notice and refute this charge because it has been often used to the prejudice of truth, and because it is the only one which has ever been adduced calculated in the least to sustain the remarks of Dr. Miller just quoted. The case is this. Perrin says:

"King Louis XII of France, having received information from the enemies of the Waldenses dwelling in Provence, of several heinous crimes which they fathered upon them, sent to the place Adam Fumee, master of requests, and a Sarbonist doctor, called Parui, who was his confessor, to make inquiry into the matter. They visited all their parishes and temples, and neither found there any images, or sign of the ornaments belonging to the mass, or ceremonies of the Romish church; much less could they discover any of those crimes which they were charged. But rather that they kept the Sabbath duly, caused their children to be baptized according to the primitive church, taught them the articles of the Christian faith, and The commandments of God. The king having heard the report of said commissioners, said, with an oath, that they were better men then himself or his people" [Jones, p. 348].

Jones narrates the same circumstance, substantially as Perrin, except in reference to infant baptism, He represents the report of the messengers as of the following effect:

"They kept the Sabbath-day, observed the ordinance of baptism, according to the primitive church, instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God" [Debate, p. 405].

Upon this discrepancy, Mr. Rice, in his Lexington Debate, says: "Here Mr. Jones, when he came to infant baptism, wholly omitted it; and instead of saying, as did the author he quoted--'causing their children to be baptized,'--he says, 'observe the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church'!! Thus the Waldenses were proved to be anti-Pedo-baptists, by concealing their testimony. A more glaring falsification of history I never saw!" [As quoted in Pope and McGuire's Debate, p. 209.]

Mr. Rice was not remarkable for scrupulous accuracy in his statement of facts in this Debate. Nor are his feelings, at any time, characterized by leniency towards persons whose religious sentiments come in contact with his own. But we must pardon the grossness of the assault upon Mr. Jones, by remembering that it was made in the hurry and excitement of an oral discussion. Mr. Jones does not quote Perrin, as charged by Mr. Rice. The authority referred to by Perrin for the anecdote is, "'Vesembecius' Oration respecting the Waldenses." Jones refers to the same authority, 'Vesembecius' Oration on the Waldenses, in Perrin, ch. 5." He does not say, "as quoted by Perrin." He evidently looks beyond Perrin, and draws his authority from the same source. To impeach Jones, therefore, and to discredit him as a historian, appeal must be made to the original authority--the authority upon which he and Perrin both rely--to the Oration of Vesembecius. This Mr. Rice did not do. He has consequently made his charge at random, and affirmed concerning that of which he knew nothing. Had he gone to the proper source for information, he would have found that Jones was right and Perrin wrong. The language of Vesembecius is:

*"Illi ad regem referunt, illis in locis homines baptizari, articulos fidei et decalogum doceri, dominicos dies religiose coli, Dei verbum exponi, veneficia et stupra apud eos nulla esse. Ceterum se in ipsorum templis neque imagines, neque ornamento missae ulla reperisse. His auditis, rex, jurejurando addito; me, inquit, et cetero populo meo Catholico meliores illi viri sunt."* That is:--"They report to the king, that the men were baptized, the articles of faith and the ten commandments were taught, the Lord's day observed, the word of God preached, and no show of wickedness of fornication to be perceived amongst them; but that they found not any images in their churches, nor ornaments belonging to the mass. The king hearing this, said, and he bound it with an oath, They are better men than myself and the rest of my Catholic people" [Perrin, pp. 83,84].

The charge against Jones falls to the earth! He has perverted no documents nor falsified any history. The report to the king was, that "homines," men, adults, and not infants, were baptized. Jones' account of the matter is amply sustained by the original authority. The blows at his reputation recoil. We trust that Mr. Rice and Dr.

Miller will reconsider their statements, and retract their charges against Mr. Jones; as it is thus proved that he was right and Perrin wrong.

The history of Perrin was originally written in the French language, and strong suspicions have been expressed respecting the fidelity of the English translation. We are not of those who entertain such suspicions. As we have already remarked, **Perrin no doubt thought it would subserve the interests of religion to remove from the Waldenses the reproach of their being Baptists; and in his zeal to accomplish this, he was betrayed into inaccuracy of reasoning as well as of statement**, as we have already proved beyond all question. And here is another instance of the same sort; and we refer to it because it has often been quoted to prove that the Waldenses were Pedo-baptists. Perrin says:

"The president with his assessor took their journey to Perouse, and caused public proclamation to be made in the name of the king, that every one of the inhabitants should go to mass upon pain of death. Afterwards they came to Pignerol, where they summoned several to appear before them. Among others, there appeared a poor simple laboring man, whom the president ordered to have baptism again administered to his child, who had been lately baptized by the Waldensian minister, near Angrogne. The poor man desired so much respite as to offer up his prayers to God, before he answered him. Which, with some laughter, being granted, he fell down upon his knees before all the standers by, and having concluded his prayer, he said to the president, that he would cause his child to be re-baptized, provided he would oblige himself by a bond, signed with his own hand, to discharge and clean him of the sin that he should commit in so doing, and suffer himself the punishment and condemnation, which God would one day inflict upon him for it, taking this iniquity upon him and his. Which the president understanding, commanded him to depart out of his presence, without pressing him any further" [Letter of Ecclampadius, Jones, p. 445].

Our author does not tell us to whom he is indebted for this anecdote. It strikes us as extremely improbable. The Papists are not wont to administer baptism anew, no matter how heretical the minister by whose hands it is given. They not only recognize the baptism of heretics, but have authorized, in cases of necessity, the rite to be administered by a midwife, a degraded priest, a Jew or Turk. They have ever esteemed anabaptism a damnable heresy. Could this 'president,' then, demand the re-baptism of the Waldensian infant, without incurring the anathemas of his church? Did he not know, that by so doing he was walking in the paths of heresy, and setting at nought the canons of councils and the decisions of the fathers? If such a thing did occur, it is without parallel in papal history--it is a single and solitary instance of anabaptism being urged by any Romish dignitary. But we suspect that he simply demanded the child to be baptized. Instances of this sort abound in the conduct of both Papists and Protestants toward the Baptists. They are of very recent occurrence

in Europe. On this supposition, the conduct of the peasant and the 'president' was natural and consistent. The president wished the salvation of the infant, and hence demanded its baptism for the regeneration of its soul and the purgation of its original sin. These the doctrine of his church led him to believe would ensue. The peasant, on the other hand, being a Baptist, and esteeming such an act as unauthorized by the Scriptures, as worshipping the host or bowing before an image, would not give his consent in the matter. He acted as full many a Baptist, in ancient and in modern times, has acted. Papists have made such requisitions of Baptists, but never of Pedo-baptists, so far as any other recorded fact bears testimony. The severe anathemas of Rome against the Novatians, Donatists, and even the Waldenses, for anabaptism, make it very questionable that the event narrated above ever transpired--that any minister of papal vengeance ever so glaringly and wantonly outraged the doctrines of his church. The incident, however, is of no intrinsic importance, as doubtless at the time of its reputed occurrence, 1555, Presbyterianism had found its way into some places, where the Waldensian doctrines and practices had prevailed; and this thing happened, according to our author, in a district adjacent to Geneva. We have alluded to the matter simply to show the bias of our author's mind--as an instance where a story, bearing a strong impress of the apocryphal, is gravely narrated to prove that the Waldenses were Pedo-baptists.

**Sims, Perrin and others have pointed with great confidence to the creed drawn up and adopted at Angrogne, September 12, 1535, in which the baptism of infants is set forth. But this creed is so unlike any document of the sort preceding it, put forth by any portion of the Waldenses, that an explanation of the circumstances in which it originated is necessary to its proper interpretation.** The persecutions of the Waldenses had been unusually severe in parts of Piedmont and in the adjoining portions of France. Not only the Inquisition, but large armies had been active in their suppression. Their churches were broken up and their ministers put to death. Hunted like wild beasts, their prominent men nearly all destroyed, the poor Waldenses of these regions were almost sunk into despair. 'Persecution caused them to dissemble and conceal their faith. They attended the Romish masses, and in other respects conformed outwardly to the mummeries of papal superstition' [Perrin, p. 80]. But they could not be at ease while thus to escape the displeasure of men, they brought upon themselves the displeasure of God. They had heard much respecting the boldness of the Reformers in Germany and Switzerland; and in their distress, they determined to seek their counsel and advice. Accordingly they sent two of their ministers, George Morel and Peter Masson, to confer with Ecolampadius and Bucer, and others of the Reformers. [Jones, p. 446.]

Masson, returning home, was taken and put to death by the Papists. [Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, Vol. 2, p. 1-6.]

Morel returned in safety with the letters and papers, assembled his brethren, and

reported. Fox says, that Morel "declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them, how many and great errors they were in, into which their old ministers, whom they called barbs, that is to say, uncles, had brought them, leading them from the right way of true religion" [Murdock's Mosheim, vol. 3, p. 184, note 57]. Thus it is evident that Morel had learned something new of the Reformers, differing from the doctrine of the Waldensian fathers, and which he proposed to introduce into the creed of the brethren in his region.

And so Dr. Murdock, the translator of Mosheim, in a note upon that author, represents the case. He says:

"In their council in Angrogne, A.D. 1532, [1535], they adopted a short confession of faith, professedly embracing the doctrine they had firmly believed for four hundred years, yet manifestly a departure in some particulars from the principles stated by their deputies to Ecolampadius; and conformed to the new views he had communicated to them, especially in relation to free-will, grace, predestination, and several points of practical religion" [Ib. 470].

And Mosheim, speaking of the Waldenses of that time, says: "The descendants of the Waldenses who lived shut up in the valleys of Piedmont, were led by their proximity to the French and Genevans to embrace their doctrines and worship" [Perrin, p. 81].

But the very face of the creed puts its paternity above all dispute. We will quote a few articles:

"II. All that have been, or shall be saved, were elected by God before all worlds." "III. They who are saved cannot miss of salvation." "IV. Whosoever maintaineth free-will, wholly denieth predestination." "XVII. As to the sacraments, it hath been determined by the holy scriptures, that we have but two sacramental signs or symbols, which Christ Jesus hath left unto us: the one is baptism, the other the eucharist or Lord's Supper, which we receive to demonstrate our perseverance in the faith, according to the promise we made in our baptism in our infancy; as also in remembrance of that great benefit which Jesus Christ hath conferred upon us, when he laid down his life for our redemption, cleansing us with his most precious blood" [p. 481].

Can any one be so blind as not to perceive in these articles, the handiwork of the Reformers? Who can fail to recognize one or more of the phrases and tenets peculiar to that age, and unknown to the Waldenses? The baptismal article, especially, partakes largely of "the new views" learned in Germany. The expression "the promise we made in our baptism in our infancy," can only have meaning by admitting allusion to be made to godfathers and godmothers--to sponsorial promises; and yet Dr. Baird, Dr. Miller, and all Presbyterians vehemently insist that the Waldenses never tolerated such sponsion! Dr. Gill maintains that the article must not be

understood in a literal sense. The true rendering is, "The promise we made in baptism, being little children," So by Sims in Peyran. [*Divine Right of Infant Baptism*, pp. 37, 38.] "This phrase, being little children," says Dr. Gill, "as I think, means their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of receiving the eucharist, to show their perseverance in the faith they then had promised to persevere in: besides, if this be understood of them as infants in a literal sense, what promise were they capable of making when such? Should it be said, that they promised by their sureties, it should be observed that the Waldenses did not admit of godfathers and godmothers in baptism; this is one of the abuses their ancient barbs complained of in baptism, as administered by the Papists" [*Eccl. History*, vol. 3, p. 184].

**Let the matter of this creed be viewed from whatever point it may, it can never prove that the Waldenses were Pede-baptists. It is too modern to enter into the merits of the discussion now in progress. It was got up and adopted by a few of the Waldenses only; and these few confess that they had lapsed from the stern faith of their ancestors. They admit too, that they had learned many new things of the Reformers, under whose advice and instruction they acted; and by whom they had been taught to reject much of the teaching and many of the practices of their barbs.** We may reasonably suppose, that their rejection of infant baptism was one of the "many and great errors" in which the Reformers believed them to be involved--one of the paths "leading them from the right way of true religion," into which "their old ministers" had directed them. The Reformers were the bitter enemies and persecutors of the Baptists. They pursued them with as unrelenting and as merciless severity as ever did the Papists. They would not of course countenance these deputies from the Waldenses until they gave up their opposition to infant baptism. The fact, then, that no creed of the Waldenses, that no book or document of theirs, makes the slightest commendatory allusion to infant baptism, until at this time, in this creed, drawn up and adopted at the suggestion of the enemies and persecutors of the Baptists, by an assembly who reproach their fathers and their old ministers with "many and great errors"--these things, we say, furnish to our mind strong presumptive proof that infant baptism was then first introduced among any who could pretend at all to belong to the Waldenses proper.

And here appropriately we may notice the fact, so often and so triumphantly referred to--by Dr. Miller, Mr. Sims, and others--that the Waldenses readily united with the Reformed churches, and received ministers from them. This is true of the Waldenses in Piedmont, and we have shown above how this, in part, was brought about--by leading the Waldenses to reject the practices of their fathers. In their persecuted and depressed condition, they sought and obtained the sympathy of their neighbors in Switzerland; and as they had considerably fallen from their former boldness and purity of faith and practice, they were readily induced, in order to secure the favor and fellowship of their new acquaintances, to conform to such customs and opinions

as they might dictate. Mosheim says, "They retained not a few of their ancient rules of discipline, so late as they year 1630. But in this year, the greatest part of the Waldenses [in Piedmont] were swept off by pestilence; and their new teachers, whom they obtained from France, [Geneva], regulated all their affairs according to the pattern of the French Reformed [Presbyterian] Church" [Perrin, p. 231].

**Thus it is plain how the inhabitants of Piedmont became Presbyterians--just as the inhabitants of Geneva and other places became so--by the influence of John Calvin and co-laborers. Until they came under the influence of the Reformers, we find no traces of infant baptism among the pure Waldenses.** Not a line of theirs, prior to the Reformation, has been adduced by any one of the authors before us--Perrin, Peyran, and their editors--to show that the Waldenses were Pedo-baptists--not a line or syllable. That some of them since should embrace that practice, we have shown to be natural enough, and we have fully explained the means by which they were induced to adopt a custom unknown to their "old ministers" and churches.

True, Perrin or his editors have introduced into the volume before us, mixed with the ancient writings of the Waldenses, certain extracts from the "Spiritual Alamanc," and which is done, too, without informing the reader of the source from which they were derived! Of course, this was done to serve a purpose, whether honorable or not, the reader must determine. It looks very much like a pious fraud! It is certainly calculated to impose a falsehood, as the extracts stand among Waldensian writings confessedly of great antiquity, without the slightest intimation that these are quotations from the "Spiritual Alamanc," a work of doubtful date and certainly of no authority! This fraud may be found on pp. 230-232. It is strange, after such a flourish against Mr. Jones' integrity in the beginning of this volume, that an act of such doubtful morality, to say the least, should be perpetrated before the volume was half completed! But no one can see moles in others' eyes so clearly and so readily as those who have beams in their own! In one of the extracts from this "Spiritual Almanac," is the following language, so often quoted by Pedo-baptist controversialists:

"And whereas baptism is administered in a full congregation of the faithful, it is to the end, that he that is received into the church, should be reputed and held of all, for a Christian brother, and that all the congregation might pray for him that he may be a Christian in heart, as he is outwardly esteemed to be a Christian. And for this cause it is, that we present our children in baptism, which they ought to do, to whom the children are nearest, as their parents, and they to whom God hath given this charity."

These look like Presbyterian, but not like Waldensian practices. The whole clause taken together, would seem to teach that infants were presented in baptism that they should be 'reputed and held by all as Christian brethren'! The reason and the rite are



alike absurd.

But the argument most relied on to prove that the Waldenses were Pedo-baptists is derived from the practice of the Vaudois, or the Protestant churches now in Piedmont. This is often repeated in great triumph; and very recently we saw it stated in the newspapers, that Dr. Sawtell had made quite a display of this matter in Indianapolis! We have already exposed, in part, this miserable refuge. Admitting that it proved any thing, it could only establish what was the custom of the Waldenses who formerly dwelt in Piedmont. It could not go further. But the great majority of the Waldenses dwelt in other countries. They were to be found almost in every state and kingdom of Europe. What then can the Vaudois custom prove in relation to these? Besides, the old Waldensian churches were utterly broken up in Piedmont in 1686. Not a vestige of them was left. They and their friends were put to death, or else driven into exile. True, several years after, a company of some eight hundred armed men returned, and by force of arms established themselves upon their farms and in their villages again. These or their descendants embraced Presbyterianism, and to a considerable extent maintain that form of worship to this day. Before any thing respecting the Waldenses can be concluded from the Vaudois, it must be shown that the latter maintain the doctrines and conform to the customs of the former. It is the sublimity of nonsense to infer, from the simple fact that the Vaudois are the descendants of the Waldenses according to the flesh and because they dwell in Piedmont, that therefore they hold the sentiments and customs of the Waldenses! But it is unnecessary to expose this absurdity further. To mention it is to call upon it universal contempt.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

First Edition 1812  
Fourth Edition 1819  
Fifth Edition 1826

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## **PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION**

The history of the Christian Church, when prosecuted in minute detail, and in all its ramifications, is an ample theme, and has occupied the pens of many learned men, both of our own and other countries. The elaborate treatises of Eusebius, Du Pin, Fleury, Mosheim, Priestley, Milner, and others of inferior consideration, have most of them been long before the public, and are all well known. To discuss the subject at large, or to enter into any competition with those works, as it is not to be expected in the compass of a single volume [the first edition of Jones' history was comprised of one volume], so it must not be considered as having at all entered into the views of the present writer. The following pages, whatever may be their merits or defects, were not designed to instruct persons of general reading; for the author is fully aware that they contain little which is not familiar to that class of men. They were compiled with the view of communicating some interesting information to a few friends whose views of the gospel of Christ, and of the nature of his kingdom in this world, happen to coincide pretty much with his own, but who have been debarred the opportunity of exploring the voluminous productions in which that information lay scattered.

Those who have bestowed any considerable degree of attention upon the article of Ecclesiastical History, will readily admit, that no period of it stands so much in need of elucidation, as that which intervened from the beginning of the ninth century to the days of Luther. The original sources of our information are, almost exclusively, the Catholic writers--a race of men who, while they had an interest in disguising the truth, appear to have delighted themselves in calumniating all that dissented from their communion. And even since the time of the Reformation, while the light of

divine truth has been shining around us with increasing splendor, and thus contributing to expose in all its deformity that "mystery of iniquity," the Roman hierarchy, our Protestant historians have been but too implicitly led by those false guides. There is scarcely any History of the Christian Church extant in our language from which it would not be easy to exemplify the truth of this representation; but in no case could it more strikingly be done, than in that which respects the leading object of the present work. Not to multiply proof of this, where proofs are so abundant, an instance in point may be adduced from a contemporary writer of our own country, who, a few years ago, published, in our own language, the "History of France," in five vols. 4to. The following is the account there given of the Albigenses, a class of Christians who, as the reader will see from the subsequent part of this volume, were only a branch of the Waldenses, inhabiting a particular district in France.

"The Albigenses," says this historian, "believed in two Gods; one a beneficent being, author of the New Testament, who had two wives, Collant and Collibant, and was father of several Children, and among others, of Christ and the devil. The other God was a malevolent being, a liar, and a destroyer of men, author of the ancient law, who, not content with having persecuted the patriarchs during their lives, had consigned them all to damnation after death. They also acknowledge two Christs; one wicked, who was born at Bethlehem and crucified at Jerusalem, and who kept as his concubine Mary Magdalene, the woman so well known for having been caught in the act of adultery; the other Christ, all virtuous and invisible, who never inhabited the world, but spiritually in the body of Paul. They represented the Church of Rome as the scarlet whore mentioned in the Revelation. They regarded the sacraments as frivolous things; considered marriage as a state of prostitution; the Lord's supper as a chimera; the resurrection of the flesh as a ridiculous fable; and the worship of images as detestable idolatry. Had all their tenets been equally rational with the last, they would not have been obnoxious to much censure. They were divided into two classes; the perfects and the believers. They all openly professed great purity of manners, and secretly practiced the most infamous voluptuousness, on the principle, that from the waist downwards, man is incapable of sin." [*History of France*, Vol. 1, p. 412, London, 1791. I am not insensible that there is a grossness in this quotation which renders it almost unfit to be transplanted into any other soil; and I am anxious to apologize to my readers for laying it before them; but the truth is, that it is not worse than may be found on the same subject in many other writers; while the recency of its publication, and the high ground which its author has lately taken among us, seemed to entitle him to the right of preference. As to the statement itself, it cannot but remind us of the words of Jesus, "Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake."]

Such is the disgusting caricature which this writer has exhibited to the world of the Albigenses. But that any man with his eyes open, and capable of exercising two

grains of discrimination, should have first of all permitted himself to be so far imposed upon by the Catholic writers, as to give credit to such a tissue of absurd and ridiculous fooleries, and then gravely to detail them to his readers for the truth of history, is at once a striking instance of weakness in the author, and of the necessity of exercising continual vigilance on the part of the reader, if he would neither become the dupe of Papal slander, nor of Protestant credulity. The reader cannot fail to be surprised when he is told that the author of this wretched ribaldry is no other than John Gifford, Esq. the biographer of the late Right Honourable William Pitt, whose work, recently published in 3 vols. 4to. and 6 vols. 8vo. is held up as a kind of national undertaking! Of the merits of this last publication it would, no doubt, be presumptuous in the present writer to offer any opinion; but if the biographer of our great statesman have been as regardless of the truth of history in the latter instance as in the former, posterity will owe him but few obligations for his labors.

Mr. Hume had a much more correct view of the character of the Albigenses; and it is singular that Mr. Gifford should have overlooked it. The following is the passage to which I refer. "The Pope (Innocent III) published a crusade against the Albigenses, a species of enthusiasts in the south of France, whom he denominated heretics, because, like other enthusiasts, they neglected the rights of the [Catholic] church, and opposed the power and influence of the clergy. The people from all parts of Europe, moved by their superstition and their passion for wars and adventures, flocked to his standard. Simon de Montfort, the general of the crusade, acquired to himself a sovereignty in these provinces. The Count of Toulouse, who protected, or perhaps only tolerated the Albigenses, was stripped of his dominions. And these sectaries themselves, though THE MOST INNOCENT AND INOFFENSIVE OF MANKIND, were exterminated with all the circumstances of extreme violence and barbarity." *History of England*, Vol. 2. ch. 11. Nothing can be more just than this account of the Albigenses, provided we allow Mr. Hume his own definition of the term "enthusiasts"--a term which he uniformly employs to denote all those who believe the Bible to be the word of God, and who receive it as the rule of their faith and practice. I may further add, that the reader will find his account of the Albigenses to be perfectly consonant to all that is related of them in the following pages.

I shall here take the liberty to introduce, as expressive of my own sentiments, the language of an author, who more than a century ago, was engaged in the same pursuit with myself, and to whose learned pen the following pages are much indebted. "I conceived that it was well becoming a Christian to undertake the defense of innocence, oppressed and overborne by the blackest calumnies the devil could ever invent. That we should be ungrateful towards those whose sufferings for Christ have been so beneficial to his church, should we not take care to justify their memory, when we see it so maliciously bespattered and torn. That to justify the Waldenses and Albigenses, is indeed to defend the Reformation and Reformers, they having so long before us, with an exemplary courage, labored to preserve the Christian religion

in its ancient purity, which the Church of Rome all this while has endeavored to abolish, by substituting an illegitimate and supposititious Christianity in its stead. So long as the ministers of the Church of Rome think fit to follow his conduct who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, innocence should not be deprived of the privilege of defending herself against their calumnies, while she willingly resigns to God the exercise of vengeance for the injustice and violence of those who have oppressed her." [Dr. Allix's *Remarks on the Churches of Piedmont*, preface, p. 6]

It may possibly occur to some of my readers that "the Portraiture of Popery," would have been a title every way as appropriate to the ensuing pages as that which I have given it. And it certainly must be admitted, that the odious features of superstition and intolerance do but too prominently obtrude upon us, wherever the proceedings of that apostate church interpose themselves. The picture which invariably presents itself to the mind, is that of a power "speaking great words against the Most High, and wearing out the saints of the Most High," [*History of the Council of Trent*, translated by Brent, p. 2] or, of a woman "drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus." It should, however, be remarked, that if the outlines of this hideous picture have been sketched in the following work, and in colors more sombre than may be pleasing to its friends, the circumstance is wholly accidental, since it is an object that was entirely foreign to the intention of the writer, further than a faithful record of well-authenticated facts might necessarily lead him to it. In sketching the History of the Christian Church previous to the times of the Waldenses, I have gone considerably more into detail than was my original intention; but in that particular I have been actuated solely by the desire of rendering the work more generally useful to that class of readers for whom it was principally designed. After all, it pretends to nothing more than a sketch of a vast subject, and no one can be more sensible than the writer himself is of its numerous deficiencies. Whether he may hereafter be induced to resume the subject, and fill up the outline more correctly, must depend partly upon the reception which the present attempt meets with from his contemporaries, and partly upon other circumstances which are beyond the reach of human control. For the rest he would gladly offer his apology in the words of Father Paul the Venetian. "He that shall observe that I speak more of some times, and more sparingly of others, let him remember, that all fields are not equally fruitful, nor all grains deserve to be kept; and that of those which the reaper would preserve, some ears escape the hand, or the edge of the sickle: it being the condition of every harvest, that some part remains to be afterwards gleaned."

It may possibly strike some readers with surprise that no notice is taken, in the following pages, of a multiplicity of sects which arose, from time to time, in what is called the Christian world, and whose history occupies so very large a space in the volumes of most of our modern writers on this subject. But to speak the truth, my opinion of these in general is, that they have nothing to do with the history of the church or kingdom of Christ; and that to connect them with it, as Dr. Mosheim and

others have done, is scarcely more unwise than the conduct of Mr. Hume would have been, had he incorporated the Tyburn Chronicle into his valuable History of England.

In tracing the kingdom of Christ in the world, I have paid no regard whatever to the long disputed subject of apostolical succession. I have, indeed, read much that has been written upon it by the Catholic writers on one side, and by Dr. Allix, Sir Samuel Morland, and several Protestants on the other; and I regret the labor that has been so fruitlessly expended by the latter, persuaded as I am that the *postulatum* is a mere fiction, and that the ground on which the Protestant writers have proceeded in contending for it, is altogether untenable. **It is admitted, that the Most High has had his churches and people in every age, since the decease of the Apostles; but to attempt to trace a regular succession of ordained bishops in the Vallies of Piedmont, or any other country, is "laboring in the fire for very vanity," and seems to me to proceed upon mistaken views of the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and of the sovereignty of God, in his operations in the earth, as they have respect unto it.** Jesus himself, in reply to an inquiry put to him by the Pharisees, (Luke 17:20-24) compares his kingdom to the lightning, darting its rays in the most sovereign and uncontrolled manner from one extremity of the heavens to the other. And this view of it corresponds with matter of fact. Wherever the blessed God has his elect, there, in his own proper time, he sends his gospel to save them. One while we see it diffusing its heavenly light on a particular region, and leaving another in darkness. Then it takes up its residence in the latter, and forsakes the former. Thus, when Paul and his companions attempted to go into Bithynia, the Spirit permitted them not; but they were instructed by a vision to proceed to Macedonia, where the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. When Paul first came to Corinth, he met with great opposition, but he was encouraged to persevere by Him who said, "I have much people in this city." When the first churches began to swerve from the form of sound words, to corrupt the discipline of the house of God, and to commit fornication with the kings of the earth, by forming an alliance with the state, we cease to trace the kingdom of Christ among them, but we shall find it successively among the churches of the Novatians, the followers of Aerius, the Paulicians, the Cathari, or Puritans in Germany, the Patetines, and the Waldenses, until the times of reformation.

If the present work contain any thing of sufficient interest to give it a temporary buoyancy upon the ocean of public opinion, and prevent its rapid transition into the gulf of oblivion--that insatiable vortex which has already swallowed up myriads of much more important publications, the author would persuade himself it must be those excellent letters of our great poet Milton, which, in the capacity of Latin Secretary to Cromwell, he wrote to the Protestant princes upon the Continent, pleaded the cause of the poor, afflicted, and grossly injured Waldenses. It is a mortifying reflection, that these interesting letters should now be almost forgotten as the compositions of our great poet. Whence comes it to pass, that while Milton's

Defence of the People of England is so generally known, no one ever speaks of his Defence of the Waldenses? It will be difficult to assign a more plausible reason for this, than the unpopularity of the subject. The Waldenses were "a poor and afflicted people," the subjects of a kingdom that is not of this world, and they were treated by their adversaries as "the filth of the world and offscouring of all things." But Milton understood their character, and duly appreciated it. He recognized in them his Christian brethren; their distress not only reached his ears, but roused all the sensibilities of his soul; he participated in their sorrows, and his letters in their behalf do as much honor to the benevolence of his heart as his immortal poem of *Paradise Lost* does to the sublimity of his genius. It has been too much the fashion amongst a certain class of writers to inveigh against the malignity and moral character of Milton; but surely we have a right to ask his revilers, before they take such freedoms with his fair fame, at least not to be unjust to his virtues.

William Jones  
Islington, July 1812

### **PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION**

An interval of somewhat more than a dozen years has now elapsed, since I first called the attention of my friends and the public to the interesting history of "The meek confessors of Piedmont, and of the south of France." To detail the circumstances which originally prompted me to prosecute the study of their history, would have so much the appearance of vanity and parade that I decline entering upon it; but I may be allowed to say that, after having possessed myself of such materials as the leadings of Providence had thrown in my way, I was chiefly determined to pursue the subject and lay the result before the world, by finding, that in whatever circle the mention of these extraordinary people was introduced, scarcely an individual could be met with who knew anything more about them than the name. Whether it were owing to the political state of Europe during the greater part of the past century, and of the last thirty years in particular; or to whatever other cause it is to be attributed, the fact is undeniable, that the memory of this noble army of martyrs was rapidly sinking into oblivion, and in a fair way of speedily becoming extinct.

Concise, and consequently imperfect, however, as was the narrative of the Waldenses comprised in the first edition of this work, the author was gratified on perceiving that it had excited an unusual degree of interest among the friends of Primitive Christianity, who expressed themselves anxious to know whatever more could be told them concerning this remarkable people. He therefore kept the subject constantly in view, and in the beginning of the year 1816, presented them with a greatly enlarged edition of the work, comprised in 2 vols. 8vo. Two years afterwards a third edition was called for, and since then a fourth, all of which the public have been pleased to receive with marked testimonies of approbation. Though additions and improvements



were introduced into each succeeding impression of the work, the author was far from supposing that he had brought it to any thing like a perfect state. He was, nevertheless, disposed to take credit to himself for having embodied into one succinct narrative a more copious and digested history of the Waldenses, and of those who maintained the same faith and order with them, than had hitherto appeared in our language, or indeed in any other, and he had the satisfaction to find the public voice unequivocally admitting this fact. It cannot reasonably, therefore, as he thinks, be expected from him that he should sit down quiet and unmoved while he sees others rising up, and by means that are scarcely compatible with the strict rules of literary warfare, endeavoring to push him to the wall. Of this unfair mode of proceeding, he has witnessed many attempts since he first brought the subject of this history before the public, but of which he did not think it worth his while to take any particular notice.

That a topic which has every year been rising in popularity, should find writers ready to take it up, was so naturally to be expected, that it could not reasonably excite surprise in any one. Since the first edition of this work made its appearance, several of our countrymen have been induced to visit the regions of Piedmont; and two of them, clergymen of the Church of England, who on their return laid before the public the result of their observations and enquiries, have shewn no little zeal to identify the ancient Waldenses with our national establishment. This is no way wonderful--there is scarcely a sect in Christendom, which, during the last dozen years has not laid claim to them as their rightful kindred, in one way or other; but as this is a case of fact which involves in it the truth of history, it deserves more than a bare mention in this place.

Before we enter on the discussion of it, however, and indeed to lay a proper foundation for the remarks which I have to offer, I must be permitted to premise, that I have now before me a "Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont, in the year 1823, and Researches among the Vaudois or Waldenses, Protestant inhabitants of the Cottian Alps, etc. etc. By William Stephen Gilly, M.A. Rector of North Fambridge, Essex. Second edition, with considerable additions and corrections, 1825."

In an Appendix to the volume, Mr. Gilly presents his readers with a "Notice of Publications relating to the Vaudois (Waldenses) during the three last centuries;" and having given the titles of several, and remarked upon most of them with some degree of minuteness, he at last announces my book in the following terms, which I quote verbatim.

8. "History of the Waldenses, connected with a Sketch of the Christian Church, from the birth of Christ to the eighteenth century. By William Jones, London, 1812. Octavo. pp. 676." "This volume does not enter upon the subject of the Vaudois till the

319th page, and carries their history no farther than the year, 1686."

This is the only mention that is made of my publication, so far as I can perceive, in all Mr. Gilly's book; and there are two or three circumstances connected with it of sufficient moment to entitle them to regard. Some may probably think that I ought to be well satisfied, and consider it an act of condescension in a clergyman of the Church of England, that he had noticed, even thus briefly, a publication issuing from the pen of a dissenter! Be this as it may, I cannot help remarking it as somewhat singular, that he should refer his readers to the first edition of my book, which, at the time of his writing, had been ten years sold off, and consequently must have cost him no little pains to procure. In the year 1828, when he commenced his excursion to Piedmont, there had been a second, third, and fourth edition published, in an enlarged and improved state; but probably it better suited his purpose to refer to the first and most imperfect edition of the work than to any other.

Leaving the reader, however, to indulge his own reflections on the correctness of this probability, I proceed to notice the complaint which Mr. Gilly makes, and which, in fact, is applicable to every edition of my work, namely, that "it carries their history no farther than the year 1686." This is certainly true; but my defense is an easy one--my Narrative stops where the Story ends. I professed to give the History of the Churches of Piedmont and other places, commonly designated Waldenses and Albigenses, not of individuals; and as I consider those churches to have been utterly dispersed and scattered by a series of persecutions which terminated in the year 1686, I consider myself to have brought the subject to its legitimate close.

If we are to credit a host of writers belonging to the Church of England, the two witnesses of the Apocalypse, (Revelation 11:3,4, etc.) were the two churches, or to speak more properly, the two classes of churches, which passed under the names of the Waldenses and Albigenses. This was the opinion of Bishops Lloyd, Newton, Hurd, etc. Messrs. Whiston, Faber, Gauntlett and others, and even Mr. Gilly himself admits it (p. 146). Now these two witnesses, after prophesying twelve hundred and sixty years in sackcloth, according to the prophetic testimony, were to be finally overcome and killed by the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit. (Revelation 11:7) This event I consider to have been consummated in the year 1686, and consequently as terminating the history of the Waldenses. Where, then, is the propriety of complaining of me, as Mr. Gilly and others would seem to do that I have not pursued the subject further? But, it may be asked, does not the page of history record, that in the year 1689 about eight or nine hundred men proceeded from the neighborhood of Geneva, equipped with arms and ammunition, re-entered their own country, drove away the new inhabitants, and after many contests with their enemies, obtained a reinstatement in their former possessions?" Certainly; there is no disposition to deny the fact; but I beg leave to ask Mr. Gilly, and those who dwell upon it, of what description of persons did this new race of the Waldenses consist--and are they

prepared to shew us a number of new churches formed by them bearing any resemblance to those of the ancient Waldenses which were dispersed by the armies of Louis XIV and the Duke of Savoy? We are quite content to rest the issue of this enquiry on the testimony which is borne to the present state of the Vaudois, by our author and the other members of the Established Church, compared with the accounts which have been transmitted us by friends and foes concerning their ancestors. Let us try the subject on one or two points; and I begin with their doctrinal sentiments.

"I ventured to ask Mr. Peyrani (says Mr. Gilly) if the Vaudois Clergy urged the doctrine of absolute predestination and election. He replied that these nice points of controversy were not often discussed in their pulpits, and: that for his own part, he had never given his assent to the belief in absolute predestination." "If God infallibly saves some, and as infallibly rejects others, (said Mr. P.) I do not see what is the use of his laws?" He admitted that Calvin was a good man, he desired to be thought a faithful servant of God, "but many of his tenets convey a strange notion of the Almighty's attributes."

I now request the reader to turn to Vol. 2. of my History, and compare the preceding extract with the numerous testimonies given, pp. 90, et seq. to the doctrinal sentiments of the ancient Waldenses. But what shall we think of Mr. Gilly, who in the face of all this evidence to the contrary, can stand up and tell us, "that the peculiar doctrinal sentiments maintained by Calvin never found any warm advocates in these Vallies," p. 245? This is to falsify the truth of history.

But I proceed to notice the account which Mr. Gilly gives us of the constitution, discipline and worship of the present Vaudois churches. He informs us they are partial to the Episcopal form of church government; and though particular circumstances have induced them to drop the title of bishop in its generally received sense, yet the episcopal functions are retained, p. 75.

"At present," says he, "either the liturgy of Geneva, or Neufchatel is read in the churches, according to the discretion of the pastor; but that of Geneva, which is a beautiful production, is principally followed. The rituals which are adopted, in conformity to their intercourse with Switzerland, have a service for the Communion, and different forms for certain days and seasons." So much for the present race of churches in Piedmont! Let the reader carefully examine the Confessions of Faith, published by their ancestors, and given in my History, vol. 2. ch. 5. sect. 8. and try if he can find any thing that bears a resemblance to this order of things. As regards Episcopacy, we find them saying, "We must not obey the pope and bishops, because they are the wolves of the church of Christ."-"So many orders of the clergy, so many marks of the beast."

In the "beautiful" liturgy of Geneva, as Mr. Gilly terms it, we have stated prayers for Sundays--morning and evening prayers for Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays; others for Wednesdays and Saturdays--prayers also for particular solemnities, Easter, Ascension-day, and Whitsunday Christmas-day--New-year's-day--the first of June. etc. etc. Had the ancient churches of the Waldenses anything of this trumpery among them? Far otherwise; for, in alluding to these things, we find them strongly inveighing against them, as marks of Antichrist, and quoting the very words of the apostle Paul to the Galatians, "Ye observe days and months, and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labor in vain" See pp. 85-90. Vol 2. of this work.

Once more: let us compare the ancient and modern Vaudois on the article of Baptism. On this subject Mr. Gilly thus writes:

"From infant instruction, we came to the discussion of infant baptism, and nothing can be more false than the calumny, that the Vaudois object to infant baptism. One of the arguments used by the petitioners of the commune of San Giovanni, when they implored permission to re-open their new church, was, that in the winter time their poor infants suffered dreadfully from the severity of the cold, in being carried to such a distance as Angrogne to be publicly baptized. They have even a formulary of baptism, very much like that in the Church of England, and the service begins thus: "You present this infant to be baptised;"

This may be done, it seems, either by sprinkling or immersion, at the discretion of the parties!

"In some articles of faith," says Mr. Gilly, "subsequently drawn up by the Waldensian clergy, there are many such strong declarations as these: 'We maintain that infants must be baptized under salvation, [pray what is meant by that?] and consecrated to Jesus Christ, according to Christ's command;' 'Suffer little children to come unto me.'" pp. 168, 169.

Let us now compare with this, the doctrine of their forefathers, as handed down to us in their Confessions of Faith and other writings.

"We believe that in the ordinance of baptism," say they, "the water is the visible and external sign which represents to us that which, by virtue of God's invisible operation, is within us namely, the renovation of our minds, and the mortification of our members through Jesus Christ. And by this ordinance we are received into the holy congregation of God's people, previously professing our faith and change of life." And with regard to the baptism of infants, they insist upon it to be one of the leading features of Antichrist. Their words are; "He teaches to baptize children into the faith,

and attributes to this, the work of regeneration; thus confounding the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, with the external rite of baptism, and on this foundation bestows orders, and indeed grounds all his Christianity." See pp. 51 and 56

But here I stop--it is needless to pursue the subject farther.

**Enough has surely been said, to shew that the present race of Protestant churches in Piedmont, bears little or no affinity to the ancient Waldenses, either in their doctrinal sentiments, their discipline and external order, or their religious practices; and it is an act of justice to the memory of those excellent people to rescue them from this unnatural alliance.** Mr. Gilly's "Narrative" is not destitute of amusement and information, but it is a perfect melange, in which topographical description, biographical anecdote, ecclesiastical history, the ancient and the modern, fact and fiction are strangely jumbled together. So far as his efforts have been exerted to plead the cause of the distressed inhabitants of those Vallies, whose privations and sufferings arising from the invasion of their country by the French armies during the late war, we can easily imagine to be great, he is entitled to our respect and gratitude. But in his attempt to identify the present race of the Vaudois with their predecessors "the meek confessors of Piedmont," he has totally failed. In fact, had he properly understood the character of the ancient Waldensian churches, we can have no conception that he would have entertained any wish to become their advocate. And as it may probably save others from falling into similar blunders, I shall close this Preface with laying before the reader a brief sketch of what they were.

In the first place, they were dissenters--protestant dissenters--dissenters upon principle, not only from the church of Rome, but also from all national establishments of religion,--they existed by mere toleration from the civil government,--they acknowledged no earthly potentate as head of the church; they absolutely protested against every thing of the kind. They had no Book of Common Prayer--no Liturgy, no thirty-nine articles to guard them from error, heresy, or schism. They had no reverend gentlemen--no privileged order of clergymen, paid or pensioned for discharging the duties of the pastoral office among them. They paid particular respect to their Lord's words; "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ and all ye are brethren: And call no man your father upon earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven: Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master even Christ: but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." They brought up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they neither sprinkled nor immersed them, under the notion of administering Christian baptism -- they were, in a word, so many distinct churches of ANTIPAEDOBAPTISTS.

William Jones  
Islington, Sept. 25th, 1825

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

First Edition 1812  
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The rise and progress of the Christian religion,--its influence on every state and kingdom by which it has been embraced,--and the amelioration of the condition of the human race, through its means, by the conversion of rude barbarians to a degree of improvement unknown to classic ages, all concur to render an impartial account of it, almost as interesting to the philosopher and the politician as it is to the sincere disciple of the Savior. The history now offered to the public, has, however, been compiled with a more direct and special view to the information of the latter class of readers than of either of the former; and it may not be without its use, before we enter immediately on the subject itself, to pause, and take a cursory view of the actual state of the world in the age in which the gospel dispensation had its commencement. Christianity claims an heavenly origin, and professes to have conferred, and indeed still to confer, blessings on mankind to which no other religion has any pretensions. What, from age to age, it is doing for ourselves, few of us need to be told: but without reverting to the condition of our species at the time of its first promulgation, and distinctly marking its progress in the subversion of the idolatrous rites and absurd superstitions of Paganism, we can never appreciate, as we ought to do, the extent of those benefits which have resulted from the introduction and establishment of this divine institution in the world. It appears highly desirable therefore, by way of introduction to the following work, that the reader be presented with a sketch of the general state of the world at the time of the Savior's birth; and that his attention be also particularly called to the state of the Jewish nation at the same interesting period.

## **A VIEW OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD IN GENERAL, AT THE TIME OF CHRIST'S BIRTH.**

The inspired historians, who have narrated the life and actions of the Lord Jesus

Christ, have particularly specified the time of his birth, as being under the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus, and when Herod the Great was king of Judea (Luke 2:1; Matthew 2:1). At this period the Roman empire was in the zenith of its extent and power; that military people having reduced the greatest part of the habitable earth under the dominion of its arms; and even the land of Judea, once so renowned as the kingdom over which David and Solomon had swayed the royal scepter, had sunk into a province of this mighty empire.

The ancient Roman empire was at this epoch of the world a most magnificent object. It extended from the river Euphrates in the east, to the Atlantic or western ocean; that is, in length more than three thousand miles. In breadth too, it was more than two thousand; and the whole included above sixteen hundred thousand square miles. This vast extent of territory was divided into provinces; and they comprised the countries called Spain, Gaul, (since France) the greater part of Britain, Italy, Rhoetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Moesia, Dacia, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt, Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea, with its islands and colonies. This extended territory lay between the twenty-fourth and fifty-sixth degrees of northern latitude, which was certainly the most eligible part of the temperate zone, and it produced in general all the conveniences and luxuries of life. [Rollin's *Roman History*; Hook's ditto; and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*]

From the days of Ninus, who lived about three hundred years after the flood, to those of Augustus Caesar, was a period of two thousand years; in which interval, various empires, kingdoms, and states, had gradually arisen and succeeded each other. The Assyrian or Babylonian empire may be said to have taken the lead. It not only had the precedence in point of time, but it was the cradle of Asiatic elegance and arts, and exhibited the first examples of that refinement and luxury which have distinguished every subsequent age in the annals of the east. But that gigantic power gave place to the empire of the Medes and Persians, which itself, in process of time yielded to the valor of the Greeks; while the empire of Greece, so renowned for splendor in arts and in arms, had sunk under the dominion of Imperial Rome, who thus became mistress of all the civilized world.

**ROME** is said to have owed her dominion as much to the manners as to the arms of her citizens. Whenever the latter had subdued a particular territory, they prepared to civilize it. They transferred into each of the conquered countries their laws, manners, arts, sciences. and literature. The advantages that resulted from the bringing of so many different nations into subjection under one people, or to speak more properly, under one man, were no doubt, in many respects, considerable. For by this means the people of various countries, alike strangers to each other's language, manners, and laws, became associated together in amity and enjoyed reciprocal intercourse. By Roman magnificence, which spared no expense to render the public roads



commodious to travelers, an easy access was given to parts the most distant and remote. Literature and the arts became generally diffused, and the euhivation of them extended even to countries that had previously formed no other scale by which to estimate the dignity of man, than that of corporeal vigor, or muscular strength. In short, men that had hitherto known no other rules of action, or modes of life, than those of savage and uncultivated nature, had now before them the example of a polished nation, and were gradually instructed by their conquerors to form themselves after it. These things deserve mention, because, as they contributed in some measure to facilitate the propagation of the gospel by the labors of the apostles, they may consequently be entitled to rank among those concurring events which constituted the period of our Lord's advent, "the fullness of time."

The subjects of the Roman empire, at this period, have been estimated at about one hundred and twenty millions of persons, and divided into three classes, namely, Citizens, Provincials, and Slaves. The first class enjoyed ample liberty and were entitled to peculiar immunities; the second had only the shadow of liberty without any constitutional freedom; while the last were entirely dependant on the arbitrary will of their masters, who, as best suited their purpose, either enfranchised, or oppressed, or barbarously punished and destroyed them. Enthusiastic in the cause of liberty themselves, the Romans studied the most prudent methods of rendering the provinces of the empire insensible to the yoke that was imposed on them. They treated willing captives with commendable liberality; and used the conquered countries with that moderation which evinced that their leading object was, not the destruction of mankind, but the increase of the empire. They colonized foreign countries with Romans, who introduced agriculture, arts, sciences, learning, and commerce. Having made the art of governing a particular branch of study, they excelled in it above all the inhabitants of the globe. Their history, indeed, exhibits wise councils, prudent measures, equitable laws; and all classes of men are represented to us as conducting themselves so as to command the admiration of posterity.

Having thus briefly glanced at the state of civilization which prevailed in the Roman empire at the date of the Christian era we shall dismiss the subject, in order to examine more particularly its condition with regard to morals and religion; for it is with these that the history of the Christian church is more especially concerned. And that we may have a more enlarged and distinct view of the matter, it may be profitable for us to go back in our enquiries, and take a rapid glance of the state of the Gentile world from a much earlier period. The prophet Isaiah, rapt in prophetic vision, and transported to that distant age when God should perform the mercy promised to the fathers, breaks out into the following sublime strains: "Behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isaiah 60:2,3).

Much has been said of late respecting the sufficiency of reason to direct the human mind in its pursuit of the chief good, or of the knowledge of the true character of God and of obedience to his will: the enquiry on which we are entering may possibly serve to evince how far such representations are entitled to regard, and perhaps tend to prove the truth of the apostle's assertion that "the world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

Our knowledge of the state of any of those nations which were situated beyond the confines of the Roman empire, is necessarily very imperfect and obscure, arising from the paucity of their historical monuments and writers. We have sufficient light, however, to perceive that the eastern nations were distinguished by a low and servile spirit, prone to slavery and every species of abject humiliation; whilst those towards the north, prided themselves in cherishing a warlike and savage disposition, that scorned even the restraint of a fixed habitation, and placed its chief gratification in the liberty of roaming at large through scenes of devastation, blood, and slaughter. A soft and feeble constitution both of body and mind, with powers barely adequate to the cultivation of the arts of peace, and chiefly exercised in ministering at the shrine of voluptuous gratification, may be considered as the characteristic trait of the former: a robust and vigorous corporeal frame, animated with a glowing spirit that looked with contempt on life, and every thing by which its cares are soothed, that of the latter.

The minds of the people inhabiting these various countries, were fettered by superstitions of the most degrading nature, though the sense of a Supreme Being, from whom all things had their origin, and whose decrees regulate the universe, had not become wholly extinct; yet in every nation a general belief prevailed, that all things were subordinate to an association of powerful spirits, who were called gods, [hence the apostle's expression, "there are, that are called, lords many and gods many," 1 Corinthians 8:5] and whom it was incumbent on every one, who wished for a happy and prosperous course of life, to worship and conciliate. One of these deities was supposed to excel the rest in dignity, and to possess a supereminent authority, by which the tasks or offices of the inferior ones were allotted, and the whole of the assembly, in a certain degree, directed and governed. His rule, however, was not conceived to be by any means arbitrary; neither was it supposed that he could so far invade the provinces of the others, as to interfere with their particular functions; and hence it was deemed necessary for those who would secure the favor of heaven, religiously to cultivate the patronage of every separate deity, and assiduously to pay that homage to each of them which was respectively his due.

Every nation, however, did not worship the same gods, but each had its peculiar deities, differing from those of other countries, not only in their names, but in their nature, their attributes, their actions, and other respects: nor is there any just foundation for the supposition which some have adopted, that the gods of Greece and

Rome were the same with those worshipped by the Germans, the Syrians, the Arabians, the Persians, the Egyptians, and others. The Greeks and Romans, indeed, pretended that the deities which they acknowledged were equally revered in every other part of the world; and it might probably be the case with most nations, that the gods of other countries were held in a sort of secondary reverence, and perhaps, in some instances, privately worshipped; but it is certain that each country had its appropriate deities, and that to neglect or disparage the established worship of the state was always considered as an offense of the most atrocious kind. [See Bishop Warburton's *Divine Legation*, Book 2. Sect 6. 473.]

This diversity of deities and religious worship seldom generated animosity: for each nation readily conceded to others the right of forming their own opinions, and of judging for themselves in religious matters; and they left them, both in the choice of their deities and mode of worshipping them, to be guided by whatever principles they might think proper to adopt. Those who were accustomed to regard this world in the light of a commonwealth, divided into several districts, over each of which a certain order of deities presided, could with an ill-grace assume the liberty of forcing other nations to discard their own favorite deities, and receive in their stead the same objects of adoration with themselves. It is certain that the Romans were extremely jealous of introducing any new divinities, or of making the least change in the public religion; yet the citizens were never denied the privilege of individually conforming to any foreign mode of worship, or of manifesting, by the most solemn acts of devotion, their veneration for the gods of other countries. [See *Divine Legation of Moses*, Warburton's *Works*, Vol. 2. Edit. 8vo. 1811.]

The principal deities of most nations consisted of heroes renowned in antiquity, emperors, kings, founders of cities, and other illustrious persons, whose eminent exploits, and the benefits they had conferred on mankind, were treasured up and embalmed in the breasts of posterity, by whose gratitude they were crowned with divine honors and raised to the rank of gods. And in no other respects were the heathen deities supposed to be distinguished beyond the human species, than by the enjoyment of power and an immortal existence. And to the worship of divinities of this description was joined in many countries, that of some of the noblest and most excellent parts of the creation; the luminaries of heaven in particular, the sun, the moon, and the stars, in whom, as the effects of their influence was always perceptible, an intelligent mind was supposed to reside. The superstitious practices of some countries were carried to an almost endless extreme: mountains, rivers, trees, the earth, the sea and the winds, even the diseases of the body, the virtues and the vices (or rather certain tutelary genii, to whom the guardianship and care of all these things was conceived to belong) were made the object of adoration, and had divine honors regularly paid to them.

Buildings of the most superb and magnificent kind, under the names of temples,

fanés, etc. were raised and dedicated by the people of almost every country to their gods, with the expectation that the divinities would condescend to make these sumptuous edifices the places of their own immediate residence. They were not all open to the public, for some of them were confined to the exercise of private devotion; but those of either description were internally ornamented with images of their deities, and furnished with altars and the requisite apparatus for offering sacrifice. The statues were supposed to be animated by the deities whom they represented: for though the worshippers of gods, such as have now been described, must, in a great measure, have relinquished every dictate of reason, they were not willing to appear by any means so destitute of every principle of common sense, as to pay their adoration to a mere idol of metal, or wood, or stone; they always maintained that their statues, when properly consecrated, were filled with the presence of those divinities whose impress they bore. [Arnobius adv. Gentes, lib. 6. Augustin de Civitate, lib. 8.]

The religious homage paid to these deities, consisted chiefly in the frequent performance of various rites; such as the offering up of victims and sacrifices, accompanied by prayers and other ceremonies. The sacrifices and offerings were different, according to the nature and attributes of the gods to whom they were addressed. Brute animals were commonly devoted to this purpose; but in some nations of a more savage and ferocious character, the horrible practice of sacrificing human victims prevailed. And it has been remarked by the learned Bishop Warburton, that the attributes and qualities assigned to their gods, always corresponded with the nature and genius of the government of the country. If this was gentle, benign, compassionate and forgiving, goodness and mercy were considered as most essential to the deity; but if severe, inexorable, captious or unequal, the very gods were supposed to be tyrants; and expiations, atonements, lustrations, and bloody sacrifices, then composed the system of religious worship. In the words of the Poet,

"Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes were rage, revenge or lust;  
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe."  
[Pope's *Essay on Man*. See Warburton's *Works*, Vol. 1. p. 309.]

Of the prayers of Pagan worshippers, whether we regard the matter or the mode of expression, it is impossible to speak favorably: they were not only destitute, in general, of every thing allied to the spirit of piety, but were sometimes framed expressly for the purpose of obtaining the countenance of heaven to the vilest undertakings. Indeed the greater part of their religious observances were of an absurd and ridiculous kind, and in many instances strongly tinged with the most disgraceful barbarism and obscenity. Their festivals and other solemn days were

polluted by a licentious indulgence in every species of libidinous excess; and on these occasions, they were not prohibited even from making their consecrated places, the supposed mansions of their gods, the scenes of vile and beastly gratification.[See the Treatise of Philo--Judaeus de Cherubim, p. 155.]

The care of the temples, together with the superintendence and direction of all religious ordinances, was committed to a class of men bearing the title of priests or *flamens*. It belonged to the province of these ministers to see that the ancient and customary honors were paid to the publicly acknowledged deities, and that a due regard was manifested in every other respect for the religion of the state. These were their ordinary duties; but superstition ascribed to them functions of a far more exalted nature. It considered them rather in the light of intimate and familiar friends of the gods, than in that of officiating ministers of their altar; and consequently attributed to them the highest degree of sanctity, influence, and power. With the minds of the people thus prepossessed in their favor, it could not be very difficult for an artful and designing set of men, possessed of a competent share of knowledge, to maintain a system of spiritual dominion of the most absolute and tyrannical kind.

Besides the public worship of the Pagan deities, several nations, such, for instance, as the Persians, the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Indians, and some others, had recourse to a dark and concealed species of worship, under the name of MYSTERIES. None were admitted to see or participate of these mysteries, but such as had approved themselves worthy of that distinction by their fidelity and perseverance in the practice of a long course of initiatory forms. The votaries were enjoined, on peril of instant death, to observe the most profound secrecy respecting every thing that passed [Clarkson's *Discourses on the Liturgies*, Sect. 4. Meursius de *Mysteriis Eleusiniis*, and Warburton's *Divine Legation*, Book I1. Sect. IV]; a circumstance which alone sufficiently accounts for the difficulty that we find in obtaining any information respecting the nature of these recluse practices, and for the discordant and contradictory opinions concerning them, that are to be found in the writings of various authors both ancient and modern. According to the learned Warburton, each of the Heathen deities, besides the worship paid to him in public, had a secret worship, which was termed the mysteries of the god. These, however, were not performed in every place where he was publicly worshipped, but only where his chief residence was supposed to be. We learn from Herodotus, Diodorus, and Plutarch, that these mysteries were first invented in Egypt, from whence they spread into most countries of Europe and Asia. In Egypt they were celebrated to the honor of Isis and Osiris; in Asia to Mythras; in Samothrace to the mother of the gods; in Boeotia to Bacchus; in the isle of Cyprus to Venus; in Crete to Jupiter; in Athens to Ceres and Proserpine; and in other places to other deities of an incredible number. The most noted of these mysteries were the Orphic, those in honor of Bacchus, the Eleusinian, the Samothracian, the Cabiri, and the Mythraic. But the Eleusinian mysteries, which were statedly celebrated by the people of Athens, at Eleusis, a town of Attica, in

honor of Ceres and her daughter Proserpine, in process of time supplanted all the rest, for according to the testimony of Zosimus, "These most holy rites were then so extensive, as to take in the whole race of mankind." This sufficiently accounts for the fact, that ancient writers have spoken more of the Eleusinian mysteries than of any other. They all, nevertheless, proceeded from one fountain, consisted of similar rites, and are supposed to have had the same object in view.

We are informed by the same learned prelate, Warburton, that the general object of these mysteries was, by means of certain shews and representations, accompanied with hymns, to impress the senses and imaginations of the initiated with the belief of the doctrines of religion, according to the views of them which the inventors of the mysteries entertained. And in order that the mystic exhibitions might make the deeper impressions on the initiated, they were always performed in the darkness of night. The mysteries were divided into two classes, the lesser and the greater: the former were intended for the common people--the latter for those in higher stations and of more cultivated understandings. But if the design of these mysteries really was, as some have conjectured, to impress the minds of the initiated with just notions of God, of providence, and of a future state, it is demonstrable that they must have been grossly perverted from their original intent. Bishop Warburton, who stiffly contends for this high honor in their primary institutions, is obliged to admit that the orgies of Bacchus, and the mysteries of the mother of the gods, and of Venus, and of Cupid, being celebrated in honor of deities who were supposed to inspire and to preside over the sensual appetites, it was natural for the initiated to believe that they honored these divinities when they committed the vicious actions of which they were the patrons. He further acknowledges, that the mysteries of these deities being performed during nocturnal darkness, or in gloomy recesses, and under the seal of the greatest secrecy, the initiated indulged themselves on these occasions, in all the abominations with which the object of their worship was supposed to be delighted. In fact, the enormities committed in celebrating the mysteries of these impure deities ultimately became so intolerable, that their rites were proscribed in various countries, as those of Bacchus were at Rome. [Livy's *Roman History*, Book 39.] And from this short account of the matter, we may learn how properly the apostle Paul denominated the boasted Heathen mysteries, "the unfruitful works of darkness," Ephesians 5:11. Works unproductive of any good either to those who performed them, or to society: and how very properly he prohibited Christians from joining in or "having any fellowship with them;" because the things that were done in them, under the seal of secrecy, were such as it was even base to mention, ver. 12. Warburton assures us, that while all the other mysteries became exceedingly corrupt, through the fully or wickedness of those who presided at their celebration, and gave occasion to many abominable impurities, by means of which the manners of the Heathens were entirely vitiated, the Eleusinian mysteries long preserved their original purity. But at last they also, yielding to the fate of all human institutions, partook of the common depravity, and had a very pernicious influence on the morals of mankind. In

proportion therefore as the gospel made its progress in the world, the Eleusinian mysteries themselves fell into disrepute; and, together with all the other Pagan solemnities, were at length suppressed. [Rollin's *Ancient History*. Vol. 5.]

## THE RELIGION OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS

At the time of the birth of Christ, the religion of Rome, or to speak more properly, the established superstition of the empire, had been received, together with its government and laws, by a great part of the then known world. Much of this system of superstition had been borrowed from the Greeks; and hence the propriety of classing the religion of the two people under one head. There was, however, a difference between the two, and in some points rather material. The framers of the Grecian system seem to have admitted the existence of one supreme, intelligent, great first cause, the author of every thing, visible and invisible, mid the supreme governor of the world; but they did not think it either necessary or proper to impart this idea to the multitude, whose gross conceptions they thought might be amused by a variety of fabulous tales, and whose hopes and fears would be more excited by a plurality of deities than by the unity of an overruling power. The divinities first introduced in consequence of this opinion, were the sun, and the principal planets, to which were soon added the elements of fire, air, earth, and water. These fictitious deities were invested with the human form, and all the passions incident to human nature were attributed to them. The fabricated tales of their adventures, comprehended an indulgence of the most vicious propensities and the perpetration of enormous crimes. The Greeks adored Jupiter as at the head of the celestial association, the protector of mankind, and the governor of the universe; while their philosophers, who appear in general to have been atheists, by this personage typified the higher region of the air; and by his wife (Juno) the lower atmosphere diffused between the heavens and the sea. And whilst the common people paid homage to Cybele, as the mother of the gods, the more, refined part of the nation intended nothing more than the earth by that object of worship. Fire was deified, and the great body of water had also its divine representative. Apollo was the sun, and the moon was his sister, Artemis, or Diana. Thus by the fertile imagination of the Greeks, their deities were gradually multiplied to a remarkable excess; indeed the poet Hesiod, swells the amount to THIRTY THOUSAND! According to their mythology, all parts of nature teemed with divine agents, and a system which it must be owned was in some respects elegantly fanciful, was characterised, under other views, by features of the grossest absurdity.

Worship was originally offered to their deities in the open air, in groves, or upon eminences; but the Greeks, in the progress of their superstition, were led to believe that their deities would be better pleased with the erection of buildings peculiarly devoted to their service; and temples, at first simple and unadorned, afterwards magnificent and sumptuous, were the fruits of their opinion. Of the extent to which



this point was ultimately carried, we have indeed a striking instance in the case of the temple of Diana, at Ephesus, the length of which, Pliny tells us, was 425 feet, and in breadth 220. It was supported by 107 pillars, each of them 60 feet high. This magnificent structure was erected at the expense of all Asia, and 250 years were spent in finishing it. At first these temples were without images; but in process of time wooden figures of their gods were exhibited for public reverence. Stone or marble was soon deemed preferable for this use; metals of various kinds were also adopted; and the rudeness of early fabrication was succeeded by elegant workmanship.

Sacrifices formed an essential part of the superstitious worship of the Greeks, as well as of the Romans. Grateful respect for the favors conferred on them by their imaginary deities,--the desire of averting their anger after the commission of any offense,--and an eagerness to secure their blessing on a projected enterprise, were the inducements to these oblations. Herbs were the earliest offerings, and it was usual to burn them that the smoke might ascend towards heaven. Barley, and cakes made of that grain, were afterwards substituted for ordinary herbs; and ultimately some of the most useful animals were immolated at their altars, (see Acts 14:11-13) upon which also milk, oil, and wine were poured. Those who served at the altar were required to prepare themselves by abstaining even from lawful pleasures for one or more preceding days; and all who entered the temples, on the occasions, dipped their hands into consecrated water. When the people were assembled about the altar, the priest sprinkled them with holy water, and offered up a short prayer for them: he next examined the victim, to ascertain its freedom from defects or blemishes; prayer was then resumed; frankincense was strewed upon the altar; hymns were sung; the animal was killed with ceremonious precision; pieces of its flesh were offered and burnt as first-fruits, and the principal devotees carried off the rest.

The religious system which Romulus planted on the banks of the Tiber, corresponded pretty much with that of Greece as above described. A multiplicity of divine beings, graciously superintending human affairs, formed the prevailing creed. All the deities had priests and ministers, sacrifices and oblations. The augurs, or soothsayers, in whose art or imposture the founder of Rome excelled, were considered as an important and necessary part of the establishment. Each tribe had one of these pretended prophets, who announced the will of the gods with regard to any future enterprise, from an observance of the flight or the noise of birds, from the feeding of poultry, the movement of beasts, and other appearances. The high priest and his associates not only regulated the public worship, but acted as judges in all cases which had any reference to religion, and exercised a censorial and authoritative jurisdiction over inferior ministers.

The sacrifices in which the different priests officiated did not agree in every particular; but the following usages and ceremonies were the most prevalent. When a

sacrifice was intended, a solemn procession was made to the temple of some deity. In the first place a preeco, or public cryer, called the attention of the people to the pious work: then appeared the flute-players and harpers, performing in their best manner. The victims followed, wearing white fillets, with their horns gilt, As soon as the priest reached the altar, he prayed to the gods, imploring pardon for his sins, and a blessing upon his country. Having commanded all impure and vicious persons to withdraw, he threw grain, meal, and frankincense upon the heads of the animals, and poured wine between the horns of each; and, having first scored them on the back, he gave orders to his attendants to slay them. The entrails were closely inspected, and from their particular appearance, omens were deduced, or inferred, supposing the gods to intimate their will by such minutiae to sagacious and devout observers. Some portions of the flesh were then placed upon the altar, for the gratification of that deity to whose honor the temple had been reared--the remainder was divided among the attendant rotaries.

What has been now said of the superstition of the ancient Romans, refers particularly to the manner of conducting their worship in the city of Rome, but similar arrangements prevailed in the provinces; and in our own country there were twenty-eight flamins, or Pagan priests, according to the number of the cities, and three arch-flamins; namely, one at London, a second at York, and a third at Caerleon. But to enter into a more particular detail of these things would carry me beyond the limits of this prefatory discourse; suffice it therefore to say, that the whole originated in the vulgar superstitions of the most remote ages of Paganism, and it would be difficult to say, which part was Trojan, which Egyptian, or which Chaldean. The Romans in general knew the whole to be an imposition, and many of them ridiculed the pretense that the institution was divine; and perhaps the subject cannot be more fitly and aptly expressed than it has been by Mr. Gibbon, in the following words: "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord." [*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 1. ch. ii.]

## **THE RELIGION OF THE INDIANS, EGYPTIANS, PERSIANS, AND CELTS**

In reviewing the various systems of Polytheism which prevailed at that time, those which were cultivated by the Indians, the Persians, the Egyptians, and the Celts, are entitled to distinguished notice. Of these the Indians and Celts are chiefly remarkable for having selected for the object of their adoration a set of ancient heroes and leaders, whose memory so far from being rendered illustrious by their virtues, had descended to posterity disgraced and loaded with vice and infamy. Both these classes of men believed that the souls of men survived the dissolution of their bodies; the former conceiving that all of them, without distinction, entered at death into other bodies on this earth; while the latter, on the contrary, considering immortality to be

the reward which heaven bestows on valor alone, supposed that the bodies of the brave, after being purified by fire, again became the receptacles of their souls, and that the heroes thus renewed were received into the council and society of the gods. Authority of the most despotic kind was committed to their priests by the people of either country. Their official duties were not restricted to the administration of the concerns of religion, but extended to the enacting of laws, and the various other departments of civil government.

In describing the religion of the Egyptians, we must distinguish between the general religion of the country, and the practice of particular provinces or districts. The liberty which every city and province enjoyed of adopting what deities it preferred, and of worshipping them under any forms which the inhabitants might think proper to institute, necessarily gave rise to a great variety of private systems. In the choice of their public or national gods, no sort of delicacy was manifested: the greater part of them being indiscriminately composed of mortals renowned in history for their virtues, and others distinguished alone by the enormity of their crimes; such were Osiris, Seraphis, Typhon, His, and others. With the worship of these was joined that of the constellations, the sun, the moon, the dog-star, animals of almost every kind, certain sorts of plants, etc. etc. Whether the religion of the state, or that which was peculiar to any province or city be considered, it will be found equally remote in its principles from every thing liberal, dignified, or rational. Some parts were ridiculous in the extreme, and the whole in no small degree contaminated by a despicable baseness and obscenity. In fact the religion of the Egyptians was so remarkably distinguished by absurd and disgraceful traits, that it was made the subject of derision even by those whose own tenets and practice were by no means conspicuous for wisdom. The Egyptian priests had a sacred code peculiarly their own, founded on principles very different from those which characterised the popular superstition, and, which they studiously concealed from the prying eye of the public, by wrapping it up in hieroglyphical characters, the meaning and power of which were only known to themselves.

The Persians derived their religious system from Zoroaster. The leading principle of their religion was, that all things are derived from two common governing causes: the one the author of all good, the other of all evil: the former the source of light, of mind, and of spiritual intelligence; the latter that of darkness and matter with all its grosser incidents. Between these two powerful agents they supposed a constant war to be carried on. Those, however, who taught upon this system, did not all explain it in the same way, or deduce the same conclusions from it: hence uniformity was destroyed, and various sects originated. The most intelligent part of the Persians maintained that there was one supreme God, to whom they gave the name of MYTHRA, and that under him were two inferior deities, the one called Oromasdes, the author of all good; the other Ariman, the cause of all evil. The common people, who equally believed in the existence of a supreme being, under the title of MYTHRA, appear to have

confounded him with the sun, which was the object of their adoration; and it is probable, that with the two inferior deities they joined others of whom little or nothing is now known.

None of these various systems of religion appear to have contributed in any degree towards a reformation of manners, or exciting a respect for virtue of any kind. The gods and goddesses who were held up as objects of adoration to the multitude, instead of presenting examples of excellence for their imitation, stood forth to public view the avowed authors of the most flagrant and enormous crimes. The priests took no sort of interest in regulating the public morals; neither directing the people by their precepts, nor inviting them by exhortation and example to the pursuit of what is lovely and of good report: on the contrary, they indulged themselves in the most unwarrantable licentiousness, maintaining that the whole of religion was comprised in performing the rites and ceremonies instituted by their ancestors, and that every species of sensual gratification was freely allowed by their deities to those who regularly ministered to them in this way. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, was but little understood, and of course only very partially acknowledged. Hence at the period when Christ appeared, any notions of this kind found little or no acceptance among the Greeks and Romans, but were regarded in the light of old wives' fables, fit only for the amusement of women and children. No particular points of belief respecting the immortality of the soul being established by their public standards of religion, every one was at liberty to avow what opinion he pleased on that subject.

It can excite no reasonable surprise, therefore, that under the influence of such circumstances, the state of society should have become in the highest degree vicious and depraved. The lives of men of every class, from the highest to the lowest, were spent in the practice of the most abominable and flagitious vices. Even crimes, the horrible turpitude of which was such, that decency forbids the mention of them. were openly practiced with the greatest impunity. Should the reader doubt of this, he may be referred to LUCIAN among the Greek authors, and to JUVENAL and PERSIUS among the Roman poets--or even to the testimony of the apostle Paul, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. In the writings of Lucian, for instance, he will find the most unnatural affections and detestable practices treated of at large, and with the utmost familiarity, as things of ordinary and daily occurrence. And when we turn our attention to those cruel and inhuman exhibitions which are well known to have yielded the highest gratification to both the Greeks and Romans, the two most polished nations of the world--the savage conflicts of the gladiators in the circus; when we cast an eye on the dissoluteness of manners by which the walks of private life were polluted; the horrible prostitution of boys, to which the laws opposed no restraint; the liberty of divorce which belonged to the wife as well as the husband; the shameful practice of exposing infants, and procuring abortions; the multiplicity of stews and brothels, many of which were consecrated to their deities;--when we reflect

on these and various other excesses, to the most ample indulgence in which the laws opposed no restraint; who can forbear putting the question, that, if such were the people distinguished above all others by the excellency of their laws, and the superiority of their attainments in literature and arts, what must have been the state of those nations who possessed none of these advantages, but were governed solely by the impulses and dictates of rude and uncultivated nature!

## **VIEW OF THE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF GENTILE PHILOSOPHY**

**At the time of Christ's appearance upon earth, there were two species of philosophy that generally prevailed throughout the civilized world; the one that of Greece, the other what is usually termed the Oriental.** The philosophy of the Greeks was not confined to that nation, for its principles were embraced by all such of the Romans as aspired to any eminence of wisdom. The Oriental philosophy prevailed chiefly in Persia, Chaldea, Syria, Egypt, and other eastern countries. Both these species of philosophy were split into various sects, but with this distinction, that those which sprang from the Oriental system all proceeded on one common principle, and of course had, many similar tenets, though they might differ as to some particular inferences and opinions: whilst those to which the philosophy of Greece gave rise, were divided in opinion respecting the elements or first principles of wisdom, and were consequently widely separated from each other in the whole course of their discipline. The apostle Paul is generally supposed to have adverted to each of these systems--to that of Greece, in Colossians 2:8, and to the Oriental, in 1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; and 6:20--in all which places, he strongly warns Christians to beware of blending the doctrines of either with the simple gospel of Jesus Christ. Happy had it been for the Christian church, could they have taken the admonition which was thus given them by the apostle; but vain and presumptuous man could not rest satisfied with "the truth as it is in Jesus"--the wisdom that leads to eternal life, as it came pure from above; but must exercise his ingenuity in fruitless attempts to reconcile it; first of all with the principles of the Oriental philosophy, and afterwards to many of the dogmas of the Grecian sects.

The Greek philosophers, whose doctrines were also much cultivated by the Romans, may be divided into two classes: the first comprehended those whose tenets struck at the root of all religion--a species of Atheists, who, while they professed to support and recommend the cause of virtue, in reality nourished the interests of vice, giving color to almost every kind of criminality: the other was composed of such as acknowledged the existence of a Deity, whom it was the duty of men to worship and obey, and who inculcated an essential and eternal distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice, but who nevertheless subverted these just principles, by connecting with them various notions absurd or trifling in their nature. Under the first of these classes may be ranked the disciples of Epicurus, and those who passed under the name of Academics.

**THE EPICUREANS** maintained that the universe arose out of a fortuitous concurrence of atoms; that the gods, whose existence they hesitated absolutely to deny, were totally indifferent and unconcerned about all human affairs, or rather entirely unacquainted with them; that our souls are born and die; that all things depend on and are determined by accident; that in every thing voluptuous gratification was to be sought after as THE CHIEF GOOD; and even virtue itself was only to be pursued, inasmuch as it might minister at the shrine of pleasure. The votaries of a system like this, which indeed included nearly all the children of prosperity, the rich, the noble, and the powerful, naturally studied to pass their lives in one continued round of luxurious enjoyment. The only restraint they imposed on themselves arose out of a desire to avoid, at all times, such an excessive or immoderate addictedness to pleasure as might generate disease, or tend in any other shape to abridge the capacity for future indulgence.

**THE ACADEMICS**, though they affected to be influenced by wiser principles than the former, yet entertained maxims of an equally lax and pernicious tendency with them. They were nearly allied to the Sceptics; in fact, the main distinction lay in this,--that whereas the Sceptics contended that nothing should be assented to, but every thing made the subject of dispute; the Academics, on the contrary, maintained that our judgments should acquiesce in all things which bear the appearance of truth, or which may be considered in the light of probabilities. But as they were always undetermined respecting what constituted the sort of probability to which a wise man should assent, their doctrines contributed, no less than that of the Sceptics, to render every thing vague and unsettled. To make it, as they did, a matter of doubt and uncertainty, whether the gods existed or not; whether the soul was perishable or immortal; whether virtue was preferable to vice, or vice to virtue; was certainly nothing less than to undermine the fundamental principles of religion and morality. The Academic system of philosophy fell into such disrepute as to be, at one time, quite neglected and utterly lost; but Cicero revived it at Rome, a little before the birth of Christ; and so much weight was attached to his example and authority, that it was soon embraced by all who aspired to the chief honors of the state.

**THE PERIPATETICS** belonged to the other class of philosophers, for they acknowledged the existence of a God, and the obligations of morality; yet their tenets were not much calculated to inspire a reverence for the one, or a love for the other. The doctrine which Aristotle, their great master, taught, gave to the Deity an influence not much beyond that of the moving principle in a piece of machinery. He indeed considered him to be of an highly refined and exalted nature, happy in the contemplation of himself, but entirely unconscious of what was passing here below; confined from all eternity to the celestial world, and instigating the operations of nature rather from necessity than from volition or choice. In a deity of this description, differing but little from the god of the Epicureans, there surely was

nothing that could reasonably excite either love, respect, or fear. It is difficult to ascertain precisely what were the sentiments of this class of philosophers respecting the immortality of the soul; but it may fairly be asked, Could the interests of religion or morality be in any shape effectually promoted by teachers like these, who denied the superintendence of divine providence, and insinuated, in no very obscure terms, a disbelief of the soul's future existence?

**THE STOICS** assigned to the Deity somewhat more of majesty and influence, than the disciples of Aristotle. They did not limit his functions merely to the regulating of the clouds, and the numbering of the stars; but conceived him to animate every part of the universe with his presence, in the nature of a subtle, active, penetrating fire. They regarded his connection with matter, however, as the effect of necessity, and supposed his will to be subordinate to the immutable decrees of fate; hence it was impossible for him to be considered as the author either of rewards to the virtuous, or of punishment to the wicked. The Stoics denied the immortality of the soul, and thus deprived mankind of the strongest motive to a wise and virtuous course of life. In short, the moral discipline of the Stoics may be compared to a body of a fair and imposing external appearance, but which, on closer examination, is found destitute of those essential parts which alone can give it either energy or excellence. The Platonists seem, of all the Grecian philosophers, to have made the highest advances in knowledge, and the nearest approach to true wisdom. Yet the system of **PLATO** had its defects. He considered the Deity as supreme governor of the universe, a being of the highest wisdom and power, and totally unconnected with any material substance. The souls of men he conceived to proceed from this pre-eminent source; and, as partaking of its nature, to be incapable of death. His system gave the strongest encouragement to virtue, and equally discountenanced vice, by holding out to mortals the prospect of a future state of rewards and punishments. Yet after all, his notions of the Deity were very contracted, since he never ascribes to him the attributes of infinity, immensity, ubiquity, omnipotence, omniscience, but supposes him to be confined within certain limits, and that the direction of human affairs was committed to a class of inferior spiritual agents, whom he termed daemons. This notion of ministering daemons, as well as those points of doctrine which relate to the origin and condition of the human soul, greatly disfigured the morality of Plato; inasmuch as they tend to generate superstition, and to confirm men in the practice of worshipping a number of inferior deities. His doctrine, moreover, that the soul, during its continuance in the body, was in a state of imprisonment, and that we ought to endeavor, by means of contemplation, to set it free, and restore it to an alliance with the divine nature, had a pernicious tendency, in prompting persons of weak minds to withdraw a proper degree of attention from the body and the concerns of this life, and to indulge in the dreams and fancies of a disordered imagination.

**THE ECLECTICS**, were a sect of philosophers that took their leading principles from the system of Plato. They considered almost every thing which he had advanced

respecting the Deity, the soul, the world, and the daemons, as indisputable axioms: on which account they were regarded by many as altogether Platonists. Indeed this title, so far from being disclaimed, was rather affected by some of them, and particularly by those who joined themselves to Ammonius Saccas, another celebrated patron of the Eclectic philosophy. Yet with the doctrines held by Plato, they very freely intermixed the most approved maxims of the Pythagoreans, the Stoics, the Peripatetics, and the Oriental philosophers; taking due care, however, to admit none that were in opposition to the tenets of their favorite guide and instructor.

## **OF THE ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY**

It is a subject of much regret among the learned, that the Greek writers, to whom we are chiefly indebted for our knowledge of the ancient history of philosophy, have taken so little pains to inform posterity concerning the opinions which, during the time that the Greek sects flourished, were taught in other countries, particularly in Egypt and Asia. It is owing to this, that the documents which have hitherto come to light relating to the Oriental philosophy are so few, and consequently our knowledge on the subject so imperfect. Some insight, however, into its nature and principles may be obtained from what has been handed down to us, respecting the tenets of several of the earlier sects that sprang up in the Christian church. The Oriental philosophy, as a peculiar system of doctrines concerning the divine nature, is said to have originated in Chaldea, or Persia; from whence it passed through Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt; and mixing with other systems, formed many different sects. There seems also to be sufficient ground for referring the formation of the leading doctrines of this philosophy into a regular system to Zoroaster, whose name the followers of this doctrine prefixed to some of their spurious books, and whose system is fundamentally the same with that which was subsequently adopted by the Asiatic and Egyptian philosophers.

The mixture of Platonic notions which is found in the Asiatic philosophy, as well as of Oriental doctrines among the later Platonists, may be easily accounted for, from the intercourse which subsisted between the Alexandrian and Asiatic philosophers, after the schools of Alexandria were established. From that time, many Asiatics who were addicted to the study of philosophy, doubtless visited Alexandria, and became acquainted with the then popular doctrines of Plato; and by blending these with their own, formed an heterogeneous mass of opinions, which in its turn mixed with the systems of the Alexandrian schools. This union of Oriental and Grecian philosophy was further promoted by the dispersion of the philosophers of Alexandria, in the reign of Ptolemy Physcon: many of whom, to escape from tyranny, fled into Asia, and opened schools in various places.

It is supposed to have been at the time when the Platonic philosophers of Alexandria visited the Eastern schools, that certain professors of the Oriental philosophy, prior



to the existence of the Christian heresies, borrowed from the Greeks the name of Gnostics, to express their pretensions to a more perfect knowledge of the Divine Nature than others possessed. The Pagan origin of this appellation is supposed to be plainly intimated by the apostle Paul in two passages of his writings; in one of which he cautions Timothy against "the opposition of false science," (1 Timothy 6:20,) and in the other warns the Colossians not to be imposed upon by a "vain and deceitful philosophy," framed according to human tradition, and the principles of the world, and not according to the doctrine of Christ -- Colossians 2:8. **But whatever may be thought concerning the name, there is little room left to doubt, that the tenets, at least, of the Gnostics, existed in the Eastern schools long before the rise of the Gnostic sects in the Christian church under Basilides, Valentine, and others; consequently must have been imported or derived by the latter from the former. The Oriental doctrine of Emanation seems frequently alluded to in the New Testament,** as hath been already observed, and in terms which cannot so properly be applied to any other dogmas of the Jewish sects.

The Oriental philosophers, though divided into a great variety of sects, seem to have been generally agreed in believing matter to be the cause of all evil, though they were much divided in opinion as to the particular mode or form under which it ought to be considered as such. They were unanimous in maintaining that there had existed from all eternity a divine nature, replete with goodness, intelligence, wisdom, and virtue, a light of the most pure and subtle kind diffused throughout all space, of whom it was impossible for the mind of man to form an adequate conception. Those who were conversant with the Greek language gave to this pre-eminent being the name of *buthos* in allusion to the vastness of his excellence, which they deemed it beyond the reach of human capacity to comprehend. The space which he inhabits they named *pleroma* but occasionally the term *aion* was applied to it. This divine nature, they imagined, having existed for ages in solitude and silence, at length, by the operation of his own omnipotent will, begat of himself two minds or intelligences of a most excellent and exalted kind, one of either sex. By these, others of a similar nature were produced; and the faculty of propagating their kind being successively communicated to all, a class of divine beings was in time generated, respecting whom no difference of opinion seems to have existed, except in regard to their number; some conceiving it to be more and others less. The nearer any one of this celestial family stood in affinity to the one grand parent of all, the closer were they supposed to resemble him in nature and perfection; the farther they were removed, the less were they accounted to partake of his goodness, wisdom, or any other attribute. Although every one of them had a beginning, yet they were all supposed to be immortal, and not liable to any change; on which account they were termed *aeonev*, that is, immortal beings placed beyond the reach of temporal vicissitudes or injuries. [The Greek term *aeon* properly signifies, indefinite or eternal duration, as opposed to that which is finite or temporal. It was however metonymically used for such natures as are in themselves unchangeable and immortal. That it was commonly applied in

this sense even by the Greek philosophers, at the time of Christ's birth is plain from Arrian, who uses it to describe a nature the reverse of ours, superior to frailty, and liable to no vicissitudes. There was therefore nothing strange or unusual in the application of this term, by the Gnostics, to beings of a celestial nature, liable to neither accident nor change. Indeed the term is used by the ancient fathers of the purer class, to denote the angels in general, good as well as bad.]

Beyond that vast expanse refulgent with everlasting light, which was considered as the immediate habitation of the Deity, and of those natures which had been generated from him, these philosophers placed the seat of matter; where, according to them, it had lain from all eternity, a rude, undigested, opaque mass, agitated by turbulent irregular motions of its own provoking; and nurturing, as in a seed-bed, the rudiments of vice and every species of evil. In this state it was found by a genius, or celestial spirit of the higher order, who had been either driven from the abode of Deity for some offense, or commissioned by him for the purpose; and who reduced it into order, and gave it that arrangement and fashion which the universe now bears, Those who spake the Greek tongue were accustomed to refer to the Creator of the world by the name of DEMIURGUS. Matter received its inhabitants, both man and other animals, from the same hand that had given to it disposition and symmetry. Its native darkness was also illuminated by this creative spirit with a ray of celestial light, either secretly stolen, or imparted through the bounty of the Deity. He likewise communicated to the bodies he had formed, and which would otherwise have remained destitute of reason and uninstructed, except in what relates to mere animal life, particles of the divine essence, or souls of a kindred nature to the Deity. When all things were thus completed, DEMIURGUS, revolting against the Great First Cause of all things, the all-wise and omnipotent God, assumed to himself the exclusive government of this new state, which he apportioned out into provinces or districts; bestowing the administration and command over them on a number of *genii*, or spirits of inferior degree, who had been his associates and assistants.

Man therefore, whilst he continued in this world, was supposed to be compounded of two principles, acting in direct opposition to each other;--an earthly, corrupt, or vitiated body-- and a soul partaking of the nature of the Deity, being derived from the region of purity and light. The soul, or etherial part, being through its connection with the body, confined as it were within a prison of matter, was constantly exposed to the danger of becoming involved in ignorance, and acquiring every sort of evil propensity, from the impulse and contagion of the vitiated mass by which it was enveloped. But the Deity, touched with compassion for the hapless state of those captive minds, was ever anxious that the means of escaping from this darkness and bondage, into liberty and light, should be extended to them; and had, accordingly, at various times, sent amongst them teachers, endowed with wisdom, and filled with celestial light, who might communicate to them the principles of true religion, and thus instruct them in the way by which deliverance was to be obtained from their

wretched and forlorn state. DEMIUROUS, however, and his associates, unwilling to resign any part of that dominion, of whose sweets they were now become so sensible, or to relinquish the divine honors which they had usurped, set at work every engine to obstruct the Deity; and not only tormented and slew the messengers of heaven, but endeavored, by means of superstition and sensual attractions, to root out and extinguish every spark of celestial truth. The minds that listened to the calls of the Deity, and who having renounced obedience to the usurped authorities of this world, continued steadfast in the worship of the great First Parent, resisting the evil propensities of the corporeal frame, and every incitement to illicit gratification, were supposed, on the dissolution of their bodies, to be directly borne away, pure, aerial, and disengaged from every thing gross or material, to the immediate residence of God himself; whilst those who, notwithstanding the admonitions they received, had persisted in paying divine honors to him who was merely the fabricator of the world, and his associates, worshipping them as gods, and suffering themselves to be enslaved by the lusts and vicious impulses to which they were exposed from their alliance with matter, were denied the hope of exaltation after death, and could only expect to migrate into new bodies, suited to their base, sluggish, and degraded condition. When the grand work of setting free all these minds or souls should be accomplished, God, it was supposed, would dissolve the fabric of this lower world; and having once more confined matter, with all its contagious influence, within its original limits, would throughout all future ages live in consummate glory, and reign surrounded by kindred spirits, as he did before the foundation of the world.

The moral discipline deduced from this system of philosophy, by those who embraced it, was by no means of an uniform cast, but differed widely in its complexion, according to their various tempers and inclinations. Such, for instance, as were naturally of a morose disposition, maintained that the great object of human concern should be to invigorate the energies of the mind. and to quicken and refine its perceptions, by abstracting it as much as possible from every thing gross or sensual. The body, on the contrary, as the source of every depraved appetite, was, according to them, to be reduced and brought into subjection by hunger, thirst, and every other species of mortification, and neither to be supported by flesh or wine, nor indulged in any of those gratifications to which it is naturally prone; in fact, a constant self-denial was to be rigorously observed in every thing which might contribute either to the convenience or pleasantness of life; so that the material frame being thus by every means weakened and brought low, the celestial spirit might the more readily escape from its contagious influence and regain its native liberty. Hence it was that the Manicheans, the Marcionites, the Encraitites, and others, passed their lives in one continued course of austerity and mortification. On the other hand, those who were constitutionally inclined to voluptuousness and vicious indulgence, found the means of accommodating the same principles to a mode of life that admitted of the free and uncontrolled gratification of all their inclinations. The essence of piety and religion, they said, consisted in a knowledge of the Supreme Being, and maintaining

a mental intercourse and association with him. Whoever had become an adept in these attainments, and from the habitual exercise of contemplation, had acquired the power of keeping the mind abstracted from every thing corporeal, was no longer to be considered as affected by, or answerable for, the impulses and actions of the body, and consequently could be under no necessity to control its inclinations, or resist its propensities. Hence the dissolute lives of the Carpocratians and others, who assumed the liberty of doing whatever pleased them; and maintained that the practice of virtue was not enjoined by the Deity, but imposed on mankind by that power whom they regarded as the prince of this world, the maker of the universe.

From this concise review of the state of the Gentile world at the time of Christ's appearance on earth, the inferences to be deduced, are, it is presumed, sufficiently obvious. Mankind had been furnished with abundant experience of what reason and philosophy, in their highest state of cultivation, could do in the way of directing the human mind to the attainment of virtue and happiness; and what was the result? The very wisest among them were bewildered in fruitless speculations about the nature of the CHIEF GOOD, and equally so about the way of attaining it. Some of them, indeed, admitted that it consisted in virtue; but then if we enquire wherein they supposed virtue to consist, we shall find their notions as discordant and undefined as their ideas of happiness itself were vague and desultory. ARISTOTLE made the existence of virtue to depend upon the possession of an abundance of the good things of this world; and even laid it down as a principle, that "without the gifts of fortune, virtue is not sufficient for happiness, but that a wise man must be miserable in poverty and sickness;" DIOGOENES, from whose pride and stoical austerity one might have expected sentiments of a different nature, maintained that a poor old man was the most miserable thing in life. Even PLATO, the great preceptor of Aristotle, taught his followers that happiness comprehended the possession of wisdom, health, good fortune, honor, and riches; and maintained that the man who enjoyed all these must be perfectly happy. ZENO and his followers held it as a principle, that all crimes were equal. THALES, the founder of the Ionian sect, being asked how he thought a man might bear affliction with the greatest ease, answered, "By seeing his enemies in a worse condition." EPICURUS had no notion of justice but as it was profitable, and the consequence was that the morals of his followers were proverbially scandalous; for though their master taught that happiness consisted in virtue, he made virtue itself to consist in following nature, and thus he eventually led his disciples into such gross immorality, that, according to their manner of life, virtue and voluptuousness seemed to be convertible terms with them: and ever since, an Epicure is a title appropriate to every character in which excess and sensual indulgence are found to meet. [See Brucker's *History of Philosophys* translated by Dr. Enfield; and Mosheim's *Commentaries on the affairs of the Christians before the time of Constantine the Great*, translated by R. & Vidal, Vol. I. Introd. ch. 1.]

Such was the hopeless and forlorn condition into which the human race had sunk,

and such the wretched aspect of the Heathen or Gentile world, at the time of the Messiah's appearance upon earth. The Greeks and Romans had civilized the world; philosophy had done its utmost; literature, and arts, and the sciences in every department, had been cultivated to the highest perfection; but what, under all these advantages, was the real condition of our species in reference to man's highest end and aim, the knowledge of the true God and the duties which he owes him the actual state of religion and morals? We have it strikingly described by the great apostle of the Gentiles.

"They walked in the vanity of their mind; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, they had given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness, with greediness;--they were without hope, and without God in the world." (Ephesians 2:12, and ch. 4:17,18,13)

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

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## **ON THE STATE OF THE JEWISH NATION AT THE PERIOD OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST**

The privileges which the Jews at this time enjoyed above all other nations, were many and distinguished; but in enumerating them, the apostle Paul lays the principal stress upon their being favored with a divine revelation, to guide them in matters of the highest importance to their present and everlasting happiness:--they had the oracles of God in their hands; the writings of Moses and the prophets, those holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (Romans 3:2; and 2 Peter 1:21). Yet with these incalculable advantages, the condition of the people in general was not much superior to that of the Gentiles.

The civil government of Judea, at the time of Christ's birth, was vested in the hands of a Roman stipendiary, named Herod the Great;--a title to which he could have no pretensions, except from the magnitude of his vices. Nature, it is true, had not withheld from him the talents requisite for a lofty and brilliant course of life; but such was his jealous disposition, such the ferocity of his temper, his devotedness to luxury, pomp, and magnificence so madly extravagant, and so much beyond his means; in short, so extensive and enormous was the catalogue of his vices, that he became an object of utter detestation to the afflicted people over whom he swayed the kingly scepter. Instead of cherishing and protecting his subjects, he appears to have made them sensible of his authority merely by oppression and violence; so that they complained to the Emperor Augustus, at Rome, of his cruelties, declaring they had suffered as much as if a wild beast had reigned over them; and Eusebius affirms, that the cruelty of this nefarious despot far surpassed whatever had been

represented in tragedy! Herod was not ignorant of the hatred which he had drawn upon himself, but to soften its asperity he became a professed devotee to the Jewish religion, and at a vast expense restored their temple, which through age had fallen into decay; but the effect of all this was destroyed by his still conforming to the manners and habits of those who worshipped a plurality of gods; and so many things were countenanced in direct opposition to the Jewish religion, that the hypocrisy of the tyrant's professions were too manifest to admit of a doubt.

On the death of Herod, the government of Judea was divided by the Emperor Augustus amongst his three surviving sons. Archelaus, the elder of the three, was appointed governor of Judea, Idumoea, and Samaria, under the title of Ethnarch. Antipas presided over Galilee and Peroea; whilst Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, with some of the neighboring territory, were assigned to Philip. The two latter, from their having a fourth part of the province of Judea allotted to each, were styled Tetrarchs. Archelaus, who inherited all the vices of his father, with but few of his better qualities, completely exhausted the patience of the Jews; and by a series of the most injurious and oppressive acts, drove them, in the tenth year of his reign, to lay their complaints before the emperor Augustus, who, after investigating the merits of the case, deposed the Ethnarch, and banished him to Yienne in Gaul.

On the expulsion of Archelaus, the greater part of Palestine, or Judea, was reduced by the Roman government into the form of a province, and placed under the superintendence of a governor, who was subject to the control of the president of Syria. It is probable that this arrangement at first met with the ready concurrence of the Jews, who, on the death of Herod, had petitioned Augustus that the distinct regal government might no longer be continued to them, but that their country might be received under his own immediate protection, and treated as a part of the Roman empire. The change, however, instead of producing an alleviation of misery to this unhappy people, brought with it an intolerable increase of their calamities. For, independent of the avarice and injustice of the governors, to which there were no bounds, it proved an intolerable grievance to them, who considered their nation to be God's peculiar people, that they should be obliged to pay tribute to a heathen, and an enemy of the true God, like Caesar, and live in subjection to those who worshipped false deities. Add to which, that the extortion of the publicans, who after the Roman manner were entrusted with the collection of the revenue, and for whose continual and flagrant abuses of authority it was seldom possible to obtain any sort of redress, became a subject of infinite dissatisfaction and complaint. And, to crown the whole, the constant presence of their governors, surrounded as they were by a multitude of foreign attendants of all descriptions, and protected by a Roman military guard, quartered with their eagles and various other ensigns of superstition, in the center of Jerusalem, their holy city, kept the sensibility of the Jews continually on the rack, and excited in their minds a degree of indignation bordering on fury. They naturally considered their religion to be disgraced and insulted by these innovations--their holy

places defiled--and in fact themselves, with all that they held sacred, polluted and brought into contempt. To these causes, are to be attributed the frequent tumults, factions, seditions, and murders, by which it was well known that these unfortunate people accelerated their own destruction.

If any vestige of liberty or happiness could have been possessed by a people thus circumstanced, it was effectually cut off by those who held the second place in the civil government under the Romans, and the sons of Herod, and who also had the supreme direction in every thing pertaining to religion, namely, the chief priests and the seventy elders, of whom the Sanhedrin or national council was composed. Josephus tells us, that the high priests were the most abandoned of mortals, and that they generally obtained their dignified stations either through the influence of money, or court sycophancy; and that they shrank from no species of criminality that might contribute to support them in the possession of an authority thus iniquitously purchased. Under a full conviction of the precarious tenure on which they held their situation, it became a leading object of their concern, to accumulate, either by fraud or force, such a quantity of wealth, as might enable them to gain the rulers of the state over to their interest, and drive away all competitors, or else yield them, when deprived of their dignity, the means of living at their ease in retirement.

The Sanhedrin, or national council, being composed of men who differed in opinion respecting some of the most important points of religion, nothing like a general harmony was to be found amongst its members: on the contrary, having adopted the principles of various sects, they allowed themselves to be carried away by all the prejudice and animosity of party; and were too often more intent on the indulgence of private pique, than studious of advancing the cause of religion, or promoting the public welfare. A similar depravity prevailed among the ordinary priests, and the inferior mixtlers of religion. The common people, instigated by the shocking examples thus held out to them, by those whom they were taught to consider as their guides, precipitated themselves into every species of vicious excess; and giving themselves up to sedition and rapine, appeared alike to defy the vengeance, both of God and man. There were, at that time, two prevailing systems of religion in Palestine, the Jewish and the Samaritan; and what contributed not a little to the calamities of the Hebrew nation, the followers of each of these regarded those of the other persuasion with the most virulent and implacable hatred, mutually venting their rancorous animosity in the direst curses and imprecations. The nature of the Jewish religion may be collected from the books of the Old Testament; but at the time of Christ's appearance, it had lost much of its original beauty and excellence, and was corrupted by errors of the most flagrant kind, that had crept in from various sources. The public worship of God was indeed still continued in the temple of Jerusalem, with all the rites of the Mosaic institution; and their festivals never failed to draw together all immense concourse of people at the stated seasons; nor did the Romans ever interfere to prevent those observances. In domestic life also, the



ordinances of the law were in general punctually attended to; but it is manifest, from the evidence adduced by various learned men, that even in the service of the temple itself, numerous ceremonies and observances, drawn from the religious worship of heathen nations, had been introduced and blended with those of divine institution; and that, in addition to superstitions like these of a public nature, many erroneous principles, probably brought from Babylon and Chaldea, by the ancestors of the people at their return from captivity, or adopted by the inconsiderate multitude, in conformity to the example of their neighbors the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Egyptians, were cherished and acted on in private.

The opinions and sentiments of the Jews respecting the Deity, the divine nature, the angels, daemons, the souls of men, their duties, and similar subjects, appear to have been far less extravagant, and formed on more rational grounds, than those of any other nation or people. Indeed, it was scarcely possible that they should wholly lose sight of that truth, in the knowledge of which their fathers had been instructed through the medium of revelation; especially as this instruction was rendered habitual to them, even at a tender age, by hearing, reading, and studying the writings of Moses and the prophets. In all their cities, towns, and villages, and indeed throughout the empire, wherever any considerable number of Jews resided, a sacred edifice, which they called a synagogue, was erected, in which it was customary for the people regularly to assemble, for the purposes of prayer and praise, and hearing the law publicly read and expounded. In most of the larger towns, there were also schools established, in which young persons were initiated in the first principles of religion, as well as instructed in the liberal arts.

But though the Jews certainly entertained many sentiments more rational and correct than their neighbors--sentiments which they had adopted from their own Scriptures--yet they had gradually incorporated with them so large a mixture of what was fabulous and absurd, as nearly to deprive the truth of all its force and energy.\* Hence the many pointed rebukes which Jesus Christ gave to the Scribes and Pharisees, the prime leaders of religion in his day; telling them that they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and that they had made the divine law void through their traditions. Their notions of the nature of God, are supposed to have been closely allied to the oriental philosophy on that subject, while to the prince of darkness, and his associates and agents, they attributed an influence over the world and the human race so predominant as scarcely to leave a superior degree of power even to the Deity himself. Of various terrific conceits, founded upon this notion, one of the principal was, that all the evils and calamities which befall the human race, were to be considered as originating with this prince of darkness and his ministering spirits, who had their dwelling in the air, and were scattered throughout every part of the universe. Their notions also, and manner of reasoning respecting angels, or ministers of divine Providence, were nearly allied to those maintained by the Babylonians or Chaldeans, as may be readily perceived by those who will give

themselves the trouble to investigate the subject.

[\* The Jews acknowledge two laws, which they believe to have been delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai: of which one was immediately committed to writing in the text of the Pentateuch, and the other is said to have been handed down from generation to generation, for many ages, by oral tradition. From the time of Moses to the days of Rabbi Jehuda, only part of the oral law had ever been committed to writing for public perusal. In every generation, the president of the Sanhedrim, or the prophet of his age, for his own private use, is said to have written notes of the traditions which he had heard from his teachers, but he taught in public only from word of mouth: and thus each individual wrote for himself an exposition of the law and the ceremonies it enjoined, according to what he had heard. Thus things were situated till the days of Rabbi Jehuda. He observed, that the students of the law were gradually diminishing, that difficulties and distresses were multiplying, that the kingdom of impiety was increasing in strength and extending itself over the world, while the people of Israel were driven to the ends of the earth. Fearing lest, in these circumstances, the traditions would be forgotten and lost, he collected them all, arranged them under distinct heads, and formed them into a methodical code of traditional law. Of this book, entitled the MISHNA, copies were speedily multiplied and extensively circulated; and the Jews at large received it with the highest veneration. See Mr. Allen's *Modern Judaism*; ch. 3. p. 22 - 36, where the reader will find numerous quotations from the Rabbi's shewing how this (supposed) oral law is by them extolled above the written law of Moses--just as the Papists in later ages have made void the doctrine of Christ and his apostles by the traditions of the fathers.]

But on no one point were the sentiments of the Jews of that day, more estranged from the doctrine that was taught by their prophets, than on that which regarded the character of **their Messiah**. The greatest part of the Jewish nation were looking with eager desire for the appearance of the deliverer whom God had promised to their fathers. But their hopes were not directed to such an one as the Scriptures described: **they expected not a spiritual deliverer, to rescue them from the bondage of sin and Satan, and to bestow upon them the blessings of salvation, the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, the adoption of children into his family, and the hope of an eternal inheritance in the world to come; they looked for a mighty warlike leader, whose talents and prowess might recover for them their civil liberty.** Fondly dreaming of a temporal kingdom for their Messiah, their carnal minds were so riveted under the dominion of this master prejudice, that, in general, their hearts were blinded to the real scope of the law and the prophets.

It is abundantly manifest from the New Testament Scriptures, that at the time of Christ's appearance, the Jews were divided into various sects, widely differing in opinion from each other, not merely on subjects of smaller moment, but also on

those points which enter into the very essence of religion. Of **the Pharisees and Sadducees**, the two most distinguished of these sects, both in number and respectability, mention is made in the writings of the evangelists and apostles. Josephus, Philo, and others, speak of a third sect, under the title of the **Essenes**; and it appears from more than one authority, that several others of less note were to be found among them. The evangelist Matthew notices the **Herodians**; a class of men who, it seems highly probable, had espoused the cause of the descendants of Herod the Great, and contended that they had been unjustly deprived of the greater part of Palestine by the Romans.

Josephus makes mention also of another sect, bearing the title of **Philosophers**; composed of men of the most ferocious character, and founded by Judas, a Galilean--a strenuous and undaunted assertor of the liberties of the Jewish nation, who maintained that the Hebrews, the favorite people of heaven, ought to render obedience to God alone, and consequently were continually stimulating one another to throw off the Roman yoke and assert their national independence.

**The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, the three most powerful of the Jewish sects, were cordially united in sentiment respecting all those fundamental points which constituted the basis of the Jewish religion.** All of them, for instance, rejected with detestation the notion of a plurality of gods, and would acknowledge the existence of but one almighty power, whom they regarded as the Creator of the Universe, and believed to be endowed with the most absolute perfection and goodness. They were equally agreed in the opinion, that God had selected the Hebrews from amongst all the other nations of the earth as his peculiar people, and had bound them to himself by an unchangeable and everlasting covenant. With the same unanimity, they maintained the divine mission of Moses; that he was the ambassador of Heaven, and consequently that the law delivered at Mount Sinai, and promulgated by his ministry was of divine original. It was also the general belief among them, that in the books of the Old Testament were contained ample instructions respecting the way of salvation and eternal happiness; and that whatever principles or duties were inculcated in those writings, must be reverently received and implicitly obeyed. But an almost irreconcilable difference of opinion, and the most vehement disputes, prevailed among them, respecting the original source or fountain from whence all religion was to be deduced. Both the Sadducees and Essenes rejected with disdain the oral law, to which the Pharisees, however, paid the greatest deference. And the interpretation of the written law, yielded still further ground for acrimonious contention. The Pharisees maintained that the law as committed to writing by Moses, and likewise every other part of the sacred volume, had a two-fold sense or meaning; the one plain and obvious to every reader, the other abstruse and mystical. The Sadducees, on the contrary, would admit of nothing beyond a simple interpretation of the words, according to their strict literal sense. The Essenes, or at least the greater part of them, differing from both of these,

considered the words of the law to possess no force or power whatever in themselves, but merely to exhibit the shadows or images of celestial objects, of virtues, and of duties. So much dissension and discord respecting the rule of religion, and the sense in which the divine law ought to be understood, could not fail to produce a great diversity in the forms of religious worship, and naturally tended to generate the most opposite and conflicting sentiments on subjects of a divine nature.

**THE PHARISEES**, in point of number, riches, authority, and influence, took precedence of all the Jewish sects. And as they constantly manifested an extraordinary display of religion, in an apparent zeal for the cultivation of piety and brotherly love, and by an affectation of superior sanctity in their opinions, manners, and dress, the influence which they possessed over the minds of the people was unbounded; insomuch that they may be almost said to have given whatever direction they pleased to public affairs. It is unquestionable, however, that the religion of the Pharisees was, for the most part, founded in consummate hypocrisy; and that in reality, they were generally the slaves of every vicious appetite; proud, arrogant, and avaricious, consulting only the gratification of their lusts, even at the moment of their professing themselves to be engaged in the service of their Maker. These odious features in the character of the Pharisees, drew upon them the most pointed rebukes from our Lord and Savior; with more severity indeed than he bestowed on the Sadducees, who although they had departed widely from the genuine principles of religion, yet did not impose upon mankind by a pretended sanctity, or devote themselves with insatiable greediness to the acquisition of honors and riches. The Pharisees admitted the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. They admitted, to a certain extent, the free agency of man; but beyond that, they supposed his actions to be controlled by the decrees of fate. These points of doctrine, however, seem not to have been understood or explained by all the sect in the same way, neither does it appear that any great pains were taken to define and ascertain them with accuracy and precision, or to support them by reasoning and argument.

**THE SADDUCEES**, if we may credit the testimony of Josephus concerning them, were a sect much inferior in point of number to that of the Pharisees, but composed entirely of persons distinguished for their opulence and prosperity. He also represents those who belonged to it, as wholly devoid of the sentiments of benevolence and compassion towards others; whereas the Pharisees, according to him, were ever ready to relieve the wants of the indigent and afflicted. He further describes them as fond of passing their lives in one uninterrupted course of ease and pleasure; insomuch that it was with difficulty they could be prevailed on to undertake the duties of the magistracy, or any other public function. Their leading tenet was, that all our hopes and fears terminate with the present life; the soul being involved in one common fate with the body, and, like it, liable to perish and be annihilated. Upon this principle, it was very natural for them to maintain, that

obedience to the divine law would be rewarded by the Most High with length of days, and an abundance of the good things of this life, such as honors, distinctions, and riches; whilst the violators of it would, in like manner, find their punishment in the temporary sufferings and afflictions of the present time. The Sadducees, therefore, always connected the favor of heaven with a state of worldly prosperity, and could not regard any as virtuous, or the friends of heaven, but the fortunate and happy; they had no bowels of compassion for the poor and the miserable; their desires and hopes centered in a life of leisure, ease, and voluptuous gratification--for such is precisely the character which Josephus gives us of them. And, indeed, it appears to be countenanced by the inspired writings--especially if, as is now generally admitted by the learned, our Lord, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, (Luke, ch. 16) designed, in the person of the former, to delineate the principles and manner of life of a Sadducee. Considering the parable in this point of view, we cannot fail to see great force and beauty in it, which do not appear upon any other hypothesis. That the rich man was a Jew is evident, from his terming Abraham his father; and his request that the latter would send Lazarus to his father's house, for the purpose of converting his brethren to a belief of the soul's immortality, and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, is convincing evidence that during his life-time he had imagined that the soul would perish with the body, and had treated with derision the doctrine maintained by the Pharisees respecting the happiness or misery of a future state; and that the brethren whom he had left behind, entertained similar sentiments--sentiments which decidedly mark them as the votaries of that impious system to which the Sadducees were devoted.

**THE ESSENES**, though not particularly mentioned by the writers of the New Testament, existed as a sect in the days of our Lord, and are frequently spoken of by Josephus, who divides them into two branches; the one characterized by a life of celibacy, dedicated to the instruction and education of the children of others; whilst the other thought it proper to marry, not so much with a view to sensual gratification, as for the purpose of propagating the human species. Hence they have been distinguished by some writers into the practical and the theoretical Essenes.

The practical Essenes were distributed in the cities and throughout the countries of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Their bond of association embraced not merely a community of tenets, and a similarity of manners and particular observances, like that of the Pharisees or the Sadducees; but it extended also to an intercommunity of goods. Their demeanor was sober and chaste; and their mode of life was, in every other respect, subjected to the strictest regulations, and submitted to the superintendence of governors, whom they appointed over themselves. The whole of their time was devoted to labor, meditation and prayer; and they were most sedulously attentive to the calls of justice and humanity, and every moral duty. In common with the rest of the Jews, they believed in the unity of God; but from some of their institutes, it appears that they entertained a reverence for the sun; probably,

considering that grand luminary as a deity of an inferior order, or perhaps regarding him as the visible image of the Supreme Being. They supposed the souls of men to have fallen, by a disastrous fate, from the regions of purity and light, into the bodies which they occupy; during their continuance in which, they considered them to be confined, as it were, within the walls of a loathsome dungeon. For this reason, therefore, they did not believe in the resurrection of the body; although it was their opinion that the soul would be rewarded or punished in a future state according to its deserts. They cultivated great abstinence, allowing themselves but little bodily nourishment or gratification, from an apprehension that the immortal spirit might be thereby encumbered and weighed down. It was their endeavor, too, by constant meditation, to withdraw the mind as much as possible from the contagious influence of the corrupt mass by which it was unhappily enveloped. The ceremonies, or external forms, which were enjoined in the law of Moses to be observed in the worship of God, were totally disregarded by many of the Essenes; it being their opinion that the words of Moses were to be understood in a mysterious and recondite sense, and not according to their literal meaning. Others of them, indeed, so far conformed as to offer sacrifices, but they did this at home; for they were wholly averse from the rites which it was necessary for those to observe who attended the temple worship. Upon the whole, it does not seem an improbable conjecture, that the doctrine and discipline of the Essenes arose out of an ill-judged attempt to make the principles of the Jewish religion accord with some tenets which they had fondly imbibed from the Oriental philosophy, of which we have already treated.

Though the practical Essenes were very much addicted to superstition, society derived no inconsiderable benefit from their labor, and the strictness of their morals. Those of the theoretical class, however, seem to have set scarcely any bounds whatever to their silly extravagance. Although they professed themselves to be Jews, and were desirous to be considered as the disciples of Moses, they were almost entirely strangers to the Mosaic discipline. Renouncing employment of every description, and all worldly possessions, they withdrew themselves into solitary places, and there dispersed about in separate cells, passed the remnant of their days without engaging in any kind of bodily labor, and neither offering sacrifices, nor observing any other external form of religious worship. In this state of seclusion from the world and its concerns, they studied to reduce and keep the body low, by allowing it nothing beyond the most slender subsistence, and, as far as possible, to detach and disengage the soul from it by perpetual contemplation, so that the immortal spirit might, in defiance of its corporeal imprisonment, be kept constantly aspiring after its native liberty and light, and be prepared, immediately on the dissolution of the body, to re-ascend to those celestial regions from whence it originally sprang. Conformably to the practice of the Jews, the theoretical Essenes were accustomed to hold a solemn assembly every seventh day. On these occasions, after hearing a sermon from their president, and offering up their prayers, it was usual for them to feast together,--if that can indeed be called a feast, which was

restricted to a mutual participation of salt and bread and water. This repast is said to have been followed by a sacred dance, which was continued throughout the whole night, until the dawn appeared. At first the men and women danced in two separate parties; but at length, their minds, according to their own account, kindling with a sort of divine ecstasy, the two companies joined in one, mutually striving, by various shouts and songs of the most vehement kind, accompanied with the most extravagant motions and gesticulations of the body, to manifest the fervent glow of that divine love with which they professed to be enflamed. To such an extent of folly may men be led by the spirit of enthusiasm, and in consequence of their entertaining erroneous principles respecting the Deity, and the origin of the human soul!

As to the moral doctrine of these sects of the Essenes, as well as that of the Pharisees and Sadducees, into which the Jewish people were divided, it cannot be considered as having in any degree contributed towards promoting the interests of virtue and genuine piety. The Pharisees, as was frequently objected to them by Christ, who knew their hearts, were destitute of the love of God and their neighbor, the essential principles of righteousness--they were hypocritical in their acts of worship--proud and self-righteous--harsh and uncharitable in their judgment of others while they made the divine law void through their traditions. They paid little or no regard to inward purity or sanctity of mind, but studied by all possible means to attract the eyes of the multitude towards them, by an ostentatious solemnity of carriage, and the most specious external parade of piety and brotherly love. They were continually straining and perverting the most important precepts of the divine law; whilst at the same time, they enforced an unreserved obedience to ordinances which were of mere human institution. The Sadducees regarded all those persons as righteous, who strictly conformed themselves to the ritual observances prescribed in the law of Moses, and that did no injury to any of the Jewish nation, from whom they had received none. And as their principles forbade men to look forward to a future state of rewards and punishments, and placed the whole happiness of man in the possession of riches and in sensual gratification, they naturally tended to generate and encourage an inordinate love of money, a brutal insensibility to the calls of compassion, and a variety of other vices equally pernicious and degrading to the human mind. The Essenes labored under the influence of a depressing superstition; so that, whilst they were scrupulously attentive to the demands of justice and equity in regard to others, they appear to have altogether overlooked the duties which men owe to themselves. Those of them who were distinguished by the name of Therapeutae, or theoretical Essenes, were a race of men who resigned themselves entirely to the dictates of the most egregious fanaticism and folly. They would engage in no sort of business or employment on their own account; nor would they be instrumental in forwarding the interests of others. In short, they appear to have considered themselves as released from every bond by which human society is held together, and at liberty to act in direct opposition to almost every principle of moral discipline.

It cannot therefore excite any reasonable surprise that, owing to the various causes which we have thus enumerated, the great mass of the Jewish people were, at the period of the birth of Jesus Christ, sunk in the most profound ignorance as to divine things; and the nation, for the most part, devoted to a flagitious and dissolute course of life. That such was the miserable state of degradation into which this highly privileged people had fallen, is incontestibly proved by the history of our Lord's life, and the tenour of his discourses and conversations which he condescended to address to them. Hence his comparison of the teachers among them to blind guides, who professed to instruct others in a way with which they were totally unacquainted themselves; and the multitude to a flock of lost sheep, wandering without a shepherd. Matthew 15:14; John 9:39; Matthew 10:6; 15:24.

In addition to what has been already said respecting the sources of error and corruption among the Jews, we have still further to remark, that, at the time of Christ's appearance, numbers among them had imbibed the principles of the Oriental philosophy respecting the origin of the world, and were much addicted to the study of a mystical sort of learning to which they gave the name of Cabbala. [For a very ingenious and interesting account of the Cabbala, the reader is referred to Mr. Allen's *Modern Judaism*, ch. 5, p. 65.]

**THE SAMARITANS** are spoken of in the New Testament as a sect altogether distinct from the Jews; and as they were inhabitants of Palestine, they merit attention in this place. Their sacred rites were performed in a temple erected on Mount Gerizim; they were involved in the same calamities which befell the Jewish people, and were no less forward than the Jews in adding to their other afflictions, the numerous evils produced by factions and intestine tumults. They were not, however, divided into so many religious sects; although the instances of Dositheus, Menander, and Simon Magus, plainly prove that there were not wanting among them some who were carried away by the love of paradox and a fondness for novel speculations; and that they debased the religion of their ancestors, by incorporating with it many of the principles of the Oriental philosophy. Much has been handed down to us by Jewish authors respecting the religious sentiments of the Samaritans, on which however we cannot place reliance, as it was unquestionably dictated by a spirit of invidious malignity. It is certain, however, that our Lord attributes to the Samaritans a great degree of ignorance respecting God and divine things; it cannot therefore be doubted, that in their religious system the truth was much debased by superstition, and the light in no small degree obscured by the mists of error. They acknowledged none of the writings of the Old Testament as sacred, or of Divine authority, but the five books of Moses alone. We learn, nevertheless, from the conversation of the woman with our Lord at the well of Samaria, John 4:25, that the Samaritans confidently expected the Messiah, and that they looked forward to him in the light of a spiritual teacher and guide, who should instruct them in a more perfect and acceptable way of worshiping



the Most High than that which they then followed. Whether they were carried away with the fond conceit of his being a warlike leader, an hero, an emperor, who should recover for the oppressed posterity of Abraham their liberty and rights, and to the same extent that the Jews were, it would not be easy to determine. In this one thing, at least, they appear to have shewn themselves superior to the Jews in general, that they did not attempt to gloss over or conceal the many imperfections of their religion, but frankly acknowledged its defects, and looked forward with hope to the period when the Messiah should reform what was amiss, and communicate to them a larger measure of spiritual instruction, of which they stood so much in need. ["Jehoida, the high priest at Jerusalem, had a son named Manasseh, who married a daughter of Sanballat, governor of the Samaritans. Nehemiah governor of Jerusalem, banished Manasseh for this breach of the law. This exile carried a copy of the Pentateuch with him, read it to the Samaritans, and dissuaded them from idolatry, to which they never afterwards returned; and it was his father-in-law Sanballat, who obtained leave of Darius Nothus to erect the temple on Mount Gerizim, of which Manasseh was the first high priest. Hence proceeded a race of men, as the Jews acknowledge, more exact in worshipping the true God than themselves. Hence came the Samaritan Pentateuch in the old Phoenician character, which confirms that of the Jews. Hence also went a Greek version of the Pentateuch, for the use of Hellenistic Samaritans resident in other countries, and especially for those at Alexandria; and of course the conversion of the Samaritans was an event in providence favorable to the general knowledge and worship of the one true God." Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p 27.]

So exceedingly great was the fecundity of the Jewish people, that multitudes of them, from time to time, were constrained to emigrate from their native country; and at the era of Christ's birth, the descendants of Abraham were to be met with in every part of the known world. In all the provinces of the Roman empire, in particular, they were to be found in great numbers, either serving in the army, or engaged in the pursuits of commerce, or practising some lucrative art. Of the truth of this we have evidence in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we learn that on the day of Pentecost, there were assembled at Jerusalem, Jews "out of every nation under heaven," who had come up to attend the festival. Their dispersion over all the west, was the consequence of the subjugation of Judea to Rome, and it was an important link in the chain of divine Providence; for it placed them, as they express it, "witnesses of the rarity of God in all the nations of the world," and this at a time when idolatry and vice overwhelmed all the rest of mankind. Those of them who thus ventured to establish themselves without the confines of Palestine, were every where successful in obtaining that general sort of encouragement and protection from violence, which was to be derived from various regulations and edicts of the emperors and magistrates in their favor: but the peculiarities of their religion and manners caused them to be held in very general contempt, and not unfrequently exposed them to much vexation and annoyance from the jealousy and indignation of a superstitious

populace. Many of them, in consequence of their long residence and intercourse among foreign nations, fell into the error of attempting to accommodate their religious profession to the principles and institutions of some of the different systems of heathen discipline, of which it would be easy to adduce numerous instances. On the other hand, however, it should not be overlooked, that the Jews were often successful in proselyting to their faith many of those among whom they sojourned, giving them to perceive the superiority of the Mosaic religion to the gentile superstition, and were highly instrumental in causing them to forsake the worship of a plurality of gods.

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**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE BIRTH TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST**

The kingdom of the Messiah forms an important article in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. Those holy men who, from time to time, were raised up to exercise their ministry in the Jewish church, had foretold the advent of this illustrious personage, and described, in the most glowing colors, the majesty of his character, the extent and perpetuity of his empire, the blessings of his government, and the happiness which his subjects should enjoy under his mild and gentle reign. Accordingly, the chosen tribes, throughout successive ages, anticipated his appearance with eager expectation. [2 Samuel 7:11-16; Psalm 2:8; 22:27, 73; 89:19-36; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-9; chap. 60; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:15, ad finem; Daniel 2:44; 7:14.]

It was a custom among the eastern monarchs, when entering upon an expedition, to send harbingers before them to announce their approach, and prepare for their reception. Isaiah had taught the Jews to expect that such also should be the case with their promised Messiah; that he should be preceded by "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isaiah 40:3).

In conformity with this prediction, the sacred historian informs us that the joyful intelligence of the Messiah's immediate appearance was announced, in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Roman emperor Tiberius, by the preaching of John the

Baptist in the wilderness of Judea (Luke 3:1). The leading object of John's ministry was to proclaim the kingdom of heaven at hand; in virtue of which he called upon all who heard him, to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins; whilst the testimony that he bore to the character of his divine Master, was the most honorable that can be conceived (Matthew 3:1).

The Jewish Sanhedrin, hearing of his fame, sent to interrogate him, whether he were the promised Messiah; and if not, to inform them what he professed himself to be. John immediately directed their attention to the prophecy of Isaiah, declaring that he was merely the herald of his Sovereign--"the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah."--That there stood among them, one whom they knew not, whose character was infinitely more dignified than his own--one who, though he came after him, was preferred before him, and so much his superior, that he considered himself not worthy to loose even the latchet of his shoe (John 1:19-27).

When Jesus had attained the age of thirty, the period of life at which the priests entered upon their ministrations in the temple, and was about to commence his public ministry, he was solemnly inaugurated in his sacred office by means of the ordinance of baptism, administered by the hands of his fore-runner. Impressed with sentiments of the most profound veneration for his Lord, John hesitated, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Jesus, however, reminded him, that there was a necessity for this--that his baptism was to serve as an emblematical figure of the manner in which he was to accomplish the work of human redemption: for as in baptism the individual is buried under, and raised again from the water, even so it became him to fulfill all righteousness, by dying for the sins of his people, and rising again for their justification. This being, accordingly, transacted in a figure, the evangelist informs us, that "the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descending like a dove, alighted upon Jesus, and a voice was heard from heaven, declaring, This Is My Beloved Son, In Whom I Am Well Pleased" (Matthew 3:13-17). The ministry of Jesus, which continued during a period of three years, was restricted to the benefit of the Jewish nation. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles sums it up in two words, "He did and taught" (Acts 1:1). He went about all Galilee "teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:53).

His doctrine comprehended the nature and perfections of God--the misery of fallen man--a declaration of his own character as the Son of God and promised Messiah--the design of his mission into this world, which was to seek and save the lost, to give his life a ransom for many, and call sinners to repentance--the immortality of the soul--the resurrection from the dead--the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments that He was appointed of God to judge the world in righteousness at the last day; and, finally, the gracious promise, that whosoever believeth the divine testimony concerning himself shall not perish, but have everlasting life (John 4:24;

3:3-19; Matthew 16:26; John 5:27-29; Mark 16:15,16). In his doctrine he rescued the moral law from the false glosses imposed upon it by the Scribes and Pharisees; unfolded its spirituality and extent, as requiring perfect love to God and man; and enforced its indispensable obligation upon all men as the rule of their correspondence with God; declaring that he himself came not to abrogate or annul one tittle, but to fulfill its utmost requirements, by his own obedience and conformity thereunto, and adopting it as the unalterable law of his kingdom, which is to regulate the conduct of his disciples to the end of time (Matthew 5,6,7).

The fame of this divine teacher soon spread "throughout all Syria," and "multitudes of people from Galilee, from Decapolis, from Jerusalem, from all parts of Judea, and even from beyond Jordan, resorted to him to hear his discourses and be healed of their infirmities" (Matthew 4:24,25).

The miracles which he wrought from time to time, were the fullest attestation of his mission that could possibly be given; for they demonstrated that "God was with him" (Acts 10:38). They were performed at his word, in an instant, on persons both near and at a distance; they were done by him in the most public and open manner--at Jerusalem and in every part of Judea and Galilee--in cities, in villages, in synagogues, in private houses, in the public streets, and in the highways, in the fields, and in the wilderness--upon Jews and Gentiles--before Scribes and Pharisees and rulers of the synagogues--not only when he was attended by few persons, but when surrounded by great multitudes--and in a word, before men of every diversity of character. They were in themselves of such a nature as to bear the strictest examination, and they had every thing about them which could possibly distinguish them from the delusions of enthusiasm, and the artifices of imposture. Accordingly we find him appealing to them with all the confidence of an upright mind, fully impressed with a consciousness of their truth and reality. The appeal was short, simple, and decisive. He seldom reasoned on either their nature or design, but generally pointed to them as plain and indubitable facts, which spake their own meaning and carried with them their own authority. They were too public to be suspected of imposture; and being the objects of sense, they were secured against the charge of enthusiasm. They had no disguise, and were, in a variety of instances, of such a nature as to preclude the very possibility of collusion. They were performed in the midst of his bitterest enemies, and were so palpable and certain as to extort from them the acknowledgment, that "this man doth many miracles; if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him."

An inattentive reader of the evangelic history would be led to conclude, from the accounts that are given us of the multitudes who followed Jesus, that the number of his disciples was immense. But we have frequent intimations of the fallacy of implicitly trusting to appearances in these things. Were we to consider only the interesting nature of his doctrine, the wisdom and energy with which it was delivered,

and the stupendous works of supernatural power by which it was accompanied--the little success that attended it, must have ever remained a source of perplexity to us; but the problem is solved by admitting the scriptural account of the depravity of the human mind, its alienation from God, and its natural enmity against his truth. The reception which the Messiah was to meet with, had been described by an ancient prophet in these remarkable words, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"--And the event justified the prediction. Some few indeed, and those chiefly from among the inferior ranks in life, believed on him as the hope of Israel, and found in him all their salvation and desire; and while his claims of being the Messiah were generally set at nought by their countrymen, they could say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68,69).

From among these latter, Jesus selected twelve whom he named apostles, and whom he qualified and sent forth to preach the doctrine of his kingdom, and to cure diseases; and sometime afterwards he appointed seventy others also to labor in his vineyard. These he sent forth, two and two, into every city and place to which he himself would come, as his heralds, announcing his approach, and calling all descriptions of persons to repent and believe the gospel (Luke 10:1-16).

It appears from the testimony of ancient historians, that about the time of Christ's appearing, the Jews anxiously expected him as the great deliverer and chief ornament of their nation; and even among the heathens an opinion was at that time prevalent, probably derived from the Hebrew prophets, that a prince of unparalleled glory was to arise in Judea, who was to found a kind of universal monarchy. But in the humble appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, the Jews found nothing that corresponded to the expectations they entertained on this subject. Their vain hearts, like those of the generality of men in all ages, were so intoxicated with the admiration of worldly pomp, that that was the only greatness for which they had any relish; and hence they formed a picture of him, who was the desire of all nations, very unlike the original. Nor was the doctrine which he inculcated more suited to their taste, than his personal appearance answered to their expectations. For, while they fostered the presumptuous imagination, that in virtue of the privileges they enjoyed as God's covenanted people, and especially as being the descendants of Abraham, they had a peculiar claim to the Divine favor and to all the blessings of their Messiah's kingdom, both Jesus and his fore-runner boldly attacked this master-prejudice, and evinced the futility of every such plea. They were now called upon to give up the erroneous sentiments which they entertained respecting their own characters, the way of acceptance with God, and the nature and blessings of their Messiah's reign, on pain of incurring eternal ruin. For whereas they expected eternal life as the reward of their Jewish privileges, or of their own personal righteousness, they were now taught, that God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; that the Son of God came to be lifted

up upon the cross, as the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses elevated in the wilderness, that whosoever, not of the Jews only, but among the Gentiles also, believed in him, should not perish, but obtain eternal life (John 3:16,17).

And, with regard to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, the doctrines of Jesus were equally at variance with their fondest hopes; for, while they ardently longed for the accomplishment of the promises which God had made unto their fathers by the prophets, they seem in general to have had no other object in view than the establishment of a temporal monarchy, like the other kingdoms of this world, though doubtless much surpassing them in all its extent and splendor. Accordingly, being interrogated by their leaders "when the kingdom of God should come," Jesus perceived the mistake of their hearts, and to correct it, told them that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation"--that is, it did not at all resemble the kingdoms of this world--it was not to strike the senses of men by the glare of worldly grandeur; for as it is wholly spiritual, consisting in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, he added, "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20,21). So also when he spake to them concerning their bondage to sin and vassalage to Satan, the god of this world, with the necessity of being set free from this spiritual tyranny before they could participate of the liberty of the sons of God, they resented it as the highest insult that could be offered them; "We are Abraham's seed," say they, "and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, ye shall be made free" (John 8). If we keep in view these false principles by which the minds of the Jewish people were led astray, the invincible obstinacy of their prejudices, and the contrariety of the doctrine and character of Jesus thereto, we shall cease to wonder at the issue to which matters were ultimately reduced between them. When he avowed himself to be the Son of God, and claimed equality with the MOST HIGH, they resisted his pretensions and accused him of blasphemy. And when he acknowledged his regal character, they charged him with treason against the Roman government. On these grounds they demanded his death, and "the voice of them and of the chief priests prevailed" (Luke 23:23). It cannot be necessary to pursue this part of the narrative in detail, since the result must be familiar to every Christian.

"They that dwelt at Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which were read every Sabbath-day,--they fulfilled them in condemning him; and though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain; and when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulcher. But GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD" (Acts 13:27-30).

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

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## **FROM THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO THE PROMULGATION OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE GENTILES**

The resurrection of Jesus is an article of such importance in the system of Christianity, that, like the key-stone in the arch of the building, it is emphatically that which supports the whole superstructure. "If Christ be not risen," says the apostle, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God" (1 Corinthians 15:14-19).

That the Messiah should rise again from the dead, was an event clearly predicted in ancient prophecy; (Psalm 2; Psalm 16:10,11; Isaiah 53:10-12) and Jesus himself repeatedly foretold both the fact of his rising, and the day on which it should happen, not only to his disciples but to his enemies also, and even rested the evidence of his divine mission upon that event. (See Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 12:38; John 2:18-20; 10:17; 8:28; Matthew 27:53.) Of the truth and certainty of his resurrection, then, the apostles were witnesses, and they were every way qualified for substantiating the fact. "He was seen by them alive, after his crucifixion." It was not one person, but many who saw him. They saw him not only separately but together, not only by night but by day, not at a distance but near, not once only but several times. They not only saw him but touched him, conversed with him, ate with him, examined his person to remove their doubts. "He shewed himself alive to them after his passion by many infallible signs, being seen of them forty days," during which time "he spake to them concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3), which they were to be employed in setting up in the world. To qualify them for this vast achievement he had promised to pour down upon them the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, and directed them to wait at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. When thus fitted for their work, they were enjoined to "go and teach all nations," or proclaim to them the



glad tidings of salvation, to baptize all who believed the gospel, and then further to instruct them in all his commands (Luke 24:19; Acts 1:4). In doing this, they were to be witnesses for him both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:16). Thus having delivered to them his last injunctions, he led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted up his hands and blessed them, and while engaged in the very act of benediction, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven, a cloud receiving him out of their sight (Luke 24:50,51; Acts 1:8).

When the seventh Sabbath from the passover was completely ended, and the next day or first day of the week fully come, that is, fifty days after Christ's resurrection, and ten days after his ascension, the apostles, with the hundred and twenty disciples, were all assembled together with one accord, agreeably to their stated practice (John 20:19, 26; Acts 2:1; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2).

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, sitting upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4).

Such is the account given to us by the Spirit of inspiration concerning this extraordinary interposition of heaven, and the effects which it produced upon the apostles were certainly of the most stupendous kind. For, it is evident, that a flood of light now broke in upon their minds, as it were instantaneously, instructing them in the meaning of the prophetic writings, far beyond what they had hitherto attained; removing the films of prejudice which clouded their understandings, and leading them into just views of the spiritual and heavenly nature of their Lord's kingdom. Upon many occasions, during his personal intercourse with them, they had discovered strong prejudices in favour of a worldly kingdom, and slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had written: and even when their Lord had risen from the dead, and was about to ascend into heaven, they asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). But the illumination which now filled their minds, removed their ignorance, rectified their misapprehensions, and conformed their views to the scope of all the prophets, as well as to the doctrine which they had received from the lips of Christ himself.

It is also manifest that this effusion of the Holy Spirit had an amazing effect upon the apostles in animating them with a spirit of power, magnanimity, and zeal in their master's service. While he was yet with them, we may trace in their history numerous marks of timidity and weakness under the anticipation of danger. Such were their efforts to prevent his going into Judea: and their forsaking him at the time of his apprehension; on which occasion, it is recorded that they all forsook him and fled;

even Peter, the most intrepid among them, denied that he knew him. But what a revolution took place in their conduct in this respect after the day of pentecost. We behold them inspired with fortitude and resolution to declare their testimony before magistrates and rulers, regardless of personal danger, and even "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his sake."

But the most astonishing effect of all was, that they were hereby qualified for speaking various languages which they had never learned, thus making known their message to men of all nations under heaven, and confirming its truth by performing such miraculous works as were an evident indication that God was with them. This indeed was in perfect consistency with Christ's promise to them when he said, "In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." An occurrence so remote from the common course of nature, we may readily suppose, would produce an astonishing sensation upon those who were witnesses of it. The sudden ability of so many rude and illiterate Galileans, to speak perfectly in all languages--to express themselves with propriety and force, so as not only to be clearly understood, but to impress the consciences of the hearers, was a phenomenon which carried with it a proof of Divine interposition too incontestible to admit of a rational doubt. Those who first observed it spake of it to others, and a rumor spread abroad. Jerusalem was at the moment the resort of Jews and Jewish proselytes dispersed throughout the various parts of the Roman empire, and multitudes had come from different countries to celebrate the feast. The promiscuous throng, who were collected by so strange a report, and had been accustomed to different languages, were therefore greatly astonished to hear them declare, each one in his own tongue, the wonderful works of God. While some expressed their surprise at this, others ascribed it to the effects of wine. This weak and perverse slander was, however, immediately refuted by the apostle Peter, who, standing up with the other eleven apostles, lifted up his voice and said unto them:

"Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you that these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day 2 -but this is that which is spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:14-16).

He then quotes the words of Jehovah in which he had promised to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh--attended with the most awful denunciations against those who should despise it, but with a gracious promise of salvation to all that should call upon the name of the Lord. The illustration of this remarkable prophecy, and its application to what was now obvious to all their senses, paved the way for the apostle's drawing their attention to the great subject of his ministry, the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had taken and by wicked hands had crucified and slain.

The Holy Spirit gave energy to his doctrine. Like a torrent, it bore down all the vain imaginations and presumptuous reasonings by which the minds of his hearers were fortified; it reached conviction to their consciences; so that, like men frantic with despair, they cried out in the anguish of their hearts, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" To persons reduced to this extremity, conscious that they had been imbruing their hands in the blood of the Son of God, how unspeakably welcome must have been the words of the apostle,

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38).

This divine declaration of mercy, to men in the situation of these convicted Jews, pricked to the heart with a consciousness of their guilt and overwhelmed with despair, must have been like life from the dead. Three thousand of them joyfully received the apostle's doctrine, were baptized, and the same day added to the number of disciples that already existed in Jerusalem.

And here we contemplate the beginning of the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world; or, which is the same thing, the erection of the first Christian church. But before proceeding further, it may not be improper to pause, and endeavor to trace out a concise description of it in a few leading particulars.

When Jesus was interrogated by the Roman governor concerning his claim to royalty, he replied that his kingdom was not of this world; and in the church of Jerusalem we see the truth of this exemplified. We there behold a company of self-condemned sinners, who under the impending wrath of heaven had fled for refuge to the mercy of God, freely proclaimed to them in the gospel of salvation. They were persons who believed what these inspired witnesses testified concerning the mission, the character, the sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven of the Son of God; and who, under all their accumulated guilt and wretchedness, found enough in these things to encourage their hope of forgiveness, and even fill their souls with peace and joy. The gospel which the apostles preached, was that which exactly suited their case--it contained no rules or directions about what they should do in order to atone for their deep and aggravated guilt; for they found all that was necessary to satisfy the most troubled conscience in the doctrine concerning the Son of God, as delivered for the offenses of the guilty and raised again for their justification. Hence we see that, in obedience to his command, "those who gladly received the truth, were baptized" in the name of the Lord Jesus. In this ordinance they confessed their faith in him as the Son of God, who died for their sins, was buried, and rose again the third day; publicly professing that all their hope of salvation centered in these things.

They separated themselves from "an untoward generation;" and "all that believed were together." They received from the apostles the various ordinances of public worship, the apostles' doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the ordinances of prayer and praise; and in these things they continued steadfastly, having favor with all the people and receiving into their number, from time to time, such individuals as it pleased the Lord to call to the knowledge of the truth.

The doctrine which they believed, and in which they found all their happiness and joy, was the common bond of union among them. They loved one another for the truth's sake, which dwelt mutually in them. To this they were naturally attached, as being the common center of their hope and joy; and it prompted them to take a lively interest in each other's spiritual welfare. Having experienced much forgiveness at the hands of God, they were influenced to love much. And this love was not an inactive, dormant principle in them, for it manifested itself in the most substantial acts of kindness and liberality.

"There were none among them that lacked; or as many as were possessed of lands or houses sold them, and laid the amount down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made according as every man had need" (Acts 4:34).

It is evident, therefore, that they were not connected together by any of those ties which constitute the spring of action in the kingdoms of this world. In men actuated by such noble and disinterested principles, human policy could have no place. Their fears, their hopes, their joys, and their sorrows, were all of a spiritual and heavenly tendency; and they were animated by one object of pursuit, the attainment of that glory, honor, and immortality, promised them by the Lord Jesus.

Thus was the kingdom of Christ established with all possible evidence that it was not of this world. What laws were given were of Divine origin and authority, they were held superior to all other laws. We ought, say the servants of Jesus, to obey God rather than man. What power appeared, was the power of God working in a miraculous manner, and with supernatural efficacy. The design of this extraordinary interposition was not to restore again the kingdom to Israel, or to bestow the honors and the riches of the world on the followers of Christ; but to deliver them from the present evil world, and save them from perishing in the destruction that awaits it. So far were they from being allowed the hope of reigning in this life, that they were assured of being exposed to poverty, contempt, and every form of persecution. Neither their principles nor their practices were conformable to this world; nor were their hopes or fears to be engaged by the concerns of it; but they were to wait for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, and expect to reign with him in glory.

If this be a just representation of the church or kingdom of Christ as it appeared in

its establishment, it is manifest that, wherever we trace it in subsequent periods, we must find something that resembles it in its leading features. We shall discern a people, holding the same views of the character and work of the Savior, owning subjection to him as the king whom God hath set upon his holy hill of Zion; evincing their allegiance to him by an implicit obedience to his laws, institutions, and ordinances; and discarding the doctrines and commandments of men. As the church at Jerusalem was the first Christian church established by the ministry of the apostles, so it was designed to serve as a pattern, in its faith and order, to all succeeding churches, to the end of the world. It was constituted under the direction of the twelve inspired apostles, who for a course of time acted as the elders, bishops, or overseers of the flock of Christ, took up their station in it, and under Divine direction, gave forth the law to regulate the practices of all other churches: for out of Zion was to go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Acts 15:6,22-29; Isaiah 2:2). Having briefly glanced at this heavenly kingdom in its first establishment, and seen its origin, nature, laws, immunities, and the character of its subjects, I now proceed to trace its subsequent history, agreeably to the account given of it by the prophet Daniel.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms; and it shall stand for ever" Daniel 2:44.

The success which attended the first publication of the gospel, is very beautifully described in the Book of the Revelation, ch. 6:1, 2, by a vision which the apostle had of the Lamb, opening the first seal. "And I saw," says he, "and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer." The history of the apostles and first preachers affords a striking comment on these words, at the same time that it illustrates to us an ancient prediction concerning the Messiah (Psalm 110:2); for now we see the standard of Christ first erected as an ensign to the nations; from hence went forth the rod of his strength, by which he ruled in the midst of his enemies, and (from that time, or) in that day of his power, the willing nations submitted to him cheerfully, and "numerous as drops of morning dew."

Among the Jews there were daily three stated hours of prayer, at which time some went up to the temple, and others prayed in their own houses with their faces directed towards the temple. The first of these stated times of devotion was at nine in the morning, which was the time of their offering the lamb for the morning sacrifice; the second at twelve at noon, called by them the time of the great meat-offering; and the third, at three in the afternoon, when they offered the lamb for the evening sacrifice. Two of the apostles, viz. Peter and John, going up together into the temple, on one of these occasions, were addressed by a poor cripple, who solicited alms from

them. The man had been lame from his infancy, and was carried daily to the gate of the temple, where he importuned the alms of the worshippers as they passed him. The apostles fixing their eyes upon him, demanded his attention to what they were about to say; assured him that silver and gold they had none, but that such as they had they were ready to communicate, adding, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:1, etc.). The power of the glorified Savior gave energy to the word of his servants. Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up; his feet and ankle bones received strength, and the invalid was in an instant restored to the entire and perfect exercise of his limbs. Wonder and amazement seized the minds of the spectators of this miracle; the people collected together in vast concourse around the apostles in Solomon's porch, "greatly wondering" at what had taken place, but wholly unable to account for it. Peter seized the opportunity, a most favorable one unquestionably, to draw their attention to the grand theme of his ministry, the death and the resurrection of his Lord. He first reprehended their stupidity in supposing for a moment, that a work so far exceeding the power of man, and so much above the course of nature, could have been accomplished by their own agency, or in virtue of their own holiness; pressed home upon them their guilt in putting to death the Prince of Life; boldly testified that God had raised him again from the dead; and declared that the miracle which they had witnessed, was effected solely by the power of Christ. The apostle admitted that their guilt had arisen from their own ignorance, and that of their rulers; and that God, whose province it is to educe good out of evil; who makes the wrath of man to praise him, and ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will, had over-ruled their wicked devices to subserve at once his own glory and the happiness of sinful man. He, therefore, exhorted them to repent and believe the gospel which he now preached, and which it was the Divine good pleasure should first of all be made known among them who were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with the fathers. He declared to them that Jesus of Nazareth was that great Prophet whose coming had been foretold by Moses, and of whom he was only the type; that it was their indispensable duty to hear HIM in all things whatsoever he should speak; and reminded them of the warning which Moses himself had denounced against every one that should not hear that great Prophet. "Unto you first," says he, "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

This discourse produced a second harvest of converts to the Christian faith; for "many who heard the word believed; the number being about five thousand" (Acts 4:1).

By this time, however, the enemies of Jesus began to take the alarm. Peter had scarcely done speaking, when the priests and Sadducees, with the captain of the temple, rushing upon them, forcibly apprehended Peter and John, and committed them to prison. On the following day the Jewish Sanhedrin, their supreme court of

judicature, was convened. It consisted of the rulers or chief priests; the heads of the twenty-four courses; the elders of the other tribes; and the Scribes who were doctors of the law, commonly of the tribe of Levi. This great national council sat at Jerusalem. Annas, who had formerly been high-priest, but now ejected by the Roman procurator, was with them, and Caiaphas (his son-in-law) who was now high-priest; the very persons who had procured the death of Jesus Christ, and who of course were highly concerned to suppress this new doctrine. John and Alexander, two distinguished personages among the Jews, with others who were related to the high priest, were also present upon this interesting occasion. It was the custom for the Sanhedrin to sit almost in a circle, and to place the prisoners in its center. The apostles being now brought out and placed in the midst, it was demanded of them to say by what power, or by what name, they had performed the wonderful cure on the preceding day.

Peter, who had formerly trembled at the voice of a girl, was now not afraid to use the utmost freedom with the council and heads of the Jewish nation. He confessed the name and cause of Jesus; charged home upon their consciences the guilt of putting him to death; assured them the miracle was wrought in his name and by his power; and while he pointed their attention to the voices of their own prophets, declaring that "the stone which should be set at nought of the builders, would become the head of the corner;" finally averred that Jesus was the alone medium of salvation to the children of men.

A little reflection upon this strange scene will be sufficient to apprise us of the dilemma in which the Sanhedrin was now involved. On the one hand, the fortitude, the wisdom, and the composure of the apostles struck them with surprise: for they perceived that they were men destitute of the advantages of education, and had no pretensions to what the world calls wisdom. They were recognized by some as the former companions of Jesus previous to his crucifixion, in whose name they now declared the miracle to have been wrought; and the man who had been healed stood before them. There was no reasoning against matter of fact; the thing carried its own evidence along with it. But the question now was, how should the difficulty be got over? They, therefore, ordered the apostles out of court; held a solemn council among themselves; confessed that the miracle was incontrovertible; but that the best way of getting rid of the business was, as far as in them lay, to quash all further inquiry into this mysterious affair, and dismiss the apostles with a strict injunction that they should teach no more in the name of Jesus!

The number of the disciples continued to increase in Jerusalem, and, from the church there, the word of the Lord sounded out into the adjacent parts. The presence of Christ was conspicuously displayed among his people. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul;" the apostles were armed with fortitude to bear testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and "great grace was upon them all."

The instituted discipline of the house of God was manifested, by punishing, in the persons of Ananias and his wife Sapphira, the odious crimes of dissimulation and hypocrisy; and this awful manifestation of the Divine jealousy and holiness impressed the whole church with reverence and fear; while "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Then it was that Zion "looked forth as the morning, fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners" (Cant. 6:10).

The Sadducees, it would seem, had, at this time, the chief sway in the Jewish state. Josephus, their own historian, has described them "as remarkable for a fierce and cruel temper: and that, particularly when they sat in judgment, they were much more rigorous and severe than the Pharisees." [*Antiq. b. 13. ch. sect. 10. 6. and b. 20. ch. 9, sect. 1; Jewish Wars, b. 2. ch. 3. sect. ult.*] Of this sect were Caiaphas, the high-priest, and his party. They heard of the progress of the gospel, and were filled with indignation. Upon this occasion all the apostles seem to have been the victims of their rage. They were seized and confined in the common prison. But how futile is the rage of man when opposing the counsels of heaven! One stronger than the whole Sanhedrin, even the Lord Jesus, dispatched his angel that same night, who opened the prison doors and brought out the apostles, directing them to go in the morning into their very temple, and there speak to the people all the words of this life. How great must have been the amazement of the Sanhedrin at hearing, on their assemblage on the morrow, and giving commandment to have the apostles brought forth, that the officers found the prison doors shut with all possible safety, and the guards at their posts, but not a prisoner within; and that the apostles were, at that moment, in the temple, teaching the people.

The report, as may easily be imagined struck an unusual damp upon the whole court, who finding themselves so frequently foiled, began to hesitate about the result of all this. They had obstinately resisted the divine mission of Jesus, supported as it was by the most unquestionable miracles; and they had at length succeeded in putting him to death. Now they congratulated themselves that there was an end to him and his cause. But when they found his disciples, after his death, affirming that God had raised him from the dead, and exalted him to the highest glory in heaven; that they carried on the same design, and that they wrought miracles in his name, they could see no end of the affair, and were wholly at a loss what course to take. Add to all this, that the sentiments of the multitude were now evidently with the apostles, and some little prudence was necessary, while they punished the latter, that they did not bring down upon their own heads the vengeance of the former. The officers, however, were sent to take them, and enjoined to do it without violence. The apostles peaceably yielded themselves; and being brought before the council, were severely reprehended for disregarding the late prohibition they had received from the council. They answered with their usual firmness, as they had done upon a former occasion, that it was only reasonable they should obey God, rather than man; but



they avowed their determination to persevere, and even charged the Sanhedrin, in terms more pointed than ever they had yet done, with being the betrayers and murderers of the Lord of life. They, at the same time, asserted that "God had raised up Jesus from the dead, and exalted him to his right hand in heaven, to be a Prince and Savior, to dispense repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins."

It is manifest that matters were now arrived at the utmost crisis, between the apostles and the Jewish rulers, who were cut to the heart by the answer which the former had given them. The rage of the Sadducees could no longer be restrained; and the destruction of the apostles was the first thing that occurred to them:--A true picture of the spirit of bigotry in every age, when men armed with power have been engaged in opposing the cause of truth and justice. But God, who in his overruling providence, had hitherto guarded the lives of his servants, and had still further occasion for their labors, restrained the wrath of the Jewish rulers, and averted the purposes of this confederacy. There was among them a certain doctor of the Jewish law, of the sect of the Pharisees, (said to have been the son of good old Simeon, mentioned Luke 2:25,) and certainly the preceptor of the famous apostle Paul, a person of great eminence in his profession, and deservedly venerated for his prudent counsel in cases of difficulty. Gamaliel, after requesting that the apostles might withdraw a little while from the hall of justice, gave his advice that they should let those men alone. He reminded them of the fate of several impostors who had risen up among them from time to time, but who had all come to ruin; and that if this new sect were a mere human institution, it was unnecessary to give themselves any trouble to suppress it, for it would of itself quickly come to an end; but if it were really of God, all their opposition would be in vain, and they themselves would only be found ultimately fighting against heaven. The advice of Gamaliel prevailed; the apostles were again called in, and again commanded not to speak any more in the name of Jesus; yet, to save appearances, they were not dismissed until they had been scourged and enjoined silence. But neither the stripes nor the injunctions had any influence upon them; they "retired from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus, whilst daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:41).

At this interesting period, while Satan's kingdom fell like lightning from heaven before the preaching of the everlasting gospel, and the number of the Christians was daily increasing, a circumstance arose in the church, which demanded the attention and engaged the wisdom of the apostles. The church, though consisting wholly of Hebrews, comprised two classes of persons: one party understood only the Hebrew and Chaldee languages, which was used in their synagogues at Jerusalem and its vicinity; while the other had been accustomed chiefly to the use of the Greek language, into which the Old Testament Scriptures had been translated, (the version which we now call the septuagint) and which had been for some time in common use,

previous to the coming of Christ, in all the Jewish synagogues dispersed throughout the cities of Greece, as well as in Egypt. These last were called Hellenists, or Grecians; and of them it would appear, there were at that time many in Jerusalem, members of the church. As the multitude relieved out of the common fund was very great, it can excite no surprise that a few individuals were occasionally overlooked. Hence a "murmuring is said to have been excited among the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration" (Acts 6:1, etc.).

Hitherto the twelve apostles had executed the different offices of apostle, elder, and deacon-the former or highest office in the Christian church, being evidently considered as including every inferior one. To redress the alleged grievance, the apostles convened the whole church, stated to them that the ministry of the word of God was that which claimed their own primary attention, and how unsuitable it would be for them to neglect it for the sake of attending to the poor; they therefore recommended it to their brethren to look out among themselves for seven men, full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit, to be appointed over this matter. "But we," say they, "will give ourselves wholly to prayer and to the ministry of the word." The proposal met the cordial approbation of all the church; and thus the office of deacon was instituted. They chose Stephen, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch. Some of them (probably all) were occasionally engaged in preaching the gospel, but this was no part of their office as deacons, the latter being restricted to the serving of tables, or ministering to the wants of the poor.

There were in Jerusalem a great number of synagogues, to which the people resorted for religious instruction. One of these was called the synagogue of the Libertines; that is, such Jews and proselytes as had been Roman slaves, but had obtained their freedom, or were the descendants of such free men. It was also the resort of the Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and those who came from Cilicia, (among whom, in all probability, was Saul of Tarsus (Acts 23:34; 21:39) as well as others that came from Asia Minor. Stephen, by the boldness of his doctrine, and the miracles which he wrought among the people in attestation of it, had attracted the attention of certain persons belonging to that synagogue, who undertook to dispute with him; but not being able to resist the wisdom and the energy with which he spake, they had recourse to the old method of persecution. They suborned men to accuse him of blasphemy against Moses and against God. By this artifice Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin, where, though alone and unsupported, in the midst of furious enemies, he stood firm and unmoved, like a rock in the midst of the waves.

"And all that sat in the council looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel" (Acts 6:15).

The noble defense which Stephen delivered on this occasion, will be found in the

seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, to which I must refer the reader; its length precludes its insertion; and to abridge would be to injure it.

But what avail signs and wonders, the most splendid appeals of eloquence, or the most forcible convictions of truth, among the obdurate and incorrigible? For, notwithstanding the goodness of his cause, the miracles which he had wrought to support it, the lustre with which he now appeared, and the eloquence which flowed in torrents from his lips, "they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death" (Acts 7:57-60).

His dying deportment evinced how eminently he was filled with the spirit of his divine Master, and is a pattern to all who are called to suffer in the same righteous cause. He kneeled down with the utmost tranquillity and composure, and having committed his departing soul into the hands of his Redeemer, his only remaining concern was for his murderers, and, in the temper and spirit of his dying Master, his last words were, "Lord, lay not this sill to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." The death of Stephen was so far from satiating the rage of the Jewish rulers, that it seems to have been regarded merely as the tocsin to fresh scenes of slaughter and blood. They now gave full vent to their cruelty, and raised a general persecution against the whole church. The loss of this first of "the noble army of martyrs" was deeply bewailed by his brethren; and as the only remaining token of their affection, "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts 8:1,2).

During the last tragical scene, when his enemies were about to carry their vengeance into effect against him, they laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul, and who was one of those that gave their voice for his being put to death.

Saul was born at Tarsus, the chief city of the province of Cilicia. His parents were both of them Hebrew Jews, and his father, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, was a freeman of Rome. Having received the first rudiments of his education in his native city, he went to Jerusalem, where he entered himself of the sect of the Pharisees, and studied the law of Moses, with the traditions of the elders, under Gamaliel, a noted doctor of the laws. When Stephen was put to death, Saul, though but a young man, appears to have taken an active part upon the occasion; and now, flushed with the blood of that eminent martyr, he became outrageous. Armed with authority from the high-priest, he made havoc of the church: pursued them from house to house, dragging them away to prison without mercy, and scourging them in the synagogues, compelled them to blaspheme the name of Jesus, not sparing even the weaker sex (Acts 26:9,10).

Conformably to the instructions which Christ himself had left them, (Matthew 10:22) the disciples gave way to the storm, and dispersed themselves throughout the cities of Judea and Samaria, spreading the knowledge of the gospel wherever they came. And here it is scarcely possible for us not to contemplate the short-sightedness of human policy, as contrasted with the wisdom and over-ruling providence of God. The very methods taken to quash the cause of Christ became the direct means of promoting its progress. Philip, of whom we have lately seen that he was chosen a deacon of the church in Jerusalem, went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ among the inhabitants with great success. Intelligence being brought to Jerusalem that Samaria had received the word of God, two of the apostles went down thither, and communicated to the new converts the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, and thus the second Christian church was planted. Soon after this we find Philip, by Divine direction, meeting with the Ethiopian eunuch, to whom he communicated the knowledge of Christ, and baptized him into the faith of it, by which means the gospel would be carried down to Ethiopia, and the prediction of the Psalmist consequently fulfilled, "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God" (Psalm 68:31).

Philip, on returning from this interview with the eunuch, called at Azotus (the famous ASHDOD of the Philistines) (1 Samuel 6:17) a town on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and from thence passed through several cities that lay in his way, preaching the gospel in each of them, until he arrived at Caesarea, at that time the metropolis of Palestine, and residence of the Roman governor, where he appears to have afterwards settled for life (Acts 21:8,9).

In all this time the malice of Saul was raging with unabated fury. Intimation had probably been given him, that many of the persecuted disciples had taken refuge at Damascus. This was a most noble city, situated at the foot of Mount Lebanon. [So Milton, in reference to the Syrian idol, whose temple was fixed in that city, thus writes;--"Rimmen, Whose delightful seat "was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams," *Paradise Lost*, b. 1. 1. 467, etc. Mr. Maundrell describes it as "situated on an even plain of so great extent, that one can but just discern the mountains which compass it on the farther side; It stands on the west side of the plain, about two miles distant from the head of the river Barrady which waters it. It is of a long straight figure, about two miles in extent, adorned with mosques and steeples, and encompassed with gardens, according to computation, full thirty miles round." The fruit tree called the Damascene, and the flower called the Damask rose, were transplanted from the gardens belonging to this city; and the silk and linen, known by the name of Damask, were probably the invention of its inhabitants. *Anc. Univ. Hist.* 8vo. vol. 1. p. 260.] It had formerly been the capital of Syria, and was still very considerable. Josephus says it abounded with Jews, and in one place mentions that the inhabitants shut up in their baths and destroyed in one hour, ten thousand of them [*Wars*, b. 2. oh. 20. sect. 2]; and upon another occasion

he represents the Damascenes as having murdered eighteen thousand Jews with their wives and children, without the least color or pretext. [Ibid. b. 7. ch. 8. sect. 7.] To this city Saul petitioned the high-priest to grant him letters of authority to go and search the synagogues for the disciples of Jesus, and that, if he found any, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Caiaphas was still in office, and, no doubt, every way as anxious as Saul himself could be to stop the growing heresy. The request was cheerfully complied with; and, in the capacity of chief inquisitor, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Christians, Saul hastened on his journey, to fulfill, as he thought, the holy errand of extirpating heretics. About noon, Saul and his companions arrived in the vicinity of the city of Damascus, when suddenly there appeared to him the Schekinah, or glory of the Lord, far more bright and dazzling than the sun in his meridian splendor, and this great light from heaven shone around them. Saul was sufficiently versed in Jewish learning to recognize this as the excellent glory, and he instantly fell to the earth as one dead. But how inconceivably great must have been his astonishment to hear himself addressed by name, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And yet, if alarmed at the question, his surprise could not be diminished on asking, "Who art thou Lord?" to be told in reply, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest,--it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Trembling and astonished, Saul inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Jesus said unto him, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." And Saul arose from the earth, but the splendor of the vision had overpowered his bodily eyes, so that he was led by the hand into Damascus, where he remained three days without sight or food. The Lord afterwards appeared in vision to a certain disciple, in Damascus, named Ananias, and directed him where he should find Saul, and what instructions he should give him as to his future conduct, telling him that he was a chosen vessel unto him, to bear his name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel, "for I will shew him," said the Savior, "how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:1-16).

Ananias obeyed the Divine command, and laid his hands on Saul, when a thick film like scales fell from his eyes; his sight returned, his mind became tranquillized, and he was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Thus the lately persecuting Saul was numbered with the disciples; and in a few days "he straightway preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of God;" an event no less wonderful to the disciples which dwelt at Damascus than to their enemies; but "Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt there, proving that Jesus is the true Messiah" (Acts 9:22).

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE FIRST PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE GENTILES, TO THE RETURN OF PAUL AND BARNABAS FROM THEIR FIRST JOURNEY**

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus to the faith of Christ is a memorable event in the annals of the Christian church. Whether we consider the nature of the change which then passed upon his mind, the extraordinary signs which accompanied it--such as the miraculous shutting and opening of his eyes--or the astonishing effects which these things produced, we shall find something to excite our admiration, and lead us to adore the riches and sovereignty of divine grace. Such a revolution was now produced in all his sentiments and in all the springs of his life, as resembled the course of a mighty river changed from east to west by the shock of an earthquake. The supernatural signs which affected his bodily frame, shewed what befell his mind, and at the same time served to exemplify the effects which his ministry should produce among the Gentiles, unto whom Christ now sent him "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:18, with ch 9:17, 28). "When it pleased God," says he, "who called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" (Galatians 1:15-17). In that country he appears to have spent nearly the term of three years (verse 18), but the inspired historian has given us no account of the fruit of his ministry there. Our own reflections, however, may teach us to contemplate the wisdom of God, in directing the steps of Saul into Arabia, at this particular juncture of his life. His conversion to the Christian faith must, in the eyes of his unbelieving countrymen, and especially of his former associates, have been in the highest degree provoking. Engaged as he had formerly

been in the most active measures for destroying the subjects of the kingdom of Christ, they must now necessarily have regarded him as a grand apostate, whose conversion tended greatly to weaken the cause in which they were so zealously engaged, while it strengthened the hands of the Christians.

But, notwithstanding the interval that had elapsed, and which, humanly speaking, might have given time for the fiercest rage to cool, Saul had no sooner returned to Damascus, than "the Jews took counsel to kill him" (Acts 9:23). The Lord, however, opened a way for his escape. For although his adversaries had prevailed upon the governor of the city to aid them with a military force; and though sentinels were placed at the gates of the city night and day to prevent his escape, his friends let him down by night through a window in a basket, by the wall of the city, and thus frustrated their malicious designs (2 Corinthians 11:23).

Saul, upon this, went up to Jerusalem to have an interview with some of the other apostles, where he met with Peter and James, and abode with them fifteen days. It is perfectly natural to suppose that such of the disciples of Christ, in that city, as had a personal knowledge of him, and had witnessed his former persecuting zeal against them, would, if unacquainted with his conversion, take the alarm on his again appearing among them. Such, in fact, was the case; for when he attempted to join himself to them, "they were all afraid of him, not believing him to be a disciple" (Acts 9:26). Their fears, however, were instantly dispelled by the intelligence which Barnabas gave them of his conversion, and of his subsequent preaching at Damascus. He was therefore received of the church, and gave them the most convincing proof of the sincerity of his profession, by the boldness with which, during the short time he was among them, he spake in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the members of the synagogue with whom he had been formerly connected. The consequence was, that another effort was made to destroy him, which coming to the ears of his brethren, he was safely conveyed down to Caesarea, and from thence sent to Tarsus, the place of his nativity.

The persecution which had arisen in consequence of the death of Stephen, and which occasioned the dispersion of the greater part of the church, had now raged during a period of four years; but it pleased God at this time to grant his people a season of repose and tranquillity.

Tiberius, who had swayed the imperial scepter at Rome for three and twenty years, was now dead, and had been succeeded, as emperor, by his grandson Caius Caligula. So infamous had been the conduct of the former, and so odious had he rendered his character in the eyes of his subjects, that, if we may credit historians, he was suspected of choosing the latter for his successor, "as foreseeing that Caius alone would outstrip him in what was vile and abominable." [Dion. Cassius, b, 58.] Certain it is that his excessive wickedness, and intolerably shocking behavior, tended in no

small degree to obliterate the recollection of the horror and infamy that had attached itself to the name of Tiberius. [Suetonius' *Life of Calig.* c. 11: Josephus Antiq. b. 18. c. 6. sect. 10. Eutrop. *Brev. Hist. Romans* b. 7. sect. 12.]

The commencement of the reign of Caius was rather auspicious than otherwise. He signalized himself by several wise and beneficent actions, and gained upon the love and popularity of his subjects, They retained an affectionate remembrance of his father Germanicus, and hoped the son would tread in his steps. But the atrocious character of the new emperor speedily began to develope itself. One of his first vile actions was the murder of the younger Tiberius, who had been appointed, by the late emperor Tiberius, his colleague in the government of the empire. Another was the murder of Macro, a person to whom Caius himself owed the greatest obligations. When Caius did any thing unbecoming his dignity, it had been the custom of Macro to admonish him boldly of the impropriety of his conduct, a freedom which the despot soon grew weary of, and therefore ordered him to be put to death. To such a pitch of extravagance and impiety did he at length arrive, that he set himself up for a deity, and insisted upon being worshipped as such; a thing to which the Jews, of all nations, would never consent, and hence they incurred his resentment. Altars and temples were erected to Caius throughout the various countries then subject to the Roman arms, and the image of this detestable tyrant was set up as an object of adoration. An attempt was even made by some heathens who dwelt at Jamnia, a city of Judea, and who had an aversion to the Jewish laws, to build an altar of brick in honor of Caius, intending probably thereby, at once to vex the Jews and ingratiate themselves with the emperor. The Jews instantly demolished the altar, and the heathens complained to Capito, the questor (or collector of the Roman tribute) who transmitted an account of the affair to the emperor; though Capito himself was suspected of being the real author and contriver of the plot, in order to ensnare and destroy the Jews. Caius, without delay, recalled Vitellius, the Roman governor of that province, from his station; a man whose mild and gentle deportment had greatly conciliated the Jews; and sent Petronius to succeed him, giving him orders to go to Jerusalem with an army and set up his statue in their temple, in the most holy place, with the name of Jupiter inscribed upon it; enjoining him to put to death every Jew that dared to resist, and to make all the rest of the nation slaves. This order from Caligula came upon them like a clap of thunder. At first, the Jews could scarcely credit the report of so execrable a design, but their incredulity was soon dissipated. Petronius marched with a large body of auxiliaries raised in Syria, from Antioch into Judea, and even advanced as far as Ptolemais. The Jews were thrown into the utmost consternation. An immense multitude of them were collected together, who, with their wives and children, went into the plain near Ptolemais, and supplicated Petronius, first for their laws and next for themselves. The friends of Petronius seeing them at a distance, mistook them for a large army; but, on a nearer approach, they found them only an unarmed, lamenting multitude. Advancing in sight of Petronius, who was seated upon an eminence, they threw themselves down upon the ground



before him, uttering the deepest lamentations. When ordered to rise, they approached him with dust upon their heads, and their hands behind them like men condemned to die, and the Senate addressed Petronius to the following effect: "We come to you, sir, as you see, unarmed; we have brought with us our wives, children, and relations; and we throw ourselves down before you as at the feet of Caius, having left none at home, that so you may save all, or destroy all;" with much more to the same purport, declaring also that their love for their temple and laws was greater than for their lives, accompanying the whole with expressions of the bitterest lamentation, and every token of anguish and distress. Their entreaties prevailed; Petronius humanely granted their request, and deferred executing his commission. Some, indeed, attribute his lenity to another cause. Caligula was expected to visit Alexandria in Egypt the ensuing summer; had Petronius pushed matters to an extremity at this moment with the Jews, it would, in all probability, have led them to neglect their harvest, and the cultivation of their lands; and as the emperor's journey must unavoidably be made through those parts, it was apprehended that such neglect would have prevented that plenty which was requisite to accommodate the vast concourse that might be expected to accompany him on such an occasion. He therefore wrote to the emperor, urging the most plausible pretexts for the delay, and especially the necessity that existed of deferring the matter, for fear of the scarcity that might ensue.

It has been usual with commentators to attribute the cessation of persecution at this time to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus; but I apprehend a much more adequate cause is to be found in the circumstances now related. The Jews were fully employed in warding off this terrible blow from themselves and their temple, which was their glory and confidence; and, in such a state of things we may be fully assured, that they would want both the leisure and inclination to pursue and persecute the Christians. Caligula died soon after, in the fourth year of his reign, being assassinated in his own palace by one of his officers. And thus "the churches had rest throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Spirit, were edified and multiplied." It is probable, also, that during this interval of external peace, many of the Christians, who had been driven from their families and houses, by the cruel hand of persecution, again returned to Jerusalem. [Philo de Legat. ad Caium, p. 1010-1021. Josephus de Bello Jud. b. 2. c. 10. sect. 1. Lardner's Credibility, ed. 1730. p. 121-145.] During this auspicious season, Peter revisited the churches already planted in Galilee and Samaria, and among other places came down to Lydda, where there appear to have been a few disciples not yet organized as a church. Here he wrought a miracle by restoring a man to health and soundness who had been afflicted with palsy, and confined eight years to his bed. At Joppa, a neighboring town, he raised to life a female disciple, named Tabitha. These things were spread abroad, and drew the attention of such as heard of them, "and many believed and turned to the Lord."

Peter took up his residence for some time in Joppa: and while he continued there, an event took place which merits particular relation. The church of Jerusalem had been now planted about eight years, during which time the preaching of the gospel had been restricted to the natural descendants of Abraham. The period, however, was now at hand, when, according to the Divine good pleasure, the Sun of Righteousness was to arise upon the benighted Gentiles with healing in his wings. This mystery, which had been hid from ages and generations, was now unfolded to the mind of the apostle Peter, by means of a vision which he had while he abode at Joppa (Acts 10:9), and by the interpretation of that memorable vision, he was instructed to consider the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles as no longer in force; that henceforward he was to call no man common or unclean. He was sent Caesarea to preach, the gospel of Christ to Cornelius the centurion and his household; and while engaged in making known to these Gentiles the way of salvation, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all his hearers in the same supernatural manner as had been formerly done upon the Jews on the day of Pentecost, to the astonishment of the apostle and of all the Jewish brethren who accompanied him from Joppa. Thus was his mind instructed into this part of the Divine will; the believing Gentiles baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and received into the kingdom of the Messiah: and thus was Peter now honored by his divine Master in opening the door of faith to the Gentiles, as he had previously done to the Jews at Jerusalem, for unto him were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18).

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he found his fellow apostles and all his Jewish brethren, laboring under the same mistaken sentiments concerning the admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of Christ, which had recently occupied his own mind. They had heard with some surprise that the Gentiles had also received the word of God, and waited the apostle's arrival, probably with some impatience, to explain to them his conduct in going into men uncircumcised and eating with them. Peter recapitulated the whole matter in detail, and terminated the narrative with this pointed appeal to themselves, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, What was I that I should withstand God?" This silenced all their scruples; for it is said, "they held their peace and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:1-18).

When Saul of Tarsus was called by divine grace to the knowledge of the truth, he at the same time received a commission from the glorified Savior, to execute his ministry among the Gentiles. Hence, in explaining to the churches of Galatia his apostolic authority, he says, "He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles" (Galatians 2:8).

And to this great undertaking he devoted himself most unreservedly, as we shall perceive by taking a brief review of his labors. The place where we begin to trace the

history of this great apostle of the Gentiles, is **ANTIOCH**. There were formerly many cities which bore that name; but this was the metropolis of Syria, and indeed of all the east. For situation, magnitude, populousness, and various other advantages, it ranked as the third city in the Roman empire, being inferior only to Rome and Alexandria. The greater part of its inhabitants were Greeks; but Josephus says, that many Jews also settled in it. "The kings of Syria allowed the Jews the freedom of Antioch equally with the Greeks, so that their numbers increased exceedingly, and they were always bringing over a great many of the Greeks to their religious worship." [Josephus' Wars, b. 7. ch. 3. sect. 3.] This city, which is situated on the river Orontes, was remarkable, not only for its local scenery, but also for the magnificence of its buildings, the extent of its commerce, and the learning of its inhabitants, insomuch that it seems to have been considered in those days as an honor to be one of its citizens. Hence, Cicero, in his oration for the poet Archias, a native of Antioch, calls it "a noble city, once eminent and wealthy, abounding in men erablent for their great learning and true taste."

But however famous Antioch was for the things mentioned by Cicero, it became more remarkable in having the light of the glorious gospel bestowed upon it; for the success which the gospel had among its inhabitants, the fruit of which appeared in the erection of a numerous Christian church; and for its giving the name of CHRISTIAN to the followers of Jesus Christ. Here Christianity flourished to such a degree, for many ages, that it obtained the appellation of Theopolis, or the city of God, and this church was considered as the first and chief of the Gentile churches. The gospel, indeed, had found its way into this great city previous to its being visited by Saul; for it appears from the inspired history that some of the teachers, who had been driven from Jerusalem by the persecution which arose about Stephen, had reached Antioch, where they made known the glad tidings of salvation among the Grecians or Hellenistic Jews; and "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:19-22). When the report of these things reached Jerusalem, that church sent Barnabas to Antioch, who rejoiced at seeing the grace of God so illustriously displayed among them; and, by his own exhortations and discourses, he was eminently instrumental in promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom among them. Hearing that Saul was at Tarsus, Barnabas went in quest of him, and having found him, he brought him also to Antioch, where they both continued a whole year labouring with much success in the work of the Lord.

Caius Caligula, whose death has been already noticed, and which took place about this time, was succeeded in the empire by Claudius Caesar, who, soon after his entrance on the government, bestowed the kingdom of Judea on Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, (mentioned Matthew 2) and nephew to Herod the Tetrarch, who put to death John the Baptist. Herod Agrippa experienced much of the vicissitudes that usually accompany the pursuit of ambition. He had incurred the

displeasure of Tiberius, by whose order he was put in chains and committed to prison. The account which Josephus gives us of this affair is as follows. Before Caius Caligula ascended the throne of the Caesars, as Herod and he were one day riding together in their chariot, the former, who was anxious to ingratiate himself with the heir apparent to the throne, "wished to God that Tiberius was gone, and Caius emperor in his stead." Eutychus, who drove the chariot, overheard the words, but concealed his knowledge of them at the moment. Some time afterwards, however, being accused by his master Herod of theft, he discovered the treason to Tiberius, who instantly had him arrested, and confined during the life of the latter. When Tiberius died, Caius not only liberated his old friend, but invited him to his palace, put a crown upon his head, and constituted him king of the tetrarchy of Philip, and bestowed on him a chain of gold, of the same weight as the iron one which he had worn during his imprisonment. [Josephus' Antiq, b. 18. ch. 6. sect. 5. and Wars, b. 1. ch. 9. sect. 4.]

Herod was a professed zealot for the law of Moses and the peculiarities of Judaism, and studied by every means in his power to ingratiate himself with the Jews. He expended large sums in the defense and ornament of their city; but it was now in his power to attempt a more acceptable service, by exerting his authority against the Christians; and the motives of vanity and popular applause by which he was governed, prompted him to embrace the opportunity. He begun by apprehending the apostle James, the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, whom he hastily put to death; and finding the Jews were highly pleased with this step, he caused Peter also to be apprehended and imprisoned, intending to have him executed after the passover; a period when, by reason of the influx of strangers from all parts to the city, he should have an opportunity of shewing his zeal against this new sect to a greater number of spectators. James, indeed, had finished his course, and was gone to receive the crown of righteousness from the hands of his divine Master in the kingdom of God. But the work of Peter was not yet accomplished; and though marked out by Herod for a speedy sacrifice, he was still secure. So intent was Herod, however, upon his destruction, that he not only committed him to prison, but loaded him with two chains, and consigned him to the charge of sixteen soldiers, who were to watch him by turns, four at a time, two of them being chained to him, one on either side, and two placed as sentinels at the prison door. It is probable that the Jews still recollected how all the apostles had formerly escaped when put in prison, and perhaps they suspected the fidelity of the guards; nor is it unlikely that at their particular request, all these precautions were taken in the case of Peter. We may also realize something of the anxiety and concern which must have pervaded the church on this distressing occasion. They had lost Stephen and one apostle; and the life of the great apostle of the circumcision was in the utmost jeopardy: "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." How long it pleased God, in this instance, to exercise the faith and confidence of the church, does not clearly appear. It is thought by some, that Peter was apprehended about the beginning of

April, or during the days of unleavened bread, which was the beginning of the feast of the passover. [See Benson's *First Planting of Christianity*, ch. 5. sect. 6.] That feast lasted eight days, and they date the transactions in the third year of the reign of Claudius. It was the usual practice of the Jews, during the festival, to indulge in mirth and jollity, and at the end to release the prisoners. On this occasion, however, they were anticipating the high satisfaction of seeing, as soon as the paschal lamb was eaten, and the festival quite ended, the foremost of this sect brought out and put to death. His enemies congratulated themselves in thinking that they had him secure. The next day was appointed by Herod for his being publicly executed. But the night before this was to take place, the Lord interposed and rescued him out of their hands. Peter, in all probability, knew the time they had appointed for his martyrdom; but he seems to have been in the enjoyment of a serene and tranquil mind, and not in the least alarmed about their machinations. He was sleeping very composedly between the two soldiers, chained by the arm to each of them, when the angel of the Lord came upon him, accompanied by an effulgent brightness, and smiting Peter on the side, raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly; and his chains fell off from his hands, And the angel said, "Gird thyself and bind on thy sandals; and he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee and follow me, and he went out and followed him," apprehending that he saw a vision. The prison was in the suburbs of Jerusalem, and when they had passed the first and second watch, they came unto the great iron gate which led towards the city. This opened to them of its own accord; and the angel having escorted Peter through one street, and completely delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, he departed from him. In the morning, Herod found himself disappointed of his prey! The guards were examined, but being unable to give a satisfactory account of their prisoner, he commanded them to be put to death. It is not improbable that Herod might suspect a miraculous interposition in this instance; but to punish the guards as if they had been guilty of conniving at his escape, was the likeliest method to stop further inquiry, and prevent the people from suspecting any thing extraordinary in the affair (Acts 12:1-19).

Herod did not long survive this event. He lived and died a monument of the instability of human greatness. He was much devoted to his Roman masters, and had a taste for their magnificence. This induced him to celebrate games and shows at Caesarea in honor of the emperor; on which occasions he labored to display the utmost of his grandeur. His pride was farther flattered by an embassy from Tyre and Sidon. Those cities had incurred his displeasure; but as they chiefly drew their subsistence from his dominions, they were compelled to supplicate peace, which, though they had highly offended him, they obtained by their interest with Blastus, his chamberlain. The king appointed a day on which to receive their submission, when he appeared in the theater with a splendor that dazzled the eyes of the spectators. He addressed himself to the ambassadors in a pompous oration, suited, we may suppose, to give them the highest idea, both of his power and clemency. When he had ended, he

heard his praises resound from every quarter as the multitude shouted, "It is the voice of a god and not of a man." His vain heart was elated with this impious compliment, which, considering that Herod professed the knowledge of the true God, displayed an awful instance of pride and impiety, The angel of the Lord smote him with an irresistible though invisible stroke, because he gave not God the glory; and while surrounded with the fancied insignia of majesty, and in the midst of their idolatrous acclamations; he was seized with excruciating pains, "worms bred in his putrefied flesh and devoured him alive." In this wretched condition he continued five days, and then expired, an awful instance of God's just judgment, "who resisteth the proud, and will not give his glory to another."

[The account which Josephus gives of the death of Herod coincides with that given by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, except that the former goes more into detail, and has particularly noticed that the king himself could not but acknowledge the hand of God in his sufferings, and how flattering and unjust the acclamations were, which ascribed divinity to him, a mortal being, now seized with a disease which would quickly hurry him out of the world. He left behind him a son named AGRIPPA, then seventeen years of age, before whom Paul afterwards appeared and made the well known apology for Christianity, by which he almost persuaded Agrippa to be a Christian. He also left two daughters, who are noticed in the New Testament, viz. BERNICE, who was married to Herod, king of Chalcis, her father's brother, when she was only sixteen years of age; and DRUSILLA, who was afterwards married to the governor Felix. After the death of Herod Agrippa, the kingdom was again reduced to a Roman province, and then the persecution of the Christians, for awhile, abated.]

While these things were transacting in Judea, 'the church of Antioch increased greatly, both in numbers and in gifts. For besides the stated office-bearers of bishops, and deacons, which were common to all the churches, this at Antioch had several eminently gifted persons, as prophets (or exhorters,) and teachers (or ministers of the word;) among whom were Barnabas and Simeon, and Lucius, and Manaen, and Saul. By means of a certain prophet who had come down from Jerusalem to Antioch in those days, the Lord was pleased to intimate his will that, among other things, a season of scarcity was approaching which would severely affect the disciples in Judea; an event which accordingly took place in the latter end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth year of the reign of Claudius, as is noticed by Josephus, Eusebius, and Orosius. In this calamitous event, we have a signal display, not only of the care of the blessed God over his people, in revealing its approach by the ministry of this prophet, and thus giving them an opportunity to provide against it, at a time when many of the Christians in Jerusalem had forsaken all for the gospel's sake, and were laboring under peculiar difficulties; but we have also a manifestation of his divine wisdom and goodness in so ordering the course of events, as that, in the generous and disinterested conduct of the believing Gentiles, the church at Jerusalem should have a pledge of their fervent love and affection towards them as

their Christian brethren, and of the sense they entertained of their obligations to those from whom the sound of the gospel first came out; for "having been made partakers of their spiritual things, they thought it perfectly reasonable to minister unto them in temporal things." And if we also take into the account, that even among the believing Jews there was at that time some little remains of the ancient jealousy about the admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of Christ, we cannot but see how wisely adapted this was to dissipate all evil surmising from the minds of the former, and to promote the most cordial amity and concord between these different classes of Christians. Nothing has so powerful a tendency to meliorate the human heart, as acts of kindness and love; nothing softens the mind of man and infuses into it a favorable opinion of others like expressions of charity! No sooner was the approach of this famine intimated in the church at Antioch, than "the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren which were in Judea, which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

Soon after Barnabas and Saul had returned from Jerusalem to Antioch, the Lord was pleased to make known his will, that they should be separated for the great work whereunto he had called them, which was accordingly done by fasting and prayer, accompanied with the imposition of hands. Saul had long been invested with the apostolic office; for he received it not from any man or body of men, as he himself declares, but immediately from Jesus Christ. We are not therefore to imagine that the act of the church, on this occasion, constituted either Saul or Barnabas apostles but it recognized them as the apostles of Christ; and from the whole transaction we may at least deduce this instruction, that as God is not the author of confusion, but of order and peace in all the churches of the saints, so it is his will that all the affairs of his kingdom should be conducted, not as human wisdom may suggest, but from a regard to his authority, under the control of his revealed will, and in a dependence upon him for his blessing, without which the wisest and best concerted measures must prove fruitless.

Thus sent forth "by the Holy Spirit," concurring with the act of the church at Antioch, they accordingly departed unto Seleucia, a place fifteen miles below Antioch, and situated upon the same river, Orontes, and five from the place where that river runs into the sea. From thence they sailed to the island of Cyprus, situated in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, being the native country of Barnabas. As this island lay contiguous to Judea, it abounded with Jews, as it is attested by several ancient authors. The first place which the apostles visited in that island was Salamis, a city lying on the eastern extremity, and one of the highest ports to Syria. The gospel had already reached that island, but the knowledge of it was confined to the Jews (Acts 11:19). The apostles here found Jewish synagogues, which they frequented, and in which they preached the word of God to both Jews and Gentiles. After this they traveled nearly the whole length of the island, till they came to Paphos, which was

situated upon the western extremity, a place famed for its temple and obscene worship of the Paphion Venus. This was the residence of Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul, who, hearing of the arrival of Barnabas and Saul, sent for them, desiring to hear from their mouths the word of God. Here the apostles were withstood by Elymas, a noted magician, who sought to turn away the deputy from the faith. Saul, however, detected his malicious intention; and, as Peter had formerly done in the awful instance of Ananias and Sapphira, so Saul by his apostolic power, denounced upon Elymas the impending judgment of God for his iniquity. Scarcely had he uttered the words when the sorcerer was struck with a total blindness, insomuch that he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand (Acts 13:6-12). The Lord was pleased by means of this judgment upon Elymas, to awaken the attention of the proconsul to the things which concerned his everlasting peace, for "when he saw what was done, he believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." On this occasion, we find the first intimation of the change of the name of the great apostle of the Gentiles from Saul to Paul. Various conjectures for this have been offered by the learned. By some it is supposed that the latter title was given him because he had been the means of converting Sergius Paulus to the Christian faith; as Scipio obtained the appellation of Africanus from the circumstance of his having conquered Africa. Others, however, and among them ranks the judicious Benson, account for it, by supposing that at the time of his circumcision he received the two names of Saul and Paul - -the latter as his Roman name, (for he was born a freeman of Rome,) and the former as his Jewish name, for he was a Jew, or as he calls himself, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. As, therefore, he had been called Saul, while he continued among the Jews, and as he was henceforward to execute his ministry among the Romans he adopted his Roman name. And the same reason hath been assigned, for changing the name of his companion Silas into that of Silvanus. Paul and Barnabas quitting Paphos sailed to Perga, a town in Pamphilia, not far from the coast of Asia Minor, from whence they passed on to Antioch In Pisidia. And here we may remark, that, in executing their mission among the Gentiles, it was the invariable practice of these apostles, on their arrival at any city or town, where they had not previously been, in the first place to inquire whether there were any Jewish synagogue in it. and if they found one, they attended its worship on the ensuing Sabbath. Such was the case at Iconium, Acts 14:1. -- at Thessalonica, ch. 17:1. -- at Corinth, ch. 18:4. -- at Ephesus, ch. 19:8, and other places; and such was the case at Antioch in Pisidia, where "they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day and sat down" (Acts 13:14, etc.). This manner of proceeding does not appear to have been arbitrary or capricious; but conformable to the revealed will of their divine Master, who, in the commission which he gave to his apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, commanded them "to begin at Jerusalem," the place where he was crucified. This was altogether in unison with the nature and with the properties of the grace revealed in the gospel itself -- which. "Grand as the bosom whence it flowed, and kind as the heart that gave it vent,-outshines the thoughts of shallow man." So we find Peter reminding the Jews that unto them first God, having raised



up his Son Jesus, had sent him to bless them, in turning away every one of them from his iniquities. And the conduct of Paul at Antioch was strictly conformable to this. He first addressed himself to the Jews, briefly glancing at their history from the period of the Exodus of their fathers from Egypt fill the times of David, that eminent type of the Messiah; and from the mention of whom he is naturally led to speak of David's Son the Savior promised unto Israel. This he proceeds to prove, was none other than Jesus of Nazareth, of whose character John the Baptist had spoken in the most exalted terms -whom the Jewish rulers had put to death, but whom God had raised again the third day, and of whose resurrection the apostles were witnesses. The important inference which the apostle deduced from these facts and doctrines, is, that "through this man, Christ Jesus, is preached the forgiveness of sins, and that by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses;" and he enforced the whole by the most awful denunciations against those who should despise his doctrine and reject his testimony.

Many of the Jews had no ear to give to this doctrine; but to the Gentiles it was indeed glad tidings of great joy; and even some of the Jews and religious proselytes took part with the apostles, who exhorted them to continue in the grace of God. The Gentiles having thus tasted that the Lord is gracious, expressed their earnest desire that the apostles would again preach to them on the following Sabbath; to which Paul and Barnabas consenting, almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. To those who know any thing of the value of the gospel to human happiness, one can scarcely imagine a more interesting spectacle, than the bare idea of such a multitude flocking around these inspired teachers to receive from their lips the words of eternal life. Vastly different however, was its effect upon the unbelieving Jews;--they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which the apostles taught, contradicting and blaspheming." Paul and Barnabas, however, animated with that fortitude which became them as the ambassadors of the Most High, thus solemnly warned them; "It was necessary that the word of God should be first spoken unto you, but seeing ye put it from you, and thereby declare yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, (by the prophet Isaiah) I have set thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the ends of the earth." This intelligence, that such things had been prophesied concerning them many ages ago, and that the Lord had commanded his apostles to receive them as subjects of his kingdom, without subjecting them to the law of Moses, was most acceptable to the poor Gentiles, who rejoiced in it as those that find great spoil; and they glorified the word of the Lord.

Thus "as many of them as were ordained to eternal life believed; the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region, and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:16-52).

A persecution was, however, raised against the apostles by the unbelieving Jews, who stirred up the devout and honorable women and the chief men of the city, who speedily succeeded in causing them to be expelled out of their coasts. They therefore shook off the dust of their feet as a testimony against them, and came to Iconium which was then the chief city of Lycaonia, and even to this day subsists as a considerable town under the name of Cogni, situated at the foot of Mount Taurus. Here also they found a synagogue of the Jews, in which they preached the gospel with such success, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed their testimony. From the number of those who in Iconium are said to have believed, we may infer that it was a great and populous city, as well as perceive the reason of the apostles' conduct in prolonging their stay in it to establish the disciples in the faith, and to comfort them under the persecution which the unbelieving Jews raised against them. But when matters arrived at such a crisis, that the city became divided, one part holding with the Jews and the other with the apostles, the latter, having received intimation that an assault was about to be made upon them to use them cruelly and stone them, they prudently withdrew and fled to Lystra and Derbe, two other cities of Lycaonia, in which they preached the gospel. At the former of these places, the apostles met with one who had all his days been a cripple, having never walked; and Paul by a word restored him to the perfect use of his limbs, so that he leaped for joy. This extraordinary cure, performed so instantaneously, excited a kind of ecstasy and surprise in the minds of the spectators, who shouted aloud in the language of the Cappadocians, that the gods were come down in the similitude of mortal men. And they named Barnabas, Jupiter-and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. The next thing was to make preparation for sacrificing oxen to them, and crowning them with garlands, as was customary with their heathen deities. But the apostles were very differently minded from Herod, (who received the blasphemous adulations of the people upon a far less occasion;) they no sooner heard of it than they ran into the midst of them, and after the eastern manner of expressing grief or indignation, they rent their clothes and exclaimed, "Sirs, why do ye these things--we are men of like passions with yourselves, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities to the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein," etc.

Nor was it without difficulty that, even with these arguments, they prevailed upon them to desist from their absurd purpose.

Among the fruit of their ministry here, however, at this time, the apostles had the satisfaction of enumerating Timothy, afterwards an evangelist; as well as his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, whose native city seems to have been Lystra. (Compare 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:5; Acts 14:21; 16:1,2.) But the adversaries of the apostles who had formerly driven them from Iconium, at length pursued them to Lystra, where they seized Paul, drew him out of the city, and stoned him, leaving him, as they thought, dead. While his friends stood around him, however, he rose up

and walked into the city, and the following day, Barnabas and he took their leave and departed for Derbe, where they preached the gospel with much success, and from thence returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, establishing the minds of the disciples in the truths they had received, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and warning them that they must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Upon this second visit, they also ordained elders or bishops in every church, which was done by fasting and prayer, commending them to the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ on whom they believed. After this they passed throughout all the region of Pisidia and came to Pamphilia, where they again preached the word in the city of Perga, and passing through Attalia, sailed for Antioch in Syria, the city from whence they had originally taken their departure. Thus having accomplished their first journey, they reported to the church all that God had wrought by their means, and especially how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. This done they took up their abode again for a considerable while with the disciples at Antioch (Acts 14:19-23).

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE RETURN OF PAUL AND BARNABAS AFTER THEIR FIRST JOURNEY, TO THE PERIOD OF PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM WITH THE CONTRIBUTION FOR THE SAINTS; BEING HIS SECOND AND THIRD JOURNIES**

While Paul and Barnabas were prolonging their stay with the church at Antioch, previous to their setting out on a second journey, a circumstance occurred in that church, which, on account of its great importance to all the Gentile converts, appears to have engaged their most serious and fixed attention.

It seems that at this particular juncture, "certain men came down from Judea, and taught the Gentile brethren at Antioch, that, unless they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses; and kept the law, they could not be saved" (Acts 15:1,24).

Some suppose these teachers to have been Cerinthus and Ebion, the founders of two noted sects, of which the mention frequently occurs in ecclesiastical history; but the opinion rests solely upon tradition--a very doubtful guide in all cases, and more especially so in the concerns of religion. It is probable that, whatever were their names, they had formerly been of the sect of the Pharisees; and that when they became professors of the Christian faith, they still retained something of that old leaven, of which Jesus had warned his disciples to beware. The doctrine and spirit of that sect were very opposite to the religion of Christ; and when these men embraced the gospel, they had not discerned the difference so clearly as Paul did at his conversion--they rather reconciled the gospel to their former ways of thinking, than became themselves reconciled to its simplicity. Hence we find they became disturbers

of the Gentile churches, as is evident from what took place at this time at Antioch, as well as from the epistle which Paul afterwards wrote to the churches of Galatia.

The doctrine of these teachers, which aimed at subjecting the Gentile converts to the rite of circumcision, and especially to make their obedience to that institute essential to their salvation, met with the most pointed opposition from these apostles. The subject involved the whole church at Antioch in dissension and disputation; and terminated in a general agreement that a deputation, consisting of Paul and Barnabas, with several others, should go up to Jerusalem to consult the apostle, and the elders of that church about this question. In their way they passed through the regions of Phoenicia and Samaria, whence they made known the calling of the Gentiles into the Christian church, and the success which their ministry had met with among them, to the inexpressible satisfaction of the Jewish brethren.

On their arrival at Jerusalem, they acquainted the apostles and elders with the object of their mission, in consequence of which the church was convened to take the subject into deliberation. And it appears that even in that church, the proposal to subject the Gentiles to circumcision, found supporters, especially among those disciples who had originally been of "the sect of the Pharisees" (Acts 15:5). When the church had been some time harassed with the dispute, Peter rose up and reminded them how God had formerly made choice of him to be the means of opening the door of faith to the Gentiles, and how he had also poured out the Holy Spirit upon them, making no distinction in his kingdom between Jew and Gentile, but purifying the hearts of each by faith. He, therefore, expostulated with them for attempting to bring the Gentile brethren under the severe yoke of Jewish ceremonies--a yoke so intolerable, that neither they nor their fathers were able to bear it; and pronounced the project of these men to be no less than a "tempting God." And he closed his speech by declaring the sufficiency of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to effect the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles, without any regard to the peculiarities of Judaism. When Peter had ended his address, Paul and Barnabas gave the church a particular account of the miracles and wonders which, by means of their ministry, God had wrought among the Gentiles; and when they had finished, the apostle James, who seems to have acted as president of the assembly on this occasion, summed up the whole subject, recapitulating what had been said, and giving his own judgment as an apostle of Christ, which was, "That they should not trouble those who from among the Gentiles were turned unto God; but that they should write unto them, that they must abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." This met the unanimous approbation of the whole church; and accordingly, letters were written to all the Gentiles, disclaiming the authority of these new teachers, protesting against their doctrine, and completely freeing the disciples from the yoke of bondage which was thus attempted to be imposed upon them. So Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem to the church at Antioch, which being convened, they read the epistle, to the great consolation of all

the Gentile brethren. The apostles, after this, continued at Antioch, teaching the disciples the commandments of the Lord Jesus, and preaching the glad tidings of salvation to all sorts of men, in which it seems they were assisted by many others on whom the glorified Head of the church had bestowed the gifts necessary for the work of the Christian ministry (Acts 15:33).

The interest of the kingdom of Christ was a subject that, of all others, lay nearest to the heart of the apostle Paul. The church at Antioch was now confirmed in the faith and obedience of the gospel; the question which had lately agitated them was set at rest; and it abounded with laborers in the Lord's vineyard; he therefore proposed to Barnabas that they should leave Antioch and pay a second visit to the different places in which they had formerly preached the doctrine of Christ, and examine the state of the various churches they had there planted. It is not at all improbable, that Paul's fear and jealousy might be excited, lest these corrupt teachers, who had troubled the brethren at Antioch, might also get access into other Gentile churches, and propagate the same pernicious sentiments, thereby subverting the doctrine of divine grace, and stumbling the Gentile disciples in their profession. Barnabas yielded to the proposal; but when they were about to proceed, a difference of opinion arose between them as to the propriety of taking Mark with them as an evangelist, or assistant in the work of the ministry; and this diversity of judgment was overruled by their common Master, no doubt, ultimately to promote his own glory and the happiness of numbers, by inducing the apostles to travel asunder and in opposite directions; for the result was, that Barnabas took Mark, his own nephew, and sailed unto Cyprus, his native country - -while Paul chose Silas, one of the brethren that had returned with him from Jerusalem when he last visited it; and being commended by the church to the Divine benediction, they took their leave and proceeded for Syria and Cilicia. Many Christian churches were collected by the ministry of the first preachers of the word, of which we have no express mention in that very concise narrative, -the Acts of the Apostles. Thus, for instance, we have no particular account of any Christian churches being planted in Cilicia, yet we are informed that Paul and Silas went through Cilicia confirming the churches, which of course must have been previously gathered and set in order. And when we consider that this was Paul's native country, and that previous to his being first brought to Antioch by Barnabas he had spent some years in it, we may reasonably infer, that his ministry had been owned by his divine Master, and that he was the spiritual father of many, in the regions of Cilicia.

Of the labors of Barnabas and Mark in the island of Cyprus, the sacred history is silent; but, that he who commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and who also promised to be always with them while thus engaged, even to the end of the world, did own their labors and grant them success, it were unreasonable to doubt.

Paul, accompanied by Silas, however, among other places, revisited Derbe and Lystra, at the latter of which he had, during his former visit, converted **TIMOTHY**, then quite a youth, to the faith of Christ. The father of Timothy was a Gentile, probably proselyted to the Jewish religion, but his mother and grandmother were both Jewesses. From his earliest years he had been instructed in the knowledge of the Old Testament writings-and, it would seem from an expression which Paul uses in one of his letters to him, (1 Timothy 1:18) that, upon his being first brought to the knowledge of the truth, the Holy Spirit had given a prophetic intimation of his future eminence as a minister of the word. So favorable was the report which the brethren of Lystra now gave the apostle, of the gifts, the zeal, and the amiable deportment of Timothy, that Paul chose him as an associate in the work of the ministry, with which office he was solemnly invested by the prayers of the church and the laying on of the hands of the presbyters of the church at Lystra (1 Timothy 4:14). To prevent the Jews in that quarter from cavilling at his ministry, because they knew that his father was a Gentile, the apostle circumcised him with his own hand: after which they proceeded on their journey, every where delivering to the churches the decrees which had been ordained by the church at Jerusalem, and which ascertained in the fullest manner the liberty of the Gentiles from the observances of the Mosaic ritual; and by these means they were established in the faith, and their numbers multiplied daily.

Their stay appears to have been very transient in Phrygia and the region of Galatia, on this occasion; nor were they permitted by the Holy Spirit to preach the word at this time in Asia Minor; but, passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas, a noted sea-port town, where travelers from the upper coasts of Asia usually took shipping to pass into Europe. Here they appear to have been joined by Luke, the writer of the history of the Acts, a native of Antioch, as is generally believed, and who, to the profession of a physician, had joined that of an evangelist or preacher of the gospel (Acts 16:9,10).

At Troas, Paul had a vision in the night. There stood beside him a man of Macedonia, and besought him, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Paul gave an account of this vision to his companions, who all concurred in one interpretation of it, namely, that the Lord had called them to preach in Macedonia. They therefore obeyed the heavenly admonition, loosed from Troas, and went direct for Samothracia, an island in those seas, famous for being the seat of certain religious mysteries, in equal estimation with those called Eleusinian; but it does not appear they went on shore, for they landed the next day at Neapoils, a sea-port town of Macedonia.

Thus Paul, having first preached the gospel at Damascus, after that in Arabia, next at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, then to the Gentiles in Syria and Cilicia, and most of the countries of the Lesser Asia, was now, by Divine appointment, entering upon his career among the Greek nations. At Neapoils, where

he first landed, he seems to have made little or no stay, but to have proceeded immediately to **PHILIPPI**, which is said to have been the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony. Though an inland town, Philippi was situated on the river Strymon, which was the ancient boundary of Macedonia. It had formerly gone by the name of Crenides, owing probably to its springs or fountains of water; for, according to Appian, it was built upon a hill. Afterwards it took the name of Datus, because of the gold mines which were in its neighborhood. But Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, having conquered Thrace, added that part of it which lay between the rivers Nessus and Strymon to Macedonia, and observing that it might be made a good defense against the Thracians, he fortified it and gave it the name of Philippi, in honor of himself. Lucian, in his dialogue entitled *The Fugitives*, introduces Hercules describing Philippi in the following manner: "The plain, which is very fertile, raises itself into little hills, which serve for a defense to the city of Philippi, whose walls are washed by the river Hebrus." Pierce, in his *Synopsis* prefixed to this epistle, mentions certain coins of several Roman emperors, and particularly one of Claudius, the inscription of which intimates that a colony of Romans was planted at Philippi by Julius Caesar, and afterwards augmented by Augustus, who sent the adherents of Mark Anthony into this and other cities of Macedonia, so that, having twice received inhabitants from Italy, of a small town it became a great city, and enjoyed all the privileges of a Roman colony.

It appears as though there were but few Jews resident at Philippi, since we find no mention made of any synagogue in it. There was, however, an Oratory or *Proseucha*, a place in which the Jews and their proselytes were accustomed to assemble for prayer, without the city, by the river side, to which Paul and his companions resorted on the Sabbath-day, and being set down, they spake unto the women which resorted thither. Among these was Lydia, a Jewish proselyte, of the city of Thyatira, who had taken up her residence at Philippi for the sake of commerce. The Lord opened her heart so that she understood and believed the doctrine which Paul taught. Lydia and her domestics were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with this Christian family the apostle and his associates afterwards took up their abode, during their stay at Philippi, which is said to have been "many days."

Upon several occasions, as they went to the place where the Jews assembled for prayer, they were annoyed by a certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, or of the Pythian Apollo--probably a species of fortune-teller, by means of which she brought her employers much gain. She seems to have indulged herself in pouring ridicule upon the apostle and his companions, whom she followed through the streets, exclaiming aloud, "these men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." Paul, grieved with her conduct, ejected the evil spirit out of her--which greatly enraged her masters, for they perceived that there was now an end to their emoluments from that quarter; and seizing him and Silas, they drew them before the magistrates and rulers of the city, making bitter



complaints against them as persons who "exceedingly troubled their city, teaching customs which it was not lawful for them to observe, being Romans." This speech incensed the populace against them, and the too credulous magistrates used them in a manner that was both shameful and barbarous -- ordering the jailers to tear off their clothes and beat them with rods, which they instantly did, and with great severity. We find Paul afterwards alluding to this cruel treatment, 1 Thessalonians 2:2, and again 2 Corinthians 11:23, where, reciting some of his sufferings he says, "he had received stripes above measure." Not satisfied, however, with this brutal outrage, they cast them into prison, enjoining the jailer to keep them safely. The latter well understood their meaning, and to comply with it, "thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks" (Acts 16:24).

In this situation, distressing no doubt, and, in the eyes of many very contemptible, at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God, in the hearing of the other prisoners. And now the Lord caused a great earthquake which opened all the doors of the prison, and loosed every one's bonds. The jailer was by the noise roused from his slumbers, and thrown into the utmost consternation; and finding all the doors of the prison open, he drew his sword and was on the eve of committing suicide, suspecting the prisoners to be fled, and probably recollecting the strict orders he had received the day before concerning Paul and Silas. The apostles, however, perceiving that he was about to lay violent hands upon himself, cried with a loud voice, "Do thyself no harm, for we (the prisoners) are all here." Upon hearing which, the jailer called for lights, rushed into the prison, and trembling, fell down before Paul and Silas, whom he brought out, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The answer was direct and unequivocal--"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and all that were in his house.

Nothing could possibly be better suited to the jailer's case, than the doctrine which the apostle now preached unto him. It was an immediate and an effectual relief under all the horrors of a guilty conscience. He found in it what reconciled his mind to God, and filled him with joy and peace, as the sequel shows; for, believing, he rejoiced in God with all his house, and was baptized, he and all his straightway. The fruits of his faith were instantly apparent in his kind and tender treatment of Paul and Silas; for he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and, taking them into his house, exercised towards them that hospitality which became a Christian brother.

Such were the transactions of this memorable night. The earthquake had, no doubt, been felt over the whole city; and the miraculous opening of the prison doors would soon be communicated to the magistrates, who, when morning arrived, sent an order for the discharge of the prisoners. Paul, however, did not think it inconsistent with Christian meekness to demand from them an apology for the illegal treatment he and

his friend had sustained, especially considering that they were Roman citizens. Of this latter circumstance, the magistrates seem never to have had the least apprehension; but on being told it, they took the alarm, waited upon them personally, made due acknowledgments of the impropriety of their conduct, and besought them to depart out of their city. The apostle complied with that request; but his conduct on the occasion shews, that while he considered it to be his duty to demean himself as a quiet and peaceable subject of the government under which he was placed, he did not think it inconsistent therewith, to claim the protection of that government, and all the civil rights and privileges to which he was entitled. So quitting the prison, they went to the house of Lydia to visit their brethren, and having comforted them, took their leave of Philippi, leaving, as is supposed, Luke behind, who probably continued some years with this infant society. [The following are some of the grounds on which this supposition is founded. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles, previous to this event, carries on the narrative in the following manner. Acts 16:11-6. "Loosing from Troas, WE came with a straight course to Samothrace--and on the Sabbath day WE went out of the city, by a river side and it came to pass as we went to prayer," etc. But after Paul and the rest departed from Philippi, the writer changes his style, thus- "Now when THEY had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, THEY came to Thessalonica," etc. Nor does he resume his former manner of writing, until chap. 20, where, describing Paul's voyage to Syria, he thus writes--"These going before tarried for us at Troas; and WE sailed from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto THEM to Troas, where WE abode seven days." It is therefore very probable, that Luke remained with the new converts at Philippi, until Paul, several years afterwards, in his way from Corinth to Syria, came to Philippi and took him with them.]

Thus have we reviewed the origin of the church of the Philippians-a church which, of all that were planted by this apostle, seems to have enjoyed the greatest share of his esteem and affection, But their love was evidently reciprocal. For it is manifest that the sufferings which the apostle had undergone in their city, for the sake of communicating to them the knowledge of salvation, more precious than gold, had greatly endeared him to the church there; while, on the other hand, the brethren at Philippi lost no opportunity of evincing their gratitude to the apostle; for when he was at Thessalonica, they twice sent him a pecuniary contribution, thus enabling him to make the gospel without charge to the Thessalonians. They also sent him money during his first imprisonment at Rome, that he might want nothing necessary to his comfort which they could supply. (See Philippians 4:15, 16, 18; 2:25.)

Passing through Amphipolis, a city built in an island formed by two branches of the river Strymon, and a colony of the Athenians, and from thence through Apollonia, they came to **THESSALONICA** [anciently called Thermae; it still subsists as a place of some note, and is now in possession of the Turks, under the name of Salonichi], now the metropolis of all the countries comprehended in the Roman province of

Macedonia. It was the residence both of the proconsul and questor; so that being the seat of government, it was constantly filled with strangers, some to attend the courts of judicature, and others to solicit offices. Placed at the bottom of the Thermaic gulf, it was conveniently situated for commerce, and many of its inhabitants were merchants, who carried on an extensive trade with foreign countries. The Jews resorted to this city in such numbers as to form a large synagogue, to which, according to his usual custom, the apostle, on his arrival there, had recourse.

The account which is left us, by the sacred historian, of the apostle's method of procedure in the synagogue of Thessalonica, though concise, is remarkably comprehensive. According to his usual custom, he, during three Sabbath days, reasoned with them out of the Scriptures (of the Old Testament, which were esteemed by themselves as the oracles of God;) unfolding their meaning, and alleging from their true import, that the Messiah must necessarily have already come; and, moreover, that he must have been a suffering person, since their own prophets had clearly described him under this view; nay, that he must also have risen again from the dead, concerning which event the spirit of prophecy had spoken particularly; and, finally, that this Jesus of Nazareth, unto whom he bore witness, was THE CHRIST, or true Messiah, whom they were anxiously expecting. The result was, that some of the Jews believed that Jesus whom he preached was the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of sinners, and consequently consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the women of chief note in the city not a few (Acts 17:1-4).

It seems probable that Paul and his associates continued their attendance on the synagogue worship no longer than three Sabbath days, though it appears from Philippians 4:16, that they remained some considerable time after that in Thessalonica. But having now repeatedly declared their testimony, they withdrew, and separated the disciples. After this Paul and Silas appear to have preached, without reserve, among the idolatrous Gentiles, and to have wrought many miracles, all which were attended with the most amazing success; for in the first epistle, which he wrote not long afterwards to this church, he reflects with the most grateful emotions of mind upon the success which his ministry had among them--that the gospel which he preached came unto them not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; so that they became followers of the apostles and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, insomuch that the Thessalonians became ensamples to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia--that the gospel sounded out from them; and in every place their faith towards God was spoken of; so that the unbelieving Jews who persecuted them, were ready to attest the power which the gospel had upon these idolatrous Gentiles, and how it became the means of turning them to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered them from the wrath to come (1 Thessalonians

1:5-10).

Paul and his companions were at length driven from this city, in consequence of a persecution raised by the envious, unbelieving Jews, who instigated the rabble against them, setting all the city in an uproar, and assaulting the house of Jason, whom they drew, along with other brethren before the rulers of the city. In this state of things it was judged prudent to withdraw, which they accordingly did, unto **BEREA**, where also they found a synagogue of the Jews, and into which they entered, declaring their testimony as at Thessalonica. To the honor of the Bereans, it is recorded that they received the doctrine which the apostle preached, and with the utmost readiness of mind examined the Scriptures daily, whether the things he declared were so or not--the happy result of which was that "many of them believed, of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few." Intimation, however, having reached Thessalonica that Paul was preaching with great success at Berea, the unbelieving Jews, who had recently driven him from that city, followed him to Berea, and there also excited the multitude against him. The brethren, therefore, sent him away, as though he were going towards the sea, reserving Silas and Timothy among them, who seem to have been less obnoxious to the Jews than Paul was. But the friends of the latter, anxious for his safety, privately conveyed him to **ATHENS**, styled by general consent, "the seat of the muses"--once the first city of Greece in every point of view; and though it had at this time passed the zenith of its political splendor, it was still as famous for learning as it had ever been: for at the time Paul visited it, the city was full of philosophers, rhetoricians, orators, painters, poets, statuaries, and of young men who resorted thither to be taught philosophy and the liberal sciences. Pausanias says, that there were more images in Athens than all Greece besides, and that they worshipped the gods more than all Greece did. No place could possibly afford a greater fund of speculation and amusement to a curious mind than Athens. Temples, altars, statues, historical memorials, living philosophers of various sects, the works of the learned of every age, a confluence of the most polite and literary persons from various countries, all indulging the luxury of learned leisure, were objects that must at once have obtruded themselves upon the apostle's notice. Nor was he incapacitated, either by defect of natural taste or of education, from relishing the beauties or appreciating the value of such things. He had enjoyed a liberal education, had read their poets, and we have repeated instances of his quoting striking passages from them. But in Paul, the Christian predominated over the philosopher and the critic. He plainly saw that with all their advantages, they lacked "the one thing needful"--the knowledge of the true God, and the enjoyment of his life-giving favor; without which, all their luxury was but splendid misery.

Having carefully surveyed the city, Paul found the inhabitants were almost wholly devoted to idolatry, and he therefore sent an urgent request to Silas and Timothy, who were still at Berea, to come to him with all possible expedition. Finding a synagogue of the Jews, his first object was to dispute with them, and with the

Gentiles proselyted to their religion; and after that, with such of the idolatrous inhabitants as he met with in the marketplace. The apostle was soon attacked by some of the philosophers belonging to two of their most renowned sects, viz. **the Epicureans and the Stoics**. The Epicureans are said to have ascribed neither creation nor providence to God, but held that the world was made by a casual conflux of atoms--that the gods, if there were any, were of human shape, who lay lolling upon the clouds in ease and indolence, entirely unconcerned about human affairs. They also held, that in the present state, pleasure is the chief good; and that men are not to expect a resurrection from the dead, or any future state of rewards and punishments. The Stoics, who were intolerably proud and arrogant, held that matter was eternal, God corporeal, and that either God was the soul of the world, or the world itself a god. They looked upon all things as subject to an irresistible fatality; that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. They fluctuated as to their belief of a future state of rewards and punishments, though they had some expectation of an hereafter, as well as of the conflagration and renovation of the world. In the eyes of these philosophical gentlemen, the apostle appeared a mere babbler; and in the plenitude of their superior wisdom, they looked down upon him with all the pride and disdain that has ever characterised persons of similar tenets and pretensions. When Paul preached to them Jesus and the resurrection, they regarded him as a setter forth of new deities. However, as it belonged to the court of Areopagus to take cognizance of such things, they brought Paul before it.

They had at Athens two courts of judicature, of which one was chosen annually, consisting of five hundred persons. The other was perpetual; and the members of it were accustomed to assemble in the forum called **Areopagus**, which stood upon a hill, and was the highest forum in Athens. The judges belonging to this latter court were held in such veneration, that, to be an Areopagite was a term used proverbially among them for an excellent person [Aulus Gellius, b. 12. ch. 7]. They were the Athenian senate, or standing court of judicature [Potter's *Gr. Antiq.* vol. 1. p. 105]. and, besides other things, matters of religion, blasphemy against the gods, contempt of the holy mysteries, and all sorts of impiety; the consecration of new gods, the erecting of temples or altars; and the introduction of new ceremonies into divine worship, were referred to the judgment of this court. Conceiving, therefore, that the apostle had some new object of worship to propose to the Athenians, it was perfectly natural for them to conduct him before this venerable assembly, which having done, they requested him to explain himself concerning this new doctrine; they frankly acknowledged that he brought strange things to their ears, in talking to them about Jesus and the resurrection, and they desired to know what these things meant.

The apostle's discourse upon this occasion has always been admired as a model of fine address and of cogent reasoning. He had carefully inspected their religious rites and worship; and, among the multiplicity of their altars, had observed one that was

dedicated to "the unknown God," He began, therefore, by stating, that he perceived them to be extremely religious; for besides the number of temples and altars which they had in common with the other cities of Greece, he observed one with this peculiar inscription, "To the unknown God." He might therefore fairly presume that it would not be unacceptable to them to be made acquainted with the character of that Being whom they ignorantly worshipped. "God," says he, "who made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, since he giveth to all life and breath and all things, and hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth." And here we may remark, in passing, the different method which the apostle pursued, in reasoning with the idolatrous Gentiles, from that which he uniformly adopted with the Jews. The latter had in their hands the writings of Moses and their prophets, which they themselves acknowledged to be the oracles of God. In attempting to engage their attention to his testimony, he had nothing to do but make his appeal to those Scriptures, and convince them that their own prophets had foretold all that he now testified unto them, for that in reality "he said none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should come, viz. that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first to rise from the dead, and should shew light to his people Israel and to the Gentiles." But with the Athenians, who had no written revelation in their hands, he proceeds upon quite other principles: he appeals to the volume of creation, and argues from the impressions of power, wisdom, and goodness every where displayed before their eyes; he asserts the providence and the omnipresence of God; that he is the fountain of life and all its comforts--the supreme disposer of all events, and the common father of mankind; appealing in proof of this part of his doctrine to Aratus, one of their own most favorite poets. From these first principles, founded in reason, and which commend themselves to the consciences of all men, the apostle justly infers the folly of their idols. Admitting as they did, that they themselves were the offspring of God, how absurd was it in them to imagine "the Godhead like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art or man's device." Thus, having shewn the gross absurdity of their idolatrous worship, he declared to them that the Most High had for a course of time allowed men to go on in their ignorance, without instructing them by messengers divinely commissioned, that he might shew them by facts and their own experience, the insufficiency of their reason in the concerns of religion. But the state of things was now changed; for the time was come when God commanded all men every where to repent of their ignorance, idolatry and wickedness, having "appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by his Son Jesus Christ, whom he had raised from the dead," and in that event hath given the highest certainty of the fact.

When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, the Epicureans mocked him, and the Stoics found so little interest in his reasoning, that they gladly adjourned the meeting, promising, like Felix upon another occasion, to hear him again of this

matter at a more convenient season. Some few individuals, however, were struck with his doctrine, and received it as Divine truth; amongst whom was Dionysius, one of the Areopagite judges, and a woman of some note named Damaris, with a few others, who consequently clave to the apostle and consorted with him. The handful of seed, however, sown at this time, at Athens, produced, in due season, the harvest of a numerous church, as will be seen in the history of the next century.

While Paul was thus employed at Athens, Timothy arrived from Berea, and informed him that the enemies of the faith at Thessalonica had raised a dreadful persecution against the disciples there; on hearing which, the apostle thought it best to be left alone at Athens, and without delay dispatched Timothy to Thessalonica to succor the brethren in their distress; to comfort their hearts, and prevent their being turned aside from the good profession they had made, by the afflictions they were now enduring (1 Thessalonians 3:1-6). Timothy soon afterwards returned to the apostle, bringing him a most pleasing account of their steadfastness in the faith, their regard for Paul, and their anxious desire to see him again, all which greatly refreshed and cheered his mind (1 Thessalonians 3:6,7). From Athens he proceeded to Corinth, a city situated on a narrow neck of land which joined the Peloponnesus to Greece, in consequence of which it commanded the commerce of both Asia and Europe. On the eastern side of the isthmus were the ports of Cenchrea and Sahamus, and being thus advantageously situated for commercial purposes, it soon became extremely rich and populous. Its original name was Ephyre, but during the Achsean war, the Roman consul, Mummius, burnt it to the ground. It was, however, rebuilt by Julius Caesar, after having long lain in ashes, and by his command it was colonized with the ancestors of those Gentiles to whom Paul preached the everlasting gospel. When Achaia was made a Roman province, **CORINTH**, becoming the seat of government, soon regained its ancient celebrity in regard to commerce and its attendants, riches and luxury; so that, at the time it was visited by Paul, it was almost as famous for learning and the arts as Athens itself. Here philosophers taught science, and established academies for the instruction of youth; and in such high reputation were its seminaries, that an education at Corinth became proverbial for the most finished cultivation of manners, in every polite and literary accomplishment. [Thus the Roman poet Horace, "Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum."] With all its advantages, however, it seems to have outstripped every city of Greece in laxity of morals; insomuch that a Greek word, formed by the name of this city, has been used to signify all that lasciviousness and profligate corruption which leave the human heart enslaved to the basest and most headstrong passions. According to Strabo, there was in it a temple dedicated to Venus, at which no less than a thousand priestesses attended, who made prostitution a part of their devotions to the goddess.

Paul, on his arrival in this city, found a Jewish Christian, of the name of Aquilla, and his wife Priscilla, just arrived from Italy, in consequence of a decree which had been issued by the Roman emperor Claudius Caesar, commanding all Jews to depart from

Rome. It is affirmed by Dio, an ancient historian, that Claudius did not banish the Jews from Rome, but only prohibited their assemblies. This, however, even though his decree proceeded no further, was in effect banishing all those who had any conscience of religion. But Suetonius, who lived nearer the time, expressly says, that "he expelled the Jews from Rome, who were continually making tumults; CHRESTUS being their leader, or the occasion of their disturbances" [*Life of Claudius*, ch. 25]. It is a matter of dispute among the learned, whether by CHRESTUS, Suetonius meant Jesus Christ, or not. The probability is, that he did; for in other places he has shewn himself peculiarly virulent against the Christians [*Life of Nero*, ch. 16]. And, admitting this to have been his meaning, it shews us that the decree of Claudius was occasioned by the tumults which the unbelieving Jews were continually raising at Rome against the disciples of Christ, just as they persecuted Paul and his party at Lystra, Thessalonica, and Berea, and afterwards at Corinth, not to mention their conduct in the cases of Stephen, the apostles, or the Lord Jesus himself.

The Jews being numerous in Corinth, and having a synagogue, Paul, according to his custom, had immediate recourse to it; and there, for some time, "he reasoned every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and Jewish proselytes, testifying in the boldest manner, that Jesus was the Messiah." But when they opposed and reviled his doctrine, he shook his raiment, to indicate that he had done with them, adding, "Your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean; from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles;" on saying which, he departed from the synagogue and went into the house of Justus, which lay contiguous to it. Crispus, however, the chief ruler of the synagogue, received Paul's testimony, as did also his household, and "many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8).

It is not improbable that the apostle, experiencing so much opposition as he at first did from the Jews in this city, was about to take a speedy departure from it; but if such was his purpose, he was prevented from carrying it into effect, by a vision which he had during the night. The Lord Jesus appeared to him, to animate and encourage him to persevere in preaching the gospel at Corinth. "Be not afraid," were his gracious words, "but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city." Thus encouraged, he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God, who gave testimony to the word of his grace, and made the labors of his servants instrumental in gathering a numerous church, enriched with a plenitude of spiritual gifts. While here, he also wrote his First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which is generally thought to have been the first written of all his fourteen epistles. By some, however, it is thought he had previously written his epistle to the churches of Galatia, and that he did it at Antioch, before he left that city to take his present journey into Greece. During these eighteen months that Paul is said to have passed at Corinth, it seems probable that he made an excursion from that city into the region of Achaia, or the Peloponnesus, where were many synagogues of the Jews, and from whence he



returned again to Corinth, (2 Corinthians 11:10); and if we consider that his second epistle is addressed "to the saints which are in all Achaia," it plainly shews that he had made many converts at other places in that quarter besides the city of Corinth. Accordingly his return to it is spoken of as a second coming to Corinth, for he tells them, 2 Corinthians 12:14 and chap. 13:1, that he was then coming to them the third time, though in the Acts of the Apostles there is no mention of his having been at Corinth more than once before he wrote his second epistle to that church.

The great success which crowned the apostle's ministry at this time, seems to have exasperated his enemies to the highest pitch. They formed a conspiracy to apprehend him, in which they succeeded, and dragged him before the judgment-seat of the deputy of Achaia, complaining bitterly that he persuaded men to worship God contrary to the law of Moses. Gallio was the present proconsul, and had just entered upon his new dignity. This man was the elder brother of the famous Seneca, the Stoic philosopher and tutor to Nero, and it is conjectured he obtained the office through the interest of his brother Seneca. The latter has described Gallio [Senecae Praefat. ad Natural. Quest. lib. 4] as a man of the most mild and amiable disposition, of great suavity of manners, and benign to men in general. Dion Cassius also commends him as a man of great wit and good sense [Lib. 10. p. 688, etc.]. As his conduct regards the case of Paul, he has been severely censured by many Christian writers, but probably without due consideration. He rather seems to have been aware of the futility of the charge which these Jews alleged against the apostle, and like a wise magistrate, who considered matters of opinion quite beyond his province, so long as they did not disturb the peace of society, he told the Jews that if they had any accusation to prefer against Paul for a breach of the civil law, he was ready to listen to them; but if it was merely a question of words and names, and matters regarding their law, they must settle it among themselves, for he would be no judge in affairs of that nature; which having said, he drove them from his judgment-seat.

After this the apostle prolonged his stay some time at Corinth, from whence it would seem that the rulers were not unfriendly towards him; but afterwards, taking his leave of the brethren, he sailed from the port of Cenchrea, accompanied by Aquilla and Priscilla; and the vessel touching at **EPHESUS**, Paul left them there; for, having come under a vow while at Cenchrea, it was necessary he should offer the appointed sacrifices at Jerusalem, at the ensuing feast of the passover, which was then just at hand. He therefore bade them farewell; yet perceiving that Ephesus stood much in need of the light of the glorious gospel, he promised to return to them, when the Lord should permit; and quitting that city, he landed at Caesarea, from whence he went up to Jerusalem and saluted the church, performed his vow, and returned to Antioch. After spending some time there with his old friends, he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, strengthening the disciples; and passing through the upper coasts, he at length returned to Ephesus, which was at that time the metropolis of the province of Asia, and an exceedingly populous city. It was

situated upon the river Layster, and famous, among other things, for an immense temple dedicated to the worship of the goddess Diana. This amazing edifice was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, and two hundred and twenty broad, supported by an hundred and twenty-seven stately pillars, each of them sixty feet high, the work of a king, who erected them as a token of his piety and magnificence. The entire structure was two hundred and twenty years in building, and reared at the common charge of all Asia proper; and so admirable was it, that it ranked as one of the seven wonders of the world. It had been twice destroyed by fire previous to its present enlarged and improved state; the first time, on the very day that Socrates was poisoned, and the second on the night in which Alexander the Great was born, when it was designedly set on fire by Erastratus, who, being condemned to die for it, confessed that he had destroyed so exquisite a structure, solely "that he might be remembered in future ages." The common council of Asia, however, not only put him to death, but passed a decree that "his name should never be mentioned more." The fame of Erastratus, nevertheless, survived their decree; for though silence may have been imposed upon that generation, his conduct has been recorded by almost every historian who has written of those times. It was, however, again rebuilt upon a plan of the celebrated architect Denocrates, and most magnificently adorned by the Ephesians. When Paul visited the city, this temple was in all its glory. Here a prodigious concourse of people always resorted; some to worship the goddess Diana, others to learn the arts of sorcery and magic, which were taught and practiced with such reputation at Ephesus, that the magical words or sentences used in sorcery were taken from the name of the city, being called Ephesian letters. Many came to prosecute law suits, or to solicit offices from the Roman governor of the province, who resided here; to all which may be added, that multitudes resorted to it for the purposes of commerce, or were continually passing through it in their way to and from Europe.

But that which more especially renders Ephesus interesting to the Ecclesiastical historian is, that Satan had there erected his very throne of idolatry superstition; and magic, and reigned over the minds of his deluded subjects with uncontrolled sway. The apostle on his way to Jerusalem, had caught a transient glimpse of the state of things in that city, and having discharged his vow, he returned as expeditiously as was consistent with his purpose in visiting the countries that lay in his way, now to invade this empire of darkness, and storm the strong holds of the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2, 3). Thus Ephesus became his residence during a space of three years.

On his arrival, accompanied by Gaius and Aristarchus, two of the brethren out of Macedonia, called his companions in travel, (Acts 19:29) and by Timothy, and Erastus the chamberlain or treasurer of the city of Corinth, and probably by Titus also, Paul found here twelve men who had been the disciples of John the Baptist, and, as some understand, baptized by him.

These men appear to have believed the preaching of John, as it respected the immediate appearance of the Messiah and the setting up of his kingdom, but they seem not to have been acquainted with Christ or his apostles, nor to have known that the Messiah had actually appeared, that he had been crucified, and was risen again. They, therefore, knew nothing of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, in his miraculous operations, which was now communicated to them by the apostle, in consequence of which they spake with divers tongues and prophesied. After this the apostle went into the synagogue of the Jews which he found there, and for three months reasoned with them, and persuaded them concerning the things of the kingdom of God; but finding many of them obstinate, their minds filled with prejudices, and that they began to revile him and his doctrine, Paul separated the disciples: and from that period met daily in the school of Tyrannus, who had probably himself been converted by the preaching of the apostle. And this continued during the space of two years, which gave an opportunity to many who resided in distant parts of the province, and who had heard of Paul's preaching and miracles, to visit Ephesus, and to hear the word of God from his mouth, so that by this means the knowledge of the gospel was communicated to all Asia.

And now the Divine power manifested itself remarkably, in owning the mission and doctrine of Paul; for "God wrought special miracles by his hands;"--diseases vanished, not only at his touch but at his word, and evil spirits were ejected out of many that were possessed with them. Some of the wandering Jews who had practiced the art of exorcism, supposing that Paul's miracles bore some affinity to their own tricks, undertook to imitate them, by expelling a demon out of one that was possessed; but when they invoked the name of Jesus whom Paul preached, "the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded," to the consternation of all the Jews and Greeks that dwelt at Ephesus; "and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." The most amazing consequences succeeded this display of Divine power; for many of the necromancers received the apostolic testimony, and came and confessed their diabolical practices, and the arts by which they had deceived the multitude. Many of those also who had been engaged in the devices of exorcism, conjuration, and magic, brought their books, in which, were prescribed the various forms of incantation, and spontaneously set fire to them in the presence of all the people; and they computed their value, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver, equal to seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling-an amazing effect of the prevalence of Divine truth over all the powers of darkness!

Yet, notwithstanding the success of his ministry, Paul had many adversaries at Ephesus. A number of the inhabitants enriched themselves, by manufacturing representations in miniature of the temple of Diana, and of the image that was said

to have fallen down from Jupiter; by means of which they amassed considerable wealth. Perceiving that if Paul's doctrine were suffered to spread, their trade would be ruined, they convened a meeting of all that were of the same occupation, and very gravely deliberated what was best to be done, in order to check the growing evil: "Sirs," said one of them, "ye know that by this craft we have our wealth, It is evident, moreover, that not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath turned away much people, saying that they are no gods which are made with hands; so that not only our trade is in danger of being destroyed, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana will be despised, and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth." Interest is a powerful stimulus to the passions of men; and on this occasion the speech of Demetrius, which was founded upon it, produced the desired effect, for, "when they heard these things, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The utmost confusion ensued throughout the city: the artificers ran about the streets, spreading the alarm to the multitude; and having seized two of Paul's companions, viz. Gaius and Aristarchus, they ran with one accord into the theater, intending, probably, to cast them to the wild beasts usually kept there. The apostle would himself have also entered, but his friends dissuaded him. Anarchy had now reached its highest pitch,--some exclaimed one thing, and some another,--the multitude was confounded, and the greater part knew not the cause of their coming together; they continued, however, for the space of two hours, crying out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The rage of the rioters became at length exhausted; the preconsul's secretary appeased the people, and addressed them to the following effect; "Ye men of Ephesus, who is there that knows not that the city of the Ephesians worshippeth the great goddess Diana? since this is evident, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, whom ye have not yet proved to be either spoilers of temples, or blasphemers of the goddess; if, therefore, Demetrius and his craftsmen have any thing to allege against them, the courts of law are open, where the matter may be fairly tried." He also reminded them, that they were in danger of being called to account by the Romans for the riot they had raised, there being no justifiable cause for it. On saying which, he liberated Gaius and Aristarchus, and dismissed the assembly.

During Paul's stay at Ephesus, a church had not only been gathered, but set in order with its bishops and deacons. [See Whitby on Acts 19:31]. By means of his preaching, multitudes had been converted to the Christian faith, amongst whom were "certain of the chiefs of Asia," supposed to have been priests of the temple of Diana, who had the care of the games celebrated in honor of that goddess. These, the apostle having called together after the uproar, embraced them, and then taking his leave, departed for Macedonia. Having visited the churches in that country, and given them much exhortation, he went into Greece, and there continued about three months; after which he went down to Troas, a place he had formerly visited, and where he preached with great success.

The disciples of Christ being at this period reduced to great straits in Judea, Paul had written to the Gentile churches in Macedonia and Greece to assist them by a general contribution; and during his abode among them at this time, he received the various collections which those churches had made for their relief. Having carried into effect this important service, he sailed for Syria, and landed at the port of Tyre, from whence passing by Ptolemais, and thence to Caesarea, he arrived at Jerusalem, where he delivered the contributions, and was most cordially received of the brethren.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM WITH THE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ASIA, TO THE PERIOD OF HIS DEATH**

We are now arrived at a period in the life of the great apostle of the Gentiles, when a circumstance arose which has occasioned no little perplexity to commentators, and drawn from many of them either unmerited reproaches or needless apologies.

It seems that previous to the apostle's arrival in Judea, a report had got into circulation, that he was in the practice of teaching the Jews who were dispersed throughout the Gentile countries, "to forsake the law of Moses, and neither circumcise their children, nor walk after the Jewish customs." [See Suetonius' *Life of Augustus*, ch. 19; Tacit. *Annals*, b. 15. ch. 56. 57; Joseph. *Antiq.* b. 16. ch. 10. sect. 2-5.]

This was an unfounded representation of his conduct in regard to this matter. He indeed taught the Gentiles that they should observe none of these things; but he well knew that the time which God had appointed for putting an end to the political constitution of the Jews, had not yet arrived. He, therefore, conformed to the rights of Judaism himself, though aware that the whole of that typical dispensation had been virtually abolished by the death of Christ; and he instructed his Jewish brethren to do the same, until, by the destruction of their temple and city, the providence of God should co-operate with his word in rendering it impossible for them any longer to adhere to Moses. It was, therefore, necessary that the Jews in Jerusalem should be undeceived in this matter; and, in order to this, it was recommended to him by James the apostle, and the elders of the church, to give a proof to all his Jewish

brethren that what they had heard of him was incorrect, by joining himself to four men who were under a vow, and subjecting himself to the charges that were necessary to the performance of it, "that all might know that the things which they had heard concerning him were nothing, but that he himself walked orderly and kept the law." Paul complied with this advice; and the following day, purifying himself with them, they all entered into the temple, to signify to the priest their resolution to accomplish the seven days of their purification. But before these were ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up all the people against him, and apprehending him by violence, cried out, "Men of Israel help; this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place, and hath polluted this holy temple by bringing Greeks into it." By this means an universal ferment was excited throughout Jerusalem, for the people ran together, and seizing Paul, drew him out of the temple, closing the doors, being resolved, it would seem, to put him to death. At this critical moment, when they were actually engaged in beating him, Claudius Lysias, the commander of the Roman garrison, interposed with a band of soldiers and rescued Paul, demanding to know who he was and what he had done. Finding it impossible, however, from the contrariety of their reports, to arrive at any certainty in the affair, he ordered the soldiers to take him into the castle, whither he was pursued by the multitude, crying out, "away with him."

Having reached the top of the stairs, Paul asked leave of the chief captain to address them; which being granted, he beckoned to them with his hand, and when he had obtained silence, accosted them in the Hebrew tongue, recapitulating the most material circumstances of his history, particularly his conversion to the Christian faith; appealing to the high-priest and elders for the truth of what he said; and closing the narrative with stating the commission he had received from Jesus Christ, to go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles. The very mention of this was enough for these Jews. Hitherto they had listened to him patiently, but no sooner had he spoken of his commission to the Gentiles, than they became outrageous, exclaiming, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; it is not fit that he should live," (Acts 22:1-22) on saying which, they rent off their clothes and threw dust into the air. Lysias, in all probability, understood nothing of what Paul had spoken in Hebrew; but seeing the effects which his speech had produced upon the Jews, and that they were driven to frenzy by it, he concluded that certainly he must be some notorious malefactor, and, therefore, commanding him to be brought into the castle, he was preparing to have recourse to the Roman custom of extorting a confession from his own lips, by means of torture,--one method of which was by binding the person to a pillar and severely scourging him.

When the soldiers had stripped Paul, and were extending his arms to the utmost stretch, that they might bind him with thongs to the pillar, he enquired from the centurion, whether it were lawful for him to scourge a freeman of Rome, before he was convicted of any crime? The officer, upon receiving this hint, that the apostle was

a Roman citizen, desisted from his purpose, and apprised the chief captain of the fact, who, interrogating Paul, and finding that he was free-born, began to regret what he had done, and liberated him from his bonds.

On the following day the apostle was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin, with the view of having his conduct investigated before that great national council. When placed in the midst, he surveyed the assembly with earnestness and composure, and was proceeding to renew his vindication before them, but the first sentence he uttered provoked the high-priest, who commanded the by-standers to smite him on the mouth. Paul complained of this as an unjust procedure on the part of his judges: probably he was not aware whence the order to smite him originated; at any rate, he was not apprised that it came from the high-priest, whose office was then become quite a marketable commodity, and in which the Romans were of course making frequent changes. The apostle, however, recalled his words, and apologized for them; but continuing to look round upon the council, and perceiving that one part of them were Pharisees, and the other Sadducees, he made an appeal to the former, that he had been one of their sect, and that he was now called to answer for the hope which he had, of a resurrection from the dead,-a doctrine wholly denied by the latter. A contention immediately arose between the two parties, and the Sanhedrin became divided. In this state of confusion, the chief captain, fearing Paul might be sacrificed between them, ordered a company of soldiers to go down and take him by force, and bring him into the castle. In the ensuing night the Lord Jesus appeared in vision to his servant, encouraging him to "be of good cheer," and telling him, that as he had borne witness of him in Jerusalem, he must now also do the same at Rome. A conspiracy was formed among forty of the Jews, the next morning to put him to death; "they bound themselves by a curse," that they would neither eat nor drink till that object was accomplished. The stratagem, however, failed and the plot was defeated. Paul's sister's son got intimation of it, and conveyed it to his uncle, who called one of the centurions of the garrison, desiring him to introduce the young man to Lysias, the tribune, he having something to communicate to him. Paul's nephew developed the whole plot to Lysias, who, enjoining upon him the utmost secrecy, immediately gave orders for an escort of two hundred soldiers, with the same number of spearmen, and seventy horsemen, to be got: ready against nine o'clock at night, and also to provide a horse for Paul to ride upon to Caesarea, to which place he was accordingly conveyed in safety, with a letter from Lysias to the Roman governor there, explaining the reasons of the whole procedure.

**FELIX** was at this time governor of Caesarea; and Lysias, having now transferred the whole affair between Paul and his adversaries to his jurisdiction, he ordered the high-priest and some others of the Sanhedrin to appear before him in five days, which they did, accompanied by Tertullus, an advocate or Roman orator, who was to lay Paul's crimes before the governor. When the day arrived, the apostle was brought into court, and the orator, in a pompous speech, interspersed with flattering compliments



to Felix, accused him vehemently of being a pestilent fellow, an exciter of seditions among the Jews everywhere, a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, who had profaned their holy temple, and that they would have judged him according to the Jewish law, had they not been prevented by the conduct of Lysias, who took him out of their hands; to the truth of all which, the Jews gave their assent.

By the Roman law both parties were to be heard before sentence was passed. When, therefore, the governor had beckoned with his hand for Paul to speak, he addressed them in a firm and undaunted manner, denying the accusation which they had thought proper to prefer against him of being an exciter of tumult and sedition, and boldly challenging his enemies to the proof. He admitted, indeed, that after the way which they called "heresy," so worshipped he the God of his fathers, believing all things that were written in the law and in the prophets; and this he did in the confident expectation, that there would be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and unjust. Felix, who was no doubt tolerably well acquainted with the affairs of the Christians, and the temper of the Jews towards them, put off the decision of the case for the present, promising that when Lysias came down to Caesarea, he would institute a more strict inquiry into the subject; and in the mean time Paul was remanded to the care of a centurion, who was instructed to allow him all the liberty that was consistent with his being a prisoner, and to prohibit none of his Christian brethren from having free access to him.

Felix was at this time living in an adulterous intercourse with Drusilla, a Jewess. One day during the apostle's confinement at Caesarea, they sent for Paul, wishing to hear him concerning the faith in Christ. The apostle wisely adapted his address to the characters of his audience; he stated the obligation under which all mankind are, to obey the law of God; the guilt and wrath incurred by a breach of it; and the final account to be given in the great day of retribution. Nothing could be more strikingly calculated to arouse the consciences of Felix and Drusilla. Tacitus, speaking of the former, says, he exercised the authority committed to him with all manner of cruelty and lewdness; and as for Drusilla, with whom he cohabited, she was the lawful wife of Azizus, king of the Emesenians. How pertinent, therefore, were the topics of Paul's reasoning, viz. righteousness, temperance, and a future judgment! The portrait which the apostle drew of an iniquitous and licentious governor, so exactly corresponded to the original before him, that Felix could not help shuddering at the representation of his own moral deformity; while conscience, that faithful monitor within, made the application, and told him that the mirror in which Paul shewed him the features of an abandoned heart, did him no injustice. "Felix trembled, and said, Go thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season I will send for thee." He did, indeed, again send for him, and communed often with him, but it was under the expectation of having his avarice gratified, by obtaining from the prisoner a sum of money to purchase his release. No attempt, however, being made to gratify the governor in that way, he detained him during the remaining years of his government; and even when

he was compelled to leave the province, he declined releasing him, from a wish to please the Jews, who earnestly desired to have Paul put to death.

Felix was succeeded in the government by **PORCIUS FESTUS**, who went up to Jerusalem three days after his landing at Caesarea. And now the Jews interceded with him, to have the apostle sent back to their city for trial, intending to lay wait for him and kill him. Festus, however, was aware of their design, and refused his consent. Paul, he said, should be kept at Caesarea; and if they had any thing to lay to his charge they might go down there and accuse him of it. After continuing ten days among them at Jerusalem, Festus returned, and the following day ordered Paul to be brought before him. The Jews were again present, and laid many grievous complaints against him, which they could not prove; against all which Paul defended himself. But when Festus, with a view to gratify the Jews, proposed that he should go up to Jerusalem and there be judged, the apostle objected to it, telling the governor that if he had done any thing worthy of death, he would not refuse to die; that, (as Festus very well knew) he had done the Jews no injury; that they could not prove any of the things which they alleged against him, consequently that he ought not to be delivered into their hands; and he further added, that he stood at Caesar's judgment-seat, where he ought to be judged, and to Caesar he made his appeal; for it was one of the privileges of the freemen of Rome, that if they suspected justice would not be done them, they could, before sentence was passed, appeal to the emperor, and, having made that appeal, they were then reserved to be judged by the emperor himself. After conferring some time with his council what was best to be done, Festus yielded to Paul's request, and informed him he should be sent to Rome. Previous, however, to Paul's departure from Caesarea, **KING AGRIPPA**, accompanied by his sister Bernice, came there to pay their respects to Festus. The latter, when they had been with him some days, mentioned Paul's case to the king, and what had already taken place in regard to it. Agrippa expressed a wish to see him; and on the following day, when the king, his sister, and all the tribunes and principal men of the city, had entered into court, the apostle was brought before them. Festus, in a short address, stated to Agrippa and all that were present, what already had been done in the affair, and how the Jews had failed to make good their charges against Paul--that he had once more brought him into court, that the king himself might have an opportunity of examining him previous to his being sent to Rome.

Agrippa then addressed Paul, and told him he was permitted to speak for himself; upon which the apostle stretched forth his hand, and declared how happy he thought himself in being permitted to answer the accusations of the Jews, before one who was so expert in the Jewish religion and laws, as the king was. He then went over the particulars of his birth, education, and manner of life to the time of his conversion; the remarkable circumstances of which, he laid before the monarch in the most striking manner, declaring how Jesus had appeared to him, and remonstrated with him upon his conduct, in persecuting his disciples as he had done, and finally, that

he had given him a commission to go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles. He avowed, in the most explicit manner, the effect which this heavenly vision had had upon him—that he did not attempt to resist it, but had shewed to the Jews at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all Judea, the necessity that there was for their repentance and turning to God. These were the things for which the Jews sought to kill him; but "having obtained help from God, he continued unto this day, saying none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should come; that the Messiah should suffer, and should be the first to rise from the dead, and to shew light to the people and to the Gentiles." This noble defense seems to have completely arrested the attention of both Festus and Agrippa. The former could endure it no longer, but cried out, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." The apostle, with that dignity which always becomes the advocate of divine truth, replied, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." And then, addressing himself to the king, he boldly appealed to him for the truth of what he had said concerning his conversion; the facts were notorious; they were not done in a corner. Besides, as to what he had stated concerning the voices of the prophets, he knew that Agrippa acknowledged their divine authority, and was competent to judge how far he was right in quoting them. This appeal forced from Agrippa an acknowledgment, that Paul's address had "almost persuaded him to be a Christian." The apostle replied in the most benevolent and prophetic manner, "I would to God that not only thou, but all that hear me, were not only almost, but altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

It being now determined to send Paul to Rome, he was committed to the custody of a centurion, named Julius, with whom he embarked in a vessel that was on a trading voyage to several parts of the Lesser Asia. Aristarchus, and some other of his friends, went with him; and particularly Luke the evangelist. On the following day they touched at Sidon, where the centurion gave him liberty to refresh himself, and visit his friends. At the next port, which was Myra in Lycia, a vessel offering, which was bound direct for Italy, they went on board her. In the beginning of their passage they were retarded by contrary winds. At length they reached the island of Crete, now called Candia, and having put into a port called "the Fair Havens," Paul wished to persuade them to continue there for the present, intimating, that as the winter was now advancing, they would be subject to many inconveniences and dangers, if they ventured to proceed any farther. His remonstrance, however, was over-ruled, the centurion preferring the opinion of the master of the ship to that of Paul. It was also thought best, if possible, to reach another haven at the west end of the island, which was considered more commodious and safe than the place Paul proposed; and a favorable wind springing up from the south, determined their resolution.

Their hopes, however, were soon blasted; for immediately after sailing, they were overtaken by a sudden and violent storm. The name given it by the historian, Euroclydon, expresses its direction to have been from the east, and also its energy

upon the waves. The tempest irresistibly overpowered the mariners, and rendered their skill impracticable and vain. They were compelled to abandon the ship to the direction of the wind, and were hurried away they knew not whither. Considering themselves to be in the utmost jeopardy, they had recourse to various expedients for securing the ship, at one time by undergirding it with ropes, and at another by throwing a considerable part of the cargo into the sea. In this perilous situation, expecting every hour to be either swallowed up by the waves, or dashed to pieces against unknown rocks or shores, they continued fourteen days. Wilen, nearly exhausted with hardship, anxiety, and hunger--the seamen having seen neither sun nor stars for many days--and when all hope of safety had forsaken them, Paul stood forth in the midst, and exhorted them to be of good courage, and take their food; for that God, to whom he belonged, and whom he served, had given him assurance by an angel, not only of his own safety, but that the lives of all on board should for his sake be preserved. Paul's words were verified; the ship indeed was wrecked, but the whole crew, consisting of two hundred and seventy-six persons, were ultimately brought safe to land.

The island on which they were cast, is called by Luke, Melita, and many have contended that it is the present Malta; but the latter island is not in the Adriatic Sea, and it has been convincingly shewn, that it was an island belonging to Dalmatia, formerly called Melite, but now Mleet, by the Sclavonians, and is subject to Ragusa. [See Bryant's *Observations on Ancient History*, and Pliny's *Natural History*, b. 3. ch. 26.] Here, the inhabitants, though called barbarians, received and accommodated them with great humanity, and manifested a tenderness not always found among those who bear the Christian name. They brought them under cover, and kindled fires to warm and dry them. As Paul was assisting in supplying the fire with fuel, a viper came out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. The inhabitants of the island who were spectators, no sooner saw the venomous animal suspended from his hand, than they said among themselves, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped shipwreck, vengeance suffereth not to live." Under this conviction, they confidently expected to see him fall down dead; but when they saw the apostle shake the viper into the fire, and found that he had not received the least injury from its bite, they changed their opinion of him, and said that he was a god.

The apostle and his friends were for three days courteously entertained by Publius, the governor of the island; and during his stay there, he wrought many miracles upon persons that were sick and diseased, among whom was the father of Publius, who at that time lay ill of a fever and bloody flux. These kind offices procured them many favors from the inhabitants; and when, after a residence among them of three months, they were about to depart, they liberally supplied them with every necessary accommodation for their journey.

Sailing from thence in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered at the island, they

proceeded to Syracuse in Sicily, where they tarried three days, and soon after arrived at Rhegium, and from thence, in two days at Puteoli near Naples, where they disembarked, and continued a week, in compliance with the wishes of the Christian brethren whom they found there. From Puteoli to Rome, their journey was about a hundred miles by land.

Several of the disciples at **ROME**, hearing of Paul's approach, proceeded to meet him at Appii-forum, and the Three Taverns; the former place being about fifty, and the latter, thirty miles from the city. The sight of these Christian brethren inspired the apostle with new life and rigor, for it is said, "When he saw them, he thanked God and took courage." And thus in the month of February, of the sixteenth year of the Christian era, and seventh of the reign of the emperor Nero, the apostle arrived at Rome, the imperial city, and metropolis of the whole world, situated in Italy, on the banks of the Tiber, at the distance of about sixteen miles from the sea. The foundations of this celebrated city were laid by Romulus, 753 years before the birth of Christ, at which time it consisted of only a small castle on the summit of Mount Palatine. But it had risen, by gradual and almost imperceptible degrees, to the proud eminence of being the first city in the world, in point of extent, population, and splendor. The populousness of that great capital, says Gibbon, cannot perhaps be exactly ascertained; but the most modest calculation will not surely reduce it lower than a million of inhabitants [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 2. ch. 15]. It was built upon seven hills. [Hence it was called *Urbis septicollis*, and a festival was celebrated in December, called *Septimontium festus*, to commemorate the addition of the seventh hill. The names were Mons Palatinus, Capitolinus, Aventinus, Quirinalis, Coelius, Viminalis, and Exquilinus. There is a very striking allusion to this local circumstance, Revelation 17:9, and the reader may see the subject ably illustrated in Hurd's *Introductory Sermons*, vol. 2. Sermon 11.] And is said to have been twenty miles in circumference. There were in it no less than four hundred and twenty temples, crowded with statues; the priests were numerous, and each divinity had a separate college of sacerdotal servants. Previous to the establishment of Christianity in the empire, the worship and sacrifices of the Romans were uncommonly superstitious. The will of the gods was consulted upon every occasion; and no general marched to an expedition, without the previous assurance from the augurs that the omens were propitious. Their wars were declared in the most awful and solemn manner, and prayers were always offered in the temples for the prosperity of Rome, when a defeat had been sustained or a victory won. They raised altars, not only to the gods, who, as they supposed, presided over their city, but also to the deities of conquered nations, as well as to the various passions and virtues.

The gospel had found its way to this imperial city long before it was visited by Paul, who had himself written his epistle to the church there, several years prior to his being brought thither as a prisoner. It seems very probable that the knowledge of Christ was conveyed to Rome soon after the day of Pentecost; for, it is expressly

mentioned, that, among the multitude who were witnesses of the miraculous gift of tongues, there were "strangers from Rome, both Jews and proselytes" (Acts 2:10). Such of these as were converted to the Christian faith, would, on their return home, carry with them the glad tidings of salvation, and communicate it to others. When Paul wrote his epistle to that church, it must have been numerous, for he acknowledges that "their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world" (Romans 1:8). He mentions a considerable number of them by name in his last chapter, though he had never been among them; and they must have made great progress in their Christian profession, for he declares that "he was persuaded of them that they were full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Romans 15:14). The apostle had had "a great desire for many years" (Romans 15:23) to visit that church, and had been long arranging his plans to accomplish his wish; (Romans 1:11-13) but his purpose was now effected in a manner altogether different from what he had been expecting.

During the whole voyage, it is evident that Paul had been treated by Julius, the Roman officer, to whose custody he was committed, with great humanity and kindness. At Sidon he allowed him to go on shore to visit his Christian friends. And when they were shipwrecked on the island of Melite, he kept the soldiers from killing the prisoners, that he might save Paul. When Paul's friends at Puteoli wished him to remain with them a week, probably that they might enjoy his company on the Sabbath, he kindly granted their request. Julius had been favored with many opportunities of knowing the character of his prisoner; he, no doubt, knew the favorable opinion which was entertained of his case by Festus and Agrippa, and all the tribunes at Caesarea; but the things that had occurred during the voyage, must also have tended greatly to increase his respect for him; and, it is highly probable, that, to the esteem which Julius had for him, the apostle was indebted for the indulgence which was shewn him immediately on his arrival at Rome. For he was not shut up in a common jail with the other prisoners, but, from the very first, was permitted to dwell in his own hired house, attended by a soldier who guarded him by means of a long chain fastened to his right wrist and the soldier's left arm. In this manner Herod Agrippa was chained to a soldier when he was thrown into prison by Tiberius [Josephus' *Antiq.* b. 18. ch. 6. sect. 6, 7].

On the fourth day after his arrival, Paul called the chief of the Jews together, and explained to them the circumstances of his case; the treatment he had received in his own country; how he had been delivered at Jerusalem a prisoner into the hands of the Romans, who after investigating his affair, would have liberated him, had not the clamor of the Jews prevented it; and, in short that it was "for the hope of Israel" he was bound with the chain which they then saw. It seems Paul's accusers had not yet arrived from Judea. The Jews whom he had called together, therefore, confessed that they had not received any letters from that quarter, nor any information concerning him through any other medium; they were desirous, nevertheless, of knowing his

opinion of the Christian sect, which was every where spoken against. A day was therefore appointed, on which many came to his lodgings, to whom, from morning till evening, he narrated fully the history of Jesus, testifying concerning the nature of the kingdom of God, and persuading them both from the law of Moses and from the writings of the prophets. The result was that some believed the things that were spoken, and others believed not. Thus the apostle having discharged his duty in first making known the glad tidings of salvation to his own brethren according to the flesh, took his leave of them, and thenceforward associated with the Gentiles, who had been previously formed into a church in this city, and to whom he had already addressed his important and invaluable epistle. "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unmolested by any one." And with this information the inspired historian closes his narrative of the great apostle of the Gentiles.

During the two years that Paul was detained, on this occasion, a prisoner at Rome, he wrote several of those epistles to the churches which now enrich the Scriptures, and constitute so important a part of Divine revelation. Amongst these are enumerated, that to the Ephesians--to the Philippians--to the Colossians--and the short letter to Philemon; and, it is thought, that immediately on his release he wrote the epistle to the Hebrews. From these letters we may collect, that, during his imprisonment at Rome, he was attended by many of the disciples and friends, who either accompanied him from Judea, or followed him to Italy. Of this number was Tychicus, by whom he sent his epistle to the Colossians, ch. 4:7, and Onesimus, ver. 9, and Mark, ver. 10, and also Jesus, who was called Justus, all of the circumcision, ver. 11, except Onesimus. Demas too was with him, ver. 14. and Timothy, Philippians 1:1; and Aristarchus, who was imprisoned for his zeal in preaching the gospel, Colossians 4:10; and Luke, the beloved physician and evangelist, ver. 14. He also enumerates Epaphras, who seems to have been one of the pastors of the Colossian church, ver. 12; and Epaphroditus, a member of the church at Philippi, Philippians 2:25. All these Christian brethren, residents of very remote countries, appear to have been with the apostle during his first confinement at Rome.

Of the circumstances attending his trial and release, we have no authentic particulars; but that he was liberated after a period of two years, seems deducible from the words with which the sacred historian closes the book of the Acts of the Apostles. Nor have we any certain information concerning his travels and preaching, from this time till his death. Intimations, indeed, are given in the epistles which he wrote from Rome, of his purposes, from which some writers have undertaken to sketch the transactions of the latter period of his life, and there is at least a probability that it was to the following effect.

After being released, in the spring of the year 62, he embarked with Titus, and

probably with Timothy also, at some of the ports of Italy, and touched at the Island of Crete, where he preached in many cities, and collected the disciples into societies; but finding it requisite to quit Crete, he left Titus there, to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city (Titus 1:5). From thence he proceeded to Judea, to fulfill the promise which he had made, in his epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 13:23, of visiting the church at Jerusalem, and the other churches in that country. After spending some time among them, accompanied by Timothy, he left Judea to visit the churches of the Lesser Asia, taking Antioch in his way, and travelling through Cilicia into Galatia, from whence he went to Colosse, where he had desired Philemon to provide him a lodging, (Philemon ver. 12) as he had intended to spend some time in that city.

While at Colosse he wrote his epistle to Titus in Crete, and from thence proceeded to Ephesus, where he left Timothy to direct the affairs of that numerous church (1 Timothy 1:3). From Ephesus, Paul went into Macedonia, calling at Troas in his way, where, lodging with Carpus, he left behind him the cloak (which some suppose his father had received as a badge of his Roman citizenship,) and likewise some parchments (probably the autographs or original copies of his epistles to the churches). These he afterwards requested Timothy to bring with him, when he came to visit him at Rome, during his second imprisonment (2 Timothy 4:23). In Macedonia he visited the church at Phillippi, agreeably to the intimation he had given them in his letter, (Philippians 1:25,26) and from thence proceeded to Epirus, where he spent the winter, at the city of Nicopolis, (Titus 3:12) and where he had desired Titus to come from Crete and give him the meeting. Here also, or at Philippi, he wrote his first epistle to Timothy, instructing him how to conduct himself in the house of God, fearing it would not be in his power to return to Ephesus at the time he proposed (1 Timothy 3:14, 15). Accordingly, Titus having brought him such a report of the state of the churches in Crete, as made it necessary for the apostle to visit them, he set out early in the spring from Nicopolis for that island, accompanied by Titus, Trophimus, and Erastus, and taking Corinth in his way, Erastus, who was a native of that city, chose to abide there. When they arrived at Crete, Trophimus fell sick, and was left in Miletum, a city of that island (2 Timothy 4:20).

But while Paul was thus employed in conveying the glad tidings of mercy to guilty men, or confirming the churches in the truths they had already learned, a dreadful storm was gathering at Rome, which burst upon the church there with tenfold fury. Nero, who had swayed the imperial scepter about ten years, and who had arrived at such a pitch of wickedness as to prepare the minds of his subjects for the belief of any act of tyranny, cruelty, or vileness which was reported of him, is said to have set fire to the city of Rome, on the 10th of July, A.D. 64, in consequence of which a great part of it was laid in ashes. Mischief and the misery of others were his delight; and he is said to have expressed great pleasure at the spectacle, indulging himself in singing the burning of Troy while his own city was in flames. He, however, very soon became



the suspected incendiary, and consequently the object of popular hatred. To clear himself from the odious charge, he endeavored to fix the crime on the Christians; and, having thus falsely and tyrannically imputed the guilt to them, he put them to death by various methods of exquisite cruelty. The account which is given us by Tacitus, a heathen historian, is too remarkable to be omitted.

Speaking of Nero, and the conflagration of Rome, he thus proceeds; "To divert suspicion from himself, he substituted fictitious criminals, and with that view inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men, who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. The confessions of those who were seized, discovered a great multitude of their accomplices, and they were all convicted, not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city, as for their hatred of human kind. ["Ingens multitudo," is the expression of Tacitus, the literal translation of which is, "a very great multitude." It is impossible for us, in the present day, to ascertain the exact import of this phrase: Gibbon, who evinces no solicitude to overrate the number of Christians, has ingeniously compared these words of Tacitus with the import of the same words as used by Livy on another occasion; a careful inquiry into the meaning of which had furnished the result to be seven thousand. *Decline and Fall*, vol. 2. ch. 15.] They died in torments; and these were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses, others sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs,--others again were smeared over with combustible materials, and used as torches to illumine the darkness of the night. The gardens of Nero were destined for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied by a horse race and honored with the presence of the emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer. The guilt of the Christians deserved, indeed, the most exemplary punishment; but the public abhorrence was changed into commiseration, from the opinion that these unhappy wretches were sacrificed, not so much to the rigor of justice, as to the cruelty of the jealous tyrant" [Tacit. Annal. b. 15. c. 44].

Intelligence of these cruelties being brought to Paul while at Crete, and, thinking his presence might be useful in comforting the minds of his brethren, he set out for Italy, and probably arrived at Rome in the beginning of the year 65, where he was apprehended, as being a chief man among this obnoxious sect. He appears to have been twice brought before the emperor or his prefect, whence it is presumed that he had been confined at least a year before he was condemned.

We may easily conceive how perilous it must have been for any of Paul's friends to avow an open attachment to him, under existing circumstances; and, indeed, it appears from the Second Epistle to Timothy, which he wrote while waiting his execution, that most of them fled the city. Of the conduct of Onesiphorus, however, he makes the most honorable mention (2 Timothy 1:16-18). During the apostle's stay at Ephesus, he had been extremely kind to him. But having occasion to visit Rome,

while Paul was in confinement, Onesiphorus "sought him out very diligently and found him." He was not ashamed of the apostle because he was immured in a jail and loaded with a chain; on the contrary, he bestowed upon him the most kind and tender assiduities, and cheerfully ministered to his temporal necessities. Paul could not reflect upon this affectionate behavior of his friend, without having all the sensibilities of his soul excited; and he gave vent to them, by offering up his prayer to God that he would "grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus in the great day of account;" repeating' his supplication, "the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." But Onesiphorus had now returned to Ephesus: Luke alone was with him; and even he appears to have been so intimidated that, at the apostle's first examination, he was afraid to stand by him. In this state of things, "about to be offered up, and viewing the hour of his departure at hand," he urged Timothy to hasten to him to receive his last instructions, and assist him in the ministry during the short time he had to live. And thus, according to the most credible records, he was condemned and put to death in the twelfth year of the reign of Nero, answering to the sixty-sixth of the Christian era. Two years after that, Nero put an end to his own life, and to this terrible persecution, which had raged during a period of four years, and swept off a prodigious number of the disciples of Christ.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE PERIOD OF THE DEATH OF PAUL, A.D. 66, TO THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST CENTURY**

It has been pertinently remarked by one of the ancients, that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles leaves the reader thirsting for more. But concise as his narrative is, it ought to be regarded by us as an invaluable part of the sacred writings; and for this reason among others, because it shews us in what sense the apostles understood the commission which their Lord had given them, previous to his ascension into heaven. From their discourses, recorded in that book, we learn what were the doctrines they preached; what the laws and institutions they enforced upon the disciples; and the manner in which they set up his kingdom in the world. In attempting a sketch of this interesting subject, we have hitherto prosecuted our journey under the light of divine Revelation; but, henceforward, we must be content to explore our way under more uncertain guides.

A mind accustomed to reflection, naturally inquires, how were the other apostles of Christ occupied during the period that Paul was engaged in conveying the glad tidings of salvation throughout the Gentile countries. But the volume of revelation does not give such ample information upon this subject as we might wish. It may however, be remarked, that as Jerusalem was the place from whence, according to ancient prophecy, "the word of the Lord was to go forth, and the law to proceed out of Zion," so we may see special reasons why the Lord appointed them their stations for a season in that church. It seems evident, that at the first, they not only discharged the apostolic office in giving forth the New Testament revelation of doctrine, and delivering to the churches the ordinances of public worship, but they also acted as

bishops, elders, pastors, or ministers of the word, and also as deacons, having the care of the poor. In process of time, however, we find other persons appointed to fulfill the two last mentioned offices, (compare Acts 6:5, with 11:30; 15:6-22, 23) and that, even while some of the apostles still remained with the church at Jerusalem. We may also infer, that though the twelve were stationed there by the Head of the church, they, nevertheless, made occasional excursions into different parts of Judea and Samaria, to propagate the knowledge of Christ, and gather his disciples into churches, as we see Peter doing (Acts 9:32), and that when it became no longer necessary for them to remain with that church, they proceeded to carry into effect the commission which the Lord Jesus had given them, to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

It appears from credible records, that the gospel was preached in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by Jude; in Egypt, Mavorica, Mauritania, and other parts of Africa, by Mark, Simeon, and Jude; in Ethiopia, by the Eunuch and Matthias; in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighboring parts of Asia, by Peter; in the territories of the seven Asiatic churches by John; in Parthia, by Matthew; in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew; in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew; in Persia, by Simeon and Jude; in Media, Carmania, etc. by Thomas; from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, by Paul, who also published it in Italy, and probably in Spain, Gaul, and Britain. [Young's *History of Idolatrous Corruptions in Religion*, vol. 2: p. 216-240. See also a Sermon by Dr. Geo. Campbell, entitled "The Success of the Gospel, a Proof of its Truth."]

James, the brother of the apostle John, and son of Zebedee, as we have formerly noticed, had been put to death by Herod; and, if we may credit Jerome, Peter also was put to death in the twelfth year of the reign of Nero, about the same time that Paul finished his course and was taken to receive the crown of righteousness which his Divine Master had promised to bestow upon him. By this time also James, the Lord's brother, had sealed his testimony with his blood. The following account of his death is given us by Josephus the Jewish historian. "Ananus, who had seized the office of high-priest, was a man bold in his temper, and very insolent. He was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who surpass all the other Jews in their rigid manner of judging offenders; and he thought he now had a proper opportunity of exercising his authority. Festus was dead, and Albinus, who had been sent into Judea to succeed him, was upon his journey thither. So he assembled the Sanhedrim of judges, and brought before him the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others of his companions, and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned" [Antiq. b. 20, ch. 9]. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, gives a somewhat different account of the death of James, and thinks he was killed, not in consequence of a judicial trial, but in a popular tumult, the occasion of which he thus explains. "When Paul had appealed unto Caesar, and had been sent to Rome by Festus, the Jews who had

aimed at his death, turned their rage against James, the Lord's brother, who had been appointed by the apostles, bishop of Jerusalem." [*Eccles. Hist.* b. 2, ch. 23].

These different accounts are certainly not irreconcilable, and the fact itself is unquestionable, that he was put to death by the Jews, about the year 64, and only a short time after the writing of that excellent epistle which forms a part of the sacred canon. The Divine long-suffering was, however, now fast drawing towards a close with the devoted city and people of Jerusalem. The measure of their iniquities was at length filled up. To all their former crimes they had now added these, that "they had both killed the Lord Jesus, and persecuted his servants the apostles," even unto death; and the wrath of Heaven was about to come upon them to the uttermost. Christ himself, during his personal ministry, had foretold their doom, and bewailed it in the most pathetic strains.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest those that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not: behold your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37).

For "the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another (Luke 19:42). As the accomplishment of these predictions ended in the utter abolition of the Jewish church and state, a constitution which was originally founded in Divine appointment, and had existed during a period of fifteen hundred years; and, as it was unquestionably the most awful revolution in all the religious dispensations of God, and which, moreover, in various ways, contributed greatly to the success of the gospel, it seems to merit a more detailed account than is generally to be found of it in the histories of the Christian church.

Nero, the Roman emperor, whose death has been already adverted to, left the empire in a state of extreme confusion, and Judea partook of it in a remarkable degree. To him succeeded Galba, who reigned from June the 9th, 68, to January 15th, 69, when he was followed by Otho, who scarcely swayed the imperial scepter three months. Then came Vitellius, who reigned no longer than to December 21st of the same year—there having been, if we include Nero who preceded, and Vespasian who followed, no less than five different emperors in the short space of eighteen months; during which the empire was a scene of confusion, desolation and misery. It has been remarked, that Christianity at first derived some advantages from the abandoned characters of the Roman emperors, who at this time swayed the scepter. They had other crimes and other mischiefs in view, and this left them little leisure to harass a sect so contemptible, when compared with Paganism, as was that of the Christians. Accordingly, from the death of Christ to that of Vespasian, for about the space of

thirty-seven years, the Romans paid little regard to the progress of the gospel. They were ruled by weak, frantic, or vicious emperors; the magistrates and senators, and every worthy man of any note, stood in continual fear for their own lives. Nero, indeed, had destroyed many of the Christians at Rome; but it was for a supposed crime of which all the world knew them to be innocent; so that this cruel treatment raised compassion, and rather did service than harm to the Christian cause, and the persecution was soon over.

After the death of king Herod Agrippa, the particulars of which the reader will find recorded, Acts 12. Judea again became a province of the Roman empire, and CUSPIUS FADUS was sent to be its governor. Upon his arrival he found the country infested with banditti, which were grown both numerous and powerful, whom he was compelled to suppress, and also to quell an insurrection which the Jews had raised against the inhabitants of Philadelphia, formerly the city of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites. During the government of Fadus, there arose a notable impostor, named Theudas, who drew great numbers of the deluded Jews after him, inviting them to follow him beyond Jordan, and promising them that he would divide the waters of that river, as Joshua had done by his single word. Fadus sent some military troops against him and his followers, who killed some and took others prisoners, and among the latter, Theudas himself, whom he caused to be beheaded, and his head brought to Jerusalem [Josep. *Antiq.* b. 20. ch. 1, and 5].

Fadus was soon afterwards succeeded by TIBERIUS ALEXANDER, an apostate Jew, who very shortly gave way to make room for Ventidius Cumanus, during whose government of Judea, those troubles began which ended in the ruin of the Jewish nation. The great concourse of people which their festival brought to Jerusalem, obliged the Romans at such times to keep a guard before the gate of the temple to prevent tumults. It was now the passover, when one of the Roman soldiers upon duty, had the impudence, probably intending an insult to the Jews, by shewing that he was not of the circumcision, to expose his nakedness. This indignity roused the resentment of the Jews to such a height, that they went and complained of it to Cumanus, and very insultingly told him, that the affront was offered by his order, not merely to the nation, but to their God. Cumanus at first tried to appease them by fair means, but finding them grow more tumultuous, he ordered all his troops to the spot, which so alarmed them that they fled in the greatest consternation, insomuch, that ten thousand (Eusebius and Jerome say thirty thousand) were stifled to death in their flight, by running over one another in the confined avenues that led to and from the temple. [Joseph. *Antiq.* b. 20. ch. 5.]

Cureanus was soon afterwards succeeded in the government of Judea by CLAUDIUS FELIX, under whom the Jewish affairs proceeded in a progressive course of deterioration. The country swarmed with robbers and insurgents, and Jerusalem itself became the prey of false prophets, and pretended workers of miracles, who were

continually blowing the embers of discontent and sedition. Add to which, that numbers of Sicarii or assassins crowded into all the cities and towns of the country, committing the most horrible murders, under the pretext of zeal for their religion and liberties. Felix did not content himself with merely inflicting punishment upon those who violated the public peace, but he extended it to almost all others indiscriminately, whom his avarice or resentment marked out for destruction. His cruel behavior induced a very old priest, named Jonathan, who had been instrumental in procuring him the office, to complain of his ill conduct; which Felix at length becoming unable to bear, procured a person, in whom Jonathan reposed great confidence, to assassinate the latter, and it was accordingly done. This murder going unpunished, because the person who should have avenged it was the instigator to it, proved the occasion of an almost infinite number of others, which were committed everywhere, the temple not excepted; insomuch, that the Jewish chiefs, and even the pontiffs, made no hesitation of hiring the assassins above-mentioned to rid them of all such persons as were obnoxious to them [Joseph. *Antiq.* b. 2. ch. 13].

Felix was succeeded in the government by FESTUS, (Acts 14:27) who, on coming into the province, found the very priesthood engaged in a civil war among themselves, occasioned by the frequent depositions of the pontiffs (or high priests) and their continuing to insist upon being allowed a greater portion of the tythes, than the inferior priests could afford them. Agrippa had the preceding year deposed Ananias, and put Ishmael in his room. There were still several other discarded pontiffs alive, all of whom claimed the same share in the tythes which they had enjoyed while in office; the yielding of which, must of course impoverish the inferior priests, who therefore resisted the demand. Their rancor at length arose to such a height, that each party was accustomed to walk the streets, accompanied by a troop of the Sicarii, and upon every rencontre they fell foul on each other, killing all that opposed them, and filling both city and country, and even the very temple itself, oftentimes with blood. Festus, therefore, had a threefold task upon his hands; he had to suppress the violence of the priesthood against each other -- that of the seditious laity against the Romans, and such as contentedly submitted to their government-- and that of the banditti abroad, who infested the whole country, and robbed, plundered, and massacred everywhere without mercy [Joseph. *Antiq.* b. 20. ch. 8]. These concerns occupied the greater part of his time, during his short government. Festus dying soon after Paul was brought before him (Acts 26), Nero nominated as his successor ALBINUS, of whom we had lately occasion to speak, the high-priesthood having in the mean time been, by Agrippa, transferred to Ananus. Of this governor it is related by historians, that he was such a cruel and rapacious monster, that Felix and Festus, with all their faults, were angels when compared with him. His first care, however, was to suppress the Sicarii, robbers, and banditti, which were now grown more numerous and daring than ever. He punished with the utmost severity as many as came into his hands; yet the rest only became thereby more bold and impudent. Albinus, after a two years tenure of office, was recalled by Nero, and

succeeded by Gessius Florus, the last and worst governor that Judea ever had.

Josephus seems at a loss for language sufficiently strong in which to paint him correctly, or a monster black enough with which to compare him. His rapines, and cruelties, and acts of oppression; his compromising with the banditti for large sums of money; and, in short, his whole behavior, was so openly flagitious, that the Jews were disposed to regard him rather as a bloody executioner sent to torture than as a magistrate to govern them. His design seemed to be that of goading them to an open rebellion, either that he might have the brutal satisfaction of seeing them destroy each other, or to prevent them from inquiring into his own oppressions and atrocities. And, indeed, he but too well succeeded in this; for, by his means a war was kindled, which only ended with the total ruin of the Jewish nation [Joseph. *Antiq.* b. 20. ch. 11].

My confined limits render it inexpedient to go into any ample detail of this dreadful catastrophe, and I shall therefore restrict myself to a few of the leading particulars, referring such of my readers, as desire a more full account of the matter, to the volumes of Josephus.

While Felix was governor of Judea, a dispute arose between the Jews and the Syrians, concerning the city of Caesarea--the former maintaining that it belonged to them, because it had been built chiefly by Herod; the latter insisting that it had always been esteemed a Greek city, inasmuch as their monarch had erected temples and statues in it. From words they proceeded to blows, and took up arms against each other. Felix, for the moment, put an end to the contest, by sending some of the chief men of each nation to Rome, to plead their cause before the emperor. The latter decided in favor of the Syrians; but the decision was no sooner announced in Judea than it became the signal for a general revolt--the Jews everywhere taking up arms; and thus began the fatal war, in the second year of the government of Florus, in the twelfth of Nero's reign, and in the sixty-ninth year of Christ. Agrippa, who was at Jerusalem at the beginning of the revolt, used every exertion to moderate their rage; they pelted him with stones, and compelled him to leave the city, which was instantly in a flame. Florus beheld all this with inhuman pleasure, and without lifting his finger to quell the tumult. The evil spread throughout all Judea, and nothing was to be heard of but robberies, murder, and every species of cruelty--cities and villages filled with the dead of all ages and of each sex, and of every quality down to the tender infant. The Jews, who were almost everywhere the sufferers, on their part, spared neither Syrians nor Romans, but retaliated their cruelties wherever they got the better of them, in consequence of which many of their peaceful brethren were murdered in their places of abode. The Caesareans fell suddenly on those of their city, and massacred twenty thousand of them; two thousand were murdered at Ptolemais; and fifty thousand at the city of Alexandria in Egypt. At Jerusalem, Florus one day caused his troops to go and plunder the market, and to kill all they met; and



they accordingly murdered three thousand five hundred persons, men, women, and children. This, however, was far from satiating the monster; the streets of the city continued day after day to be deluged with human blood. Bernice, the sister of Agrippa, happening to be detained at Jerusalem during this time, to perform the vow of the Nazarene, which required thirty days for its accomplishment, used every entreaty to soften the brutish praetor, even at the risk of her own life, And when repulsed one day, she repeated her exertions on the next, going barefoot, and throwing herself at the footstool of his tribunal, in the most submissive terms beseeching him to put a stop to the shedding of so much blood. He disdained to shew her the least token of common respect, and she ran the risk of being torn to pieces before she could reach her own home. Florus wrote to Cestius, the governor of Syria, casting all the blame of these horrible cruelties upon the Jews [Joseph. *Wars of the Jews*, b. 2. ch. 14, 15].

The revolt still spreading wider, the Jews at length carried their conquests beyond Jordan, where they took the fortress of Cyprus, raised it to the ground, and put all the Romans to the sword. Cestius, whom I have just mentioned, and who had hitherto kept himself an idle spectator of these mutual devastations, began to think it high time to exert himself in putting a stop to their further progress. He, therefore, marched into Judea with a powerful army, burned all the towns and villages in his way, massacred all the Jews he could come at, and then encamped before Gibeon about the feast of tabernacles. The Jews at Jerusalem no sooner heard of his approach, than forsaking the solemnities of their religion, and, even though it was on the Sabbath-day, they flew to arms, and proceeded to meet him with such fury, that had not the cavalry arrived at the moment to the support of his infantry, he had sustained a signal defeat. He lost five hundred men, while the Jews lost but twenty-two. Here Cestius tried to conciliate the latter by sending two of his principal officers to offer them a pardon and terms of peace. Instead of listening to his proposals they put one of them to death, and wounded the other, who narrowly escaped with his life—an action so base and treacherous, that it was condemned by the more moderate of the Jews themselves. Cestius enraged at this, pursued them almost to Jerusalem, and halting at a village called Scopas, about a mile from the city, waited three days, in the hope that their terror would induce them to relent; but not finding that to be the case, he advanced in order of battle on the 30th of October, 69, and put them into such consternation, that they abandoned all the outworks and retired into the inner cincture near the temple. Cestius set fire to the former, and began to lay siege to the latter, taking up his head quarters in the royal palace [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 2. ch. 18].

Had the governor vigorously pushed the siege, it is probable he might have succeeded at this time in putting an end to the sedition; but that sinful nation was to be reserved for much sorer evils. Means were found to corrupt his generals, which gave new life to the insurgents. They made a sortie and succeeded in repulsing him,

pursued him to his camp at Gibeon, harassing his rear, whilst, having secured the passes, they attacked his army in flank. Hemmed in on all sides, the mountains re-echoed with the hideous cries of his soldiers, and having lost four thousand foot and two hundred horse, favored by the intervening night, they, on the 8th of November, happily found a pass through the narrow straits of Bethoron and escaped [Joseph. Wars, b. 2. ch. 19].

Intelligence being brought to Nero of the ill success of Cestius, and that the Jews were making the most vigorous preparations to carry on war against the Romans, he gave orders to Vespasian, who had greatly signalized himself, both in Germany and Britain, to march speedily into Judea with a powerful army. In the beginning of the ensuing year, accompanied by his son Titus, at the head of sixty thousand men, all well disciplined, he entered Galilee, and having burnt Gadara, was marching to besiege Jotapata. Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian was at that time governor of the province; and being apprised of the intention of Vespasian, he threw himself into Jotapata, which, during a period of forty-seven days, he defended with great bravery. It was at length taken by assault, about the beginning of July, and given up to fire and sword; not one Jew escaped to convey the dreadful tidings, but all were either murdered or made prisoners. Of the former, the number was computed at forty thousand, and of the latter only twelve hundred, among whom was Josephus the governor [Joseph. Wars, b. 3. ch. 7].

**[JOSEPHUS]**, whose "History of the Wars of the Jews" is too well known to need any description from me, was, by his father, of the race of the priests, and of the first of the twenty-four courses; and by his mother he was descended from the Asmonsaeon family, in which the royal power was united with that of the high-priesthood. He was born at Jerusalem, in the first year of Caius Caligula. At sixteen years of age, he began to inquire into the sentiments of the different sects among the Jews,--the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. At twenty-six he went to Rome, to petition the emperor Nero in behalf of several priests of his acquaintance, whom Felix had sent bound to Rome. At Puteoli he became acquainted with Aliturus, a Jewish comedian, who had ingratiated himself with Nero. Through this man he was introduced to Poppaea, the wife of Nero, by whose interest he succeeded in obtaining liberty for his friends, and from whom he also obtained many considerable presents. The following year he returned into Judea, when he saw every thing tending to a revolt under Gessius Florus. In the beginning of the Jewish war, he commanded in Galilee. When Vespasian, who was a general of the Roman army under the reign of Nero, had conquered that country, Josephus was taken at Jotapata. He and forty more Jews had concealed themselves in a subterraneous cavern, where they formed the desperate resolution of killing each other rather than surrender themselves to the Romans. Josephus, having been governor of the place, and therefore entitled to priority in point of rank, it was at first proposed by the rest to yield it to him as an honor, to become the first victim. He, however, contrived to divert their minds from

this, by proposing to cast lots for the precedence; and after thirty-nine of them had ballotted and killed one another, he, and the other who survived, agreed not to lay violent hands upon themselves, nor to imbrue their hands in one another's blood, but deliver themselves up to the Romans. Upon this, Josephus surrendered himself up to Nicanor, who conducted him to Vespasian. When brought into the presence of the latter, Josephus told him that he had something to communicate to him which would probably strike him with much surprise, and perhaps not obtain his immediate credit--it was that he, Vespasian, should become emperor of Rome, in less than three years. Aware that the general might think this was merely a stratagem on the part of Josephus to save his life, the latter told him that he did not ask for his liberty,--he was content to be kept as a close prisoner during the interval; and that, should his prediction not be realized, he was content to be then put to death. Vespasian yielded to his request, although he, at first, placed no credit in what Josephus had said. He, however, kept the latter with him, as a prisoner, while he himself continued in these parts; but when he heard that he had been elected emperor at Rome, he gave him his liberty, and raised him to his confidence and favor. Josephus continued with his son Titus, who took the command of the army after his father Vespasian was gone to Rome. He was present at the siege of Jerusalem, and was a spectator of the awful desolations of the city, temple, and country; and soon after wrote his *History of the Jewish Wars*, and *Jewish Antiquities*. The whole were finished in the 56th year of his age, in the 13th of Domitian, and Anno Christi, 93.]

Whilst Vespasian was carrying on the siege of Jotapata, his son Titus was sent against Jaffa in the neighborhood, which he subdued on the 20th of June. On taking possession of the town, the inhabitants made a desperate resistance in the streets during the space of six hours; but being at last overpowered, all the men were put to the sword, and the women and children taken prisoners. A week after, the Samaritans, who had assembled upon Mount Gerizzim, with the intention of defending themselves, having been closely surrounded by a Roman detachment, were reduced to the utmost distress for want of water. Many of them died with thirst, and those who refused to surrender were all put to the sword. Joppa, which had been laid waste by Cestius, being again repeopled by a great number of seditious Jews, who infested the adjoining countries, Vespasian sent troops to take it, which they soon achieved. Above four thousand of them endeavored to escape the massacre, by fleeing to their ships, A sudden tempest drove them back, so that they were all either drowned or put to the sword, Tarichea and Tiberias were next taken--after the reduction of which, all the other cities of Galilee submitted to the Romans, except Gischala, Gamala, and Mount Tabor [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 3. ch. 7, 9, 10].

Gamala was situated upon the lake Genesareth, opposite to Tarichea, and stood the siege of Agrippa, near seven months; but, still holding out, the Romans were obliged to come to his assistance. But of all the places which they had been called to subdue, none put the courage and strength of the Romans so severely to the test as Gamala.

Having at length succeeded in beating down one of its towers, the army entered in at the breach, and put four thousand of its inhabitants to the sword; while a much greater number perished by their own hands, precipitating themselves down from the rocks and walls, as well as by other violent methods. In the mean time Placidus, a Roman general, by a dexterous stratagem succeeded in obtaining possession of Mount Tabor [Joseph, *Wars*, b. 4, ch. 1].

The inhabitants of Gischala, against which Vespasian sent his son Titus, seemed disposed to make a voluntary surrender of themselves, to which Titus, who by this time was satiated with the carnage that had ensued at Gamala, earnestly exhorted them. The voice of the more peaceable citizens, however, was overruled by that of a factious and vile fellow, named John, the son of Levi, who succeeded in getting the mob at his beck, and overawed the whole city. It being the sabbath, this wretched man begged of Titus to forbear hostilities till the morrow, when he would accept of his offer; but, succeeding in his request, he, in the mean time fled to Jerusalem, where he was the occasion of much mischief. On the morrow the citizens went out and surrendered themselves, informing Titus of John's flight, supplicating his clemency towards the innocent, and beseeching him that he would only punish the factious. Titus readily yielded to their request, and dispatched some of his horse after the fugitives. John himself reached Jerusalem; but the Romans put to death six thousand of his followers upon the road, and brought back three thousand women and children prisoners. The taking and garrisoning of this place completed the conquest of Galilee, and Titus on this rejoined his father at Caesarea, where they gave their troops a respite before they proceeded to besiege Jerusalem [Joseph. *Wars*. b. 4. ch. 2].

Here it may be proper to digress a little, and compare with the preceding melancholy detail, the predictions of Jesus Christ concerning this devoted people. He had been foretelling the destruction of the temple, when his disciples came and asked him, "But when shall these things be, and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, let no man deceive you, for many shall come, saying, I am the Christ; and the time draweth near-go ye not after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions be not terrified, for these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet-for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and famines and pestilences, and great signs shall there be from heaven. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to those that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts

failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21; Matthew 24; Mark 13).

It may be useful to keep these things in view, while we now proceed to mark the accomplishment of this awful prophecy in the prosecution and final issue of this dreadful siege.

Vespasian discovered no haste to depart from Caesarea, and commence the siege of Jerusalem, but prolonged his stay, insomuch that his officers began to be amazed at his inactivity, and took the liberty to remind him that he was losing the most favorable opportunity of making himself master of that city and of all Palestine. But that prudent general soon made them sensible that his continuing thus idle at Caesarea was the surest means of effecting the conquest of which they were speaking, with the least difficulty and risk of his troops. There can be little doubt that he was fully apprised of the shocking state of things within the city, which at this time was given up to such intestine broils and massacres that the strength of the Jews was daily exhausting itself, while the Romans were nourishing theirs. In fact, the whole nation was at this moment divided into two opposite parties; one of which, foreseeing that the war, if continued, must end in the total ruin of their country, were for putting an end to it by a speedy submission to the Romans; while the other breathed nothing but hostility, confusion and cruelty; and opposed all peaceable measures with invincible obstinacy. This latter party was by far the most numerous and powerful; besides which, it consisted of men of the vilest and most profligate characters that perhaps the pen of the historian ever recorded. They were proud, ambitious, cruel, rapacious, and addicted to the most horrid crimes. If we may credit Josephus, their own historian, they acted more like infernal beings than men. John of Gischala, formerly mentioned, was then at the head of this party in Jerusalem. Upon one occasion they put to death twelve thousand persons of noble extraction and in the flower of their age, butchering them in the most horrid manner. In short, their rage and cruelty had grown to such a height, that the whole nation trembled at their very name, while none durst be seen or heard to weep for the murder of their nearest relatives, nor even to give them burial [Joseph. *Wars*, b.4. ch. 6].

Thus every thing succeeded to the wish of Vespasian. The party of John of Gischala, having massacred or driven away their opponents, began to turn their murderous weapons against each other. In the mean time, the Roman general, having past his winter at Caesarea, marched out in the beginning of the spring, and penetrated Idumea, plundering and burning every place through which he passed, except where he thought it necessary to leave a garrison to keep the country in awe. [Ibid. b. 4. ch. 9.]

A few months previous to this time he had received the news of Nero's death, and of Galba being appointed his successor. Titus, his son, was therefore dispatched to

Rome to compliment the new emperor, and to know his pleasure about prosecuting the war against the Jews. Taking his journey by sea, and detained by adverse winds, he had reached no further than Achai, when the news arrived that Galba was murdered, after a reign of seven months, and Otho proclaimed in his stead. The latter, in about three months, shared the fate of his predecessor, and was succeeded by Vitellius, whose short reign issued in Vespasian being chosen emperor.

Suetonius, describing the state of things at this period, compares Rome to a ship at sea, tossed about by contrary winds, and ready at every moment to sink. And such was its fluctuating state, when the election of **Vespasian** happily restored tranquillity to the empire. As soon as he had received the news that his election was confirmed at Rome, he left the best of his troops with his son, ordering him to go and besiege Jerusalem and utterly destroy it, while himself returned to the capital of his empire. [Joseph. *Wars*. b. 4. ch. 9.]

**Titus** lost no time in carrying into effect the injunctions of his father; and, accordingly, in the beginning of April, near the time of the feast of the passover, he put his army in motion; and, advancing as close to the city as he thought expedient, went personally, attended only by six hundred horse, to reconnoitre its strength and avenues. It was strongly situated by nature; surrounded by three stout walls, and many stately and strong towers. The first or old wall, which, by reason of its vast thickness, was looked upon as impregnable, had no less than sixty of these towers, lofty, firm, and strong. The second had fourteen, and the third eighty. The former, besides its extraordinary height and thickness, was raised on a high and steep mountain, having beneath it a valley of prodigious depth. The other two were high and strong in proportion. The whole circumference of the city was nearly four English miles. [Ibid. b. 4. ch. 11. and b. 5. ch. 2, and 4.]

Before he commenced a regular siege, Titus dispatched Josephus, the Jewish historian, with offers of peace to the inhabitants, but they were indignantly rejected. He was sent a second time with fresh overtures, but with no better success. Titus now resolved to begin the assault in good earnest. In fourteen days a breach was made in the first wall, by means of the battering rams which played against it, at which the Romans entered, and the Jews abandoning this last enclosure, retired behind the next. Titus, in five days more, succeeded in destroying a tower in the second enclosure, which gave his troops admittance into that also; but being bent on saving the city, he would not suffer any part of the wall or streets to be demolished, which left the breach and lanes so narrow, that when his soldiers were repulsed by the besieged, they experienced great inconvenience, and many of them were killed. The oversight was speedily rectified, and the attack renewed with such rigor, that they resumed their advantage in four days after the first repulse. [Joseph. *Wars*, ch. 7-9.]

At this time the internal state of the city was beyond description horrible. For besides that faction prevailed against faction, and the streets became deluged with the blood of the people, famine raged in a terrible manner among them, which was soon followed by a pestilence; and as these two dreadful judgments increased, so did the fury of the factions, who by their intestine feuds, had destroyed such quantities of provisions, that they were forced to prey upon the people with unheard of cruelty. They broke into their houses, and, if they found any store of provisions, put them to death for not apprising them of it; and if nothing was found but bare walls, which was generally the case, they inflicted torture upon them, under the pretext that they had some provisions concealed. "I should undertake an impossible task," says Josephus, "were I to enter into a detail of all the cruelties of these impious wretches; let it suffice to say, that I do not think that, since the creation of the world, any city ever suffered such dreadful calamities, or abounded with men so fertile in every species of wickedness." [Ibid. b. 5. ch. 19, and b. 6, ch. 4.]

Titus was not unapprised of their miserable condition, and was still desirous of sparing them. He granted them four days for reflection, during which he, caused his army to be mustered, and provisions to be distributed to them in the sight of the Jews, who flocked upon the walls to see it. He then sent Josephus to expostulate with them, which he did, exhorting them not to run themselves into inevitable ruin, by obstinately persisting to defend a place which could hold out but a very little longer, and which the Romans already looked upon as their own. Josephus has given us a copy of his elaborate and pathetic speech on this occasion, which he tells us drew a flood of tears from his eyes. They requited his kindness by darting their arrows at him, and rejected the merciful overtures of Titus. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 6. ch. 1.]

It is difficult for us in the present day to form any adequate conception of the extremity of wretchedness to which the inhabitants of this devoted city were reduced. While the poor were carried out at the gates, to be buried at the public expense, Titus was informed by a deserter, that at one of the gates where he was stationed, there were carried out one hundred and fifteen thousand, eight hundred and eighty, between the 14th of April, when the siege commenced, and the 1st of July. Another told him that they had carried out at all the gates six hundred thousand, and that then, being unable to carry them all out, they had filled whole houses with them, and shut them up.

I must not disgust the reader by reciting in this place, the miserable resources to which the wretched inhabitants were now reduced, in order to prolong the sad remains of life; but one circumstance is so materially connected with the narrative, that it cannot with any propriety be suppressed. It was in this sad and pinching conjuncture that an unhappy mother was reduced to the extremity of feeding upon her own child! This lady, whose name was Miriam, had taken refuge, with many

others, in this devoted city, from the breaking out of the war. As the famine increased, her house was repeatedly plundered of such provisions as she had been able to procure. She had vainly endeavored by her entreaties, to prevail upon them, or by her execrations to provoke them, to put an end to her miserable existence, but the mercy was too great to be granted her. Frantic at length with fury and despair, she snatched her infant from her bosom, cut its throat, and broiled it; and having satiated her present hunger, concealed the rest. The smell of it soon drew the voracious human tigers to her house; they threatened her with the most excruciating tortures, if she did not discover her provisions to them. Upon which she set before them the relics of her mangled infant, bidding them eat heartily and not be squeamish, since she, its once tender mother, had made no scruple to butcher, dress, and feed upon it. At the sight of this horrid dish, inhuman as they were, they stood aghast, petrified with horror, and departed, leaving the astonished mother in possession of her dismal fare. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 6. ch. 3.]

When the report of this spread through the city, the horror and consternation were as universal as they were inexpressible. They now, for the first time, began to think themselves forsaken of the providence of God, and to expect the most awful effects of his anger. Nor were their fears either unreasonable or ill-founded; for no sooner had Titus heard of this inhuman deed, than he vowed the total extirpation of the city and people. "Since," said he, "they have so often refused my proffers of pardon, and have preferred war to peace, rebellion to obedience, and famine to plenty, I am determined to bury that cursed metropolis under its ruins, that the sun may never more dart his beams on a city, where the mothers feed on the flesh of their children, and the fathers, no less guilty than themselves, choose to drive them to such extremities, rather than lay down their arms." [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 6. ch. 3.]

This dreadful event happened about the end of July, by which time the Romans had got possession of the fortress or castle of Antonia, which obliged the Jews to set fire to the stately galleries that joined it to the temple, lest it should facilitate a passage to the besiegers into it. On the seventeenth day of that month, the daily sacrifices, for the first time, ceased, there being no proper person remaining to offer them up. On the 28th of July, Titus set fire to the north gallery of the temple, which enclosed the outer court, from fort Antonia to the valley of Cedron, by means of which he got an easy admittance into it, and forced the besieged into that of the priests. Six days he tried to batter down one of the galleries; yet such was the strength of the wall, that it eluded the force of his battering rams, as well as the art of sapping. His next attempt was to get possession by scaling; but his men were so vigorously repulsed, and with such loss that he was obliged to desist. The gates were then set on fire, which, being plated with silver, burnt all that night, whilst the metal dropped down in the melting. The flame communicated itself to the porticos and galleries, which the besieged beheld without offering to stop it, contenting themselves with sending out volleys of impotent curses against the Romans. On the ninth of August, Titus gave orders to



extinguish the fire, and called a council to determine whether the remainder of the temple should be saved or not. He himself was for the former, but most of his officers for the latter, alleging that it was no longer a temple, but a scene of war and slaughter, and that the Jews would never be at rest, so long as any part of it was standing. But when they found Titus so inflexibly bent on preserving so noble an edifice, against which he told them he could have no quarrel, they all came over to his mind. The next day, August the 10th, was therefore determined upon for a general assault. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 6, ch. 4.]

In the mean time, something on the part of the Jews, having turned up, which exasperated the Roman soldiers, or as Josephus thinks, pushed by the hand of Providence, one of them of his own accord, took up a blazing firebrand, and getting on his comrade's shoulders, threw it into one of the apartments that surrounded the sanctuary, through a window, and instantly set the whole north side in a flame, up to the third story. Titus, who was gone to rest himself awhile in his pavilion, was awaked at the noise, and ran immediately to give orders for the fire to be extinguished. He called, entreated, threatened, and even caned his men, but all to no purpose. The confusion was so great, and the soldiers so obstinately bent upon destroying all that was left, that he was neither heard nor regarded. Those that flocked thither from the camp, instead of obeying his orders, were busy, either in killing the Jews or increasing the flames. Observing that all his endeavors were ineffectual, Titus entered into the sanctuary and most holy place, the remaining grandeur and riches of which, even yet, surpassed all that had been told him of it. [Ibid. b. 6. ch. 4.] Out of the former he saved the golden candlestick, the table of the shew-bread, the altar of incense, all of pure gold, and the book of the law, wrapped up in a rich golden tissue. Upon his quitting that sacred place, some soldiers set fire to it, obliging those who had staid behind to come out also--in consequence of which, they all began to plunder it, carrying off the costly utensils, robes, gold plating of the gates, etc. insomuch that there was not one of them who did not enrich himself by it.

A horrid massacre succeeded to this, in which many thousands perished, some by the flames, others falling from the battlements, and a greater number still by the enemy's sword, which spared neither age, sex, nor quality. Among them were upwards of six thousand persons, who had been seduced thither by a false prophet, who had promised them that they should find a miraculous deliverance on that very day. The Romans carried their fury to the burning of all the treasure-houses of the place, though they were full of the richest furniture, vestments, plate, and other valuable articles, there laid up for security; nor did they cease the dreadful work of devastation, till they had destroyed all except two of the temple gates, and that part of the court that was destined for the women. The city was now abandoned to the fury of the soldiers, who proceeded forthwith to plunder it, setting it on fire in every direction, and murdering all that fell into their hands; whilst the factious party among the Jews, that had hitherto escaped, went and fortified themselves in the

royal palace, where they killed eight thousand of their own countrymen that had there taken refuge. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 7. ch. 1.]

Preparations were now making for a vigorous attack on the upper city, and particularly on the royal palace, and this occupied Titus from the 20th of August to the 7th of September, during which time, great numbers came and made their submission to him, among whom were forty thousand citizens of the inferior classes, including, in all probability, the Christian church, to whom he gave permission to go and settle where they would. On the 8th of September the city was taken and entered by Titus.

JUSTUS LIPSIUS has been at the pains to compute the numbers of Jews that are said by Josephus to have perished, from the beginning to the conclusion of the war; and, for the reader's satisfaction, I subjoin them.

### **JEWS KILLED IN, AND OUT OF JUDEA**

At Jerusalem, by order of Florus -- 3,630  
 At Caesarea, by the inhabitants -- 20,000  
 At Scythopolis in Syria -- 30,000  
 At Ascalon, by the inhabitants -- 2,500  
 At Ptolemais -- 2,000  
 At Alexandria in Egypt, under Tiberius -- 50,000  
 Alexander -- 10,000  
 At Damascus -- 8,400  
 At the taking of Joppa -- 223  
 In the mountain of Cabula -- 2,000  
 In a battle at Ascalon -- 10,000  
 In an ambush -- 8,000  
 At the taking of Apheck -- 15,000  
 Upon Mount Gerizzim -- 11,600  
 Drowned at Joppa, in a sudden storm -- 4,200  
 Killed at Terichea -- 6,500  
 at Gamala -- 9,000  
 in their flight from Gischala -- 2,000  
 at the siege of Jotapata -- 30,000  
 of the Gadarenes, besides many drowned -- 13,000  
 in the villages of Idumea -- 10,000  
 at Gerisum -- 1,000  
 at Macheron -- 1,700  
 in the desert of Jarden -- 3,000  
 Slew themselves at Massala -- 960  
 In Cyrene, by the governor Catulus -- 3,000

Perished at Jerusalem, by the sword, pestilence, famine, and during the siege --  
 1,100,000  
 TOTAL 1,357,490

According to this account, the whole amounts to 1,357,490, besides a vast multitude that died in the caves, woods, wildernesses, common sewers, in banishments, and various other ways, of whom no computation could be made. To which must also be added, ten thousand slain at Jotapata more than our author has mentioned; for Josephus expressly mentions forty thousand, but he only thirty thousand. To these if we add ninety thousand taken prisoners, apparently doomed to a captivity worse than death, and eleven thousand, who are said to have perished either through the neglect of their keepers or their own sullen despair, the amount will be scarcely less than A MILLION AND A HALF! The reader must also keep in view, that a great proportion of these were strangers, who had been invited from remote parts of the world, to come to Jerusalem and assist them in the defense of their religion and liberties, their country, city, and temple; in doing which, they shared in the common ruin. Thus did the providence of God order it, that those who, by their opposition to the gospel, in all parts of their dispersion, had participated in the guilt of crucifying the Lord Jesus, and persecuting his apostles, should also be involved in their punishment.

It is not a little remarkable that Titus, though a heathen, was frequently obliged, during this war, to acknowledge an overruling providence, not only in the extraordinary success with which he had been favored against them, but also in the invincible obstinacy through which they, to the last, preferred their total destruction to that of accepting his repeated overtures of mercy. Again and again did he, in the most solemn manner, appeal to heaven, that he was innocent of the blood of these wretched people. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 5. ch. 12.] In almost every chapter, we find Josephus also ascribing these dreadful calamities, and the final ruin of his nation, city, and temple, to an overruling power; to the offended Deity, to the sins of the people: but nowhere more pathetically, than in that chapter, in which he sums up a number of dreadful warnings sent beforehand, not so much to reduce them to obedience, as to make them discern the almighty hand that was now pouring out the awful vials of his wrath upon them. [Joseph. *Wars*, b. 6. ch. 5. and b. 5. ch. 13.]

As soon as the Romans had completed their destructive work of fire and slaughter, Titus set them to demolish the city, with all its noble structures, fortifications, palaces, towers, walls, and other ornaments, down to the level of the ground; as though he had nothing in view but to fulfill the predictions of Christ concerning its destruction, as contained in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew's gospel. He left nothing standing but a piece of the western wall and three towers, which he reserved merely as a monument to future ages of what had been the strength of the city, and the skill and valor of its conqueror. His orders were executed so punctually, that,

except what has been just mentioned, nothing remained which could serve as an index that that ground had been once inhabited; insomuch, that when Titus himself, some time afterwards, passed through it, in his way from Caesarea to Alexandria, in order to embark for Rome, he wept profusely at the sight of a devastation so dreadful, cursing the wretches that had compelled him to be the author of it. [Ibid. b. 6, ch. 8, 9.]

Such was the dreadful issue of this war, terminating in the utter downfall of the Jewish state and nation, from which it has never recovered to this day; it involved in it the destruction of the temple and the discontinuance of the services annexed to it. The desolation of the country itself went on increasing; till, from being, for its size, one of the most fertile and populous countries in the world, it is now become the most barren and desolate, the latest computation of the number of its inhabitants scarcely exceeding fifty thousand.

All these calamities were, no doubt, accomplished by natural causes; and were therefore such as might have been expected from a thorough knowledge of the tempers of the inhabitants, their refractory disposition towards the Romans, their factions among themselves, and their presumptuous confidence in supernatural assistance joined to a knowledge of their weakness when contrasted with the overbearing power of the Romans. But who besides the Supreme Being could have foreseen all these circumstances, or have known that the operation of them would lead to this catastrophe, when the rebellion might have terminated in many other ways, instead of the total ruin of the country and the dispersion of its inhabitants? The divine foresight is conspicuous therefore, in our Saviour's clear prediction of these events, with all their leading circumstances, when it does not appear that any other person entertained the least apprehension of such a thing. The Jews, indeed, now tell us, that Jesus Christ found all that he predicted concerning the destruction of their city and temple in the prophecies of Daniel; but it is natural to ask, why did not their own Scribes, the professed interpreters of the law and the prophets; and why did not also the leading men of their own nation discover the same things in that book?

Not only the wisdom but the justice of God is also conspicuously displayed in this great event. A particular Providence had ever attended that people. They had always been favored with prosperity while obedient to God and his prophets; and on the other hand, calamity of some kind had been the never-failing consequence of their disobedience. But the measure of their iniquities was now filled up; and the wrath of heaven came upon them to the uttermost. Never had the nation in general shewn a more perverse and obstinate disposition towards any of their prophets, than was now oriented towards Christ and his apostles, though none of their prophets had ever been sent to them with such evident marks of a divine mission. Their inveteracy to Christianity continues to this day, and so does their dispersion, though they are still

a distinct people, and never mix, so as to be confounded, with any of the nations among whom they have settled.

But I quit this subject with a reflection or two. The reader will perceive, that the history of the Jewish war, as detailed by their own historian, Josephus, in many instances a witness of the facts he attests, forms a commentary upon the prophecies of Christ. Amongst other things, he has given a distinct account of the "fearful sights and great signs from heaven," which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem; and Tacitus has confirmed the narration of Josephus. [Tacit. Annal. b. 5.] If Christ had not expressly foretold these things, some might have suspected that Josephus exaggerated, and that Tacitus was misinformed; but as the testimonies of these historians confirm the predictions of Christ, so do the predictions of Christ confirm the wonders recorded by these historians.

We may also remark, that by these terrible events, an end was at length put to the Mosaic economy; for, with the destruction of their city and temple, the whole of the Jewish polity and church state was also subverted. From that time, the remnant of that once highly favored nation have been dispersed throughout the world; despised and hated by all; subjected, from age to age, to a perpetual succession of persecutions and miseries, yet under all these disadvantages, upheld by Divine Providence, a distinct people. They have ever since remained "without a king, without a prince, and without a sacrifice: without an altar, without an ephod, and without divine manifestations;" as monuments everywhere of the truth of Christianity--yet, with this promise, that "the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God; and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4,5).

The accession of Vespasian to the imperial dignity, connected with the termination of the Jewish war, by the arms of his son Titus, happily restored tranquillity and peace to the world. He reigned ten years, much to the happiness of his subjects, and was succeeded in the throne by his son, who, though rather unpopular at the commencement of his reign, nevertheless, conducted himself in such a manner as to acquire the greatest reputation of any of the Roman emperors. During all this period the churches enjoyed a state of outward peace, and the gospel was everywhere crowned with success. To the inexpressible grief of his subjects, however, at the age of forty-one, and after the short reign of two years, two months, and twenty days, Titus was snatched away, having, as was suspected, been poisoned by his own brother Domitian, who succeeded to the throne in the year 81.

**DOMITIAN**, in his temper and disposition, inherited all the savage cruelty of the monster Nero. Yet he spared the Christians in a considerable degree, until about the year 95, when several were put to death, and others banished, on account of their religion, both in Rome, and throughout all the provinces. Among those put to death

was his own cousin and colleague in the consulship, Fabius Clemens; and, among the banished, the wife and niece of the latter, both named Flaviae Domitillae. At this time, the apostle John was banished to the island of Patmos, from whence he wrote his epistles to the seven churches in Asia. He is said to have survived the persecution of Domitian, though it is uncertain how long; and to have died at Ephesus in the reign of Nerva or Trajan, at which city he was buried. The crime alleged against the Christians at this period, and which drew down upon them the cruel hand of persecution, was that of Atheism, by which is to be understood, that they refused to throw a grain of incense on the altars of the heathen deities. The storm, however, was of short duration; for both Eusebius and Tertullian inform us, that Domitian revoked the edict which he had issued against the Christians, and recalled from banishment those who had been driven away. Having caused the earth to groan under his cruelties and excesses, he was at length assassinated, in the sixteenth year of his reign, and was succeeded in the empire by **NERVA**, a prince of a most gentle and humane disposition, under whom the Romans lived as happy as during the former reign they had been miserable. He pardoned all that were imprisoned for treason, called home such as had been banished, restored the sequestered estates, punished informers, redressed grievances to the utmost of his power, and acted with universal beneficence towards all descriptions of his subjects. According to Dio Cassius, he forbade the persecution of any persons either for Judaism, or for impiety; by which is to be understood, Christianity; for so the Heathens termed the latter, on account of its being hostile to their worship; and because Christians, having neither temples, altars, nor sacrifices, were generally considered by them to be also without religion. After a short but brilliant reign of sixteen months and eight days, Nerva died, A.D. 98, and was succeeded by **TRAJAN**, whom he had previously nominated as his heir, a man well skilled in martial and cabinet affairs. In his deportment courteous, affable, humane, and just; and, perhaps, not undeservedly esteemed one of the best princes with which Rome had ever been favored.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH FROM THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST CENTURY, TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY UNDER CONSTANTINE, A.D. 315**

### **SECTION 1**

#### **THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION UNDER THE REIGN OF TRAJAN A.D. 98 TO 117**

There is more truth than would at first strike the mind of a superficial observer, in Dr. Jortin's remark, that Christianity was, at the beginning, more likely to prosper under bad than under good emperors; especially if the latter were tenacious of their religious rites and ceremonies. Accordingly, from the death of Christ to the reign of Vespasian, a period of about thirty-seven years, the Romans paid little regard to the progress of the gospel. They were ruled by weak or frantic and vicious emperors; the magistrates and senators, and every worthy man of any note, stood in continual fear for their own lives, and the empire was a scene of confusion, desolation, and misery. [Jortin's *Remarks*, vol. 1. p. 30.]

Gibbon, in one short paragraph, has sketched a tolerably correct picture of the state of the Roman government during the times of which we are now treating, and the reader cannot be displeased at my transplanting it into these pages.

"The annals of the emperors," says he, "exhibit a strong and various picture of

human nature, which we should vainly seek among the mixed and doubtful characters of modern history. In the conduct of these monarchs, we may trace the utmost lines of vice and virtue; the most exalted perfection, and the meanest degeneracy of our own species. The golden age of Trajan and the Antonines had been preceded by an age of iron. It is almost superfluous to enumerate the unworthy successors of Augustus. Their unparalleled vices, and the splendid theater on which they were acted, have saved them from oblivion. The dark, unrelenting Tiberius, the furious Caligula, the feeble Claudius, the profligate and cruel Nero, the beastly Vitellius, and the timid, inhuman Domitian, are condemned to everlasting infamy. [Vitellius consumed in mere eating, at least six millions of our money in about seven months. It is not easy to express his vices with dignity or even decency. Tacitus fairly calls him "a hog."] During fourscore years (excepting only the short and doubtful respite of Vespasian's reign) Rome groaned beneath an unrelenting tyranny, which exterminated the ancient families, and was fatal to almost every virtue, and every talent that arose in this unhappy period." [*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1.ch. 3.]

We have already traced the progress of Christianity through our author's age of iron, and are now entering upon what he terms the golden age of Trajan and the Antonines,

"If a man were called to fix," says the same elegant historian, "the period in the history of the world during which: the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Cornmodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose character and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully governed by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antchines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws." [Gibbon, vol. 1. ch. 3.] Such a state of things as this many would imagine could be little inferior to a millennium, as it respected Christians--but how far the opinion would be consonant to truth, will appear in the sequel.

**TRAJAN** ascended the throne of the Caesars in the year 98, and soon afterwards conferred the government of the province of Bithynia upon his friend the ingenious and celebrated **PLINY**. The character of the latter is one of the most amiable in all Pagan antiquity. In the exercise of his office as proconsul, the Christians, against whom the severe edicts which had been issued by preceding emperors seem to be still in force, were brought before his tribunal. Having never had occasion to be present at any such examinations before, the multitude of the criminals, and the severity of the laws against them, seem to have greatly struck him and caused him to



hesitate how far it was proper to carry them into execution, without first consulting the emperor upon the subject. The letter which he wrote to Trajan upon this occasion, as well as the answer of the letter, are happily preserved, and are among the most valuable monuments of antiquity, on account of the light which they throw upon the state of the Christian profession at this splendid epoch. The letter of Pliny seems to have been written in the year 106 or 107, and is as follows.

"C. PLINY, to the EMPEROR TRAJAN, wishes health. SIRE! It is customary with me to consult you upon every doubtful occasion; for where my own judgment hesitates, who is more competent to direct me than yourself, or to instruct me where uninformed? I never had occasion to be present at any examination of the Christians before I came into this province; I am therefore ignorant to what extent it is usual to inflict punishment, or urge prosecution. I have also hesitated whether there should not be some distinction made between the young and the old, the tender and the robust; whether pardon should not be offered to penitence, or whether the guilt of an avowed profession of Christianity can be expiated by the most unequivocal retraction--whether the profession itself is to be regarded as a crime, however innocent in other respects the professor may be; or whether the crimes attached to name, must be proved before they are made liable to punishment.

"In the mean time, the method I have hitherto observed with the Christians, who have been accused as such, has been as follows. I interrogated them--Are you Christians? If they avowed it, I put the same question a second, and a third time, threatening them with the punishment decreed by the law: if they still persisted, I ordered them to be immediately executed: for of this I had no doubt, whatever was the nature of their religion, that such perverseness and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved punishment. Some that were infected with this madness, on account of their privilege as Roman citizens, I reserved to be sent to Rome, to be referred to your tribunal.

"In the discussion of this matter, accusations multiplying, a diversity of cases occurred. A schedule of names was sent me by an unknown accuser; but when I cited the persons before me, many denied the fact that they were, or ever had been Christians; and they repeated after me an invocation of the gods, and of your image, which for this purpose I had ordered to be brought with the statues of the other deities. They performed sacred rites with wine and frankincense, and execrated Christ; none of which things, I am assured, a real Christian can ever be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought proper to discharge. Others, named by an informer, at first acknowledged themselves Christians, and then denied it, declaring that though they had been Christians they had renounced their profession, some three years ago, others still longer, and some even twenty years ago. All these worshipped your image and the statues of the gods, and at the same time execrated Christ.

"And this was the account which they gave me of the nature of the religion they once had professed, whether it deserves the name of crime or error; namely, that they were accustomed on a stated day to assemble before sun-rise, and to join together in singing hymns to Christ as to a deity; binding themselves as with a solemn oath not to commit any kind of wickedness; to be guilty neither of theft, robbery, nor adultery; never to break a promise, or to keep back a deposit when called upon. Their worship being concluded, it was their custom to separate, and meet together again for a repast, promiscuous indeed, and without any distinction of rank or sex, but perfectly harmless; and even from this they desisted, since the publication of my edict, in which agreeably to your orders, I forbade any societies of that sort.

"For further information, I thought it necessary, in order to come at the truth, to put to the torture two females who were called deaconesses. But I could extort from them nothing except the acknowledgement of an excessive and depraved superstition; and, therefore, desisting from further investigation, I determined to consult you; for the number of culprits is so great as to call for the most serious deliberation. Informations are pouring in against multitudes of every age, of all orders, and of both sexes, and more will be impeached; for the contagion of this superstition hath spread not only through cities, but villages also, and even reached the farm houses. I am of opinion, nevertheless, that it may be checked, and the success of my endeavours hitherto forbids despondency; for the temples, once almost desolate, begin to be again frequented--the sacred solemnities which had for some time been intermitted, are now attended afresh; and the sacrificial victims, which once could scarcely find a purchaser, now obtain a brisk sale. Whence I infer, that many might be reclaimed, were the hope of pardon, on their repentance, absolutely confirmed."

## TRAJAN TO PLINY

"My dear Pliny, You have done perfectly right, in managing as you have, the matters which relate to the impeachment of the Christians. No one general rule can be laid down which will apply to all cases. These people are not to be hunted up by informers; but if accused and convicted, let them be executed; yet with this restriction, that if any renounce the profession of Christianity, and give proof of it by offering supplications to our gods, however suspicious their past conduct may have been, they shall be pardoned on their repentance. But anonymous accusations should never be attended to, since it would be establishing a precedent of the worst kind, and altogether inconsistent with the maxims of my government."

It is an obvious reflection from these letters, that at this early period, Christianity had made an extraordinary progress in the empire; for Pliny acknowledges that the Pagan temples had become "almost desolate." Nor should we overlook the remarkable proof which they afford us of the state of the Christian profession, and the dreadful

persecutions to which the disciples of Christ were then exposed, It is evident from them, that by the existing laws, it was a capital offense, punishable with death, for any one to avow himself a Christian. Nor did the humane Trajan and the philosophic Pliny entertain a doubt of the propriety of the law, or the wisdom and justice of executing it in the fullest extent. Pliny confesses that he had commanded such capital punishments to be inflicted on many, chargeable with no crime, but their profession of Christianity; and Trajan not only confirms the equity of the sentence, but enjoins the continuance of such executions, without any exceptions, unless it be of those who apostatized from their profession, denied their Lord and Savior, and did homage to the idols of Paganism.

These letters also give us a pleasing view of the holy and exemplary lives of the first Christians. For, it appears by the confession of apostates themselves, that no man could continue a member of their communion whose deportment in the world did not correspond with his holy profession. Even delicate women are put to the torture, to try if their weakness would not betray them into accusations of their brethren; but not a word nor a charge can be extorted from them, capable of bearing the semblance of deceit or crime. To meet for prayer, praise, and mutual instruction; to worship Christ their God; to exhort one another to abstain from every evil word and work; to unite in commemorating the death of their Lord, by partaking of the symbols of his broken body and shed blood in the ordinance of the supper--these things constitute what Pliny calls the "depraved superstition," the "execrable crimes," which could only be expiated by the blood of the Christians!

We should not overlook the proof which these letters afford, of the peaceableness of the Christians of those days, and of their readiness to submit even to the most unjust requisitions, rather than disturb the peace of society. According to Pliny's own representation, their numbers were so immense, that, had they considered it lawful, they might have defended themselves by the power of the sword. Persons of all ranks, of every age, and of each sex, had been converted to Christianity; the body was so vast as to leave the Pagan temples a desert, and their priests solitary. Scarce a victim was brought to the altar, or a sacred solemnity observed, through the paucity of the worshippers. The defection from Paganism must have been conspicuous which could produce such striking effects. But the Christians neither abused their power to resist government, nor acted indecently in their worship. They knew the edicts that were in force against them; and to avoid giving offense, they assembled before break of day, for the worship of their God and Savior. And when Pliny issued his edict to that effect, they, for a while yielded to the storm, and desisted from the observance of their Agapae, or feasts of charity. This view of things abundantly justifies the encomium of Hegesippus, one of the earliest Christian writers, "that the church continued until these times, as a virgin, pure and uncorrupted."

Considering the character which both the emperor and the proconsul sustained, for

mildness of disposition and gentleness of manners, it has occasioned no small perplexity to many, and even to some of our philosophic historians, how to account for the circumstance, that such men should be found in the list of persecutors, and at the same time to admit the unoffending deportment of the Christians. Dr. Warburton has given a very satisfactory solution of this difficulty; and, though the passage be rather long, I shall transcribe the substance of it in this place.

"The Pagan world having early imbibed this inveterate prejudice concerning intercommunity of worship, men were but too much accustomed to new revelations, when the Jewish appeared, not to acknowledge its superior pretensions. Accordingly we find, by the history of this people, that it was esteemed by its neighbors a true one; and therefore they proceeded to join it occasionally with their own; as those did whom the king of Assyria sent into the cities of Israel in place of the ten tribes. Whereby it happened, so great was the influence of this principle, that, in the same time and country, the Jews of Jerusalem added the Pagan idolatries to their religion, while the Pagans of Samaria added the Jewish religion to their idolatries.

"But when these people of God, in consequence of having their dogmatic theology more carefully inculcated to them, after their return from the captivity, became rigid, in pretending not only that their religion was true, but the only true one; then it was that they began to be treated by their neighbors, and afterwards by the Greeks and Romans, with the utmost hatred and contempt, for this their inhumanity and unsociable temper. To this cause alone we are to ascribe all that spleen and rancor which appears in the histories of these later nations concerning them. CELSUS fairly reveals what lay at the bottom, and speaks out for them all. 'If the Jews, on these accounts,' says he, 'adhere to their own law, it is not for that they are to blame: I rather blame those who forsake their own country religion to embrace the Jewish. But if these people give themselves airs of sublimer wisdom than the rest of the world, and on that score refuse all communion with it, as not equally pure,--I must tell them, that it is not to be believed that they are more dear or agreeable to God than other nations.'--Hence, among the Pagans, the Jews came to be distinguished from all other people, by the name of a race of men odious to the gods, and with good reason. This was the reception the Jews met with in the world.

"When Christianity arose, though on the foundation of Judaism, it was at first received with great complacency by the Pagan world. The gospel was favorably heard, and the superior evidence with which it was enforced, inclined men, long habituated to pretended revelations, to receive it into the number of the established. Accordingly we find one Roman emperor introducing it among his closet religions; and another promising to the senate to give it a more public entertainment. But when it was found to carry its pretensions higher, and, like the Jewish, to claim the title of the only true one, then it was that it began to incur the same hatred and contempt with the Jewish. But when it went still further, and urged the necessity of all men forsaking their own national

religions, and embracing the gospel, this so shocked the Pagans, that it soon brought upon itself the bloody storm which followed. Thus you have the true origin of persecution for religion; a persecution not committed, but undergone by the Christian church.

"Hence we see how it happened, that such good emperors as Trajan and Mark Antonine came to be found in the first rank of persecutors; a difficulty that hath very much embarrassed the enquirers into ecclesiastical antiquity, and given a handle to the deists, who empoison every thing, of pretending to suspect, that there must be something very much amiss in primitive Christianity, while such wise magistrates could become its persecutors. But the reason is now manifest. The Christian pretensions overthrew a fundamental principle of Paganism, which they thought founded in nature, namely, the friendly intercommunity of worship. And thus the famous passage of Pliny the younger becomes intelligible. 'For I did not in the least hesitate, but that whatever should appear on confession to be their faith, yet that their frowardness and inflexible obstinacy would certainly deserve punishment.' What was the 'inflexible obstinacy?' It could not be in professing a new religion; that was a thing common enough. It was the refusing all communion with Paganism, refusing to throw a grain of incense on their altars. For we must not think, as is commonly imagined, that this was at first enforced by the magistrate to make them renounce their religion; but only to give a test of its hospitality, and sociableness of temper. It was indeed, and rightly too, understood by the Christians to be a renouncing of their religion, and so accordingly abstained from. The misfortune was that the Pagans did not consider the inflexibility as a mere error, but as an immorality likewise. The unsociable, uncommunicable temper, in matters of religious worship, was esteemed by the best of them as a hatred and aversion to mankind. Thus Tacitus, speaking of the burning of Rome, calls the Christians 'persons convicted of hatred to all mankind.' But how? The confession of the Pagans themselves, concerning the purity of the Christian morals, shews this could be no other than a being 'convicted' of rejecting all intercommunity of worship; which, so great was their prejudice, they thought could proceed from nothing but hatred towards mankind. Universal prejudice had made men regard a refusal of this intercommunity as the most brutal of all dissociability. And the emperor JULIAN, who understood this matter the best of any, fairly owns, that the Jews and Christians brought the execration of the world upon them, by their aversion to the gods of Paganism, and their refusal of all communication with them." [Dr. Warburton, *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. 2. b. 2. sect. 6. etc.]

But to proceed. From what took place in the province of Bithynia, under the government of the mild and amiable Pliny, a tolerably correct judgment may be formed of the state of Christianity during the reign of Trajan, in every other part of the empire. While Pliny was thus conducting matters in Bithynia, the province of Syria was under the government of Tiberianus. There is still extant a letter which he addressed to Trajan, in which he says, "I am quite wearied with punishing and

destroying the Galilseans, or those of the sect called Christians, according to your orders. Yet they never cease to profess voluntarily, what they are, and to offer themselves to death. Wherefore I have labored by exhortations and threats, to discourage them from daring to confess to me, that they are of that sect. Yet, in spite of all persecution, they continue still to do it. Be pleased therefore to inform me, what your highness thinks proper to be done with them." [Quoted in Dr. Middleton's *Free Enquiry*, p. 201.4to. ed.]

The stated returns of the public games and festivals were generally attended by calamitous events to the Christians. "On those occasions, the inhabitants of the great cities of the empire were collected in the great circus of the theater, where every circumstance of the place, as well as of the ceremony, contributed to kindle their devotion and to extinguish their humanity. Whilst the numerous spectators, crowned with garlands, perfumed with incense, purified with the blood of victims, and surrounded with the altars and statues of their tutelar deities, resigned themselves to the enjoyment of pleasures, which they considered as an essential part of their religious worship; they recollected, that the Christians alone abhorred the gods of mankind, and by their absence and melancholy on those solemn festivals, seemed to insult or to lament the public felicity. If the empire had been afflicted by any recent calamity, by a plague, a famine, or an unsuccessful war; if the Tyber had, or if the Nile had not, risen beyond its banks; if the earth had shaken, or if the temperate order of the seasons had been interrupted, the superstitious Pagans were convinced that the crimes and the impiety of the Christians, who were spared by the excessive lenity of the government, had at length provoked the Divine justice. [Inveterate as were the prejudices of this classical historian against the Christians, it seems he could condescend occasionally to borrow a striking thought or a brilliant sentence from their writings. The reader may compare the above quotation with the following extract from Tertullian's Apology. "If the city be besieged, if any thing happen ill in the fields, in the garrison, in the lands, immediately they, (the Pagans,) cry out, 'Tis because of the Christians.' Our enemies thirst after the blood of the innocent, cloaking their hatred with this silly pretense, 'That the Christians are the cause of all public calamities.' If the Tyber flows up to the walls--if the river Nile do not overflow the fields--if the heavens alter their course--if there be an earthquake, a famine, a plague, immediately the cry is 'Away with the Christians to the lions.' APOL. cap. 1. Operum, p. 17.]

It was not among a licentious and exasperated populace, that the forms of legal proceedings could be observed; it was not in an amphitheater stained with the blood of wild beasts and gladiators, that the voice of compassion could be heard. The impatient clamors of the multitude denounced the Christians as the enemies of God and men, doomed them to the severest tortures, and venturing to accuse by name, some of the most distinguished of the new sectaries, required, with irresistible vehemence, that they should be instantly apprehended and cast to the

lions." [Gibbon's *Decline*, vol. 2:ch. 16.]

About the time that Pliny wrote his celebrated letter, Trajan, who was then entering upon the Parthian war, arrived at Antioch in Syria. **IGNATIUS** was at that time one of the pastors of the church there; a man of exemplary piety, and "in all things like to the apostles." During the emperor's stay at Antioch, the city was almost entirely ruined by an earthquake. It was preceded by violent claps of thunder, unusual winds, and a dreadful noise under ground. Then followed so terrible a shock, that the earth trembled, several houses were overturned, and others tossed to and fro, like a ship at sea. The noise of the cracking and bursting of the timber, and of the falling of the houses, drowned the cries of the dismayed populace. Those who happened to be in their houses were, for the most part, buried under their ruins; such as were walking in the streets and in the squares, were, by the violence of the shock, dashed against each other, and most of them killed or dangerously wounded. Trajan himself was much hurt, but escaped through a window out of the house in which he was. When the earthquake ceased, the voice of a woman was heard crying under the ruins, which being removed, she was found with a sucking child in her arms, whom she kept alive, as well as herself, with her milk.

The eminent station of Ignatius, and the popularity which generally attends superior talents, marked him out as the victim of imperial fury on the occasion. He was seized, and by the emperor's order sent from Antioch to Rome, where he was exposed to the fury of wild beasts in the theater, and by them devoured. About the same time, Simeon, the son of Cleopas, who had succeeded the apostle James, as pastor of the church originally gathered in Jerusalem, but which, at the time of its destruction, removed to a small town called Pella, was accused, before Atticus, the Roman governor, of being a Christian. He was then an hundred and twenty years old, but his hoary hairs were no protection to him under the charge of professing Christianity. He endured the punishment of scourging, for many flays; but though his hardiness astonished, his sufferings failed to excite the pity of his persecutors, and he was, at length, ordered to be crucified.

This state of things, which is commonly termed the third persecution, seems to have continued during the whole of Trajan's reign; for it does not appear that his edicts against the Christians were revoked during his life, which, after having swayed the imperial scepter nineteen years, was closed in the year 117, while prosecuting his great military expedition in the east.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION UNDER THE REIGNS OF ADRIAN AND THE ANTONINES**

**A.D. 117-180**

The persecuting edicts, which had been issued against the Christians, under the former emperors, continued unrepealed when Adrian was raised to the throne of the Caesars. The law of Trajan, of which I have taken notice in the foregoing section, and which had been registered among the public edicts of the empire, had, in some degree, ameliorated the state of matters. "The Christians were not to be officiously sought after;" but still, such as were accused and convicted of an adherence to Christianity were to be put to death as wicked citizens, if they did not return to the religion of their ancestors.

Under the reign of **ADRIAN**, the empire flourished in peace and prosperity. He encouraged the arts, reformed the laws, enforced military discipline, and visited all his provinces in person. His vast and active genius was equally suited to the most enlarged views, and the minute details of civil policy; but the ruling passions of his soul were curiosity and vanity. As these prevailed, and as they were attracted by different objects, Adrian was, by turns, an excellent prince, a ridiculous sophist, or a jealous tyrant. After his death, the senate doubted whether they should pronounce him a god or a tyrant, and the honors decreed to his memory were granted to the prayers of his successor, the pious Antoninus. [Gibbon's Rome, vol. 1:ch. 3.]

In the sixth year of his reign, Adrian came to Athens, where he was initiated in the



Eleusinian mysteries. Tertullian describes him as a man excessively curious and inquisitive-- (*curiositatum omnium explorator*)--his knowledge was various and extensive--he had studied all the arts of magic, and was passionately fond of the Pagan institutions. At the time of his visiting Athens, **QUADRATUS** was pastor of the Christian church in that city, having succeeded Publius, who suffered martyrdom either in this or the foregoing reign. It seems likely that this church had undergone a severe persecution; for we are informed that when Quadratus took the oversight of them he found the flock in a dispersed and confused state; their public assemblies were neglected; their zeal was become languid, and they were in danger of being wholly scattered. Quadratus labored indefatigably to recover them, and he succeeded. Order and discipline were restored, insomuch, that at a subsequent period, when Origen wrote his treatise against Celsus, he adduces the church at Athens as a notable pattern of good order, constancy, meekness and quietness. [Eusebius, b. 4. ch. 23. and Cave's *Life of Quadratus*.]

Quadratus drew up an apology for the Christian religion, which he addressed and delivered to the emperor; as did also Aristides, a Christian writer at that time in Athens. Unfortunately these apologies are lost, and it is greatly to be regretted; for had they survived the wreck of time, they would, in all probability, have thrown much light upon the state of the Christian profession at that period. Nor have we any certain information what effect they produced upon the mind of the emperor. "The Pagan priests," says Mosheim, "set the populace in motion to demand from the magistrates, with one voice, during the public games, the destruction of the Christians; and the magistrates, fearing that a sedition might be the consequence of despising or opposing these popular clamors, were too much disposed to indulge them in their requests." During these commotions, Serenus Granianus, proconsul of Asia, wrote to the emperor that "it seemed to him unreasonable, that the Christians should be put to death, merely to gratify the clamours of the people, without trial, and without being convicted of any crime." This seems the first instance of any Roman governor publicly daring to question the propriety and justice of Trajan's edict, which, independent of any moral guilt, inflicted death on Christians, merely because they were Christians. Serenus, at the time of writing his letter, was probably about to quit his office, but Adrian addressed the following rescript to his successor.

## TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS

"I have received a letter written to me by the very illustrious Serenus Granianus, whom you have succeeded. To me then the affair seems by no means fit to be slightly passed over, that men may not be disturbed without cause, and that sycophants may not be encouraged in their odious practices. If the people of the province will appear publicly, and make open charges against the Christians, so as to give them an opportunity of answering for themselves, let them proceed in that manner only, and not by rude demands and mere clamors. For it is much more proper, if any person

will accuse them, that you should take cognizance of these matters. If therefore, any accuse, and shew that they actually break the laws, do you determine according to the nature of the crime. But, by Hercules, if the charge be a mere calumny, do you estimate the enormity of such calumny and punish as it deserves." [Eusebius, b. 4. c. 9. and Justin Martyr's First Apology, ad finem.]

This rescript seems to have somewhat abated the fury of the persecution, though not wholly to have put an end to it. Tertullian, in reference to these times, informs us that Arrius Antoninus, then proconsul of Asia, when the Christians came in a body before his tribunal, ordered some of them to be put to death; and said to others, "You wretches! If ye will die, ye have precipices and halters." He adds, that several other governors of provinces, punished some few Christians, and dismissed the rest, so that the persecution was neither so general nor so severe as it had been under Trajan.

During the reign of Adrian, the Jews once more attempted to free themselves from the Roman yoke. A rebellious chief arose among them, of the name of Barchochebas, who assumed the title "King of the Jews," and prevailed upon these deluded people, thinned as they were by slaughter, and dispersed throughout the different provinces, to rally round his standard, and contend with the Romans for empire. While the rebellion was in progress, the Christians, refusing to join the standard of this fictitious Messiah, suffered the most atrocious indignities, and were massacred without mercy, until the fall of their leader, and the destruction of his adherents put an end to the sedition. The issue of the rebellion was the entire exclusion of the Jews from the territory of Judea. After a reign of twenty-one years, Adrian was succeeded, in the year 138, by **TITUS ANTONINUS PIUS**, a senator about fifty years of age, whom he declared his successor, only on the condition that he himself should immediately adopt **MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONIUS**, a youth of about seventeen, and by these two Antonines the Roman world was governed forty years. Their united reigns, says Gibbon, are possibly the only period of history, in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government. [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 3. ch. 3.]

The elder Antoninus appears to have been a most amiable prince. He diffused order and tranquillity throughout the empire; and, in his own personal character and intentions, was guiltless of Christian blood. The disciples of Jesus were nevertheless cruelly treated in some of the provinces of Asia, and it occasioned Justin Martyr to write his first Apology, which was presented to the emperor. The crimes they were accused of by their enemies, were impiety and atheism, which are refuted by Justin in his Apology. In several of the former edicts, the word crime had not been sufficiently determined in its signification. Hence, the Pagan priests, and even the Roman magistrates, frequently applied this term to the profession of Christianity itself. But Antoninus issued an edict, in which he decided the point on the side of humanity and justice. He addressed a letter to the province of Asia, in favor of the

persecuted Christians, which is of too much importance to be here omitted.

## THE EMPEROR TO THE COMMON COUNCIL OF ASIA

"I am clearly of opinion, that the gods will take care to discover such persons (as those to whom you refer). For it much more concerns them to punish those who refuse to worship them, than you, if they be able. But you harass and vex the Christians, and accuse them of atheism and other crimes, which you can by no means prove. To them it appears an advantage to die for their religion, and they gain their point, while they throw away their lives, rather than comply with your injunctions. As to the earthquakes, which have happened in times past or more recently, is it not proper to remind you of your own despondency, when they happen; and to desire you to compare your spirit with theirs, and observe how serenely they confide in God? In such seasons you seem to be ignorant of the gods, and to neglect their worship. You live in the practical ignorance of the supreme God himself, and you harass and persecute to death those who do worship him. Concerning these same men, some others of the provincial governors wrote to our divine father Adrian, to whom he returned for answer, 'That they should not be molested, unless they appeared to attempt something against the Roman government.' Many also have made application to me concerning these men, to whom I have returned an answer agreeable to the maxims of my father. But if any person will still persist in accusing the Christians merely as such, let the accused be acquitted, though he appear to be a Christian, and let the accuser be punished."

## SET UP AT EPHEBUS IN THE COMMON ASSEMBLY OF ASIA.

Letters of similar import were also written to the Larisseans, the Thessalonians, the Athenians, and all the Greeks, as we are informed by Eusebius; and the humane emperor took care that his edicts were carried into effect. He reigned three and twenty years, and it seems reasonable to conclude that during the greater part of this time, Christians were permitted to worship God in peace. This must have been a halcyon season to the poor afflicted disciples of Jesus, when they were permitted to sit under their own vine and fig-tree, without fear or molestation; but it terminated with the life of the elder Antoninus, about the year 162, at which time the government of the empire devolved wholly upon his late colleague, **MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS**.

This prince, at the age of twelve years, embraced the rigid system of the stoical philosophy, which he also labored to inculcate upon the minds of his subjects. He even condescended to read lectures of philosophy to the Roman people, in a manner, says Gibbon, who nevertheless eulogises his character, more public than was consistent with the modesty of a sage or the dignity of an emperor. Under his reign

commenced, what is generally accounted **THE FOURTH PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS**. It is not improbable that he had beheld with an anxious eye, the lenity which had been shewn them by his predecessors, and that the occasional interruptions that had been given them, were, at least, with his connivance. Certain it is, that no sooner had he attained to the full exercise of power, than he completely discarded the tolerant principles of Antoninus Pius, and threw open once more the flood-gates of persecution.

The churches of Asia appear to have suffered dreadfully at this period. **POLYCARP** was pastor of the church in Smyrna, an office which he had held for more than eighty years, and which he had filled up with honor to himself, to the edification of his Christian brethren, and the glory of his divine Master. It only remained for him now to seal his testimony with his blood. The eminence of his station marked him out as the victim of popular fury. The cry of the multitude against Polycarp was, "This is the doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, the subverter of our gods, who teaches many that they must not perform the sacred rites, nor worship our deities. Away with these Atheists." The philosophy of the emperor could not teach him that this pretended atheism was a real virtue, which deserved to be encouraged and propagated amongst mankind. Here reason and philosophy faded him; and his blind attachment to the gods of his country caused him to shed much blood, and to become the destroyer of the saints of the living God! [This is the emperor, whom Pope has panegyrised in the following lines "Who noble ends by noble means obtains, Or, failing, smiles in exile or in chains; Like good Aurelius, let him reign; or bleed like Socrates, that man is great indeed."]

The friends of Polycarp, anxious for his safety, prevailed on him to withdraw himself from public view, and to retire to a neighboring village, which he did, continuing with a few of his brethren, day and night, in prayer to God, for the tranquillity of all the churches. The most diligent search was, in the mean time, made for him without effect. But when his enemies proceeded to put some of his brethren to the torture, with the view of compelling them to betray him, he could no longer be prevailed on to remain concealed. "The will of the Lord be done," was his pious ejaculation; on uttering which, he made a voluntary surrender of himself to his persecutors, saluted them with a cheerful countenance, and invited them to refresh themselves at his table, only soliciting from them on his own behalf one hour for prayer. They granted his request, and his devotions were prolonged to double the period, with such sweetness and savour, that all who heard him were struck with admiration, several of the soldiers repenting that they were employed against so venerable an old man. His prayer being ended, they set him on an ass, and conveyed him towards the city, being met on the road by Herod the Irenarch (a kind of justice of the peace) and his father Niceres, who were chief agents in this persecution. [Cave's *Life of Polycarp*, p. 53.] Many efforts were tried to shake his constancy, and induce him to abjure his profession; at one time he was threatened by the proconsul with the fury of wild

beasts. "Call for them," said Polycarp, "it does not become us to turn from good to evil." "Seeing you make so light of wild beasts," rejoined the magistrate, "I will tame you with the more terrible punishment of fire." But Polycarp bravely replied, "You threaten me with a fire that is quickly extinguished, but are ignorant of the eternal fire of God's judgment, reserved for the wicked in the other world. But why do you delay? order what punishment you please." Thus, finding him impenetrable both to the arts of seduction and the dread of punishment, the fire was commanded to be lighted, and the body of this venerable father burnt to ashes, in the year 166.

**Melito** was, at this period, pastor of the neighboring church of Sardis. As the rage of persecution grew more violent, he drew up an apology for the Christians, which he presented to the emperor (A.D. 170), about the tenth year of his reign, a fragment of which is still preserved in Eusebius. He complains of it as an almost unheard of thing, that pious men were now persecuted, and greatly distressed by new decrees throughout Asia; that most impudent informers, who were greedy of other people's substance, took occasion, from the imperial edicts, to plunder others who were entirely innocent. He then humbly beseeches the emperor that he would not suffer the Christians to be used in so cruel and unrighteous a manner; that he would vouchsafe to examine the things charged on the Christians, and stop the persecution, by revoking the edict published against them; and reminds him that the Christian religion was so far from being destructive to the Roman empire as its enemies suggested, that the latter was much enlarged since the propagation thereof. [Cave's *Life of Melito*, and Eusebius, b. 4. ch. 26.]

In the same year that Polycarp was put to death, (166), **JUSTIN MARTYR** drew up a Second Apology, which he addressed to the emperor Antoninns, and to the senate of Rome. He states the case of his Christian brethren, complains of the unrighteousness and cruelty with which they were everywhere treated, in being punished merely because they were Christians, without being accused of any crimes; answers the usual objections against them, and desires no greater favor than that the world might be really acquainted with their case. His appeal seems to have produced no impression upon those to whom it was addressed. Justin and six of his companions were seized and carried before Rusticus, the prefect of the city of Rome, where many attempts were made to persuade them to obey the gods and comply with the emperor's edicts. Their exhortations had no effect. "No man," says Justin, "who is in his right mind can desert truth to embrace error and impiety." And when threatened, that unless they complied they should be tortured without mercy, "Dispatch us as soon as you please," said the disciples, "for we are Christians, and cannot sacrifice to idols." On saying which, the governor pronounced the following sentence, that "for refusing to sacrifice to the gods, and to obey the imperial edicts, they should be first scourged and then beheaded according to law," which was immediately carried into effect. [Cave's *Life of Justin*.]

The history of the reign of this philosophic emperor abounds with similar instances of unrelenting cruelty on the part of the magistracy, and of patient suffering for Christ's sake on that of his disciples. Justin Martyr, in the account he gives of the martyrdom of Ptolemseus, assures us, that the only question asked him was, "Are you a Christian.?" And upon his confessing that he was one, he was immediately put to death [Second Apology, ch. 42]. Lucius was also put to death for making the same confession, and for asking Urbicus, the prefect, why he condemned Ptolemy, who was neither convicted of adultery, rape, murder, theft, robbery, nor of any other crime, but merely for owning himself to be a Christian. **Hence, it is sufficiently manifest, that it was the mere name of a Christian that was still made a capital offense,** and that while these inhuman proceedings were sanctioned by an emperor who made great pretensions to reason and philosophy, they were carried on for the purpose of supporting a system of superstition and idolatry repugnant to every principle of reason and truth. These cruelties were exercised on persons of the most virtuous characters, for their adherence to the worship of the one true God, the first principle of all true religion. How precious, in those times especially, must have been the consolatory sayings of Jesus Christ; and what but an unshaken confidence in his almighty power and faithfulness, could have supported the hearts of his people in such trying circumstances (John 14:27; 15:18-23; 16:23; 17:24)?

Towards the close of the reign of this emperor (A.D. 177), the flame of persecution reached a country, which had hitherto afforded no materials for ecclesiastical history, viz, the kingdom of **FRANCE**, in those days called **GALLIA**. By whom or by what means, the light of the glorious gospel was first conveyed into that country, we have no certain information; for the first intelligence that we have of the fact itself, arises from the account of a dreadful persecution which came upon the churches of Vienne and Lyons, two cities lying contiguous to each other in that province. Vienne was an ancient Roman colony: Lyons was more modern: and of this latter church, the presbyters or elders were **Pothinus** and **Iraeneus**. "Whoever," says Milner, "casts his eye on the map of France, and sees the situation of Lyons, at present the largest and most populous city in the kingdom, except Paris, may observe how favorable the confluence of the Rhine and the Soane, on which it stands, is for the purposes of commerce. The navigation of the Mediterranean, in all probability, was conducted by the merchants of Lyons and Smyrna, and hence the easy introduction of the gospel from the latter place, and from the other Asiatic churches, is apparent." [Milner, *Church Hist.* vol. 1:p. 223.]

That it was in some such way as this Christianity was first planted there, seems probable, also from the circumstance, that not only the names of Pothinus and Iraeneus, the pastors of the church at Lyons, are Grecian, but that also the names of several other distinguished persons in these churches prove them to have been of Greek extraction. And when we reflect upon the cruel persecutions by which the friends of Jesus had been harassed both in Greece and Asia Minor, it seems not

unreasonable to expect that they should seek an asylum from the storm in these cities. The churches, too, though they appear to have been but recently planted, were evidently very numerous, at the time this terrible persecution overtook them. When the violence of the storm had in some measure subsided, a pretty copious account of it was drawn up, as is supposed by Iraeneus, in the form of an epistle from the churches of Vienne and Lyons to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia. We are indebted to Eusebius for preserving it from oblivion, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and I incline to the judgment of Dr. Lardner when he pronounces it "the finest thing of the kind in all antiquity" (Lardner, *Credibility of the Gospel History*, part 2). [But though I bow with great deference to the judgment of Dr. Lardner, I must be allowed to say that the style in which this letter is drawn up does not meet my taste. It is much too labored to correspond with the melancholy nature of the subject. It is not the simple, natural, unaffected language of a feeling heart. We must, however, remember that Iraeneus was a Greek, and that the Greeks were great admirers of eloquence.]

Eusebius gives it as a specimen of what was transacted in other places; and that the reader may have some notion of the savage rage with which this persecution was carried on, not only with the connivance, but with the knowledge and approbation of this philosophic emperor, I shall give a copious abridgment of the account, The epistle opens with the following simple address.

"The servants of Christ, sojourning in Vienne and Lyons in France, to the brethren in Asia Proptic and Phrygia, who have the same faith and hope of redemption with us; peace and grace, and glory, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." They then declare themselves unable to express the greatness of the affliction which the saints in those cities had recently sustained, or the intense animosity of the heathen against them. Christians were absolutely prohibited from appearing in any house, except their own, in baths, in the market, or in any public place whatever. The first assault came from the people at large--shouts, blows, the dragging of their bodies, the plundering of their goods, casting of stones, with all the indignities that may be expected from a fierce and outrageous multitude--these were magnanimously sustained. Being then led into the forum by the tribune and the magistrates, they were examined before all the people whether they were Christians; and on pleading guilty, were shut up in prison until the arrival of the governor. Before him they were at length brought, and "he treated us," say they, "with great savageness of manners."

Vettius Epigathus, one of their brethren, a young man full of charity both to God and man--of exemplary conduct--a man ever unwearied in acts of beneficence, was roused at beholding such a manifest perversion of justice, and boldly demanded to be heard in behalf of the brethren, pledging himself to prove that there was nothing atheistic or impious among them. "He was a person of quality"--but however equitable his demand was, it only served to excite the clamor of the mob, and to irritate the governor, who merely asked him if he was a Christian, which he

confessed in the most open manner, and for which he was immediately executed. Others imitated his confidence and zeal, and suffered with the same alacrity of mind. In process of time, ten of their number lapsed, "whose case," say they, "filled us with great and unmeasurable sorrow." This appears to have much dejected the churches, and to have spread a general alarm, "not that we dreaded the torment," say they, "with which we are threatened, but because we looked forward unto the end, and feared the danger of apostasy." The vilest calumnies were propagated against them at this time-they were accused of eating human flesh, and of various unnatural crimes; "of things," say they, "not fit even to be mentioned or imagined, and such as ought not to be believed of mankind." The rabble became incensed against them even to madness-and the ties of blood, affinity, or friendship, seem to have been wholly disregarded. "Now it was," say they, "that our Lord's word was fulfilled--'the time will come when whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.'" **The martyrs sustained tortures which exceed the powers of description.** "The whole fury of the multitude, the governor, and the soldiers, was spent in a particular manner on Sanctus, a deacon of the church of Vienne, and on Maturus, a late convert indeed, but a magnanimous wrestler in spiritual things; and on Attalus of Pergamus, a man who had been the pillar and support of our church; and on Blandina, a female who was most barbarously tortured from morning to night, with the intent of extorting from her a confession which should criminate her brethren; but "it was an evident refreshment, support, and an annihilation of all her pains to say, 'I am a Christian, and no evil is committed among us.'"

The most barbarous indignities were inflicted upon Sanctus the deacon, to extort from him something injurious to the gospel, which he sustained in a manner more than human; and such was the firmness with which he resisted the most intense sufferings, that to every question which was put to him by his tormentors, he had uniformly one reply, "I am a Christian." This provoked the executioners so much, that they applied red hot plates of iron to the tenderest parts of his body, till he was one wound, and scarcely retaining the appearance of the human form. Having left him a few days in this ulcerated condition, they hoped to make him more exquisitely sensible to fresh tortures. But the renewal of these while he was dreadfully swelled, was found to have the effect of reducing him to his former shape, and restoring him to the use of his limbs. Biblias, a female, was one of those who had swerved from her profession at the commencement of the persecution. She was now pitched upon, as being one that was likely to accuse the Christians; and the more effectually to extort from her that confession which they wished her to make, this weak and timorous creature was put to the torture. The fact which was pressed upon her to acknowledge was, that the Christians ate their children. "In her torture she recovered herself," it is said, "and awoke as out of a sleep, and in answer to their interrogations, thus remonstrated, How can we eat infants--we, to whom it is not lawful to eat the blood of beasts." \* She now recovered her fortitude, avowed her Christianity, and "was added to the army of martyrs."



[\* A late ecclesiastical historian (Mr. Milner) has the following remark upon this passage. "Hence it appears that the eating of blood was not practiced among the Christians at Lyons; and they understood not Christian liberty in this point." But with all due deference to Mr. Milner, one cannot help wishing that he had shewn us, "Who gave Christians the liberty of eating things strangled and blood." Nothing can be more express than the prohibition, Acts 15:28,29. Can those who plead their "Christian liberty" in regard to this matter, point us to any part of the word of God in which this prohibition is subsequently annulled? If not, may we be allowed to ask, "By what authority, except his own, can any of the laws of God be repealed?" Mr. M. held that "the church has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and to settle controversies in matters of faith;" and doubtless, that church which has power to make new laws in Christ's kingdom, cannot want authority to abolish old ones; but where they obtained this power and authority, we have yet to learn. The following remark of a sensible writer shews, that he is far from agreeing with Mr. Milner in thinking that blood eating is any part of Christian liberty. "This (i.e. eating the blood of animals) being forbidden to Noah, appears also to have been forbidden to all mankind; nor ought this prohibition to be treated as belonging to the ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation. It was not only enjoined before that dispensation existed, but was enforced upon the Gentile Christians by the decrees of the apostles, Acts 15:20. To allege, as some do, our Lord's words, 'that it is not that which goeth into a man which defileth him,' would equally justify the practice of cannibals in eating human flesh. Blood is the life, and God seems to claim it as sacred to himself. Hence, in all the sacrifices, the blood was poured out before the Lord, and in the sacrifice of Christ, he shed his blood, or poured out his soul unto death." Fuller's Discourse on Genesis 9:3,4.]

The ten persons who had swerved from their profession in the hour of trial, and denied that they were Christians, not being credited by, the magistrates, were refused the benefit of their recantation. They were insulted for their cowardice, and led to punishment along with the rest, as murderers, though not as Christians, on the evidence which had been produced of their eating human flesh. They proceeded with countenances full of shame and dejection, while those who suffered for their attachment to Christianity, appeared cheerful and courageous, so that the difference between them was perceptible to all the by-standers. After this, no Christian who was apprehended, renounced his profession, but persevered in it to the last.

The populace becoming clamorous to have **THE CHRISTIANS THROWN TO THE WILD BEASTS** in the amphitheater, that favourite spectacle was at length provided for them on this occasion, and Maturus, Sanctus, Blandina, and Attalus, were brought out for this purpose. But previous to the wild beasts being produced, Maturus and Sanctus were put to the torture in the amphitheater, as if it had not been applied to them before; and every thing that an enraged multitude called for

having been tried upon them, they were at last roasted in an iron chair, till they sent forth the offensive effluvia of burnt flesh. Upon Sanctus, however, the only effect produced was a declaration of his former confession, that he was a Christian; and at length death terminated his sufferings.

Blandina was then produced, and on being fastened to a stake, a wild beast was let loose upon her; but this she bore with the greatest composure; and, by her prayers, encouraged others to bear with fortitude whatever might befall them; but, as the wild beast did not meddle with her, she was remanded back to prison.

At length, Attalus was loudly called for; and he was accordingly led round the amphitheater, with a board held before him, on which was inscribed, THIS IS ATTALUS THE CHRISTIAN. It appearing, however, that he was a Roman citizen, the president remanded him to prison, until the emperor's pleasure should be known concerning him and others who were in the same predicament. In this respite they so encouraged many who had hitherto declined this glorious combat, as it was justly called, that great numbers voluntarily declared themselves Christians.

The emperor's answer was, that they who confessed themselves to be Christians should be put to death; but that those who denied it should be set at liberty. Upon this, a public assembly was convened, attended by a vast concourse of people, before whom the confessors were produced, when such of them as were found to be Roman citizens were beheaded, and the rest thrown to the wild beasts. But to the astonishment of all present, many who had previously renounced their Christianity, and were now produced only to be set at liberty, revoked their recantation, and, declaring themselves Christians, suffered with the rest. These had been greatly encouraged so to do, by Alexander, a Phrygian, who had shewn himself particularly solicitous for the perseverance of his brethren. The multitude became greatly enraged at this; and Alexander being called before the tribunal, and confessing himself a Christian, he was sentenced to be thrown to the wild beasts; and on the following day he was produced in the amphitheater for that purpose, together with Attalus, whom the people had insisted upon. being brought out once more. Previous to their exposure to the wild beasts they were subjected to a variety of tortures, and at last run through with a sword. During all this Alexander said nothing, but evinced the greatest firmness of mind. And, when Attalus was placed in the iron chair, he only said, in allusion to the vulgar charge against the Christians of those days, of murdering and eating infants, "This, which is your own practice, is to devour men; we neither eat men, nor practice any other wickedness."

On the last day of the show, Blandina was again produced, together with a young man of the name of Ponticus, about fifteen years of age, who had been brought out daily to be a spectator of the sufferings of others. This youth, being required to acknowledge the heathen deities, and refusing to do so, the multitude had no

compassion for either of them, but subjected them to the whole circle of tortures, till Ponticus expired in them; and Blandina, having been scourged, and placed in the hot iron chair, was put into a net, and exposed to a bull; and after being tossed for some time by the furious animal, she was at length dispatched with a sword. The spectators acknowledged that they had never known any female bear torture with such fortitude.

**When this scene was over, the multitude continued to show their rage by abusing the dead bodies of the Christians.** Those who had been suffocated in prison were thrown to the dogs, and watched day and night, lest their friends should bury them. The same was done with the bodies that were left unconsumed by fire; that had been mangled or burned, with the heads only of some, and the trunks of others. Even in this horrid state the heathens insulted them, by asking where was their God, and what their religion had done for them. The mangled carcasses having been exposed in this manner for six days, were then burned; and being reduced to ashes, the latter was cast into the river, to disappoint them, as was fondly imagined, of their hopes of a resurrection. From what was done in this place, says Eusebius, we may form an estimate of what was transacted in others. [Euseb. Hist. b. 5:ch. 1.]

The prisons were now glutted with the multitude of the Christians--they were thrust into the darkest and most loathsome cells, and numbers were suffocated; even "young men who had been lately seized, and whose bodies had been exercised with sufferings, unequal to the severity of the confinement, expired." Pothinus, one of the elders of the church at Lyons, upwards of ninety years of age, though very infirm and asthmatic, was dragged before the tribunal; "his body," says the narrative, "worn out indeed with age and disease, yet he retained a soul through which Christ might triumph." After being grossly ill-treated by the soldiers and the rabble, who unmercifully dragged him about, insulting him in the vilest manner, without the least respect to his age, pelting him with whatever came first to hand, and every one looking upon himself as deficient in zeal if he did not insult him in some way or other; he was thrown into prison, and after languishing two days, expired.

These few instances, which indeed are but little in comparison of the horrid barbarities detailed in this letter, may, however, give the reader some idea of this dreadful persecution, which, lamentable to tell, received the express sanction of the philosophic emperor, Marcus Aurelius. "He sent orders," says the letter, "that the confessors of Christ should be put to death; and that the apostates from their divine Master should be dismissed." Such proceedings, as Mosheim properly remarks, will be an indelible stain upon the memory of the prince by whose order they were carried on. His death, however, which took place in the year 180, put a period to this fiery trial, which, with scarcely any intermission, had raged in one quarter or other during a period of eighteen years.



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **SKETCH OF THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY FROM THE DEATH OF MARCUS AURELIUS TO THE TIME OF CONSTANTINE**

**A.D. 180-306**

Aurelius was succeeded in the government of the empire by his son **Commodus**, during whose reign of nearly thirteen years, the Christians enjoyed a large portion of external peace, and their numbers were every where multiplied to a vast extent. The character of this young prince formed a contrast to that of his father: he was not only an epicure, but, as Gibbon allows, "he attained the summit of vice and infamy." Historians attribute the toleration which he granted the Christians, to the influence which Marcia, his favourite concubine, had obtained over his mind. She is said to have had a predilection for their religion, and to have employed her interest with Commodus in their behalf. There is nothing incredible in this, unless indeed the character of that lady should be thought incompatible with it. The Lord, in whose hand are the hearts of all men, and who turns them as the rivers of water, frequently sends his people relief in the most unexpected manner, and by means from which they would least apprehend it--thus impressing upon their minds a conviction of his own dominion and sovereignty, and of their entire dependence upon him.

In the year 192, Commodus was put to death, in consequence of a conspiracy raised against him by his own domestics; when the choice of a successor fell upon **Pertinax**, praefect of the city, an ancient senator of consular rank, whose conspicuous merit had broke through the obscurity of his birth, and raised him to the first honors of the state. The reign of this amiable prince, however, proved of short duration; for on the 28th March, of the same year, only eighty-six days after the death of Commodus, a general conspiracy broke out in the Roman camp, which the officers wanted either

the power or inclination to suppress, and the emperor fell a victim to the rebellious fury of the Praetorian guards.

On the death of Pertinax the sovereign power devolved upon **Severus**, who, during the persecution of the churches of Lyons and Vienne, had sustained the rank of governor of that province. In the first years of his reign, he permitted the Christians to enjoy a continuance of that toleration which had been extended to them by Commodus and Pertinax. But the scene changed towards the latter end of this century, and about the tenth year of his reign, which falls in with the year 202, his native ferocity of temper broke out afresh, and **kindled a very severe persecution against the Christians**. He was then recently returned from the east, victorious; and the pride of prosperity induced him to forbid the propagation of the gospel. He passed a law by which every subject of the empire was prohibited from changing the religion of his ancestors for that of the Christian or Jewish. Christians, however, still thought it right to obey God rather than man. Severus persisted, and exercised the usual cruelties. At this time Asia, Egypt, and the other provinces were deluged with the blood of the martyrs, as appears from the testimonies of Tertullian, Clemens of Alexandria, and other writers. It was this series of calamities, during which, Leonides, the father of Origen, and Irenaeus, pastor of the church at Lyons, suffered martyrdom, that induced Tertullian to write his Apology, and several other books in defense of the Christians.

The mention of **TERTULLIAN** naturally directs our attention to the progress of Christianity, in a region which we have hitherto had no occasion to notice, viz. the Roman province of **AFRICA**. This whole country, once the scene of Carthaginian greatness, abounded with Christians in the second century; though of the manner in which the gospel was introduced, and of the proceedings of its first preachers there, we have no account. A numerous church existed at Carthage in the latter end of the second and beginning of the third century, of which Tertullian was one of the pastors. He may be said to have flourished from the year 194 to 220, though, if we may rely on the correctness of some of our historians, "he exhibited a striking instance, how much wisdom and weakness, learning and ignorance, faith and folly, truth and error, goodness and delusion, may be mixed up in the composition of the same person." [Haweis's *Church History*, vol. 1:p. 192.] His works, which were written in Latin, have been handed down to us; and it certainly is matter of regret, that, in general, the subjects on which he wrote, are not more important. Nor can it be denied, that there was much of the ascetic in his composition. He seems to have been deeply impressed with apprehensions that a spirit of lukewarmness and indifference was coming upon the churches, and with the fear of their being infected by the customs of the Pagans around them, which he labored to counteract by enforcing a discipline rigorous in the extreme. It is however, due to him to say, that he defended, with great clearness and ability, the doctrine of the revealed distinction in the Godhead, against Praxeas, who had propagated sentiments subversive of the

Christian faith. In that work he treats of the Trinity in Unity--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--yet one God;--of the Lord Jesus Christ as both God and man; as at once the Son of man, and the Son of God;--and of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter and Sanctifier of believers; and this he describes as the rule of faith which had obtained from the beginning of the gospel.

But his Apology for the Christians is an invaluable treatise; it exhibits a most pleasing view of the spirit and behavior of the disciples of Jesus at that time, and of their adherence to the faith, order, and discipline of the churches planted by the apostles. The reader will not be displeased at my introducing in this place, the following interesting sentences; it is however proper to premise, that I give them rather as an abridgement, than as an exact transcript of my author, though his ideas are carefully preserved.

"We pray for the safety of the emperors to the eternal God, the true, the living God, whom emperors themselves would desire to be propitious to them, above all others who are called gods. We, looking up to heaven, with outstretched hands, because they are harmless, with naked heads, because we are not ashamed, without a prompter, because we pray from the heart; constantly pray for all emperors and kings, that they may have a long life, a secure empire, a safe palace, strong armies, a faithful senate, a well moralized people, a quiet state of the world: whatever Caesar would wish for himself in his public or private capacity. I cannot solicit these things from any other than from HIM from whom I know I shall obtain them, if I ask agreeably to his will; because he alone can do these things: and I expect them from him, being his servant, who worship him alone, and am ready to lose my life in his service. Thus, then, let the claws of wild beasts pierce us, or their feet trample on us, while our hands are stretched out to God: let crosses suspend us, let fires consume us, let swords pierce our breasts--a praying Christian is in a frame for enduring any thing. How is this, ye generous rulers? Will ye kill the good subjects who supplicate God for the emperor? Were we disposed to return evil for evil, it were easy for us to avenge the injuries which we sustain. But God forbid that his people should vindicate themselves by human force; or be reluctant to endure that by which their sincerity is evinced. Were we disposed to act the part, I will not say of secret assassins, but of open enemies, should we want forces and numbers? It is true we are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all your towns, cities, islands, castles, boroughs, councils, camps, courts, palaces, senate, forum,\* we leave you only your temples. For what war should we not be ready and well prepared, even though unequal in numbers; we, who die with so much pleasure, were it not that our religion requires us rather to suffer death than to inflict it? If we were to make a general secession from your dominions, you would be astonished at your solitude. We are dead to all ideas of worldly honor and dignity; nothing is more foreign to us than political concerns; the whole world is our republic. [\* I cannot but think that this language of Tertullian is much too strong, and that the reader who would not be misled,

should receive it with some degree of qualification. There can be no doubt that the profession of Christianity had spread extensively at the commencement of the third century: but Paganism was still the religion of the empire; and if any reliance can be placed upon Gibbon's calculation as it respects this matter, "not more than a twentieth part of the subjects of the Roman empire had enlisted themselves under the banners of the cross before the conversion of Constantine."]

"We are a body united in one bond of religion, discipline, and hope. We meet in our assemblies for prayer. We are compelled to have recourse to the divine oracles for caution and recollection on all occasions. We nourish our faith by the word of God; we erect our hope, we fix our confidence, we strengthen our discipline, by repeatedly inculcating precepts, exhortations, corrections, and by excommunication when it is needful. This last, as being in the sight of God, is of great weight; and is a serious warning of the future judgment, if any one behave in so scandalous a manner as to be debarred from holy communion. Those who preside among us, are elderly persons, not distinguished for opulence, but worthiness of character. Every one pays something into the public chest once a month, or when he pleases, and according to his ability and inclination, for there is no compulsion. These gifts are, as it were, the deposit of piety. Hence we relieve and bury the needy; support orphans and decrepit persons; those who have suffered shipwreck, and those who, for the word of God, are condemned to the mines or imprisonment. This very charity of ours has caused us to be noticed by some: 'See (say they) how these Christians love one another.'

"But we Christians look upon ourselves, as one body, informed as it were by one soul; and, being thus incorporated by love, we can never dispute what we are to bestow upon our own members. And is it any great wonder, that such charitable brethren as enjoy all things in common, should have such frequent love-feasts? For this it is you traduce us, and reflect upon our little frugal suppers, not only as infamously wicked, but as scandalously excessive. The nature of this supper you may understand by its name, for it is the Greek word for love. We Christians think we can never be too expensive, because we consider all to be gain that is laid out in doing good. When therefore we are at the charge of an entertainment, it is to refresh the bowels of the needy. We feed the hungry, because we know God takes a peculiar delight in seeing us do it. If, therefore, we feast only with such brave and excellent designs, I leave you from thence to guess at the rest of our discipline in matters of pure religion. Nothing earthly, nothing unclean, has ever admittance here. Our souls ascend in prayer to God, before we sit down to meat. We eat only what suffices nature, and drink no more than is strictly becoming chaste and regular persons. We sup as servants that know we must wake in the night to the service of our Master, and discourse as those who remember that they are in the hearing of God. When supper is ended, every one is invited forth to sing praises to God; and by this you may judge of the measure of drinking at a Christian feast. As we begin, so we conclude all with. prayer, and depart with the same tenor of temperance and



modesty we came; as men who have not so properly been drinking, as imbibing religion." [Reeves's Apologies, vol. 1.p. 302-339.]

There is something noble in the following appeal, with which Tertullian closes his Apology.

"And now, O worshipful judges, proceed with your shew of justice, and believe me, ye will be still more and more just in the opinion of the people, the oftener you make them a sacrifice of Christians. Crucify, torture, condemn, grind us all to powder if you can; your injustice is an illustrious proof of our innocence, and for the proof of this it is that God permits us to suffer; and by your late condemnation of a Christian woman to the lust of a pander, rather than the rage of a lion, you notoriously confess that such a pollution is more abhorred by a Christian, than all the torments and deaths you can heap upon her. But do your worst, and rack your inventions for tortures for Christians, 'Tis all to no purpose; you do but attract the notice of the world, and make it fall the more in love with our religion. The more you mow us down, the thicker we spring up--the Christian blood you spill, is like the seed you sow; it springs from the earth again and fructifies the more. That which you reproach in us as stubbornness, has been the most instructive mistress in proselyting the world--for who has not been struck with the sight of what you call stubbornness, and from thence prompted to look into the reality and grounds of it; and whoever looked well into our religion that did not embrace it? and whoever embraced it [on proper grounds] that was not ready to die for it? For this reason it is that we thank you for condemning us, because there is such a happy variance and disagreement between the Divine and human judgment, that when you condemn us upon earth, God absolves us in heaven."

**MINUCIUS FELIX** was contemporary with Tertullian, and rather before than after him. He had been a Roman orator, but, being converted to the Christian faith, he wrote an eloquent and learned defense of that religion, which Dr. Lardner thinks was published about the year 210. This work is in the form of dialogue, between Caecilius, a heathen, and Octavius, a Christian--Minucius sitting as umpire between them. The style of Minucius possesses all the charms of Ciceronian eloquence; nor would it be an easy task for any translator of him to do justice to his original. Caecilius, the heathen, in a long and declamatory harangue, brings forward all the common-place calumnies of his predecessors, and accuses the Christians as a desperate and unlawful faction, who poured contempt upon their deities, derided their worship, scoffed at their priests, and despised their temples as no better than charnel houses and heaps of dead men's bones. Octavius, having patiently listened to this severe philippic, addresses himself to Minucius, and tells him, that he shall endeavor to the best of his ability, by stating the truth, to exonerate his religion from the foul aspersions cast upon it by his opponent. He does not deny the fact, that the Christians poured contempt upon the gods of the heathen. On the contrary, he freely

admits it, and proceeds to evince the vanity of the worship of their images. "The mice," says he, "the swallows, and the bats, gnaw, insult, and sit upon your gods; and, unless you drive them away, they build their nests in their mouths; the spiders weave their webs over their faces. You first make them, then clean, wipe, and protect them, that you may fear and worship them. Should we view all your rites, there are many things which justly deserve to be laughed at--others that call for pity and compassion."

He then proceeds to discuss the subject with his opponent in regular order. He shews that man differs from the other creatures on this lower world chiefly in this, that while the beasts of the field are created prone to the earth, bent downward by nature, and formed to look no further than the good of their bellies--man was created erect and upright, formed for the contemplation of the heavens, susceptible of reason and conscience, calculated to lead him to the knowledge and imitation of God. Hence he infers the absurdity of atheism and the necessity of a great first cause, as one of the clearest dictates of reason and conscience. "When you lift up your eyes to heaven," says he, "and survey the works of creation around you, what is so clear and undeniable, as that there is a God, supremely excellent in understanding, who inspires, moves, supports, and governs all nature. Consider the vast expanse of heaven, and the rapidity of its motion either when studded with stars by night, or enlightened with the sun by day; contemplate the Almighty hand which poises them in their orbs, and balances them in their movement. Behold how the sun regulates the year by its annual circuit, and how the moon measures round a month by its increase, its decay, and its total disappearance. Why need I mention the constant vicissitudes of light and darkness, for the alternate reparation of rest and labor? Does not the standing variety of seasons, proceeding in goodly order, bear witness to its divine Author? The spring with her flowers, the summer with her harvest, the ripening autumn with her grateful fruits, and the moist and unctuous winter, are all equally necessary. What an argument for providence is this, which interposes and moderates the extremes of winter and summer with the allays of spring and autumn--thus enabling us to pass the year about with security and comfort, between the extremes of parching heat and of cold? Observe the sea, and you will find it bounded with a shore, a law which it cannot transgress. Look into the vegetable world, and see how all the trees draw their life from the bowels of the earth. View the ocean, in constant ebb and flow; and the fountains, running in full veins; with the rivers, perpetually gliding in their wonted channels. Why should I take up time in shewing how providentially this spot of earth is cantoned into hills, and dales, and plains? What need I speak of the various artillery for the defense of every animal--some armed with horns and hedged about with teeth, or fortified with hoofs and claws, or speared with stings, while others are swift of foot or of wing? But, above all, the beautiful structure of man most plainly speaks a God. Man, of stature straight, and countenance erect, with eyes placed above, like sentinels, watching over the other senses within the tower."

This may furnish a specimen of the elegant style, and powerful reasoning of this early Christian writer, in behalf of the existence of a great first cause and of a providence--in the clearness and force of which it may be fairly doubted if he has ever been surpassed by any who have come after him.

Adverting to the accusation, that the Christians were in general a poor and despicable race of men, their apologist replies, "That the most of us are poor, is not our dishonor, but our glory. The mind, as it is dissipated by luxury, so it is strengthened by frugality. But how can a man be poor, who wants nothing, who covets not what is another's, who is rich towards God? That man is rather poor, who, when he has much, desires more. No man can be so poor as when he was born. The birds live without any patrimony; the beasts find pasture every day, and we feed upon them. Indeed they are created for our use, which, while we do not covet, we enjoy. That man goes happier to heaven, who is not burdened with an unnecessary load of riches, Did we think estates to be useful to us, we would beg them of God, who, being Lord of all, would afford us what is necessary. But we choose rather to condemn riches than to possess them, preferring innocence and patience to them, and desiring rather to be good than prodigal. Our courage is increased by infirmities, and affliction is often the school of virtue."

**ATHENAGORAS** lived in the reigns of Adrian and the Antenines. He was, in his younger days, a heathen philosopher, and designing to write against the Christians, sat down to read their Scriptures, with the view of making his work more complete. A diligent inquiry into the divine oracles, however, brought him over to that faith which he wished to destroy. He drew up all Apology for the Christians, addressed to Marcus Aurelius, in which he complains, that while the other subjects of the Roman government were freely permitted to worship the deities according to their own voluntary choice, the Christians alone, whose worship was pure, simple, and worthy of the Deity, were not only denied this privilege, but were most unjustly maligned, slandered, and persecuted. He vindicates them from the charge of atheism, of which they were accused by their heathen adversaries; refutes the calumny of their eating human flesh, and the impure and unnatural connections with which they were charged, by shewing the sanctity of their doctrines, and the purity and innocence of their lives. "Why should you be offended at our very name?" says he, "the bare name does not deserve your hatred; it is wickedness alone that deserves punishment. If we are convicted of any crime, less or more, let us be punished, but not merely for the name of a Christian; for no Christian can be a bad man, unless he acts contrary to his profession. We are accused, 'that we do not worship the same gods as your cities, and offer them sacrifices.' But consider, O emperor, that the Maker and Governor of this world stands in no need of blood and sweet-smelling incense; he delights in himself, nothing is wanting in him. The sacrifice he demands is a rational and acceptable service.'

Again, "There is an infamous report," says he, "that we are guilty of three great crimes, viz. impiety against the gods, feeding on murdered infants, and of incestuous copulations. If these be true, spare neither age nor sex; punish us, with our wives and children; extirpate us out of the world, if any among us live as beasts, (though even the beasts of the field do not these abominable things.) But if any man be baser than a beast, to commit such wickedness, let him be punished for it. If these, however, be false and scandalous calumnies against us, notice them as such. Inquire into our lives, into our opinions, into our obedience to authority, our concern for your person and government; allow us only that common justice and equity you grant your enemies, and we ask no more, being assured of the victory, and are willing to lay down our lives for the truth." [Athenagores' *Legatio pro Christianis*, c. 4.]

Lastly, in vindication of their manner of life, Athenagoras says, "Among us the meanest day-laborers, and old women, though not able to dispute about their profession, yet can demonstrate its usefulness in their lives and good works. They do not, indeed, critically weigh their words, and recite elegant orations, but they manifest honest and virtuous actions, while, being buffeted they strike not again, nor sue those at law who spoil and plunder them; they give liberally to those that ask, and love their neighbor as themselves. Thus we do, because we are assured that there is a God who superintends human affairs, who made both us and the whole world, and to whom we must at last give an account of all the actions of our lives." [It has been made a question by some, how far it is probable the apologies which were, from time to time, drawn up by the Christians and addressed to the emperors, ever reached the hands of those monarchs. But with all their pomp and mightiness, there is good reason to think that the Roman emperors were more accessible than many of the petty sovereigns of Europe are in the present day. Augustus, for example, suffered all sorts of persons to approach him; and when a poor man once offered him a petition in a timorous manner, with a hand half extended and half drawn back, the emperor jested with him, and told him he looked as if he was giving an halfpenny to an elephant. Jortin's *Remarks*.]

These are, unquestionably, triumphant appeals, and reflect the highest honor on the Christians of those days. But, however eloquent and forcible, they appear to have been little regarded by the rulers and magistrates. We have taken a review of the state of things throughout the second century; and painful as the recital is, we shall find that matters were little, if at all improved, during some parts of the third, on which we are now entering. "That the Christians suffered in this century," says Mosheim, "calamities and injuries of the most dreadful kind, is a matter that admits of no debate; nor was there, indeed, any period of it in which they were not exposed to perpetual dangers. The law which Severus had enacted, forbidding his subjects to change their religion, was, in its effects, most prejudicial to the Christians; for though it did not formally condemn them, and seemed only adapted to put a stop to the

further progress of the gospel, yet it induced rapacious and unjust magistrates to persecute, even unto death, the poorer sort among the Christians; that thus the richer might be led, through fear of similar treatment, to purchase their safety at an expensive rate." It seems to have been during the reign of Severus, that the martyrdom of **PERPETUA AND FELICITAS**, with that of their companions, took place at Carthage, in Africa, the residence of Tertullian, about the year 202. The account is too interesting to be omitted; and it will serve, in addition to the history already detailed of the transactions at Lyons and Vienne, to give a clear idea of the manner in which these ancient persecutions were wont to be conducted. Augustine refers to the case of Perpetua, in his *Works*, vol. vii. p. 304; and Fleury has also given a copious account of the subject, vol. i. b. vi.

On this occasion, three young men, whose names were Saturninus, Secundulus, and Revocatus, were apprehended on a charge of being Christians, (probably occasioned by a rumor that they were all of them about to be baptized and added to the church,) and along with them, two females of the names of Felicitas and Perpetua; the latter a widow of the age of twenty-two, of a good family, and well educated, having a father and mother living, besides two brothers, and an infant at the breast. The father of Perpetua, who alone of all the family continued a heathen, no sooner heard that his daughter was informed against, than he had recourse to every method of persuasion and even of compulsion, to induce her to desist from her purpose of suffering martyrdom; so that she rejoiced when he left her, and in this interval she and the rest were baptized. Some days afterward, they were all thrown into prison, where the treatment she met with very much affected her at first, particularly the darkness of the place, the heat occasioned by the number of prisoners, the rudeness of the soldiers, and especially her anxiety about her child. Two of the deacons of the church, however, Tertius and Pomponius, who ministered to their wants, procured by the influence of money the removal of all the Christian prisoners into a more airy part of the prison, where Perpetua had the opportunity of suckling her child, which was ready to die for want thereof. In this situation, she comforted her mother, and encouraged her brother, entrusting to him the care of her infant son; and was, according to her own expression, as happy as if she had been in a palace. At this time she had a remarkable dream, from which she inferred that she should certainly suffer; but by which she was nevertheless greatly encouraged in her resolution.

A few days after this, a report was prevalent, that these Christian prisoners would soon be called before the governor; on which her father, overwhelmed with grief, came to her, entreating her to have compassion on his grey hairs, and on her mother, brothers, and child, which he said could not survive her. This he did, kissing her hands, and throwing himself at her feet, evincing stronger affection for her than he had before done. This much increased her concern; add to which, that he was the only relative she had who would not think themselves, in reality, honored by her conduct. To all his entreaties, however, she uniformly returned this answer, that she

was not at her own disposal, but at that of God.

On the ensuing day, while she and her friends were dining, they were summoned to an audience in the public forum, where a prodigious crowd was assembled. Here all her fellow prisoners confessed that they were Christians; but before Perpetua had an opportunity of doing it in the customary form, her father presented himself, holding her child in his arms, and supplicating her to have compassion upon him. In these entreaties he was joined by Hilarianus, the procurator, who besought her to think of her aged father and her own child, and to sacrifice for the safety of the emperor. She only answered, that she was a Christian, and could not do it.

After this the father was commanded to desist; but showing a reluctance to retire, one of the lictors struck him with a rod, which affected her, she said, as much as if she had herself been struck. However, having all made their confession, they were sentenced to be thrown to the wild beasts; notwithstanding which they returned to the prison filled with joy. Perpetua now sent Pomponius, the deacon, to request that her child might be sent to her, that as heretofore she might have the privilege of suckling it; but that indulgence was denied her. She bore the disappointment, however, with fortitude, even greater than she herself could have expected.

After a few days, Pudeus, the jailer, being favorably inclined towards them, gave permission to their friends to visit them, and when the time of exhibition drew near, the father of Perpetua also renewed his visit. He now threw himself upon the ground, tore his beard, leaving nothing either to be said or done which he thought could tend to move her; but without any other effect than to excite her pity towards him.

The author of the narrative next proceeds to give an account of some of the other prisoners; and the case of Felicitas is almost as interesting as that of Perpetua. Being eight months advanced in pregnancy, she was fearful lest her execution should be put off till another time, and that then she should die in the company of ordinary malefactors. Her companions also were affected at the reflection of going without her. Three days before the exhibition, however, she was delivered; and, being in great pain, those who were about her, asked how she would be able to endure the being exposed to wild beasts, when she was so much affected with the pains of childbirth. She replied, that in this case she was left to herself, but that in her other sufferings she should have another to support her, even Him for whom she suffered. Being delivered of a daughter, a sister of her's undertook to bring it up. Secundulus died in prison; but they had been joined by another of their friends called Saturus, who, after they were apprehended, had voluntarily surrendered himself.

The day preceding the exhibition, they all joined in a love-feast with their Christian friends who had permission to visit them, in the presence of many strangers whom

curiosity had brought to the place. To those the prisoners expressed great joy in the idea of their approaching sufferings, and endeavored to engage their attention to the great cause for which they were about to suffer. Satorius bade them observe their countenances, that they might know them all again the next day. From this extraordinary spectacle, the strangers retired with marks of astonishment, and many of them afterwards became converts.

When the day of exhibition arrived, they all went from the prison, with erect and cheerful countenances, trembling, says our author, with joy rather than with fear. In particular, Perpetua walked in such a manner as struck the spectators with particular respect; and Felicitas rejoiced that, being delivered of her child, she should accompany her friends to this glorious combat. On reaching the gate of the amphitheater, the officers, according to custom, began to clothe the men in the dresses of the priests of Saturn, and the women in those of the priestesses of Ceres. But when they remonstrated against the injustice of being compelled by force to do that, for refusing which they were willing to lay down their lives, the tribune granted them the privilege of dying in their own habits. They then entered the amphitheater; when Perpetua advanced singing hymns, and her three male companions solemnly exhorted the people as they went along. Coming in view of the *propraetor*, they said, "You judge us, but God will judge you." This so enraged the populace that, at their request, all the three were scourged; but in this they rejoiced, as having the honor to share in one part of the sufferings of their Savior.

When the wild beasts were let loose, Saturninus according to a wish which he had previously expressed, died by the attack of several of them rushing upon him at the same time; and Revocatus was killed by a leopard and a bear. Satorius was first exposed to a wild bear; but while the attending officer was gored by the animal so that he died on the following day, he himself was only dragged about and not materially hurt. A bear too, to which he was next exposed, would not go out of its den to meddle with him. He was, however, thrown in the way of a leopard, towards the end of the exhibition, and so much blood gushed out at one of his bites, that the spectators ridiculed him, as being baptized with blood. Not being quite killed, he, when the animal was withdrawn, addressed Pudeus, the jailer, exhorting him to steadfastness, in the faith, and not to be disheartened by his sufferings. He even took a ring from his finger, and dipping it in one of his wounds, gave it to him as a pledge.

Perpetua and Felicitas were first enclosed in a net, and then exposed to a wild cow. But this sight struck the spectators with horror, as the former was a delicate woman, and the breasts of the latter were streaming with milk after her delivery. They were therefore recalled, and exposed in a common loose dress. Perpetua was first tossed by the beast; and, being thrown down, she had the presence of mind to compose her dress as she lay on the ground. Then rising, and seeing Felicitas much more torn than herself, she gave her her hand, and assisted her to rise; and for some time they

both stood together, near the gate of the amphitheater. Thither Perpetua sent for her brother, and exhorted him to continue firm in the faith, to love his fellow Christians, and not to be discouraged by her sufferings.

Being all in a mangled condition, they were now taken to the usual place of execution, to be dispatched with a sword; but the populace requesting that they should be removed to another place, where the execution might be seen to more advantage, they got up of their own accord to go thither. Then, having given each other the kiss of charity, they quietly resigned themselves to their fate. In walking, Saturus had supported Perpetua, and he expired the first. She was observed to direct a young and ignorant soldier, who was appointed to be her executioner, in what manner he should perform his office. [Opuscula tria veterum auctorum, FASTIDII EPISCOPI Passio S.S. Martyrum PERPETUAE et FELICITATIS, etc. a Luca Holstenio, 8vo. Romans 1663. The editor of this publication, Lucas Holstenius, was Keeper of the Vatican Library, at Rome, a person of great learning, and the friend of our poet Milton. He studied three years at Oxford, and had a great esteem and affection for Milton, who visited him at Rome, and received many civilities from him there. See Bp. Newton's *Life of Milton*, prefixed to his edition of *Paradise Lost*. 8vo. p, 13.]

In the year 211, the tyrant Severus died, after a reign of eighteen years, and the churches found repose and tranquillity under his son and successor, **Caracalla**, though, in other respects, a monster of wickedness, whose life, says Gibbon, disgraced human nature; yet he neither oppressed the Christians himself, nor permitted any others to treat them with cruelty or injustice. And though few men have ever exceeded him in the ferocious vices, nevertheless, during the six years and two months that he reigned, the disciples found in him friendship and protection.

**Macrinus**, who from an obscure extraction, had been raised to an elevated rank in the Roman army, and who had been accessory to the death of Caracalla, was elected by the army to fill the imperial throne; but he had reigned only one year and two months, when he was succeeded by **Heliogabalus**, a youth of fifteen, whose follies and vices were infamous; and, although, as Mosheim says, perhaps the most odious of all mortals, yet he shewed no marks of bitterness or aversion to the disciples of Christ. He was slain at the age of eighteen, having reigned three years and nine months, and was succeeded, in the year 222, by his cousin, **Alexander Severus**, who was then only in the sixteenth year of his age; a prince distinguished by a noble assemblage of illustrious virtues, and esteemed one of the best characters in profane history. He did not indeed abrogate the existing laws against the Christians, which accounts for the mention of a few martyrdoms under his administration. He nevertheless shewed them, in various ways, and on many occasions, unequivocal testimonies of kindness and regard. Some attribute this to the instructions and counsels of his mother Julia Mammsea, for whom he had a high degree of love and veneration; and who was herself favorably disposed towards the Christians. Being at



Antioch with her son, A.D. 229, she sent for the renowned Origen, who resided at Alexandria, to come to her, that she might enjoy the pleasure and advantages of his conversation. It does not appear that either the emperor or his mother, so far understood and believed the Christian doctrine as to make an open profession of it, though their favorable sentiments induced them to tolerate the sect, during their lives, which were prolonged to the year 235, when they were both put to death in a conspiracy raised by **MAXIMIN**, a man who had risen from the humblest ranks of life to a dignified station in the army, and who now was made emperor.

From the death of Severus, which happened in 211, to the commencement of the reign of Maximin, A.D. 235, a period of about five and twenty years, the condition of the Christians was, in some places prosperous, and in all, tolerable. But with Maximin, the aspect of affairs changed. The character of this latter monarch formed a striking contrast to that of his predecessor. The former tyrants, says Gibbon, viz. Caligula and Nero, Commodus and Caracalla, were all dissolute and inexperienced youths, educated in the purple, and corrupted by the pride of empire, the luxury of Rome, and the perfidious voice of flattery. The cruelty of Maximin was derived from a different source--the fear of contempt. Though he depended on the attachment of the soldiers, who loved him for virtues like their own, he was conscious that his mean and barbarous origin, his savage appearance, and his total ignorance of the arts and institutions of civil life, formed a very unfavourable contrast with the amiable manners of Alexander Severus. He remembered, that, in his humbler fortune, he had often waited before the door of the haughty nobles of Rome, and had been denied admittance by the insolence of their slaves. He recollected also, the friendship of a few who had relieved his poverty and assisted his rising hopes. But those who had spurned, and those who had protected him, were guilty of the same crime, the knowledge of his original obscurity. For this crime many were put to death; and by the execution of several of his benefactors, Maximin published, in characters of blood, the indelible history of his baseness and ingratitude.

The sanguinary soul of the tyrant was open to every suspicion against those among his subjects, who were the most distinguished by their birth or merit. Whenever he was alarmed by the sound of treason, his cruelty was unbounded and unrelenting. A conspiracy against his life was either discovered or imagined; and Magnus, a consular senator, named as the principal author of it. Without a witness, without a trial, and without an opportunity of defense, Magnus, with four thousand of his supposed accomplices, were put to death. Confiscation, exile, or simple death, were, however, esteemed uncommon instances of his lenity. Some of the unfortunate sufferers, he ordered to be sewed up in the hides of slaughtered animals, others to be exposed to wild beasts, others again to be beaten to death with clubs. Throughout the Roman world, a general cry of indignation was heard, imploring vengeance against the common enemy of human kind, and, at length, by an act of private oppression, a peaceful and unarmed province was driven into rebellion against him.

[Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. 1:ch. 7.]

The malice of Maximin, against the house of the late emperor, by whom the Christians had been so peculiarly favored, stimulated him to persecute them bitterly, and he gave orders to put to death the pastors of the churches, whom he knew Alexander had treated as his intimate friends. The persecution, however, was not confined to them; others suffered at the same time: and a letter from Firmilian to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, preserved in the works of the latter, informs us that the flame extended to Cappadocia and Pontus. [Cyprian's Works, Letter 75. p. 256.] **Ambrose**, the friend of Origen, and Protocletus, pastor of the church in Caesarea, suffered much in the course of it, and to them Origen dedicated his *Book of Martyrs*. He himself was obliged to retire; but the tyrant's reign lasted only three years, in which time it must be confessed that the rest of the world had participated of his cruelties as much as the Christians. [Eusebias, b. 6. oh. 28. Orosius, b. 7. ch. 19. Origen, tom. 28.] But the name of **ORIGEN** is too important to be passed over in a history of the Christian church, with only a casual or incidental mention. "He was a man," says Dr. Priestley, "so remarkable for his piety, genius, and application, that he must be considered an honor to Christianity and to human nature." Even Jerome, his great adversary, admits that he was a great man from his infancy. His history is given in considerable detail by Eusebius, who tells us, that this very eminent man was born at Alexandria, in Egypt, A.D. 185. His father Leonides, from whom he received the first rudiments of his education bestowed uncommon pains upon it; and afterwards had him instructed by the ablest masters of the age, among whom were St. Clement and Ammonius Saccas, an eminent philosopher of Alexandria, the founder of the Eclectic sect. His early improvements were such as gave his worthy parent the greatest satisfaction. He was only seventeen years of age when the persecution under Severus began in Alexandria and his father was apprehended and confined; yet he would, at that early period of life, have fain thrown himself in the way of the persecutors, if his mother, after her most earnest entreaties had failed, had not hid his clothes in order to prevent his going abroad. He, however, wrote to his father, exhorting him to steadfastness in his profession, and not to be moved by any considerations about his family, though, in the event of his death, there would be a widow and seven children left in great poverty; and, thus encouraged, his father was beheaded, submitting to his destiny with becoming resolution. A large family being left in this destitute condition, a rich lady of Alexandria, the friend of genius and virtue, took Origen into her family. She, at the same time, entertained in her house a person of distinguished abilities, who held the principles of the Gnostics, and her table was the resort of other men of letters. But though Origen could not refrain from associating with this heretic, such was the firmness of his mind and the fixedness of his principles, that he would never join with him in prayer. In his eighteenth year he was elected master of the great School of Alexandria, which had been deserted by its late master in the time of persecution; and not choosing to be unnecessarily burdensome to his benefactress, he quitted her mansion, and provided

for his own support by giving lessons of instruction in grammar and the principles of religion. So devoted, however, did he become to the study of sacred literature, that he wholly abandoned the teaching of grammar, and sold his library, consisting of the works of the heathen philosophers and poets, for which the purchaser engaged to pay him four oboli a day. While he was thus employed, many of his pupils became martyrs; and, being in so conspicuous a station, it was with great difficulty that he himself escaped. Being obliged to instruct women as well as men, and having adopted a plan of great austerity of manners, in a fit of enthusiastic fervor, he made a literal application to himself of Christ's words, Matthew 19:12, an action for which he greatly condemned himself, in the subsequent period of his life, when he had reaped the benefit of experience and reflection.

Applying himself with extraordinary assiduity to the duties of his office as a teacher, his reputation rapidly increased; and it was still further augmented by an edition of the Old Testament, with all the different Greek versions then extant accompanying it, ranged in separate columns. These were the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, the Septuagint, that of Theodotion, and two others; with the Hebrew text in Hebrew characters, and the same in Greek letters. This constituted eight columns in the whole, but it was called **Hexapla**, from having the six Greek versions. Finding this work too expensive and unwieldy for general use, he afterwards reduced it in both respects by composing what is called the **Tetrapla**, which contained only the first four of the Greek versions already mentioned. Some time after, Origen quitted his employment and his studies, for the purpose of making a visit to Rome, for what particular object does not appear; but, returning to Alexandria, many persons of learning from distant places resorted to him; and the bishop of Alexandria being applied to by an Arabian prince for a person to instruct him in the Christian faith, he made choice of Origen in preference to any other.

At the time that Alexandria was ravaged by Caracalla, Origen went to Caesarea in Palestine, and there the bishop engaged him to expound the Scriptures publicly in the church, though he had not then been ordained. This gave umbrage to Demetrius, the bishop of Alexandria, who insisted on his returning home again, which he did. He nevertheless visited Caesarea not long, afterwards, where he received ordination, which gave such offense to Demetrius, that from that time he did every thing in his power to injure him, particularly by exposing the rash action mentioned above; though when it was communicated to him in confidence, he had promised never to divulge it, and at that time did not even blame him for it, but encouraged him to apply with rigor to the duties of his profession.

Demetrius at first got him banished from Alexandria, in a council, held A.D. 231, though on what pretense does not distinctly appear. In a second council he was deposed from the priesthood and excommunicated; and the sentence was of course ratified by distant churches. Still, however, he was received at Caesarea, and by

other bishops who became greatly attached to him, and undertook his defense. While he resided at Caesarea, numbers resorted to him from distant quarters for instruction; and among others Gregory, afterwards bishop of Neocaesarea, and his brother Athenodorus, whom he persuaded to abandon profane literature for the study of Theology; and they attended his lectures five years. Firmilau, also bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, a distinguished character in his time, was so attached to Origen that he strove to prevail upon him to remove into his province and reside with him.

In this situation he composed his Commentaries on the Scriptures, dictating, it is said, to seven notaries and sometimes more; and employing as many scribes to take fair copies, the expense of which was cheerfully defrayed by Arabrosins, whom Origen had brought over from the Valentinians to the catholic church. When he was turned sixty, he permitted scribes to copy after him as he delivered his discourses from the pulpit. It was in this period of his life that he drew up his excellent books against Celsus, in defense of Christianity. This latter was an Epicurean philosopher, who undertook to calumniate Christianity, in the most outrageous manner. Origen most ably answered all his objections, and vindicated the truth of his own religion, by the prophecies concerning Christ, by the evidence of miracles, and by an appeal to the holy influence of the gospel evinced in the lives of his disciples. This is considered by the learned to be the most valuable of all his writings, which were certainly very voluminous; for Eusebius says he wrote five and twenty volumes upon the gospel by Matthew! It must be remembered, however, that the ancients gave the title of volume to very small tracts.

In the persecution under Maximin, Origen concealed himself by retiring to Athens, where, however, he was not idle, but continued to write commentaries. In the persecution under Decius, he was apprehended, and though then far advanced in life, he shewed an example in his own conduct of that fortitude which he had so early in life, and so often afterwards, recommended to others. He was confined in the interior part of the prison, and there fastened with an iron chain, his feet stretched in the stocks to the fourth hole, a circumstance evidently mentioned by the historian to intimate that it was a posture of extreme pain, and where he was kept for several days. He bore, with invincible fortitude, a great variety of tortures to which his persecutors subjected him, taking care that they should not absolutely deprive him of life; and at length he was threatened to be burned alive. But neither what he felt, nor what he feared, at all moved him. He survived this persecution and lived to write letters afterwards highly edifying to those of his persecuted brethren who were brought into similar circumstances; and, at the advanced age of seventy, in the year 254, died at Tyre, a natural death.

From the death of Maximin to the reign of Decius, the Christians enjoyed considerable repose, and the gospel made an extensive progress. Indeed, with the

exception of the short reign of Maximin, they suffered but little persecution for nearly half a century, and the effects were but too manifest in the melancholy state of the churches at this time,--in the laxity of their discipline, and the general lukewarmness which had come upon them in their profession. The simplicity and purity of the Christian religion was greatly corrupted, and the usual concomitants of a season of worldly ease and prosperity, viz. ambition, pride, and luxury, too generally prevailed among both pastors and people. In such a state of things, it cannot surprise a reflecting mind, that HE who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand who has declared that he will make all the churches to know that it is HE who searches the reins and hearts, and will give to every one according to his works--should interpose at this time to vindicate his own cause, and reclaim the wanderings of his people.

No sooner had **DECIUS** ascended the throne than a tempest was raised, in which the fury of persecution fell in a dreadful manner upon the church of Christ. Whether it were from an ill-grounded fear of the Christians, or from a violent zeal for the superstitions of his ancestors, does not appear; but it is certain that he issued edicts of the most sanguinary kind, commanding the praetors, on pain of death, either to extirpate the whole body of Christians, without exception, or to force them by torments of various kinds to return to the Pagan worship. Hence, in all the provinces of the empire, during a space of two years, multitudes of Christians were put to death by the most horrid punishments which an ingenious barbarity could invent.

**This trying state of things was continued, with more or less intermission, during the reigns of Gallus, Valerian, Dioclesian,** and others of the Roman emperors; but the detail is harassing to the feelings, and instead of prose--curing it circumstantially, I shall dismiss the subject by an extract from Dr. Chandler's *History of Persecutions*, relating to this period, "The most excessive and outrageous barbarities," says he, "were made use of upon all who would not blaspheme Christ and offer incense to the imperial gods. They were publicly whipped,--drawn by the heels through the streets of cities,--racked till every bone of their body was disjointed,--had their teeth beat out,--their noses, hands, and ears cut off,--sharp pointed spears run under their nails,--were tortured with melted lead thrown on their naked bodies,--had their eyes dug out,--their limbs cut off,--were condemned to the mines,--ground between stones,--stoned to death, burnt alive,--thrown headlong from the high buildings,--beheaded,--smothered in burning lime kilns,--run through the body with sharp spears,--destroyed with hunger, thirst, and cold,--thrown to the wild beasts,--broiled on gridirons with slow fires,--cast by heaps into the sea,--crucified,--scraped to death with sharp shells,--torn in pieces by the boughs of trees,--and, in a word, destroyed by all the various methods that the most diabolical subtlety and malice could devise." [Introduction to Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, vol. 2, sect. 1. p. 14. Should any suspect Dr. Chandler of having overcharged the picture in this dreadful detail, I must entreat him to look into any of the larger histories of this

period, and he will soon be undeceived.]

When the persecution arose under the emperor Decius, or rather, as it is expressed by a late writer, "when the gates of hell were once more opened, and merciless executioners were let loose upon the defenceless churches, who deluged the earth with blood" (A.D. 249), **CYPRIAN** was presbyter of the church of Carthage, having been ordained the preceding year. He was soon marked out as a victim to imperial fury, but he prudently fled from Carthage, in consequence of which he was proscribed, and his effects were seized. He has been censured by some persons as a deserter of his flock; but the firmness and Christian piety with which he afterwards (under the reign of Valerian, A.D. 258,) laid down his life, affords a presumption that he had not retired for want of courage. His works, which consist of a collection of his epistles, eighty-three in number, and several tracts, contain much information respecting the state of Christianity at that period, at the same time that they display a benevolent and pious mind, and evince much of the character of the Christian pastor, in the affectionate solicitude with which he watched over his flock. The letters which he wrote during his retirement, give a distressing picture of the effects which had been produced upon the churches by that state of tranquillity and exemption from suffering, which, with little interruption, they had enjoyed from the death of Severus, in 211, to the reign of Decius in 249,--a period of about forty years.

"It must be owned and confessed," says he, "that the outrageous and heavy calamity, which hath almost devoured our flock, and continues to devour it to this day, hath happened to us because of our sins, since we keep not the way of the Lord, nor observe his heavenly commands, which were designed to lead us to salvation. Christ, our Lord, fulfilled the will of the Father; but we neglect the will of Christ. Our principal study is to get money and estates; we follow after pride; we are at leisure for nothing but emulation and quarrelling, and have neglected the simplicity of faith. We have renounced this world in words only, and not in deed. Every one studies to please himself, and to displease others." [Cyprian's Works, Epist. 11.] It is impossible for us not be struck with the shocking contrast which this picture presents, from that drawn by Tertullian about fifty years before. It seems even to have staggered the credibility of some writers. Dr. Jortin, for example, remarks, that "Cyprian has described, in very strong terms, the relaxation of discipline and manners which had ensued; which yet may require some abatement." His vehement temper," says he, "his indignation against vice, and his African eloquence, might induce him to make free with a figure called exaggeration." [*Remarks on Ecclesiastical Hist.* vol. 1. p. 376.] But, unhappily, Cyprian's account is confirmed by the testimony of Eusebius, who was nearly contemporary with him; and, which is still worse, it is put beyond all dispute by the immense number of defections from the Christian profession which everywhere abounded when the persecution, set on foot by Decius, commenced, and which occasioned great commotions in all the churches.

"Through too much liberty," says Eusebius, "they grew negligent and slothful, envying and reproaching one another; waging, as it were, civil wars among themselves, bishops quarrelling with bishops, and the people divided into parties. Hypocrisy and deceit were grown to the highest pitch of wickedness. They were become so insensible as not so much as to think of appeasing the Divine anger; but, like atheists, they thought the world destitute of any providential government and care, and thus added one crime to another. The bishops themselves had thrown off all concern about religion; were perpetually contending with one another; and did nothing but quarrel with, and threaten, and envy, and hate one another; they were full of ambition, and tyrannically used their power." [Eusebius's Hist. b. 8. ch.1.] Such was the deplorable state of the churches, which God, as Eusebius justly remarks, first punished with a gentle hand; but when they grew hardened and incurable in their vices, he was pleased to let in the most grievous persecutions upon them, under Dioclesian, which exceeded, in severity and length, all that had gone before. It began in the year 302, and lasted ten years.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

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## **REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, DURING THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES; WITH A VIEW OF THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST**

In reviewing the history of the Christian church, from the first propagation of the gospel until the reign of Constantine, it can scarcely fail to strike the reader's attention, that the Christian profession is marked, during this period, with a peculiar character, in distinction from what it sustained after the accession of Constantine to the throne, when the Christian religion was taken under his fostering care, and supported by the civil government. The first propagation of the Christian faith was not only unaided, but directly opposed in most instances, by the civil government in the different countries in which it spread. The publishers of the gospel, were, in general, plain and unlearned men, destitute of all worldly influence and power; their doctrine was in itself obnoxious, and their appearance little calculated to procure it a favorable hearing; nor could they present to the view of men any other inducement to embrace their testimony, than the prospect of life and immortality in the world to come; with the certainty, that through much tribulation believers must enter into the kingdom of God. The success of their doctrine stood in direct opposition to the power of princes, the wisdom of philosophers, the intrigues of courts, the enmity of the Pagan priesthood, with all the weight of an established system of idolatry and superstition; it could, therefore, only make its way by sustaining and overcoming the malice and rage of its enemies.

In the view that we have taken of the Christian history during the preceding period, it appears uniformly in harmony with this representation. The general character of the



disciples of Christ is that of a suffering people; and, notwithstanding some intervals of repose occasionally intervening, in general the progress of the gospel is traced in the blood of the saints, and its power and evidence made conspicuous in prevailing against the most formidable opposition. Thus, the excellency of its power appeared to be of God, and not of man. While the Christian cause was thus opposed to the world, and made its way by its own divine energy, the general purity of its profession was preserved; for, what could induce men to embrace it, but a conviction of its heavenly origin and importance? So long as the Christian profession was thus circumstanced, its success carried with it its own witness. But the scene is altogether changed, when we view the state of matters after the ascension of Constantine; for then, instead of the teachers of Christianity being called upon to shew their attachment to it by self-denial and suffering for its sake, we see them exalted to worldly honor and dignity; and the holy and heavenly religion of Jesus, converted into a system of pride, domination and hypocrisy, and becoming, at length, the means of gratifying the vilest lusts and passions of the human heart. The consequence of such a change in the state of things may be easily anticipated by those who have any proper views of the corruption of human nature; and it corresponds with matter of fact. For no sooner do we perceive the teachers in the church, who had hitherto been the foremost in sustaining the opposition of the persecuting powers, and animating their flocks to a patient continuance in bearing the cross--no sooner do we see them invested with secular honors, immense wealth, and elevated to dignity, than the first object of their lives seems to have been to maintain their power and pre-eminence, and aspiring at dominion over the bodies and consciences of men. From the days of Constantine, the corruption of the Christian profession proceeded with rapid progress. **Many evils, probably, existed before this period, which prepared the way for the events that were to follow; but when the influence of the secular power became an engine of the clergy, to be exercised in their kingdom, it need not be a matter of surprise that the progress became exceedingly rapid in converting the religion of Christ into a system of spiritual tyranny, idolatry, superstition, and hypocrisy, until it arrived at its full height in the Roman hierarchy, when, what is called THE CHURCH became the sink of iniquity.**

That such a display of human depravity as we shall have to detail in the succeeding events of church history, should be exhibited under a profession of Christianity, may very reasonably excite our astonishment. Many, indeed, without discriminating between Christianity and its corruptions, have found what they conceive a sufficient justification of their own scepticism, in the many abominations which have been, and still are, committed under the Christian name. And it must be allowed, that it is one of the most plausible and successful arguments in encouraging and supporting a sceptical state of mind, to paint the Christian system as it appears the engine of priestcraft, and the support of spiritual tyranny, idolatry, and superstition. But genuine Christianity is no more accountable for these enormities, than, what is called, the religion of nature is for all the absurd and superstitious rites of Paganism.

It may be proper, therefore, to observe, that the greatest iniquity that has been discovered in what is called the Christian church, admitting the evil in its full extent, is but the accomplishment of what was before predicted in the sacred Scriptures; and, considered in this view, it presents us with a most powerful argument in confirmation of the prophetic word. In the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, the obstruction which had hitherto operated against the full manifestation of the antichristian power, being removed, the current of events gradually brought matters to that state, in which "the man of sin" became fully revealed, "sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself as God."

The apostles of Jesus Christ gave many intimations in their writings of the corruptions which should arise under the Christian profession at a future period. There were not wanting symptoms of this even in their own days, as appears from the following passages. When the apostle Paul delivered to the elders of the church at Ephesus, a solemn warning to take heed to themselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, he adds, as the reason of it;

"for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29,30).

The jealousy and fear, which he entertained relative to the influence of false teachers, is manifest in the following passage, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ: For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no wonder, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed into ministers of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 11:3,13,14,15).

The same general caution against the effects which should proceed from false teachers, is very plainly given by the apostle Peter.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (2 Peter 2:1-3).

To these passages, and many others that might be adduced, as calculated to awaken

the attention of Christians to the dangers they should be exposed to from corrupt teachers, we may particularly add the following, as it not only foretells but describes the nature of the apostasy that should take place, and at a period remote from the time when the predictions were delivered.

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth" (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

Again, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

But of all the predictions contained in the New Testament, the most particular and express description of the antichristian power that should arise under the Christian name, is the following:

"Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled; neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-10).

In this representation of the apostasy from the purity of the Christian faith and its influence, which terminated in the man of sin sitting in the temple of God, we may notice the following particulars:

1. That the apostle describes its origin as taking place in his own day. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work," ver. 7. The seed was then sown; idolatry was already stealing into the churches, 1 Corinthians 10:14. A voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, Colossians 2:18. Men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, supposing that gain was godliness, and teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre-sake. Men of this cast appear to have early abounded, and, as acting not wholly in direct opposition to Christianity, but corrupting it in the way of deceit and hypocrisy. During the whole progress towards the full revelation of the man of sin, there was no direct disavowal of the truth of Christianity; it was "a form of godliness without the power of it."

2. There is an evident intimation in this passage of an obstacle or hindrance in the way of his power being fully revealed.

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, etc." ver. 6, 7.

Without going into any minute and critical examination of these verses, it is obvious that the wicked power which is here the subject of the apostle's discourse, and denominated the man of sin, had not then been fully displayed, and that there existed some obstacle to a complete revelation of the mystery of iniquity. The apostle uses a particular caution when hinting at it; but the Thessalonians, he says, knew of it; probably from the explanation he had given them verbally, when he was with them. It can scarcely be questioned, that the hindrance or obstacle, referred to in these words, was the heathen or pagan Roman government, which acted as a restraint upon the pride and domination of the clergy, through whom the man of sin ultimately arrived at his power and authority, as will afterwards appear. The extreme caution which the apostle manifests in speaking of this restraint, renders it not improbable that it was something relating to the higher, powers for we can easily conceive how improper it would have been to declare in plain terms, that the existing government of Rome should come to an end. There is a remarkable passage in Tertullian's Apology, that may serve to justify the sense which Protestants put upon these verses; and since it was written long before the accomplishment of the predictions, it deserves the more attention. "Christians," says he, "are under a particular necessity of praying for the emperors, and for the continued state of the empire; because we know that dreadful power which hangs over the world, and the conclusion of the age, which threatens the most horrible evils, is restrained by the continuance of the time appointed for the Roman empire. This is what we would not experience; and while we pray that it may be deferred, we hereby shew our good will to the perpetuity of the Roman state." [Tertullian's Apology, ch. 32.] From this extract

it is very manifest that the Christians, even in Tertullian's time, a hundred and twenty years before the Pagan government of Rome came to its end, looked forward to that period as pregnant with calamity to the cause of Christ; though it is probable they did not accurately understand the manner in which the evils should be brought on the church. And this indeed, the event proved to be the case. For while the long and harassing persecutions, which were carried on by the Pagan Roman emperors continued, and all secular advantages were on the side of Paganism, there was little encouragement for any one to embrace Christianity, who did not discern somewhat of its truth and excellence. Many of the errors, indeed, of several centuries, the fruit of vain philosophy, paved the way for the events which followed; but the hindrance was not effectually removed, until Constantine the emperor, on professing himself a Christian, undertook to convert the kingdom of Christ into a kingdom of this world, by exalting the teachers of Christianity to the same state of affluence, grandeur, and influence in the empire, as had been enjoyed by Pagan priests and secular officers in the state. The professed ministers of Jesus having now a wide field opened to them for gratifying their lust of power, wealth, and dignity, the connection between the Christian faith and the cross, was at an end. What followed was the kingdom of the clergy, supplanting the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

3. It is worthy of observation, in what language the apostle describes the revelation of the man of sin, when this hindrance, or let, should be removed. "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." He had before described this power, and personified, him as "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself, above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Every feature in this description corresponds to that of a religious power, in the assumption of Divine authority, Divine honors, and Divine: worship; a power which should arrogate the prerogatives of the MOST HIGH, having its seat in the temple or house of God, and which should be carried on by Satan's influence, with all deceit, hypocrisy, and tyranny; and with this corresponds the figurative representation given of the same power, Revelation 13:5-8.

As many things in the Christian profession, before the reign of Constantine, made way for the kingdom of the clergy, so, after they were raised to stations of temporal dignity and power, it was not wholly at one stride that they arrived at the climax here depicted by the inspired apostle. Neither the corruption of Christianity, nor the reformation of its abuses was effected in a day; "evil men and seducers waxed worse and worse." There was a course of mutually deceiving and being deceived. The conscience of man is not blunted all at once against the convictions of guilt; and there is something uncommonly expressive in the apostle's words, when he describes

the blessed God as giving men up to strong delusions, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; and this he represents as the necessary consequence of their not receiving the love of the truth, that they might be saved. In the sequel, it will appear, that when the bishops were once exalted to wealth, power, and authority, this exaltation was of itself the prolific source of every corrupt fruit. Learning, eloquence, and influence, were chiefly exerted to maintain their own personal dominion and popularity. Contests for pre-eminence over each other, became the succedaneum of the ancient contention for the faith, and its influence over the world. Power was an engine of support to the different factions; and the sword of persecution, which, for three centuries, had been drawn by the Pagans against the followers of Christ, the besotted ecclesiastics employed against each other in defense of what. was now called "the Holy Catholic Church."

The history of this church, from the accession of Constantine to the period when the bishop of Rome was elevated to supreme authority, discovers a progressive approximation to that state of things, denoted in scripture, by the revelation of "the man of sin sitting in the temple of God." All the violent contentions, the assembling of councils, the persecutions alternately carried on by the different parties, were so many means of preparing the way for the assumption of spiritual tyranny, and the idolatry and superstition of the Roman hierarchy. In all these transactions, the substitution of human for divine authority, contentions about words instead of the faith once delivered to the saints; pomp and splendor of worship, for the primitive simplicity; and worldly power and dignity, instead of the self-denied labors of love and bearing the cross; this baneful change operated in darkening the human mind as to the real nature of true Christianity, until, in process of time, it was lost sight of. When Jesus Christ was interrogated by the Roman governor concerning his kingdom, he replied, "My kingdom is not of this world." This is a maxim of unspeakable importance in his religion; and almost every corruption that has arisen, and by which this heavenly institution has been debased, from time to time, may be traced, in one way or other, to a departure from that great and fundamental principle of the Christian kingdom. It may, therefore, be of importance to the reader to keep his eye steadily fixed upon it, while perusing the following pages, as that alone can enable him to trace the kingdom of the Son of God, amidst the labyrinths of error and delusion which he will presently have to explore.

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**ROMAN EMPIRE. A.D. 306 TO 337**

At the commencement of the fourth century of the Christian era, the Roman empire was under the dominion of four monarchs; of whom two, viz. Dioclesian and Maximin Herculeus, were of superior rank, and each distinguished by the title of **AUGUSTUS**; while the other two, Constantius Chlorus and Maximinus Galerius, sustained a subordinate dignity, and were honored with the humbler appellation of **CAESARS**.

**Dioclesian** was raised to the throne in the year 284, consequently had swayed the imperial scepter sixteen years; but, though much addicted to superstition, he entertained no aversion to the Christians; and during this period they had enjoyed a large portion of outward peace. **Constantius Chlorus**, to whose lot it fell to exercise the sovereign power in Gaul and the western provinces, was a mild and amiable prince, under whose government we find no traces of persecution. He had himself abandoned the absurdities of Polytheism, and treated the Christians with benevolence and respect. The principal offices of his palace were executed by

Christians. He loved their persons, esteemed their fidelity, and entertained no dislike to their religious principles. This alarmed the Pagan priests, whose interests were so intimately connected with the continuance of the ancient superstition, and who, apprehending, not without reason, that, to their great detriment, the Christian religion was becoming daily more universal and triumphant throughout the empire, addressed themselves to Dioclesian, whom they knew to be of a timorous and credulous disposition, and by fictitious oracles and other perfidious stratagems, endeavored to engage him to persecute the Christians. [Mosheim, Cent. 4:ch. 1.]

The treacherous arts of a selfish and superstitious priesthood failed, however, for some time, to move Dioclesian. Their recourse was next had to **Maximinus Galerius**, one of the Caesars, who had married the daughter of Dioclesian; a prince, whose gross ignorance of every thing but military affairs was accompanied with a fierce and savage temper, which rendered him a proper instrument for executing their designs. Stimulated by the malicious insinuations of the heathen priests, the suggestions of a superstitious mother, and the ferocity of his own natural temper, he importuned Dioclesian in so urgent a manner, for an edict against the Christians, that he, at length, obtained his horrid purpose. [Mosheim, Ubi supra.]

It seems to have been the practice of the Roman emperors about this time, to take up their residence occasionally at **Nicomedia**, the capital of the province of Bythinia--the place from whence Pliny addressed his celebrated letter to Trajan. This city, for its beauty and greatness, has been compared to Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria; but, what is more to our purpose, it abounded with Christians, even from the days of the apostles (1 Peter 1:1). Dioclesian having taken up his abode at Nicomedia, Galerius, his son-in-law, had come to spend the winter with him. In the year 302, the latter prevailed upon his colleague to grant an edict for pulling down all the places of worship belonging to the Christians, to burn all their books and writings, to deprive them of all their civil rights and privileges, and render them incapable of any honors or civil promotion. This first edict, though rigorous and severe, did not extend to the lives of the Christians, for Dioclesian was much averse to slaughter and bloodshed. It was, however, merely a prelude to what was to follow; for, not long after the publication of this first edict, a fire broke out at two different times in the palace of Nicomedia, where Galerius lodged with Dioclesian. The former, though in all probability the real incendiary, threw all the odium of this upon the Christians, as an act of revenge; and the credulous Dioclesian, too easily persuaded of the truth of this charge, caused the most inhuman torments to be inflicted upon multitudes of them at Nicomedia.

Soon after this, a new edict was issued, ordering all the bishops, pastors, and public teachers, throughout the empire, to be apprehended and imprisoned; hoping, probably, that if the leaders could be once effectually silenced, their respective flocks might be easily dispersed. Nor did his inhuman policy stop there; for, a third edict



was presently issued, by which it was ordered, that all sorts of torments should be employed, and the most intolerable punishments resorted to, in order to force the disciples of Jesus to renounce their profession, and sacrifice to the heathen gods. The consequence was, that an immense number of persons became the victims of this cruel stratagem throughout every part of the Roman empire, except those who had the felicity to be placed under the mild and equitable government of **Constantius Chlorus**. The shameful manner in which multitudes of them were punished, it would be difficult to relate without violating the rules of decency; and, in the present day, would scarcely obtain credit; while others were put to death, after having their constancy tried by tedious and inexpressible torments; and not a few sent to the mines, where they were doomed to linger out the remains of a miserable life in poverty and bondage.

In the third year of this horrible persecution (A.D. 304,) a fourth edict was published by Dioclesian, at the instigation of Galerius, commissioning the magistrates to force all Christians, without distinction of rank or sex, to sacrifice to the gods, and authorizing them to employ all sorts of torments, with the view of driving them to this act of apostasy. The diligence and zeal of the Roman magistrates in the execution of this inhuman edict, ultimately reduced the Christian profession to a very low ebb; for **this horrid persecution lasted ten years.**

The rigorous edicts of Dioclesian were strictly and cheerfully executed by his associate **Maximian**, who had long hated the Christians, and who delighted in acts of blood and violence. It is the remark of Gibbon, when speaking of Maximian and Galerius, that the minds of those princes had never been enlightened by science. Education had never softened their temper. They owed their greatness to their swords; and in their most elevated fortune they still retained their superstitious prejudices of soldiers and peasants. Maximian swayed the scepter over the provinces of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, where he gratified his own inclination by yielding a rigorous obedience to the stern demands of Dioclesian.

A learned French writer, Monsieur Godeau, computes that in this tenth persecution, as it is commonly termed, there were not less than seventeen thousand Christians put to death in the space of one month. And that "during the continuance of it, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than one hundred and fifty thousand persons died by the violence of their persecutors; and five times that number through the fatigues of banishment, or in the public mines to which they were condemned. [See a Sermon of Dr. Calamy's, on Matthew 16:18. Mr. Gibbon has labored to diminish the number of martyrs on this trying occasion, and to show that they were inconsiderable indeed; but even his own account of things, when impartially weighed, will be found to justify all I have said of it.]

Galerius now no longer made a secret of his ambitious designs. He obliged Dioclesian

and Maximian to resign the imperial dignity, and got himself declared emperor of the east, resigning the west, for the present, to Constantius Chlorus, at that time in Britain, with the ill state of whose health he was well acquainted.

But Divine Providence was now preparing more tranquil times for the church; and, in order to this, it confounded the schemes of Galerius, and brought his counsels to nothing. In the year 306, Constantius Chlorus, finding his end approaching, wrote to Galerius to send him his son Constantine, who had been kept as an hostage at court. The request was refused; but, coming to the ears of young Constantine, and aware of the danger of his situation, he resolved to attempt his escape, and seizing a favorable moment, he made the best of his way for Britain, and, to prevent pursuit, is said to have killed all the post horses on his route. He arrived at York just in time to witness the death of his father Constantius, who had in the meantime nominated his son as his successor; and the army, without waiting to consult Galerius, immediately pronounced Constantine emperor of the west, in the room of his father--a proceeding which must have stung the tyrant to the heart, who was nevertheless obliged to submit, and even to confirm the appointment with the outward marks of his approbation.

Not long after this (A.D. 311,) Galerius himself, the author of all this series of complicated suffering to the Christians, was reduced to the brink of the grave by a dreadful and lingering disease, in which he suffered horrors that no language can express. "The frequent disappointments of his ambitious views," says Gibbon, "the experience of six years of persecution, and the salutary reflections which a lingering and painful distemper suggested to the mind of Galerius, at length convinced him that the most violent efforts of despotism are insufficient to extirpate a whole people, or to subdue their religious prejudices." Desirous of repairing the mischief that he had occasioned, he published in his own name, and in those of Licinius and Constantine, a general edict, which after a pompous recital of the imperial titles, proceeded in the following manner:

"Among the important cares which have occupied our minds, for the utility and preservation of the empire, it was our intention to correct and re-establish all things according to the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans. We were particularly desirous of reclaiming, into the way of reason and nature, the deluded Christians who had renounced the religion and ceremonies instituted by their fathers, and presumptuously despising the practice of antiquity, had invented extravagant laws and opinions according to the dictates of their fancy, and had collected a various society from the different provinces of our empire. The edicts which we have published, to enforce the worship of the gods, having exposed many of the Christians to danger and distress, many having suffered death, and many more, who still persist in their impious folly, being left destitute of any public exercise of religion, we are disposed to extend to those unhappy men the effects of our wonted clemency. We permit them, therefore,

freely to profess their private opinions, and to assemble in their conventicles without fear of molestation, provided always that they preserve a due respect to the established laws and government. By another rescript, we shall signify our intentions to the judges and magistrates; and we hope that our indulgence will engage the Christians to offer up their prayers to the Deity whom they adore, for our safety and prosperity, for their own, and for that of the republic." [Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. 2, ch. 16.]

This important edict was issued and set up at Nicomedia, on the 13th April, 311; but the wretched Galerius did not long survive its publication; for he died about the beginning of May, under torments the most excruciating, and in the nature of his complaint and manner of his death, very much resembling the case of Herod. After his death, Maximin succeeded him in the government of the provinces of Asia. In the first six months of his new reign he affected to adopt the prudent counsels of his predecessor; and, though he never condescended to secure the tranquillity of the church by a public edict, he caused a circular letter to be addressed to all the governors and magistrates of the provinces, expatiating on the imperial clemency, acknowledging the invincible obstinacy of the Christians, and directing the officers of justice to cease their ineffectual prosecutions, and to connive at the secret assemblies of those enthusiasts. In consequence of these orders, says Gibbon, great numbers of Christians were released from prison, or delivered from the mines. "The confessors, singing hymns of triumph, returned into their own countries; and those who had yielded to the violence of the tempest, solicited with tears of repentance, their re-admission into the bosom of the Church." [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 2, ch. 16.]

This treacherous calm, however, was of short duration. Cruelty and superstition were the ruling passions of the soul of Maximin--the former suggested the means, the latter pointed out the objects of persecution. He was devoted to the worship of the Pagan deities, to the study of magic, and to the belief of oracles. Happily, while this bigoted monarch was preparing fresh measures of violence against the Christians with deliberate policy, a civil war broke out between himself and his colleague Licinius, which occupied his whole attention; and his defeat and death taking place soon after, delivered the Christians from this last and most implacable of their enemies.

The government of the Roman world, which, a few years before, had been administered by no less than six emperors at one time, now became divided between **CONSTANTINE** and Licinius, who immediately granted to the Christians permission to live according to their own laws and institutions, a privilege which was still more clearly ascertained by **an edict drawn up at Milan, in the year 313**. By this edict, every subject of the empire was allowed to profess either Christianity or Paganism unmolested. It also secured the places of Christian worship, and even directed the restoration of whatever property they had been dispossessed by the late persecution.

The rival princes, however, were not long in seeking or finding occasion to turn their arms against each other, in the issue of which Licinius fell, and left his competitor in the undisturbed possession of the empire. No character has been exhibited to posterity in lights more contradictory and irreconcilable than that of Constantine. Christian writers, transported with his profession of their faith, have magnified his abilities and virtues to excess, and thrown an almost celestial splendor over every part of the portrait; while the Pagan historians have spread their gloomy shades upon the canvas, and obscured every trait that was great and amiable. The circumstances attending his conversion to Christianity, are too familiar to most readers, to render any thing like a minute detail of them proper in this place. His father Constantius had shown himself very favorably disposed towards the Christians, and Constantine gave early indications of a desire to protect and favor its professors. If we may credit his own assertion, he had been an indignant spectator of the savage cruelties which had been inflicted by the hands of the Roman soldiers, on those citizens whose religion was their only crime. In the east and in the west he had seen the different effects of severity and indulgence; and as the former was rendered still more odious by the example of Galerius, his implacable enemy, the latter was recommended to his imitation by the authority and advice of a dying father. These tolerant principles were displayed alike both towards Pagans and Christians, before the emperor had avowed any peculiar attachment towards the latter. It is true, nevertheless, that he did not always maintain this state of indifference; he appears evidently to have been convinced of the folly and impiety of the Pagan superstition, which induced him to exhort all his subjects earnestly to embrace the gospel, and at length to employ all the force of his authority to abolish the ancient heathen worship.

According to his own account, he was marching at the head of his army, from France into Italy, against Maxentius, on an expedition, which he was fully aware, involved in it his future destiny. Oppressed with extreme anxiety, and reflecting that he needed a force superior to arms, for subduing the sorceries and magic of his adversary, he anxiously looked out for the aid of some deity, as that which alone could secure him success. About noon, when the sun began to decline, whilst praying for supernatural aid, a luminous cross was seen by the emperor and his army, in the air, above the sun, inscribed with the words, "BY THIS CONQUER," at the sight of which, amazement overpowered both himself and the soldiery on the expedition with him. He continued to ponder on the event till night, when, in a dream, the author of Christianity appeared to him, to confirm the vision, directing him, at the same time, to make the symbol of the cross his military ensign.

[Few things have occasioned more perplexity to the writers of ecclesiastical history, and set them more at variance, than this vision of Constantine. Mr. Milner, whose credulity on most occasions is sufficiently apparent, entertains no doubt of the reality of the miracle; and such is his inconsistency with his own theological creed, that he resolves it into an answer to Constantine's importunate prayer. "He prayed, he

implored," says he, "with much vehemence and importunity, and God left him not unanswered." (As though the blessed God would listen to any prayer but that of faith! Proverbs 15:8 and Hebrews 11:6.) Dr. Haweis gives up the miracle altogether, and seems to consider the whole as an imposition. The learned Mosheim is evidently perplexed about it, and seems at a loss in what light to consider it--and so also is his translator. "The whole story," says the latter, "is attended with difficulties which render it, both as a miracle and as a fact, extremely dubious, to say no more." If any should think the subject worthy of further investigation, I would recommend to their perusal a very ingenious and learned disquisition upon it, subjoined as an appendix to the first volume of Dr. Gregory's *Church History*, written by Mr. Henely of Rendlesham. They will there find a compressed account of the opinions of the different writers on the subject, and the following deductions not unfairly drawn from the whole--that Eusebius, who received the account of this extraordinary scene from the mouth of Constantine himself, and who wrote the life of that emperor, does not appear to have given credit to it, though the latter attested it by an oath--that neither the day, the year, the time, nor the place of this vision is recorded--that there is no evidence that any one of the army saw the phenomenon besides the emperor--that the accounts given of it by the emperor at different times do not quadrate--that the whole story is replete with contradictions--and that there exists a presumption diametrically opposite to the intent of the alleged miracle, in the declaration of Christ to the Roman governor, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," etc. and that, in a word, the powerful inducements of policy and party, the obvious character of Constantine, and the opinions of the times, when judiciously considered and properly combined, present in themselves an easy solution of the whole contrivance and fraud.]

Constantine vanquished his adversary; and no sooner was he made master of Rome, by the destruction of Maxentius than he honored the cross by putting a spear of that form into the hand of the statue erected for him at Rome. He now built places for Christian worship, and showed great beneficence to the poor. He encouraged the meeting of bishops in synods--honored them with his presence, and employed himself continually in aggrandizing the church. He removed the seat of empire to Byzantium, which he embellished, enlarged, and honored with the name of Constantinople; and prohibited, by a severe edict, the performance of any Pagan rites and ceremonies throughout the city. His religious zeal augmented with his years; and towards the close of his life, several imperial edicts were issued for the demolition of the heathen temples, and the prevention of any sacrifices upon their altars. He was on the other hand, scrupulously attentive to the religious rites and ceremonies which were prescribed by the Christian clergy. He fasted; observed the feasts in commemoration of the martyrs, and devoutly watched the whole night on the vigils of the saints. And in his last illness, he summoned to the imperial palace at Nicomedia, several Christian bishops, fervently requesting to receive from them the ordinance of baptism, and solemnly protesting his intention of spending the remainder of his life

as the disciple of Christ. He was accordingly baptized by Eusebius, bishop of that city: after which he entirely laid aside his purple and regal robes, and continued to wear a white garment till the day of his death, which, after a short illness, took place on the 22d of May, in the year 337, at the age of sixty-four, having reigned thirty-three years. [Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*, b. 4. ch. 62.]

The extraordinary occurrences of the life of Constantine produced an entire change in the whole of the Christian profession. Its friends were now no longer called to endure patiently the hatred of the world--to take up their cross, and press after a conformity to Christ in his sufferings, and through much tribulation, to enter his kingdom; but they were to bask in the sunshine of worldly prosperity, enjoying the smiles of the great, and connecting with their profession the riches and honors of this present world--the baneful effects of which began speedily to develop themselves. So long as the Christians were persecuted by the heathen on account of their faith and practices, they were driven to the gospel as their only source of consolation and support; and they found it every way sufficient for their utmost need. The animating principles which it imparted, raised their minds superior to the enjoyments of this world, and in the hope of life and immortality, they were happy, even if called to lay down their lives for the sake of their profession. And, herein, the power of their religion was conspicuous. It was not with them an empty speculation, floating in the mind, destitute of any influence upon the will and the affections. While it induced them to count no sacrifice too costly which they were called to make for the gospel's sake, they were led by it to exercise the most fervent Christian affection one towards another--to sympathize tenderly with each other in all their sorrows and distresses--and by bearing one another's burdens, they fulfilled their Lord's new command of brotherly love. This was the prominent feature in Christianity during the first three centuries. The writings of the apostles and evangelists all breathe this amiable spirit, and abound with exhortations to cultivate this God-like disposition; and so conspicuous was the exercise of it among the primitive Christians that it was commonly remarked by their enemies, and recommended by them as worthy of imitation.

Such, however, is the depravity of human nature, that, as they enjoyed any intervals from persecution, they became more profligate in their morals and more litigious in their tempers. But now that the restraint was wholly taken off by Constantine, the churches endowed, and riches and honors liberally conferred on the clergy; when he authorized them to sit as judges upon the consciences and faith of others, he confirmed them in the spirit of this world--the spirit of pride, avarice, domination, and ambition--the indulgence of which, has, in all ages, proved fatal to the purity, peace and happiness of the kingdom of Christ. This inconsistent conduct of the leading men among them, in professing a religion, the prominent characteristics of which are humility and self-denial, and at the same time aspiring after the pleasures and the honors of this world, seems to have forcibly struck the very heathens

themselves. Hence, an historian of the latter class, who lived shortly after the time of Constantine, remarks concerning the bishops of Rome, "It would be well if, despising the magnificence of the city, they would imitate some of the bishops of provincial towns, whose temperance in eating and drinking, plainness of apparel, and looking above the world, recommended them to the deity as his true worshippers." [Ammianus Marcellinus, b. 27, p. 362.]

Now they began to new-model the Christian church, the government of which was, as far as possible, arranged conformably to the government of the state. The emperor himself assumed the title of bishop--and claimed the power of regulating its external affairs; and he and his successors convened councils, in which they presided, and determined all matters of discipline. The bishops corresponded to those magistrates whose jurisdiction was confined to single cities; the metropolitans to the pro-consuls or presidents of provinces; the primates to the emperor's vicars, each of whom governed one of the imperial provinces. Canons and prebendaries of cathedral churches took their rise from the societies of ecclesiastics, which Eusebius, bishop of Verceil, and after him Augustine, formed in their houses, and in which these prelates were styled their fathers and masters.[9]

This constitution of things was an entire departure from the order of worship, established under Divine direction by the apostles of Christ in the primitive churches. In fact, scarcely any two things could be more dissimilar than was the simplicity of the gospel dispensation from the hierarchy established under Constantine the Great. "Let none," says Dr. Mosheim, alluding to the first and second centuries, "confound the bishops of this primitive and golden period of the church, with those of whom we read in the following ages. For though they were both designated by the same name, yet they differed extremely, in many respects. A bishop, during the first and second centuries, was a person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which, at that time, was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly, he acted not so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. The churches also, in those early times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws. Nothing is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there ever appear, in the first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches, from which councils and metropolitans derive their origin." [Priestley's *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, vol. 2, p. 342.] To which we may add, that the first churches acknowledged no earthly potentate as their head. This had been expressly prohibited by their Divine Master.

"The kings of the Gentiles," said he, "exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise an authority upon them are termed benefactors. But with you it shall not be so; let him that is greatest among you be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he

that doth serve" (Luke 22:25, 26).

Again, "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your father who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant; and, whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, while he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:3-12).

These divine maxims, which are in perfect unison with the whole tenor of the New Testament, were entirely disregarded by the ecclesiastics who undertook to new-model the constitution of the Christian church, under the auspices of Constantine, and whom, as a matter of courtesy, they condescended to make its earthly head. But to proceed.

Thus restored to the full exercise of their liberty, their churches rebuilt, and the imperial edicts every where published in their favor, **these new bishops immediately began to discover what spirit they were of. As their several revenues increased, they grew more ambitious, less capable of contradiction, more haughty and arrogant in their behavior, more quarrelsome in their tempers, and more regardless of the simplicity and gravity of their profession and character.** Constantine's letters afford abundant proof of the jealousies and animosities that reigned among them. Adverting to a violent quarrel which had taken place between Miltiades, bishop of Rome, and Coecilianus, bishop of Carthage, in which the principals had enlisted a host of their colleagues as their respective auxiliaries, he states to them, that it was a very grievous thing to him to see so great a number of persons divided into parties, and the bishops disagreeing among themselves. He earnestly wishes to compose their differences; but in spite of all his efforts, they persisted in their quarrels--which drew from him a pathetic complaint, that those who ought to have been the foremost in maintaining a brotherly affection and peaceable disposition towards each other, were the first to separate from one another in a scandalous and detestable manner, giving occasion to the common enemies of Christianity to scoff and deride them.

To put an end to such factious and disgraceful proceedings, he summoned a council to meet at Arles in France, in order, if it were possible, to bring to a friendly and Christian compromise this long pending altercation. He himself condescended to be present on the occasion, and exerted all his influence to restore peace and harmony among them, but with little effect. He had unfortunately sown the seeds of strife and contention, by his liberal endowment of churches, and by the riches and honors that he had conferred upon the bishops, and he was now reaping the fruit of his folly. Had this first of the Christian emperors, rested satisfied with the primary edict which he published in favor of the Christians, he had acted the part of a wise, good, and impartial governor. That decree, without particularizing any sects or parties, gave full



liberty to all of them, both Christians and Pagans, to follow whatever religious profession seemed to them most eligible. But that liberty was of no long duration, and was soon abridged in reference to both Christians and Heathens. For, although in that edict he had commanded that the places of worship and other effects should be restored to Christians in general, it was soon followed by another, which restricts this grant to "**THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.**" After this, in a letter to Miltiades, bishop of Rome, complaining of the differences fomented by the African bishops, he tells him, that he had so great a reverence for "the catholic church," that he would not have him suffer, in any place, any schism or difference whatsoever to exist. There are in his letters many things which savor of the same spirit, and which can leave us in no doubt, that, by "**the catholic faith and church**" we are to understand that which **was approved by those bishops who had the greatest interest in his favor.** [Eccles. Hist. vol. 1, p. 105-107.]

And with regard to his treatment of the Pagans, it was in flagrant violation of the first principle of Christianity, as well as of the excellent edict which he had formerly issued. He prohibited by law [Eusebius, b. 10, ch. 5, 6] the worship of idols in cities and country--commanded that no statues of the gods should be erected, nor any sacrifices offered upon their altars, and sent into all the provinces Christian presidents, forbidding the Pagan priests to offer sacrifice, and confirming to the former the honors due to their characters and stations; thus endeavoring to support the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, by means altogether worldly, viz. the prospects and rewards of worldly honor and preferment.

It can excite no surprise, that those persons who could advise the issuing of these edicts, to suppress the ancient religion of the empire, should be against tolerating any sects among themselves that should presume to differ from them on any articles of the Christian faith or discipline. For nothing can be more evident than that, if the civil magistrate is vested with authority to prohibit religious opinions, or punish the abettors of them, merely because in his view they are erroneous, it must necessarily follow, that he has an equal right to punish a professing Christian whose sentiments or practices differ from his own, as he would have to punish those of a Pagan or Mahomedan. If the magistrate's jurisdiction extend to his exercising a control over the human mind in one instance, it will be impossible consistently to deny it to him in any other; and as his own judgment is, in all cases, the authorized standard of what is truth and error, in religion, he bears the sword, on this principle to punish every deviation from that standard which he has erected, whether found in Christian, Jew, or Pagan. Thus, if Constantine and his bishops were justified in abolishing heathenism by the civil power, because they believed it erroneous, Dioclesian and Gallienus with their priests, were equally right in prohibiting Christianity by civil laws, because they believed it to be not only false and impious, but blasphemy against their gods, and even as bordering upon atheism itself.

It has been well remarked by a sensible writer, that "men have been very long in discovering, and even yet seem scarcely to have discovered, that true religion is of too delicate a nature to be compelled, by the coarse implements of human authority and worldly sanctions. Let the law of the land restrain vice and injustice of every kind, as ruinous to the peace and order of society; for this is its proper province: but let it not tamper with religion, by attempting to enforce its exercises and duties. These, unless they be free-will offerings, are nothing; they are worse [than nothing.] By such an unnatural alliance, and ill-judged aid, hypocrisy and superstition may, indeed, be greatly promoted; but genuine piety never fails to suffer." [Campbell's *Lectures on Eccles. Hist.* vol. 1, p. 73.]

The sentiments of primitive Christians for the first three centuries, in reference to the divinity of the Savior, were generally speaking, pretty uniform; nor do there appear to have been any public controversies regarding this leading article of the Christian faith. But a dispute now arose which may be said to have involved all Christendom in a flame. It originated in the church of Alexandria, in Egypt, between Alexander and Arius, two of the pastors of that church, and soon spread itself into other churches, inflaming bishops against bishops, who, under the pretext of supporting divine truth, excited tumults, and fomented the most deadly strifes and hatreds towards each other. These divisions of the prelates set the people together by the ears, and the dispute was managed with such violence, that it involved the whole Christian world, and gave occasion to the heathens to ridicule the Christian religion upon their public theatres. [Socrates's *Eccles. Hist.* b. 1, ch. 6.]

The occasion of this dispute, which is well known by the name of "**THE ARIAN CONTROVERSY**," seems to have been simply this. Alexander, one of the prelates of that church, speaking upon the subject of the Trinity, had affirmed that there was "an unity in the Trinity, and particularly that the Son was co-eternal, and consubstantial, and of the same dignity with the Father." **ARIUS** objected to this language, and argued that "If the Father begat the Son, he who was begotten must have a beginning of his existence; and from hence, says he, 'tis manifest that there was a time when he (the Son) was not," etc.

It is wholly incompatible with the object of this history to discuss points of Christian doctrine; but the reader will, probably, excuse a few remarks on this extraordinary controversy. It is scarcely possible for any one who entertains a reverential regard for the great God, not to be struck with the presumption of poor, finite, erring mortals, daring to investigate, in the rash and inconsiderate manner that was now done, a subject of such awful import as the modus of the divine existence. We no sooner turn our thoughts to this question than our feeble capacities are overwhelmed with the immensity of the subject. Reason, in its most improved state, can carry us but a little way in our discoveries of God; and, if we are wise, we shall receive in simplicity of mind, every information which the great First Cause hath been pleased to afford us

concerning himself in his holy word. There, indeed, we learn with certainty, what may be also inferred from the works of creation and providence, that there is a God, who at first called the universe into being, and who still upholds and governs all things. But the works of creation and providence could never teach us, what the Scriptures make abundantly plain,--that there is in this one immense being, a distinction of Father, Word, and Spirit--a distinction which lies at the foundation of the whole economy of our redemption. Men in the pride of their hearts, may ask, how can these things be? But we are under no obligation to explain that point to them. And, indeed, it will be early enough for them to put the question, when they shall have explained how body, soul, and spirit constitute one individual human person. Every child may see that this distinction pervades the whole of divine revelation, and especially the New Testament. The FATHER is always represented as sustaining the majesty of the Godhead; as the great moral Governor of the world, giving laws to his creatures, enforced by the sanctions of the rewards and punishments of a future state. The WORD is described as becoming incarnate to accomplish the purposes of the Father's love in the redemption of the guilty. And the HOLY SPIRIT as the efficient agent, carrying into effect the purpose of the Father and the grace of the Son, on the hearts of the elect. But then it never leads us to conceive of the SON OF GOD, abstractedly from his incarnation. THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, or assumed a human body, and thus "that holy thing which was born of the Virgin, was the SON OF GOD" (Luke 1:31-35; John 1:14). The doctrine of "eternal generation" was unknown to the inspired writers, and, unquestionably, hatched in the school of Alexandria. **Happy had it been for the Christian world, could they have rested satisfied with the simple doctrine of divine revelation on this sublime subject; not seeking to be wise beyond what is written.** Much as I dislike the character of Athanasius, it is only due to him to say, that he has in a few words said all that can with propriety be said on this subject. "The Father," says he, "cannot be the Son, nor the Son the Father; and the Holy Ghost is never called by the name of the Son, but is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. The Holy Trinity is but one divine nature and one God. This is sufficient for the faithful; human knowledge goes no further. The Cherubims veil the rest with their wings."

But let the reader mark how these ecclesiastical combatants represent each other's opinions. Arius in a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, thus states the sentiments of Alexander. "God is always and the Son always -- the same time the Father, the same time the Son -- the Son co-exists with God unbegottenly, being ever begotten, being unbegottenly begotten -- God was not before the Son, no not in conception, or the least point of time, he being ever God, ever a Son -- For the Son is out of God himself." Alexander, on the contrary, in a letter to the bishop of Constantinople, gives us the doctrine of Arius in the following words. "There was a time when there was no Son of God, and that he who before was not, afterwards existed, being made, whensoever he was made, just as any man whatsoever; and that therefore he was of a mutable nature, and equally receptive of vice and virtue," etc.

If these things were publicly taught and avowed by these men, as each represents the other's sentiments, every sober man will surely think that they both merited severe reprehension, **for leaving the plain language of scripture, and introducing terms of their own invention into a doctrine of pure revelation, and at last dividing the whole of Christendom on account of it.**

Numerous expedients were tried to bring Alexander and Arius to one mind, the emperor himself condescending to become a mediator between them; but all attempts proved fruitless. He wrote letters to them at Alexandria, exhorting them to lay aside their differences and become reconciled to each other. He informs them that he had diligently examined the rise and progress of this dispute, and that he found the occasion of the difference to be very trifling and not worthy such furious contentions; and that therefore he promised himself, his mediation for peace would have its desired effect. He reminds Alexander that "He required from his presbyters a declaration of their sentiments concerning a silly, empty question -- and Arius, that he had imprudently uttered what he should not even have thought of, or what at least he should have kept secret in his own bosom; that questions about such things ought not to have been asked; if asked, should not have been answered; that they proceeded from an idle itch of disputation, and were in themselves of so high and difficult a nature, as that they could not be exactly comprehended or suitably explained. And that to insist on such points before the people could produce no other effect than to make some of them talk blasphemy, and others turn schismatics." [Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*, b. 1, ch. 63.]

This, unquestionably, was excellent advice, but religious animosities are not so easily removed; and the ecclesiastical combatants were too warmly engaged to listen to such salutary counsel. Finding all other resources ineffectual, the emperor was at length under the necessity of issuing letters to the bishops of the several provinces of the empire, enjoining them to assemble together at Nice, in Bythinia, which was accordingly done, A.D. 325. This is what goes by the name of "**The First General Council.**" The number of bishops was three hundred and eighteen, besides a multitude of presbyters, deacons, acolythists, and others, amounting in the whole to two thousand and forty-eight persons. The ecclesiastical historians inform us, that in this vast collection of the bishops, some were remarkable for their gravity, patience under sufferings, modesty, integrity, and eloquence, yet they all agree that there were others of very opposite characters.

["The eloquence of **Lactantius**, and the beauty and purity of his style, raise him superior to every author of the fourth century, and place him upon an equality with some of the most accomplished writers of ancient Rome. Entrusted with the education of Crispus, the

unfortunate son of Constantine, whom that monarch afterwards put to death, Lactantius, amidst the splendors of a court, was distinguished only by his talents and his poverty. His principal work consists of a masterly refutation of Paganism, and a learned comparison between it and Christianity. It is to the indelible disgrace of the age, that while a number of fanatic monks and popular declaimers obtained the highest stations in the church, a man who possessed the learning of Aristotle, with the eloquence of Cicero, who united philosophy with religion, and an earnest piety with all the graces of a polished taste and enlightened understanding, should be permitted to languish without distinction or reward. It is, however, but too common a case, that the service which is rendered to a party, is rated higher than that which is rendered to mankind in general. The defense of a single dogma shall raise a man to eminence and fortune; while the enlightening of thousands, the improving of the hearts, the morals, the judgments, and religious sentiments of the nation, shall frequently be passed over, with scarcely the cold return of fruitless praise." — Gregory's *Church History*, vol. 1, p. 224. "Such was the taste of the times and the people, that Lactantius, who was a man of learning and real eloquence, a man of sound sentiments, extensive knowledge, and inoffensive life, the most excellent of the Latin fathers, and justly called the Christian Cicero, was in want of common necessities; while Ambrose, who was not worthy to carry his books, was elected to the rich see of Milan; and this when the people elected their own bishops." — Robinson's *Eccles. Researches*.]

On the day appointed for holding the council, the bishops and inferior clergy were assembled in the largest room in the palace, rows of seats being placed on each side of it; and all having taken their places, they waited, standing in respectful silence for the emperor, who, being preceded by several of his friends, at length made his appearance, as Eusebius says, like an angel of God, exceeding all his attendants, in size, gracefulness, and strength; and dazzling all eyes with the splendor of his dress; but showing the greatest humility and modesty in his manner of walking, gesture, and behavior. Having taken his station in the middle of the upper part of the room, near a low chair that was covered with gold, he did not sit down, till the fathers desired it.

All being now seated, says Eusebius, the bishop whose place was the first on his right hand (Maimbourg informs us it was Eustathius, patriarch of Antioch,) rose, and addressing the emperor, gave thanks to God on his account, congratulating the church on its prosperous condition, brought about by his means, and particularly in the destruction of the idolatrous worship of Paganism. Then sitting down, the emperor himself addressed the company in Latin, expressing his happiness at seeing them all met on so glorious an occasion as the amicable settlement of all their differences, which, he said, had given him more concern than all his wars; but that these being at an end, he had nothing more at heart than to be the means of settling the peace of the church; and he concluded with expressing his earnest wish that they

would, as speedily as possible, remove every cause of dissension, and lay the foundation of a lasting peace. What he said in Latin was interpreted to the fathers in Greek.

Immediately after this speech, this excellent emperor was witness to a scene which must have afforded him a very unpromising prospect as to the success of his project for peace. For before they entered upon the discussion of any thing that related to the great object of their meeting, the bishops began with complaining to the emperor of each other, and vindicating themselves. To every thing that was said, he gave a patient hearing, and by his mildness and great address, speaking to them in Greek (which he was in some measure able to do) he at length prevailed upon them to come to an agreement, says Eusebius, not only with respect to their private differences, but also with regard to the two great objects of their assembling -- the rule of faith as it respected the Arian controversy, and the time of celebrating Easter.

Socrates says that the bishops having put into the emperor's hands written libels, containing their complaints against each other, he threw them all together into the fire, advising them, according to the doctrine of Christ, to forgive one another as they themselves hoped to be forgiven. Sozomen says, that the bishops having made their complaints in person, the emperor bade them reduce them all into writing, and that on the day which he had appointed to consider them, he said, as he threw all the billets unopened into the fire, that it did not belong to him to decide the differences of Christian bishops, and that the hearing of them must be deferred till the day of judgment. [Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*, b. 3, ch. 10-14.]

However, the emperor ultimately succeeded in restoring them to some degree of temper; and they consequently proceeded in good earnest to draw up a creed, which they were all required to subscribe, as the only true and orthodox faith, and which, from the place where they were assembled, bears the title of the **NICENE**. [As a matter of curiosity, which may gratify some readers, I subjoin this summary of the orthodox faith at this period. The original may be found in the epistle of Eusebius to the Caesareans. "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten; begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father. God of God; Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, things in heaven, and things on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate, and became man, suffered and rose again the third day, and ascended into the heavens, and comes to judge the quick and the dead: and in the Holy Ghost. And the catholic and apostolic church doth anathematize those persons who say, that there was a time when the Son of God was not; that he was not before he was born; that he was made of nothing, or of another substance or being; or that he is created, or changeable, or convertible."]

The principal persons who appeared on the side of Arius, and assisted him in the public disputation, were Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nice, and Maris of Calcedon; and the person who chiefly opposed them and took the part of Alexander, was **ATHANASIUS**, then only a deacon in the church of Alexandria, but much confided in by the bishop, and of whom more will be said hereafter. No sooner were the decrees and canons of the council drawn up, than they were sent to Sylvester, then bishop of Rome, who, in the thirteenth council of Rome, at which were present two hundred and seventy-five bishops, confirmed them in these words: "We confirm with our mouth, that which has been decreed at Nice, a city of Bythinia, by the three hundred and eighteen holy bishops, for the good of the catholic and apostolic church, mother of the faithful. We anathematize all those who shall dare to contradict the decrees of the great and holy council, which was assembled at Nice, in the presence of that most pious and venerable prince, the emperor Constantine." And to this all the bishops answered, "We consent to it." [Maimbourg's *History of Arianism*, vol. 1, p. 48.]

The council began their discussions on the 19th of June, and ended them on the 25th of August, of the same year (325) to the joy of Constantine, the defeat of Arius, and the triumph of the Athanasian party. Eusebius of Nicomedia, and sixteen other bishops, opposed the general sense of the council, and rejected the word consubstantial. But finding themselves in so small a minority, and that the emperor was determined to enforce respect to the decisions of the council, they all, except four, ultimately subscribed the confession of faith. The prevailing party then proceeded to excommunicate Arius and his followers, banishing the former from Alexandria. Letters were also written to all the churches in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, announcing their decrees, and informing them that the holy synod had condemned the opinions of Arius, and had fully determined the time for the celebration of Easter; exhorting them to rejoice for the good deed they had done, for that they had cut off all manner of heresy. When these things were ended, Constantine splendidly treated the bishops, filled their pockets, and sent them honorably home, exhorting them at parting to maintain peace among themselves, and that none of them should envy another who might excel the rest in wisdom or eloquence -- that they should not carry themselves haughtily towards their inferiors, but condescend to, and bear with, their weakness; -- a convincing proof that he saw into their tempers, and was no stranger to the haughtiness and pride that influenced some, and the envy and hatred that prevailed in others. [Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*, b. 3, ch.]

It requires not the spirit of prophecy to anticipate the effects which must flow from the disgraceful proceedings of this general council, though Constantine himself wrote letters, enjoining universal conformity to its decrees, and urges as a reason for it, that "what they had decreed was the will of God, and that the agreement of so great a number of such bishops was by inspiration of the Holy Ghost." **It laid the**

**foundation for a system of persecution of a complexion altogether new -- professed Christians tyrannizing over the consciences of each other, and, as will be seen in the sequel, inflicting torture and cruelties upon each other far greater than they had ever sustained from their heathen persecutors.** The emperor's first letters were mild and gentle, but he was soon persuaded into more violent measures; for out of his great zeal to extinguish heresy, he issued edicts against all such as his favorite bishops persuaded him were the authors or abettors of it, and particularly against the Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionists, and others, whom, after reproaching with being "enemies of truth, destructive counselors," etc. he deprives of the liberty of meeting for worship, either in public or private places; and gives all their oratories to the orthodox church. And with respect to the discomfited party, he banished Arius himself, commanded that all his followers should be called Porphyrians (from Porphyrius, a heathen, who wrote against Christianity) - ordained that the books written by them should be burnt, that there might remain to posterity no vestiges of their doctrine; and, to complete the climax, enacted that if any should dare to keep in his possession any book written by Arius, and should not immediately burn it, he should no sooner be convicted of the crime, than he should suffer death. Such were the acts of the last days of CONSTANTINE THE GREAT. [Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*, b. 3, ch. 65; Sozomen, b. 1, ch. 21; Socrates, b. 1, ch. 9. The reader will also find a very amusing account of the proceedings of this memorable council (provided he can make the necessary allowance for the author's predilection for the Catholic party, it being written More Maimburgiano, as Dr. Jortin would express it) in Maimbourg's *History of Arianism*, translated by Webster, vol. 1, book 1. 4to. edition, 1727.]

[The following is a copy of the Edict which Constantine issued on that occasion; it was addressed to the Bishops and People throughout the Empire. "Since Arius hath imitated wicked and ungodly men, it is just that he should undergo the same infamy with them. As therefore, Porphyrius, an enemy of godliness, for his having composed wicked books against Christianity, hath found a suitable recompense, so as to be infamous for the time to come, and to be loaded with great reproach, and to have all his impious writings quite destroyed: so also it is now my pleasure, that Arius, and those of Arius's sentiments, shall be called Porphyrians, so that they may have the appellation of those whose manner they have imitated. Moreover, if any book composed by Arius shall be found, it shall be committed to the flames; that not only his evil doctrine may be destroyed, but that there may not be the least remembrance of it left. This also I enjoin, that if any one shall be found to have concealed any writing composed by Arius, and shall not immediately bring it and consume it in the fire, death shall be his punishment; for as soon as he is taken in this crime, he shall suffer a capital punishment. GOD PRESERVE YOU."]



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE DEATH OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, TO THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY**

**A.D. 337 - 400**

On the decease of Constantine, the government of the Roman empire was distributed between his three sons. To **Constantine the II** were assigned the provinces of Britain, Spain, and Gaul, now called France. To his brother **Constans**, Illyricum, Italy, and Africa; whilst **Constantius** inherited the east, comprehending Asia, Syria, and Egypt, with the city of Constantinople, to which his father had transferred the imperial residence, and consequently made it the seat of government.

In the year 340, a quarrel arose between the two first mentioned brothers, which ended in a war, and that war in the death of Constantine. Constans now added the dominions of the deceased prince to his own, and thereby became sole master of all the western provinces. He retained possession of this immense territory until the year 350, when Magnentius, one of his own officers, with the view of getting himself declared emperor, contrived to procure the assassination of Constans. The usurper, however, did not long enjoy the fruits of his perfidy; for Constantius, justly incensed by his rebellious conduct, marched an army against him, and repulsing him at the outset, Magnentius, transported with rage and despair at his ill success, and apprehending the most terrible and ignominious death from the resentment of the conqueror, put a termination to his own life. Thus, Constantius, in the year 353, became sole monarch of the Roman empire, which he governed until the year 361. Marching at the head of his army, in that year, to chastise the presumption of his

own kinsman, Julian, whom the forces entrusted to his command in Gaul, had, in an hour of victory saluted with the title of Augustus, he was arrested by the hand of death, and expired at Mopsucrene in Cilicia, leaving the vacant throne to **Julian**. None of the sons of Constantine the Great, inherited the spirit and genius of their father. They, nevertheless, so far trod in his steps, as to extend their fostering care to the Catholic religion, to accelerate its progress through the empire, and to continue to undermine and abolish the system of Paganism.

**But the controversy which had arisen between Arius and Alexander, relative to the sonship of Christ, was far from being put to rest by the decision of the council of Nice.** The doctrine of Arius, indeed, had been condemned by a very large majority -- he himself was banished to Illyricum, and his followers compelled to assent to the confession of faith composed by the synod -- his writings also had been proscribed as heretical, and the punishment of death decreed against all who were convicted of the crime of harboring them in their houses. But persecuting edicts cannot extend their dominion over the thoughts, and it is scarcely less difficult to impose an effectual restraint upon the tongue. Persecution has generally been found favorable to whatever cause it has been directed against; it somehow enlists the sensibilities of our nature on the side of the persecuted party; and disposes the mind to a more candid and impartial examination of the question in dispute, than we should otherwise possess. It is perhaps too much to affirm with Dr. Middleton, that "truth was never known to be on the persecuting side" [Preface to his *Free Inquiry*, p. 8, 4to. edit.]; an impartial examination, however, of the opinions and proceedings of both Arians and Athanasians on this occasion, serves in some degree to justify the maxim, and convinces us that **they were equally remote from the truth, even as they were alike well disposed to persecute each other in proportion as either party obtained the means of doing it.** Only it is due to the orthodox party to say, that they took the lead in punishing heretics with death, and persuaded the emperor to destroy those whom they could not convert.

When the undivided government of the empire centered in the hands of Constantius, he evinced a strong predilection for the Arian side of the controversy, and Arianism became fashionable at court. The emperor favored only the bishops of that party. Paul, the orthodox prelate of the see of Constantinople, was ejected from his office by the emperor's order, and Macedonius substituted in his room. This man adopted a scheme different from either party, and contended that the Son was not consubstantial, but of a like substance with the Father, openly propagating this new theory, after thrusting himself into the bishoprick of Paul; and thus, by the addition of a single letter, affecting to settle the whole dispute. Frivolous as was this distinction, it enraged the orthodox party, who, filled with rage and resentment, rose in a body to oppose Hermogenes, the officer whom Constantius had sent to introduce him unto his episcopal throne, burnt down his house, and drew him round the streets by his heels until they had murdered him.

**ATHANASIUS**, who had rendered such essential service to Alexander, his bishop, in managing the dispute with Arius at the council of Nice, had, by this time, risen to great popularity, and in reality was become the oracle of the orthodox party. We are supposed to be indebted to him for the creed which bears his name, and which fills so eminent a place in the liturgy of our national church. Even to this day he is extolled by such respectable writers as Milner and Haweis, as a prodigy of evangelical light. **But whatever may be said of the soundness of his speculative creed, he was evidently a man of aspiring views and of persecuting principles.** In a letter to Epictetus, bishop of Corinth, alluding to some heretical opinions then prevalent, he says, "I wonder that your piety hath borne these things, and that you did not immediately put those heretics under restraint, and propose the true faith to them, that if they would not forbear to contradict they might be declared heretics, for it is not to be endured that these things should be either said or heard amongst Christians." And upon another occasion, "they ought to be held in universal hatred," says he, "for opposing the truth," -- comforting himself that the emperor, when duly informed, would put a stop to their wickedness, and that they would not be long-lived. In one of his letters he exhorts those to whom he wrote, to "hold fast the confession of the fathers, and to reject all who should speak more or less than was contained in it. And, in his first oration against the Arians, he declares in plain terms, "that the expressing a person's sentiments in the words of scripture, was no sufficient proof of orthodoxy, because the devil himself, used scripture words to cover his wicked designs upon our Savior, and that heretics were not to be received though they made use of the very expressions of orthodoxy itself."

The Scriptures were now no longer the standard of the Christian faith. What was orthodox, and what heterodox, was, from henceforward, to be determined by the decisions of fathers and councils; and religion propagated not by the apostolic methods of persuasion, accompanied with the meekness and gentleness of Christ, but by imperial edicts and decrees; nor were gainsayers to be brought to conviction by the simple weapons of reason and scripture, but persecuted and destroyed. It cannot surprise us, if after this we find a continual fluctuation of the public faith, just as the prevailing party obtained the imperial authority to support them; or that we should meet with little else in ecclesiastical history than violence and cruelties, committed by men who had wholly departed from the simplicity of the Christian doctrine and profession; men enslaved to avarice and ambition; and carried away with views of temporal grandeur, high preferments, and large revenues.

To dwell upon the disgraceful cabals, the violent invectives, and slanderous recriminations of those ruling factions, would afford little edification to the reader, and certainly no pleasure to the writer. Were we disposed to give credit to the complaints of the orthodox against the Arians, we must certainly regard them as the most execrable set of men that ever lived. They are loaded with all the crimes that

can possibly be committed, and represented as bad, if not worse, than infernal spirits. And had the writings of the Arians not been destroyed, we should, no doubt, have found as many and grievous charges laid by them, perhaps with equal justice, against the Athanasians. Constantius banished Athanasius from his bishoprick at Alexandria, and wrote a letter to the citizens, in which he terms him "an impostor, a corrupter of men's souls, a disturber of the city, a pernicious fellow, one convicted of the worst crimes, not to be expiated by his suffering death ten times;" and a bishop, named George, was put into his see, whom this eloquent emperor is pleased to style "a most venerable person, and the most capable of all men to instruct them in heavenly things." Athanasius, however, in his usual style, calls him "an idolater and hangman; and one capable of all kinds of violence, rapine, and murders;" and whom he actually charges with committing the most impious actions and outrageous cruelties.

**The truth is, that the clergy of the Catholic church were now become the principal disturbers of the empire;** and the pride of the bishops, and the fury of the people on each side had grown to such a height, that the election or restoration of a bishop seldom took place in the larger cities, without being attended with scenes of slaughter. **Athanasius was several times banished and restored at the expense of blood. What shall we make of the Christianity of the man who could act thus, or countenance such proceedings?** Had Athanasius been influenced by the benign and peaceable spirit of the gospel, he would at once have withdrawn himself from such disgraceful scenes, and preferred to worship God in the society of only a dozen day-laborers in a cellar or a garret, to all the honor and all the emolument which he could derive from being exalted to the dignity of archbishop of Alexandria, on such degrading conditions. One can scarcely forbear contrasting his conduct with the behavior of Him, whose servant he professed to be.

"When Jesus perceived that they would come and take him by force, and make him a King, he departed again into a mountain alone" John 6:15.

The fruits of the Spirit are not turbulence and strife; "but love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness and temperance; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts" Galatians 5:22.

The orthodox were deposed, and the Arians substituted in their places, with the murder of thousands; and as the controversy was now no longer about the plain doctrines of uncorrupted Christianity, but about secular honors and dignified preferments, so the bishops were introduced into their churches and placed upon their thrones by armed soldiers. And when once in actual possession, they treated those who differed from them without moderation or mercy, turning them out of their churches, denying them the liberty of worship, fulminating anathemas against them, and persecuting them by every species of cruelty, as is evident from the accounts

given by the ecclesiastical historians of Athanasius, Macedonius, George, and others. In short, they seem to have treated one another with the same implacable bitterness and severity, as their common enemies, the heathen, had ever exercised towards them, or as though they thought persecution for conscience-sake had been the distinguishing characteristic of the Christian religion, and that they could not more effectually recommend themselves as the disciples of Christ, than by devouring each other. **This made Julian, the emperor, say of them, that he found by experience, that even the beasts of the forest are not so cruel as the generality of Christians then were to one another.** Such was the wretched state of things in the reign of Constantius, which affords us little more than the history of councils and creeds differing from, and clashing with each other -- bishops deposing, censuring, and anathematizing their adversaries, and the people divided into factions under their respective leaders, for the sake of words, of the meaning of which they understood nothing, and contending for victory even to bloodshed and death. Thus, as Socrates observes, "was the church torn in pieces for the sake of Athanasius and the word consubstantial!"

It probably would not be easy to sketch in few words a more striking picture of these times than that which is given us by Ammianus Marcellinus, who, having served in the armies, had the best opportunities of studying the character of Constantius. "The Christian religion, which in itself," says he, "is plain and simple, he confounded by the dotage of superstition. Instead of reconciling the parties by the weight of his authority, he cherished and propagated by verbal disputes, the differences which his vain curiosity had excited. The highways were covered with troops of bishops, galloping from every side to the assemblies, which they called synods; and while they labored to reduce the whole sect to their own particular opinions, the public establishment of the posts was almost ruined by their hasty and repeated journies." [Ammianus Marcellinus, 1. 21, ch. 16.] It was certainly a very just, though severe censure, which Gregory Nazianzen passed upon the councils that were held about this time. "If I must speak the truth," says he, "this is my resolution, to avoid all councils of the bishops, for I have not seen any good end answered by any synod whatsoever; for their love of contention, and their lust of power, are too great even for words to express." [Opera, vol. 1, Epist. 55.] The skepticism of Gibbon has subjected him to an unmeasurable effusion of rancor from the clergy of his day; and far be it from me to stand forward the advocate of skepticism in any man; but I most cordially agree with that eminent writer, when he says, **"the patient and humble virtues of Jesus should not be confounded with the intolerant zeal of princes and bishops, who have disgraced the name of his disciples."** [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 9, ch. 50. 4]

So fascinating is the influence of worldly pomp and splendor upon the human mind, that it is not to be wondered at, that **the see of ROME became at this time a most seducing object of sacerdotal ambition.** In the episcopal order, the bishop of Rome was the first in rank, and distinguished by a sort of pre-eminence over all other

prelates. **He surpassed all his brethren in the magnificence and splendor of the church over which he presided; in the riches of his revenues and possessions; in the number and variety of his ministers; in his credit with the people; and in his sumptuous and splendid manner of living.** Ammianus Marcellinus, a Roman historian, who lived during these times, adverting to this subject, says, "It was no wonder to see those who were ambitious of human greatness, contending with so much heat and animosity for that dignity, because when they had obtained it, they were sure to be enriched by the offerings of the matrons, of appearing abroad in great splendor, of being admired for their costly coaches, sumptuous in their feasts, out-doing sovereign princes in the expenses of their table." This led Proetextatus, an heathen, who was praefect of the city, to say, "Make me Bishop of Rome, and I'll be a Christian too!"

In the year 366, Liberius, bishop of Rome, died, and a violent contest arose respecting his successor. The city was divided into two factions, one of which elected Damasus to that high dignity, while the other chose Ursicinus, a deacon of the church. The party of Damasus prevailed, and got him ordained. Ursicinus, enraged that Damasus was preferred before him, set up separate meetings, and at length he also obtained ordination from certain obscure bishops. This occasioned great disputes among the citizens, as to which of the two should obtain the episcopal dignity; and the matter was carried to such a height, that **great numbers were murdered on either side in the quarrel -- no less than one hundred and thirty-seven persons being destroyed in the very church itself!** [Socrates' *Eccl. Hist.* b. 27, ch. 3.] But the very detail of such shameful proceedings is sufficient to excite disgust; and enough has been said to convince any unprejudiced mind of the absurdity of looking for the kingdom of the Son of God in the "Catholic Church," as it now began to be denominated. "The mystery of iniquity," which had been secretly working since the very days of the apostles (2 Thessalonians 2:7), had nevertheless been subject to considerable control, so long as Paganism remained the established religion of the empire, and Christians were consequently compelled to bear their cross, by patiently suffering the hatred of the world, in conformity to the Captain of their salvation. But no sooner was this impediment removed by the establishment of Christianity, under Constantine, than "the Man of Sin" -- "the Son of perdition" began to be manifest. Men were now found, professing themselves the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, yet walking after the course of this world, "lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:3-5). And, as this state of things continued to increase in progressive enormity, until it ultimately brought forth that monstrous system of iniquity, denominated "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" described by the prophetic pen, as "the habitation of devils, -- the hold of every foul spirit, -- the cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Revelation 17:5; and 18:2), we may rest fully assured that the

sheep of Christ, -- those who heard his voice and followed his will (John 10:27), would see it their indispensable duty to separate themselves from such an impure communion, in obedience to the reiterated commands of God (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Timothy 3:5; Revelation 18:4).

It may be proper to remark, that long before the times of which we now treat, **some Christians had seen it their duty to withdraw from the communion of the church of Rome.** The first instance of this that we find on record, if we except that of Tertullian, is the case of **NOVATIAN**, who in the year 251, was ordained the pastor of a church in the city of Rome, which maintained no fellowship with the Catholic party. It is a difficult matter, at this very remote period, to ascertain the real grounds of difference between Novatian and his opponents. Those who are in any tolerable degree conversant with theological controversy, will scarcely need to be apprised how much caution is necessary to guard against being misled by the false representations which different parties give of each other's principles and conduct. Novatian is said to have refused to receive into the communion of the church any of those persons who, in the time of persecution, had been induced through fear of sufferings or death, to apostatize from their profession, and offer sacrifices to the heathen deities; a principle which he founded upon a mistaken view of Hebrews 6:4-6. We may readily conceive how interesting and difficult a subject this must have been to all the churches of Christ in those distressing times, and the danger that must have arisen from laying down any fixed rule of conduct that should apply to all cases that would come before them; or even verging towards an extreme on either side of this question. The following is the account given of Novatian by the late Mr. Robert Robinson, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 126; and I the more readily submit it to the reader, because none who know Mr. Robinson, can, for a moment, suspect him of having any undue predilection for the principles of Novatian.

"He was," says he, "an elder in the church of Rome, a man of extensive learning, holding the same doctrine as the church did, and published several treatises in defense of what he believed. His address was eloquent and insinuating, and his morals irreproachable. He saw with extreme pain the intolerable depravity of the church. Christians within the space of a very few years were caressed by one emperor, and persecuted by another. In seasons of prosperity many persons rushed into the church for base purposes. In times of adversity, they denied the faith, and reverted again to idolatry. When the squall was over, away they came again to the church, with all their vices, to deprave others by their examples. The bishops, fond of proselytes, encouraged all this; and transferred the attention of Christians from the old confederacy for virtue, to vain shows at Easter, and other Jewish ceremonies, adulterated too with Paganism. On the death of bishop Fabian, Cornelius, a brother elder, and a violent partizan for taking in the multitude, was put in nomination. Novatian opposed him; but as Cornelius carried his election, and he saw no prospect of reformation, but on the contrary, a tide of immorality pouring into the church, he

withdrew and a great many with him. Cornelius, irritated by Cyprian, who was just in the same condition, through the remonstrances of virtuous men at Carthage, and who was exasperated beyond measure with one of his own elders, named Novatus, who had quitted Carthage, and gone to Rome to espouse the cause of Novatian, called a council and got a sentence of excommunication passed against Novatian. **In the end, Novatian formed a church, and was elected bishop. Great numbers followed his example, and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted and flourished through the succeeding two hundred years. Afterwards, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners, and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names, and a succession of them continued till the Reformation."**

The same author, afterwards adverting to the vile calumnies with which the catholic writers have in all ages delighted to asperse the character of Novatian, thus proceeds to vindicate him:

"They say Novatian was the first Antipope; and yet there was at that time no pope, in the modern sense of the word. They call Novatian the author of the heresy of Puritanism; and yet they know that **Tertullian** had quitted the church near fifty years before, for the same reason, and **Privatus**, who was an old man in the time of Novatian, had, with several more, repeatedly remonstrated against the alterations taking place; and, as they could get no redress, had dissented and formed separate congregations. They tax Novatian with being the parent of an innumerable multitude of congregations of Puritans all over the empire; and yet he had no other influence over any, than what his good example gave him. People every where saw the same cause of complaint, and groaned for relief; and when one man made a stand for virtue, the crisis had arrived; people saw the propriety of the cure, and applied the same means to their own relief. They blame this man, and all these churches for the severity of their discipline; -- yet this severe discipline, was the only coercion of the primitive churches, and it was the exercise of this that rendered civil coercion unnecessary. Some exclaimed, it is a barbarous discipline to refuse to readmit people into Christian communion, because they have lapsed into idolatry or vice. Others, finding the inconvenience of such a lax discipline, required a repentance of five, ten, or fifteen years; but the Novatians said, you may be admitted among us by baptism or, if any Catholic has baptized you before, by re-baptism; but if you fall into idolatry, we shall separate you from our communion, and on no account readmit you. God forbid we should injure either your person, your property, or your character, or even judge of the truth of your repentance or your future state; but you can never be readmitted to our community, without our giving up the last and only coercive guardian we have of the purity of our [fellowship.] **Whether these persons reasoned justly or not, as virtue was their object, they challenge respect**, and he must be a weak man indeed, who is frightened out of it because Cyprian is pleased to say, they are the children of the devil."



The doctrinal sentiments of the Novatians appear to have been very scriptural, and the discipline of their churches rigid in the extreme. **They were the first class of Christians who obtained the name of (CATHARI) Puritans, an appellation which doth not appear to have been chosen by themselves, but applied to them by their adversaries;** from which we may reasonably conclude that their manners were simple and irreproachable. Some of them are said to have disapproved of second marriages, regarding them as sinful; but in this they were in common with Tertullian and many other eminent persons. A third charge against them was, that they did not pay due reverence to the martyrs, nor allow that there was any virtue in their relics! -- A plain proof of their good sense.

Novatian appears to have been possessed of considerable talents. Mosheim terms him, "A man of uncommon learning and eloquence;" and he wrote several works, of which only two are now extant. One of them is upon the subject of the Trinity. It is divided into thirty-one sections: the first eight relate to the FATHER, and treat of his nature, power, goodness, justice, etc. with the worship due to him. The following twenty sections relate to CHRIST -- the Old Testament prophecies concerning him -- their actual accomplishment -- his nature -- how the Scriptures prove his divinity -- confutes the Sabellians -- shows that it was Christ who appeared to the patriarchs, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, etc. The twenty-ninth section treats of the HOLY SPIRIT -- how promised and given by Christ -- his offices, and operations on the souls of men and in the church. The last two sections recapitulate the arguments before adduced. The work appears to have been written in the year 257; six years after his separation from the Catholic church. The other tract is upon the subject of "Jewish Meats," addressed in the form of a letter to his church, and written either during his banishment or retreat in the time of persecution. It opens up the typical nature of the law of Moses, and while he proves its abolition, is careful to guard his Christian brethren against supposing that they were therefore at liberty to eat things sacrificed to idols. [Dr. A. Clarke's *Succession of Sacred Literature*, vol. 1, p. 209-212.]

Dr. Lardner in his *Credibility of the Gospel History*, ch. 47 has been at considerable pains in comparing the various and contradictory representations that have been given of Novatian and his followers, and has exonerated them from a mass of obloquy, cast upon them by the Catholic party. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, wrote many epistles or treatises respecting the sect of the Novatians, which afford abundant evidence that their rigid discipline was relished by many. Fabius, bishop of Antioch, in particular, was their friend and favorer. Marcian, bishop of Arles, was firm in the same principles in the time of Stephen, bishop of Rome. A church was formed at Carthage for the Novatian party, of which Maximus was the pastor. Socrates, the historian, speaks of their churches at Constantinople, Nice, Nicomedia, and Cotioeus in Phrygia, all in the fourth century - these he mentions as their principal places in the East, and he supposes them to have been equally numerous

in the West. What were their numbers in these cities does not appear, but he intimates that they had three churches in Constantinople.

Though, therefore, Novatian and his principles were condemned by the Catholic party, at the time that Dionysius wrote the fore-mentioned letters concerning them to the bishop of Rome, he still continued to be supported by a numerous party in various places, separated from the Catholic church. They had among them some persons of considerable note, and of eminent talents. Among these were Agelius, Acesius, Sisinnius, and Marcian, all of Constantinople. Socrates mentions one Mark, bishop of the Novatians in Scythia, who died in the year 439. In fact, the pieces written against them by a great variety of authors of the Catholic church -- such as Ambrose, Pacian, and others -- the notice taken of them by Basil and Gregory Nazianzen -- and the accounts given of them by Socrates and Sozomen in their ecclesiastical histories, are proofs of their being numerous, and that churches of this denomination were to be found in most parts of the world, in the fourth and fifth centuries. "The vast extent of this sect," says Dr. Lardner, "is manifest from the names of the authors who have mentioned them, or written against them, and from the several parts of the Roman empire in which they were found." [Lardner's Works, 4to. ed. vol. 2, p. 57.]

All the ecclesiastical historians complain loudly of the schism that was made in the Christian church by the Novatians, whose difference from the Catholics respected matters of discipline only. But we should not be too hasty in joining issue with them in these lamentations. **On the contrary, it may fairly admit of a doubt, whether this breach in the unity of the Christian church in that age, and other similar breaches that have taken place at different times, have not been productive, upon the whole, of the happiest effects.** For besides promoting free inquiry and discussion, without which no subject can be well understood, this multiplication of sects has had a powerful tendency to counteract that overbearing authority which the whole Christian church united, could not have failed to possess, and which, if there had been no place of retreat from power, would have been insupportable. What would have been the terror of an excommunication from a church, and how would it have been possible to correct any abuse in such circumstances? That families and friends should be divided, and that those divisions should be the cause of so much animosity as they have often occasioned, is, no doubt to be lamented. But this is an evil that does not necessarily arise from sects in religion, but solely from the unreasonable spirit of bigotry in men, which cannot bear with patience that others should think or act differently from them -- that bigotry, which a number of sects, and their necessary consequences, can alone cure. Private animosity was an evil inseparable from the promulgation of Christianity itself, and was distinctly foretold by its divine author. The excellent character of many of the Novatian Bishops, was of great use in exciting emulation among those of the Catholic Church, and in checking that abuse of power, which has often disgraced Christianity infinitely more than the

divisions that are the subject of complaint. But to proceed.

Constantius, whose death has been already mentioned, was succeeded in the administration of affairs in the year 361, by his nephew **JULIAN**. This prince, during his infancy, had been entrusted to the care of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, to whom he was related on his mother's side. But although considerable pains had been taken to instruct him in the principles of Christianity, the mind of Julian imbibed a partiality for the Pagan worship, which, however, he dexterously contrived to conceal until he had assumed the reins of government. Mr. Gibbon, not without probability, resolves this unhappy bias of the young prince's mind into a disgust which he had taken at the manner in which the Arian controversy was carried on. "He was educated," says he, "in the lesser Asia, amidst the scandals of the Arian controversy. The fierce contests of the Eastern bishops, the incessant alterations of their creeds, and the profane motives which appeared to actuate their conduct, insensibly strengthened the prejudices of Julian that they neither understood nor believed the religion for which they so fiercely contended." [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 4, ch. 25.] There is surely nothing incredible in this -- the wonder would have been that, spectator as he was of such detestable squabbles, he should have retained any predilection for the Christians.

The apostasy of Julian (as the Catholic clergy delighted to call it) was carefully concealed during his minority; and, when first intimated, it was cautiously done among the adherents of the ancient Pagan worship. From the zeal and virtues of their royal proselyte, they fondly hoped the restoration of their temples, sacrifices, and worship, of which they had been in a considerable degree deprived during the reigns of Constantine and his sons. Probably they expected that the flames of persecution should again be lighted up against the enemies of their deities; while the Christians beheld with horror and indignation the apostasy of Julian. But the hopes of the former, and the fears of the latter, were disappointed by the prudent conduct of Julian, who, during his short reign, consulted the good of his subjects and the public tranquillity. Actuated by these motives, and apprehensive of disturbing the repose of an unsettled reign, he surprised the world by an edict, extending to all the inhabitants of the empire the benefits of a free and equal toleration -- but he had seen enough of the intolerant principles of the Catholic clergy, to deprive them of the power of persecuting their fellow subjects. The Pagans were permitted to open all their temples, and were at once delivered from the oppressive laws and arbitrary exactions imposed upon them by Constantine and his sons. At the same time, the bishops and clergy, who had been banished by Constantius, were recalled from exile, and restored to their respective churches. Julian, who had paid considerable attention to their disputes, invited the leaders of the different parties to his palace, that he might enjoy the pleasure of witnessing their furious encounters. The clamor of controversy sometimes provoked him to exclaim, "Hear me! the Franks have heard me, and the Germans;" -- but he soon discovered that he was now engaged with more

obstinate and implacable enemies; and, though he exerted all the powers of his oratory to persuade them to live in concord, or at least in peace, he was perfectly satisfied he had nothing to fear from their union and co-operation.

There are two particulars in the reign of Julian which ought not to be passed over without being briefly adverted to. The first is, **the extraordinary exertions which he made to restore the ancient superstitious worship.** No sooner did he ascend the throne, than he assumed the character of supreme Pontiff, and became a perfect devotee to the rites of Paganism. He dedicated a domestic chapel to the sun, his favorite deity -- his gardens were filled with statues and altars of the gods -- and each apartment of his palace displayed the appearance of a magnificent temple. He also endeavored, by his own zeal, to inflame that of the magistrates and people. "Amidst the sacred but licentious crowd of priests, of inferior ministers, and of female dancers, who were dedicated to the service of the temple, it was the business of the emperor to bring the wood, to blow the fire, to handle the knife, to slaughter the victim, and thrusting his bloody hands into the bowels of the expiring animal, to draw forth the heart or liver, and to read, with the consummate skill of a soothsayer, the imaginary signs of future events." [Gibbon, vol. 4, ch. 23.] Encouraged by the example of their sovereign, as well as by his exhortations and liberality, the cities and families resumed the practice of their neglected ceremonies. "Every part of the world," exclaims one of their own writers, with transport, "displayed the triumph of religion -- and the grateful prospect of flaming altars, bleeding victims, the smoke of incense, and a solemn train of priests and prophets, without fear, and without danger. The sound of prayer and of music was heard on the tops of the highest mountains; and the same ox afforded a sacrifice for the gods, and a supper for their joyous votaries," This may give us some notion of what might have ensued had the life of Julian not been cut short.

The other circumstance alluded to, is the project which **this emperor entertained of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem.** In a public address to the people of the Jews, dispersed throughout the provinces of his empire, he tells them, that he pities their misfortunes, condemns their oppressors, praises their constancy, declares himself their gracious protector, and expresses a hope, that after his return from the Persian war, he may be permitted to pay his vows to the Almighty in the holy city of Jerusalem. It is probable that the vain and ambitious mind of Julian aspired to the honor of restoring the ancient glory of the temple. He knew the Christians were firmly persuaded that, by the coming of Christ, the typical dispensation had come to an end; and could he succeed in restoring the Jews to their city and the ritual of their worship, he might convert it into an argument against the faith of prophecy and the truth of revelation. He, therefore, resolved to erect, on Mount Moriah, a stately temple; and without waiting for his return from the Persian war, gave instructions to his minister Alypius, to commence without delay, the vast undertaking.

At the call of their great deliverer, the Jews, from all the provinces of the empire, repaired to Jerusalem. The desire of rebuilding the temple has, in every age, been a favorite project with them. In this propitious moment, says Gibbon, the men forgot their avarice and the women their delicacy; spades and pick-axes of silver were provided by the vanity of the rich, and the rubbish was transported in mantles of silk and purple. Every purse was opened in liberal contributions, every hand claimed a share in the pious labor; and the commands of a great monarch were executed by the enthusiasm of a whole people.

The joint efforts of power and enthusiasm were, however, on this occasion unsuccessful. I am aware that the reason of this is differently accounted for. Some resolve it wholly into the early death of Julian, and the additional circumstance of his successor being actuated by different religious principles. I shall, however, transcribe the account which is given of this extraordinary affair, not by a Christian, but by a heathen writer, who lived during the transaction, and wrote his book within twenty years of it -- leaving the reader to make his own reflections on the subject. Ammianus Marcellinus, detailing the history of his own times, says, "whilst Alypius, assisted by the governor of the province, urged with rigor and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place, from time to time, inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and the victorious element continuing in this manner, obstinately and resolutely bent as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was abandoned." [Ammianus Marcellinus b. 21, at the beginning.] This "unexceptionable testimony," as Gibbon candidly admits it to be, is also supported by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, in a letter to the emperor Theodosius -- by the eloquent Chrysostom, who at the time was bishop of Antioch -- and by Gregory Nazianzen, who published his account of this preternatural event before the expiration of the same year.

There are few of the Roman emperors, whose characters have been exhibited in more discordant lights, than that of Julian. His predilection for Paganism, or his prejudice against Christianity, or both, have given such a partial bias to the pen of Mr. Gibbon when recording the events of his reign, that he uniformly represents him as a virtuous and amiable monarch. But there certainly were traits in his character of a very different nature. Dr. Lardner, whose impartiality has never been called in question, tells us, that Julian "had a certain levity of mind; was a great talker; very fond of fame; superstitious rather than properly religious; so addicted to sacrificing, that it was said the race of bulls would be destroyed if he returned victorious from Persia: and such was the multitude of his victims, that his soldiers, who partook of them, were frequently much disordered by excess in eating and drinking. He received the rising sun with blood, and attended him with blood at his setting. By frequent devotions he engaged the gods to be his auxiliaries in war; worshipping Mercury, Ceres, Mars, Calliope, Apollo, and Jupiter. Libanius, complaining of the deities who had deserted him, says, 'Which of them shall we blame? not one, but all, for none

were neglected by him, neither gods nor goddesses. And is this the return,' says he, 'for all his victims, for all his vows, for all the incense, and all the blood offered up to them, by day and by night? Wherever there was a temple, continues the same writer, whether in the city, or on the hill, or on the tops of the mountains, no place was so rough or so difficult of access but he ran to it, as if the way had been smooth and pleasant.' But though Julian was so devout and religious in his way, he could be much displeased when he was disappointed, and even angry with his gods, like other heathens. In the Persian war, having obtained some successes and expecting more, he prepared a grand sacrifice for Mars; but the omen not being favorable, he was greatly incensed; and called Jupiter to witness, that he would never more offer a sacrifice to Mars. This excess of superstition, it seems to me, is the proof of the want of judgment -- a defect which appeared upon divers occasions and in many actions not altogether becoming the dignity of an emperor." [Lardner's *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 25.]

The conduct of Julian towards the Christians does not seem to have been characterized by all that impartiality which his admirers claim for him. Sozomen, the historian, says, he ordered the strictest inquiry to be made after the estates that belonged to Christians, with a view to confiscate the whole of them, not hesitating to employ torture to come at the truth. He subjected the Christian clergy to the lowest services in the army -- and threatened, that unless the Christians rebuilt the Pagan temples, he would not suffer THE GALILEANS to wear their heads; and our historian observes, that if it had been in his power, and he had not been prevented by death, he would probably have been as good as his word. [Sozomen's *History*, bk. 5, ch. 5.]

Though Julian forebore to persecute unto death, he could not, on several occasions, refrain from using insults, which sufficiently showed what he felt, and what he wished to do. When he was sacrificing in a temple at Constantinople, and Maris, the bishop of Chalcedon, a man respectable for his learning and for the part he had acted in public life, and now venerable for his age, happening to pass by, he abused him as an impious person, and an enemy of the gods. He had even the meanness to reproach him for his blindness, saying, "Will not your Galilean God cure you?" "The old man replied, "I thank my God that I am deprived of sight, that I may not see your fall from piety." On this occasion, Julian had so much command of himself, as to pass on without making any reply.

But notwithstanding his affectation of magnanimity, Julian was not always so much master of himself, as he appeared to be on this occasion. While at Antioch, just before he set out on his expedition against Persia, two of the officers who usually attended upon his person, inadvertently complained, that by his orders, every thing in the city was polluted with the rites of heathenism, insomuch that the very fountains that supplied the city, and every thing sold in the market, bread, butcher's meat, herbs, fruit, etc. had been sprinkled with lustral water, by which they were, as

it were, consecrated to the heathen gods: such had been his insidious policy, in order to draw the people insensibly into idolatry.

These complaints coming to the ears of Julian, he ordered them to be brought before him; and interrogating them, as was his custom, with great familiarity, they frankly told him, that they had made those complaints; and that having been educated in the Christian religion, under his predecessors, Constantine and Constantius, they could not help being disgusted at seeing every thing contaminated with the rites of heathenism; but that this was the only thing in his reign of which they complained. At this he was so provoked, that he ordered them to be put to death with torture: pretending that it was not on account of their religion, but for their petulance in insulting their emperor.

About the same time, a deaconess, of the name of Pythia, who led the female singers, happening, as the emperor was passing by the doors of a place of worship, to be singing a psalm, and having, perhaps imprudently, pitched upon one of those in which the heathen gods and their worshippers are spoken of with contempt, he was so provoked that he sent for her; and, though she was very old, one of his guards struck her by his command, and in his presence, on both the cheeks, with such violence, that the blood gushed out. [Theod. Hist. b. 3, ch. 15.]

After a short reign of twenty months, Julian, who perished by the lance of a common soldier, while prosecuting the Persian war upon the banks of the Euphrates, was succeeded in the year 363 by **JOVIAN**, one of the officers of his army. He had been educated in the principles of Christianity, and as soon as he ascended the throne, transmitted a circular letter to all the governors of the provinces, securing the legal establishment of the Christian religion. The edicts of Julian were abolished, and ecclesiastical immunities restored and enlarged. The Catholic clergy were unanimous in the loud and sincere applause which they bestowed on Jovian, but they were yet ignorant what creed or what synod he would choose for the standard of orthodoxy. The leaders of the different factions were properly aware, how much depended upon the first impressions made on the mind of an untutored soldier, and they hastened to the imperial court. The public roads were crowded with Athanasian, Arian, Semi-arian, and Eunomian bishops, who struggled to outstrip each other in the race: the apartments of the palace resounded with their clamors, and the ears of the prince were assaulted, and perhaps astonished by the singular mixture of metaphysical argument and personal invective. He wisely recommended to them charity and concord, but referred the disputants to the decision of a future council.

The conduct of Jovian seems to have given the death blow to the prevalence of Paganism in the empire. "Under his reign," says the historian of the Roman empire, "Christianity obtained an easy and lasting victory; and as soon as the smile of royal patronage was withdrawn, the genius of Paganism, which had been fondly raised and

cherished by the acts of Julian, sunk irrecoverably in the dust. In many cities, the temples were shut or deserted; the philosophers who had abused the transient favor, thought it prudent to shave their beards, and disguise their profession; and the Christians rejoiced, that they were now in a condition to forgive or to revenge the injuries which they had suffered under the preceding reign." [Gibbon, vol. 4, ch. 85.]

Jovian, nevertheless, issued a wise and gracious edict, in which he explicitly declares, that though he should severely punish the sacrilegious rites of magic, his subjects might exercise with freedom and safety, the ceremonies of the ancient worship. "I hate contention," says he, "and love those only that study peace;" declaring, that "he would trouble none on account of their faith, whatever it was; and that such only should obtain his favor and esteem, as should stand forward, in restoring the peace of the church." The senate of Constantinople deputed an orator, of the name of Themistius, to express their loyal devotion to the new emperor. His oration is preserved, and merits particular attention, for the discovery which it inadvertently makes of the state of the established Catholic church at that period. "In the recent changes," says he, "both religions have been alternately disgraced, by the seeming acquisition of worthless proselytes, of those votaries of the reigning purple, who could pass, without a reason and without a blush, from the church to the temple, and from the altars of Jupiter to the sacred table of the Christians." [15] Could a volume give us a more striking picture of the wretched state to which the Christian profession was reduced in so short a time as half a century after its establishment?

Jovian reigned only one year. He appears to have been addicted to intemperance; for, after indulging himself in the pleasures of the table at supper, he retired to rest, and the next morning was found dead in his bed. The throne of the empire now remained ten days vacant; but it was at length filled by two brothers, **VALENTINIAN AND VALENS**, the former a distinguished officer in the army, who, thirty days after his own elevation, voluntarily associated his brother with him in the government of the empire, A.D. 364. Of both these princes, Mr. Gibbon says, that "they invariably retained in the purple, the chaste and temperate simplicity which had adorned their private life; and under their reign, the pleasures of a court never cost the people a blush or a sigh." Though in a great measure illiterate themselves, they were great promoters of learning among their subjects. They planned a course of instruction for every city in the empire; and the academies of Rome and Constantinople, but more especially the latter, were considerably extensive.

The two emperors were of very different tempers, and took different courses in regard to religion. The former was of the orthodox party; but though he especially favored those of his own sentiments, he gave no disturbance to the Arians. Valens, on the contrary, was less liberal in his views, and persecuted all who differed from him. In the beginning of their reign, a synod was convened in Illyricum, which again decreed



the con-substantiality of Father, Son, and Spirit. The emperors issued a circular letter, declaring their assent to this, and ordering that this doctrine should be preached -- though they published laws for the toleration of all religious denominations, and even of Paganism. In the year 375, Valentinian died suddenly in a transport of rage, and **VALENS being sole emperor**, was soon prevailed on by the artifice of Eudoxius, bishop of Constantinople, to take a decided part with the Arians, and to abandon his moderation, by cruelly persecuting the Orthodox. The first thing that fired his resentment was the conduct of these latter, who had solicited and obtained his permission to hold a synod at Lampsacus, for the amendment and settlement of the faith; when, after two month's consultation, they decreed the doctrine of the Son's being like the Father as to his essence, to be the true orthodox faith, and deposed all the bishops of the Arian party. This highly exasperated Valens, who without delay, convened a council of the Arian bishops, and in his turn, commanded the bishops who composed the synod of Lampsacus to embrace the sentiments of Eudoxius the Arian: and upon their refusal, sent them into exile, transferring their churches to their opponents. After this, he pursued measures still more violent against them; some were commanded to be whipped, others disgraced, not a few imprisoned, and many fined.

But the most detestable part of his conduct was his treacherous and cruel behavior towards eighty of them, whom, under the pretense of sending them into banishment - a thing to which they had consented, rather than subscribe what they did not believe - he put on board a ship, and caused the vessel to be set on fire as it sailed out of the harbor, through which they all perished either by fire or water. These kinds of cruelty continued to the end of his reign, and there is no room to doubt that he was greatly stimulated to them by the bishops of the Arian party. It is a melancholy reflection, that the pity which such merciless treatment as this could not have failed to excite in every feeling mind, the orthodox should have deprived themselves of, by their own imprudence, in commencing the first assault upon the Arians. They ought to have remembered that divine maxim, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them;" for on most of those occasions it was only "the measure they meted that was measured to them again."

But the conduct of Valens was not regulated by the strict rules of equity; for in this persecution he included the Novatians, whose churches he commanded to be shut up, and their pastors banished; although, so far as I can perceive, they took no part whatever in the squabbles that existed between the contending factions. Agelius, the pastor of the church in Constantinople, a man of admirable sanctity and virtue, and remarkable for his perfect contempt of money, was exiled. Yet he was restored not long after, and recovered the churches of his communion. Socrates, the historian, who seems to have been intimately acquainted with the affairs of the Novatians, says, that the toleration which this class of Christians at length obtained, they owed under providence to one Marcian, a presbyter of their church in Constantinople, a man of

learning and piety, who tutored two daughters of the emperor. This historian particularly mentions the liberality and kindness which the Novatians exercised towards such of the orthodox party as were the subjects of persecution, while they themselves were tolerated,--trait in their history which even Milner is obliged to admit "reflects an amiable lustre on the character of these Dissenters" [*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 157]-- and for showing which benevolence, they actually incurred the displeasure of the reigning party. Agelius presided over that church forty years, and died in the sixth year of the reign of Theodosius. Before his death, some difference of opinion arose in the church relative to a successor. Agelius gave the preference to Sisinnius,\* a person of great learning and talents, and consequently ordained him. The church had a great partiality for Marcian, who had been eminently instrumental in enabling them to weather the storm of persecution under Valens. Distressed that any cause of murmuring should exist among them, Agelius immediately ordained Marcian to the episcopal office, and thereby restored harmony and concord.

[\* Socrates, the historian, has given us some interesting particulars of **SISINNIUS**, which, as I do not recollect to have seen them quoted by any modern writer, I shall here extract. "He was," says he, "an eloquent person and an excellent philosopher — had diligently cultivated the art of Logic, and was incomparably well versed in the sacred Scriptures." He wore a white garment, and regularly bathed himself twice a day in the public baths. He seems to have been remarkable for the readiness of his wit on all occasions; in illustration of which, Socrates has recorded several anecdotes. Being interrogated by one of his acquaintance, why he, who was a bishop, chose to bathe twice a day, Sisinnius promptly replied, "Because I cannot bathe thrice!" His good sense led him to treat with levity the practice of clothing the clergy in black. Calling one day to pay a friendly visit at the house of Arsacius, who had succeeded Chrysostom in the see of Constantinople, he was asked, why he dressed in a manner so unsuitable to his character as a bishop. "Tell me" said he, "where it is written that a bishop should wear a black garment? You, said he, can never show that a priest ought to wear black — but I will give you my authority for wearing White. Hath not Solomon expressly said, Let thy garments be always white?" Ecclesiastes 9:8. He then referred them to Luke 9:29, on which occasion both the Lord Jesus, and Moses, and Elias, appeared to the apostles clothed in white. In the province of Galatia, Leontius, the bishop of Ancyra, commenced a prosecution against the church of the Novatians, in that city, and took from them their place of worship. Happening soon afterwards to come to Constantinople, Sisinnius waited upon him, for the purpose of entreating him to restore to his friends their chapel. Leontius flew into a passion, and said, "You Novatianists ought not to have churches, for you discard all repentance, and exclude the loving kindness of God," etc. Sisinnius listened patiently to this philippic, and then calmly replied, "But no man can repent more than I do!" How, said Leontius, do you repent? "I repent," replied Sisinnius, "that I have seen you!" Chrysostom, who was at the head of the Catholic

party, and who was a man of excessive arrogance, on one occasion addressed him with great heat, saying, "You are a heretic, and I will make you leave off preaching." "I'll give you a reward," said Sisinnius, "if you will free me from the labor of it." "O! if the office is laborious," rejoined Chrysostom, "you may go on with it." Socrates closes his account of Sisinnius with the following sketch. "He was very eminent for his learning, on which account all the bishops who succeeded, loved and honored him. Moreover, all the eminent personages of the Senatorian order had a great affection for him and admired him. He wrote many books, but he is too studious about words in them, and intermixes too many poetic terms; he was more admired for his speaking than for his writings. In his countenance and voice, in his dress and aspect, and in the whole of his action and deportment, there was much gracefulness — by reason of which accomplishments, he was beloved by all sects." Upon another occasion, he remarks that, such was the high estimation in which Sisinnius was held by the Novatian people, that, "his word was law." Sisinnius died in the year 407, and was succeeded by Chrysanthus, a man of signal prudence and modesty, by whose means the churches of the Novatians were not only upheld but increased. *Eccles. Hist.* b. 6, ch. 22. and b. 7, ch. 12.]

[It is quite amusing to witness Mr. Milner's spleen against the characters of Novatian and Sisinnius. He terms the latter a "facetious gentleman," and only mentions him for the sake of censuring his singularity in not conforming to the catholic clergy and the clerical garb. Indeed, he seems to have regarded him in much the same light as that in which Dr. Johnson regarded Milton, when he said, "he was not of the Church of England, he was not of the Church of Rome — to be of no church is dangerous." But of AErIus (concerning whom the reader will meet with some account in the next section) he disdains, so far as I can perceive, even to record his name or his heresy — though on St. Augustine, a part of whose labors were employed in an attempt to refute him, he has bestowed 172 closely printed pages! — that Augustine, of whom, after all, he is constrained to acknowledge that he understood not Paul's doctrine of justification — that he perpetually confounds it with sanctification, (vol. 2, p. 426, etc.) and as that to the doctrine of particular redemption, it was unknown to him and all the ancients, as he [Mr. Milner] wishes it had remained equally unknown to the moderns," p. 467. This was, indeed, fulfilling the pledge Mr. M. had given the public, of writing an Ecclesiastical History on a new plan. See his Preface to vol 1 of his *History of the Christian Church*.]

After having reigned fourteen years, Valens lost his life in a battle with the Goths, A. D. 378, and was succeeded in the government of the empire by **GRATIAN**, the son of Valentinian. He was of the orthodox party; and after the death of his uncle Valens, he recalled those that had been banished, restored them to their sees, and sent Sapores, one of his captains, to drive the Arians, like wild beasts, out of all their churches. This emperor, soon after his accession to power, united with himself as colleague in the government, "the great **THEODOSIUS**, a name celebrated in history, and dear to

the Catholic church."

Immediately on his advancement to the throne of the empire, Theodosius betrayed a warm zeal for the orthodox opinions. Hearing that the city of Constantinople was divided into different religious parties, he wrote a letter to them from Thessalonica, wherein he acquaints them, that "it was his pleasure, that all his subjects should be of the same religious profession with Damasus, bishop of Rome, and Peter, bishop of Alexandria, and that their church alone should be denominated "Catholic," who worshipped the divine Trinity as equal in honor, and that those who were of another opinion should be called heretics, become infamous, and be liable to other punishments." [Sozomen, b. 7, ch. 4-6.] And on his arrival in the imperial city, he sent for Demophilus, the Arian bishop, demanding to know whether he would subscribe the Nicene confession of faith, adding, "if you refuse to do it, I will drive you from your churches" -- and he kept his word, for he turned him and all the Arians out of the city.

The more effectually to extinguish heresy, he in the year 383, summoned **a council of bishops of his own persuasion to meet at Constantinople**, in order to confirm the Nicene faith; the number of them amounted to an hundred and fifty, to which may be added, thirty-six of the Macedonian party. This is commonly termed **the second Oecumenical or general council**. They decreed that the Nicene faith should be the standard of orthodoxy, and that all heresies should be condemned. When the council was ended, **the emperor issued two edicts against heretics**; the first prohibited them from holding any assemblies; and the second, forbidding them to meet in fields or villages! And as though this were not sufficiently extravagant, he followed up this absurd procedure by a law, in which he forbade heretics to worship or to preach, or to ordain bishops or presbyters, commanding some to be banished, others to be rendered infamous and deprived of the common privileges of citizens. **In the space of fifteen years he promulgated at least, fifteen several edicts against the heretics**. It is some apology for him certainly that he did not often put these execrable statutes in force; and one would charitably hope that Sozomen and Socrates, who have recorded the history of these whimsical transactions, are correct in thinking that he only intended by them to terrify others into the same opinions of the Divine Being with himself. But the zeal of Theodosius was not wholly absorbed in the establishment of uniformity among the professors of Christianity; he was equally anxious to extinguish the expiring embers of Paganism. About the year 390, he issued a law, in which he expressly states that "it is our will and pleasure, that none of our subjects, whether magistrates or private citizens, however exalted, or however humble may be their rank and condition, shall presume, in any city or in any place, to worship an inanimate idol, by the sacrifice of a guiltless victim." [Theod. 1. 16. tit. 10. leg. 12.] The act of sacrificing, and the practice of divination by the entrails of the victim, are declared a crime of high treason against the state which can be expiated only by the death of the guilty. The rites of Pagan superstition are abolished, as

highly injurious to the truth and honor of religion; and luminaries, garlands, frankincense, and libations of wine are enumerated and condemned.

Such were the persecuting edicts of Theodosius against the Pagans, which were rigidly executed; and they were attended with the desired effect, "for so rapid and yet so gentle was the fall of Paganism, that only twenty-eight years after the death of Theodosius, the faint and minute vestiges were no longer visible to the eye of the legislator [Gibbon's Rome, vol. 5, ch. 20]."

[The increase of the Christian profession in the world, must always be an interesting topic with those who rightly estimate the importance of the gospel to human happiness; but every one must be aware of the difficulty there is in arriving at certain calculations on the subject. The reader, however, will require no apology from me for subjoining in this place, a short extract from Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. "Under the reign of Theodosius," says he, "after Christianity had enjoyed, more than sixty years, the sunshine of imperial favor, the ancient and illustrious church of Antioch (in Syria) consisted of one hundred thousand persons; three thousand of whom were supported out of the public oblations. The splendor and dignity of the Queen of the East, [the name then given to Antioch] the acknowledged populousness of Caesarea, Seleucia, and Alexandria, and the destruction of two hundred and fifty thousand souls in the earthquake which afflicted Antioch under the elder Justin, are so many convincing proofs that the whole number of its inhabitants was not less than half a million." Vol. 2, ch. 15. Now, according to this calculation, the reader will see that at the time Theodosius attempted to enforce an uniformity of worship throughout the empire, the proportion which the nominal Christians in Antioch bore to the rest of the citizens, was as one to five. Taking this as a fair average, there must have been in Rome two hundred and fifty thousand professed Christians at that time, and at Alexandria, in Egypt, which was the second city in the empire, probably one hundred and fifty thousand. Thus in those three cities alone there were half a million of nominal Christians. The number of inhabitants included in the whole of the Roman Empire at that period, was one hundred and twenty millions; and if we extend the computation to that multitude, we should be led to conclude that there were among them twenty-four millions that professed the Christian religion. We must, however, keep this consideration always in view, that Christianity had, at this time, been sixty years established by law as the religion of the empire, and consequently was not a little corrupted from its original purity.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE FIFTH CENTURY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DOMINION OF THE POPES**

**A.D. 401-606**

The fall of Paganism, which may be considered as having begun to take place in the reign of Constantine, and as nearly consummated in that of Theodosius, is probably one of the most extraordinary revolutions that ever took place on the theater of this world. Their own writers have described it as "a dreadful and amazing prodigy, which covered the earth with darkness, and restored the ancient dominion of chaos and of night." [See Gibbon's Rome, vol. 5, ch. 28.]

But the pen of inspiration has depicted the awful catastrophe in strains of much higher sublimity and grandeur, and, doubtless, upon very different principles "I beheld," says the writer of the Apocalypse, "when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together: and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:12-17).

[Note from D.W. Cloud, Director, Way of Life Literature: Pastor William Jones was sadly afflicted with the tendency of his time to spiritualize the prophecies of Revelation rather than to interpret them literally. Revelation chapter 6 will be fulfilled literally during the Great Tribulation which will immediately precede the return of Jesus Christ.]

The same thing seems to be intended, when the writer says, "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven; and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:7-9).

In this highly-wrought figurative language we are taught to conceive of the dreadful conflict which subsisted between the Christian and heathen professions, the persecutions which for three centuries had been inflicted upon the former, with the issue of the whole, in the ultimate overthrow of the Pagan persecuting powers, and the subversion of that idolatrous system in the empire.

From the time of the establishment of Christianity under Constantine to the end of the fourth century, a period of more than seventy years, the disciples of Jesus were highly privileged. They were in general permitted to sit under their own vine and fig-tree, exempt from the dread of molestation. The Clergy of the Catholic church, indeed, persisted in waging a sanguinary and disgraceful contest with each other, about church preferments, and similar objects of human ambition; but, notwithstanding the squabbles of those men of corrupt minds, it must have been a season of precious repose and tranquillity to the real churches of Christ, which stood aloof from such scandalous proceedings, and kept their garments unspotted from the world.

There are few things more gratifying to the friend of TRUTH, than to have an opportunity of recording the disinterested labors of such as, under circumstances of discouragement, and frequently at the expense of all that men in general account valuable, have stood forth the champions of her noble cause, against a prevailing torrent of error. We have already adverted to the rise of the Novatianist churches, which stood firmly attached to the simple doctrine and order of the first Christian churches, and maintained a public testimony against the corrupt state of the Catholic party. Towards the close of the fourth century arose Lucifer, bishop of Cagliari, in the island of Sardinia, a man remarkable for his prudence, the austerity of his character, and the firmness of his mind in all his resolutions. Though he wrote in defense of the doctrine of the Trinity against the Arians, he refused all religious fellowship with both parties, on account of the corruption of their doctrine and the

laxity of their discipline; while he and his followers were content to suffer the persecution of either party. [Mosheim, vol. 1, p. 386.]

About the same time rose up **AERIUS**, the founder of a new sect, who propagated opinions different from those that were commonly received, and collected various societies throughout Armenia, Pontus, and Cappadocia. We are indebted to Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, who died early in the fifth century, for recording the discriminating tenets of this denomination of Christians. AErius was an elder of the church of Sebastia in Pontus; and, as Epiphanius, who undertook to confute him and all other heretics, informs us, obstinately defended four great errors. These were,

1. That bishops were not distinguished from presbyters or elders, by any divine right; for that, according to the New Testament, their office and authority were absolutely the same.
2. That it was wrong to offer up any prayers for the dead, which it seems was become customary in those days.
3. That there was no authority in the word of God for the celebration of Easter, as a religious solemnity; and
4. That fasts ought not to be prefixed to the annual return of days, as the time of Lent and the week preceding Easter.

Such seems to have been the heresy of AErius, and his writings in defense of which, we are told, met with the most cordial reception from his contemporaries. "We know with the utmost certainty," says Mosheim, "that it was highly agreeable to many good Christians, who were no longer able to bear the tyranny and arrogance of the bishops of this century." The reader, it is hoped, will excuse a remark or two upon this subject before we proceed. The learned historian, whom I have just quoted, informs us that -- **"The great purpose of AErius seems to have been that of reducing Christianity to its primitive simplicity;"** he then adds, "a purpose indeed laudable and noble, when considered in itself; though the principles from whence it springs, and the means by which it is executed, are generally in many respects, worthy of censure, and may have been so in the case of this reformer." [Mosheim, vol. 1, cent. 4, part 2, ch. 3.]

I cannot forbear subjoining the comment of his erudite translator, Dr. Maclaine, upon the text of this historian. "The desire," says he, "of reducing religious worship to the greatest possible simplicity, however rational it may appear in itself, and, abstractedly considered, will be considerably moderated in such as bestow a moment's attention upon the imperfection and infirmities of human nature in its



present state. Mankind, generally speaking, have too little elevation of mind to be much affected by those forms and methods of worship in which there is nothing striking to the outward senses. The great difficulty here lies in determining the lengths which it is prudent to go in the accommodation of religious ceremonies to human infirmity; and the grand point is to fix a medium, in which a due regard may be shown to the senses and imagination, without violating the dictates of right reason, or tarnishing the purity of true religion. It has been said, that the church of Rome has gone too far in its condescension to the infirmities of mankind -- and this is what the ablest defenders of its motley worship have alleged in its behalf. But this observation is not just; **the church of Rome has not so much accommodated itself to human weakness, as it has abused that weakness, by taking occasion from it to establish an endless variety of ridiculous ceremonies, destructive of true religion, and only adapted to promote the riches and despotism of the clergy, and to keep the multitude still hoodwinked in their ignorance and superstition.**" [Ubi Supra, p. 388.]

Now according to Dr. Mosheim's manner of expressing himself on this subject, the reader will readily perceive, that, however much some of the friends of truth might labor to stem the torrent of corruption, and restore Christianity to its original simplicity, such attempts were almost certain to be condemned by both this eminent historian and his translator. With them nothing is more common than to extol the simplicity of gospel worship during the apostolic age, and in a few pages afterwards to censure the efforts of those who have labored to retrieve it from the corruptions to which the folly and wickedness of men have subjected it. Hence, we invariably find persons of this description ranked in the class of "heretics," and reprobated as troublers of "the church!" The design of AErius, it is admitted, was laudable and noble in itself, nor is it affirmed that the means which he made use of were actually worthy of censure; but they may have been so. But, surely, a cordial attachment to the simplicity of primitive Christianity would have prompted the historian to evince some few grains of allowance for the conduct of AErius, even though in the prosecution of a "laudable and noble design," he had been betrayed into some little indiscretion in regard to the means of effecting it, which, after all, in the present instance, is not pretended. This is only what might have been reasonably expected; since to impute, without evidence, the worst motives that can be assigned to the actions of men, is not the immediate operation of that charity which thinketh no evil. The learned translator, however, takes up the subject in a somewhat different point of view; for, upon his principle, the simplicity of gospel-worship, as established in the apostolic churches, must be considered as altogether unsuitable to the exigencies of human nature; for, that the constitution and worship of the first churches were remarkable for a divine simplicity, none will deny. Now if it be lawful for men to depart from this simplicity, and to accommodate the forms of Christian worship to the ignorance, infirmities, or prejudices of men, according as these may happen to prevail in different ages, then, indeed, a power to decree rites and ceremonies in

matters of religion, is quite necessary to adapt the Christian profession to the incessant fluctuations of the state of this world; though it will not be very easy, when this right is once admitted, to show, on what principle the church of Rome can be condemned for going to an extreme in this matter; since, in that case, it is no divine rule that is to regulate our conduct, but the different fancies of men, as these respect human infirmities.

**It is happy for simple Christians that their rule of duty is plain, though, unfortunately, not sanctioned by either the catholic or the reformed church. It is "not to admit into the worship of God, any thing which is either not expressly commanded, or plainly exemplified in the New Testament."** This was evidently the principle upon which AErius proceeded in opposing the superstitions of his time, and for which he deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance -- it is the only principle which evinces a becoming deference to the wisdom and authority of God in the institution of his worship -- and, it may be added, which secures the uniform regard of his people to the institutions of his kingdom, to the end of time.

The distinction between bishop and presbyter or elder, which AErius so strongly opposed, seems to have prevailed early in the Christian church; yet it is demonstrably without any solid foundation in the New Testament. "That the terms, bishop and elder are sometimes used promiscuously in the New Testament," says Dr. Campbell, "there is no critic of any name who now pretends to dispute. The passage, Acts 20:17, etc. is well known. Paul, from Miletus sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church, saying, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the church over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (literally *episkopos* bishops.) Similar to this is a passage in Titus, chap. 1:5. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (*opresbuteros*) in every city. Ver. 7, "For a bishop (*episkopon*) must be blameless." In like manner the apostle Peter, 1 Epistle 5:1. "The elders (*opresbuteros*) which are among you, I exhort," etc. Ver. 2. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, (eoisxopones) discharging the office of bishops." [Campbell's *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 1, p. 125, 126.] So much for the heresy of AErius as it respected the denial of any distinction between the office of bishop and presbyter. On the other three particulars of his heresy, it is, at this time of day, quite unnecessary for us to bestow a word in the way of apology.

Amongst the innumerable corruptions of Christianity which have prevailed in the Catholic church, there is none that makes a more conspicuous figure than **the institution of monachism or monkery**; and if traced to its origin, it will be found strikingly to exemplify the truth of the maxim that, as some of the largest and loftiest trees spring from very small seeds, so the most extensive and wonderful effects sometimes arise from very inconsiderable causes. In times of persecution, during the first ages of the church, whilst "the heathen raged, and the rulers took counsel

together, against the Lord and against his anointed," many pious Christians, male and female, married and unmarried, justly accounting that no human felicity ought to come in competition with their fidelity to Christ, and diffident of their own ability to persevere in resisting the temptations wherewith they were incessantly harassed by their persecutors, took the resolution to abandon their possessions and worldly prospects, and, whilst the storm lasted, to retire to unfrequented places, far from the haunts of men, the married with, or without, their wives, as agreed between them, that they might enjoy in quietness their faith and hope, and, exempt from temptations to apostasy, employ themselves principally in the worship and service of their Maker. The cause was reasonable, and the motive praise-worthy; but the reasonableness arose solely from the circumstances. When the latter were changed the former vanished, and the motive could no longer be the same. When there was not the same danger in society, there was not the same occasion to seek security in solitude. Accordingly, when persecution ceased, and the profession of Christianity rendered perfectly safe, many returned without blame from their retirement, and resumed their stations in society. Some, indeed, familiarized by time to a solitary life, at length preferred through habit, what they had originally adopted through necessity. They did not, however, waste their time in idleness; they supported themselves by their labor, and gave the surplus in alms. But they never thought of fettering themselves by vows and engagements; because, by so doing, they must have exposed their souls to new temptations, and, perhaps, greater dangers. It was, therefore, a very different thing from that system of monkery which afterwards became so prevalent, though, in all probability it suggested the idea of it, and may be considered as the first step towards it. [*Essay on Christian Temperance and Self-denial*, by Dr. George Campbell.]

Such signal sacrifices, not only of property, but of all secular pursuits, have a lustre in them, which dazzles the eyes of the weak, and powerfully engages imitation. Blind imitators, regardless of the circumstances which alone can render the conduct laudable, are often, by a strong perversion of intellect, led to consider it as the more meritorious the less it is rational, and the more eligible the less it is useful. The spirit of the measure comes in time to be reversed. What at first, through humble diffidence, appeared necessary for avoiding the most imminent danger, is, through presumption, voluntarily adopted, though in itself a source of perpetual peril. Such was the operation of the principle in the case referred to. Multitudes came in process of time to impose upon themselves vows of abstinence, poverty, celibacy, and virginity, solemnly engaging in an uninterrupted observance of those virtues, as they accounted them, to the end of their lives. Every attentive reader of the Scriptures must see that they are far from countenancing this piece of superstition. Both Christ and his apostles kept up a free and open intercourse with the world; and their writings abound with instructions to Christians, not to withdraw themselves from society, and shut themselves up in cloistered cells in a state of seclusion, but to fill up their respective stations usefully in civil society, performing all the social and

relative duties of life in the most exemplary manner. Man was made for action; powers were given him for exertion, and various talents have been conferred upon him by Providence, as instruments not of doing nothing, but of doing good, by promoting the happiness both of the individual and of society.

**EGYPT**, the fruitful parent of superstition, afforded the first example, strictly speaking, of the **MONASTIC LIFE**. **Anthony**, an illiterate youth of that country, in the times of Athanasius, distributed his patrimony, deserted his family and house, took up his residence among the tombs and in a ruined tower, and after a long and painful noviciate, at length advanced three days journey into the desert, to the eastward of the Nile, where discovering a lonely spot which possessed the advantages of shade and water, he fixed his last abode. His example and his lessons infected others, whose curiosity pursued him to the desert; and before he quitted life, which was prolonged to the term of a hundred and five years, he beheld a numerous progeny imitating his original. The prolific colonies of monks multiplied with rapid increase on the sands of Lybia, upon the Rocks of Thebais, and the cities of the Nile. Ever to the present day the traveler may explore the ruins of fifty monasteries, which were planted to the south of Alexandria, by the disciples of Anthony.

Inflamed by the example of Anthony, a Syrian youth, whose name was **Hilarion**, fixed his dreary abode on a sandy beach between the sea and a morass, about seven miles from Gaza. The austere penance in which he persisted forty-eight years, diffused a similar enthusiasm, and innumerable monasteries were soon distributed over all Palestine. In the west, **Martin of Tours**, "a soldier, a hermit, a bishop, and a saint," founded a monastery near Poitiers, and thus introduced monastic institutions into France. His monks were mostly of noble families, and submitted to the greatest austerities both in food and raiment; and, such was the rapidity of their increase, that two thousand of them attended his funeral! In other countries, they appear to have increased in a similar proportion, and the progress of monkery is said not to have been less rapid or less universal than that of Christianity itself. Every province, and, at last, every city of the empire, was filled with their increasing multitudes. The disciples of Anthony spread themselves beyond the tropic, over the Christian empire of Ethiopia. The monastery of Bangor, in Flintshire, a few miles south of Wrexham, contained above two thousand monks, and from thence a numerous colony was dispersed among the Barbarians of Ireland; and Iona, one of the western isles of Scotland, which was planted by the Irish Monks, diffused over the northern regions a ray of science and superstition.

The monastic institution was not confined to the male sex. Females began about the same time to retire from the world, and dedicate themselves to solitude and devotion. The practice is alluded to in the earlier councils; but it is expressly ordained by the council of Carthage, A.D. 397, that orphan virgins shall be placed in a nunnery -- and that the superior of the nunnery shall be approved by the bishop of the diocese.

Widows, and children above six years of age, were admitted after a year's probation. They were strictly shut up in the monastery, and secluded from all worldly intercourse. They were neither allowed to go out, nor was any person permitted to come in unto them, nor even to enter the church whither they went to worship, except the clergy of approved reputation, who were necessary to conduct the religious services. None was allowed to possess property, for among them all things were common. They served themselves or helped one another. They made their own clothes, which were white and plain woolen -- the height of the cap or head-dress was restricted to an inch and two lines -- they were tasked daily, but forbidden to work embroidery, or to bleach their garments, assume any ornaments, or accommodate themselves to any fashion which they might happen to see or hear of in the world. The means of correction and discipline were reproof and excommunication; but the latter consisted only in separation from public prayers, and from the common table at meals, and if these failed to reclaim the delinquent, recourse was had to flagellation. [Fleury's *Eccles. Hist.* tom. 7.]

These unhappy exiles from social life where impelled by the dark genius of superstition, to persuade themselves that every proselyte who entered the gates of a monastery, trod the steep and thorny path of eternal happiness. The popular monks, whose reputation was connected with the fame and success of the order, assiduously labored to multiply the number of their fellow captives. They insinuated themselves into noble and opulent families, and the specious arts of flattery and seduction were employed to secure those proselytes, who might bestow wealth or dignity on the monastic profession. The lives of the monks were consumed in penance and solitude, undisturbed by the various occupations which fill the time and exercise the faculties of reasonable, active, and social beings. They passed their lives without personal attachments, among a crowd which had been formed by accident, and was detained in the same prison by force or prejudice. Their days were professedly employed in vocal or mental prayer: they assembled in the evening, and were awakened in the night for the public worship of the monastery; and to such a pitch was absurdity at length carried, that one class of them came ultimately to sink under the painful weight of crosses and chains, and their emaciated limbs were confined by collars, bracelets, gauntlets, and greaves of massy iron. [Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. 6, ch. 27.]

The times of martyrdom were now passed, and of course that sort of courage and constancy could not be exerted; a method was therefore contrived of voluntary martyrdom, and persons of fanatical dispositions inflicted upon themselves as many pains and penalties as Pagan cruelty had invented. They left parents, wives, children, friends, families, and fortunes; they retired from the world, obliged themselves to a single and solitary life, and allowed themselves no more food, raiment, and sleep, than would barely support life.

The ethics of monks is a mere caricature of virtue, in which every feature is

exaggerated, distorted, or out of place; and, as hath often happened in other matters, though the likeness is preserved, what is beautiful in the original is hideous in the copy. The doctrines of Christianity are divinely adapted to the state of man in this world, considered as a fallen and corrupted being. They exhibit a remedy for his moral depravity in the grand and interesting truths which the gospel proclaims as the objects of his faith, the ground of his hope, and the motives of his love and joy. But he is called to the exercise of self-denial, the mortification of his fleshly appetites, disconformity to the course of this world, patience under sufferings of various kinds, and in the way of well-doing to seek for glory, honor, and immortality in the world to come. In the system of monkery all these Christian virtues are carried to the most ridiculous extreme. About the middle of the fourth century, **Gregory Nazianzen** wrote an eulogy in praise of the monastic life, wherein he describes the manner in which it was practiced at Nazianzum. "There are some," says he, "who loaded themselves with iron chains in order to bear down their bodies -- who shut themselves up in cabins, and appeared to nobody -- who continued twenty days and twenty nights without eating, practicing often the half of Jesus Christ's fast -- another abstained entirely from speaking, not praising God except in thought -- another passed whole years in a church, his hands extended, without sleeping, like an animated statue." [Fleury's *Eccles. Hist.* b. 16, ch. 51.]

Now, admitting the possibility of these things, how grossly must men's notions of truth and rectitude be perverted, who can think that the all-wise Creator gave hands to any man to be kept in a position which unfitted them for being of use to himself or others -- that he gave the faculty of speech, but not to be employed in communicating knowledge? Yet these things are the subject of panegyric even from the pen of Gregory Nazianzen, a person of unquestionable talents and virtue. "To go into a convent," said Dr. Johnson, "for fear of being immoral, is, as if a man should cut off his hands for fear he should steal" [Boswell's *Life Johnson*, vol. 2]. To suffer with patience and fortitude, when called to it, for the cause of truth, is both virtuous and heroical; but the self-inflicted penances of the miserable hermit serve as a testimony of nothing so much as the idiocy or insanity of the sufferer; for with regard to God, they are derogatory from his perfections -- they exhibit him as an object rather of terror than of love, as a tyrant rather than the parent of the universe.

One of the most renowned examples of monkish penance that is upon record, is that of **ST. SYMEON**, a Syrian monk, who lived about the middle of the fifth century, and who is thought to have outstripped all those that preceded him. He is said to have lived thirty-six years on a pillar erected on the summit of a high mountain in Syria, whence he got the name of "Symeon Stylites." From his pillar, it is said, he never descended, unless to take possession of another; which he did four times, having in all occupied five of them. On his last pillar, which was loftier than any of the former, being sixty feet high and only three broad, he remained, according to report, fifteen years without intermission, summer and winter, day and night, exposed to all the

inclemencies of the seasons, in a climate liable to great and sudden changes, from the most sultry heat to the most piercing cold. We are informed, that he always stood -- the breadth of his pillar not permitting him to lie down. He spent the day till three in the afternoon in meditation and prayer; from that time till sun-set, he harangued the people, who flocked to him from all countries -- they were then dismissed with his benediction. He would on no account permit females to come within his precincts, not even his own mother, who is said, through grief and mortification, in being refused admittance, to have died the third day after her arrival. In order to show how indefatigable he was in every thing that conduced to the glory of God and the good of mankind, he spent much time daily in the exemplary exercise of bowing so low as to make his forehead strike his toes, and so frequently, that one who went with Theodoret to see him, counted no fewer than twelve hundred and forty-four times, when being more wearied in numbering than the saint was in performing, he gave over counting. He is said to have taken no food except on Sundays, and that all the last year of his life he stood upon one leg only, the other having been rendered useless by an ulcer. [The reader whose curiosity may prompt him to look further into the history of this champion of monkish austerity, may consult Dr. Middleton's *Free Inquiry*, 4to. p. 164-168. It may justly excite one's astonishment, that only half a century ago there were to be found learned doctors of the established Church of England, defending the fame of this wretched fanatic, and advocating, with all their might, the truth and reality of the miracles reported to have been wrought by him! See Middleton, ut supra.]

Instances of similar fanaticism abound in the pages of ecclesiastical history.

**Baradatus**, in the same century, and, in all probability from similar motives, betook himself to a wooden coffer, or rather cage, in which he was so confined by its dimensions and form, that he was always bowed down in it, and could not stand upright. This mansion was placed on the top of a rock, where he was exposed to the sun, the rain, and all kinds of weather. Theodatus, the bishop of the diocese, unable to comprehend either the dignity or the utility of such sublimated virtue, cruelly obliged him to quit his cage, that he might live like other men. He complied; but to make compensation for one restraint that was taken off, he made choice of another, and devoutly abjured the use of his hands, in any way in which they could be serviceable either to himself or others. This he did by devoting them to remain always in one posture, extended towards heaven, probably in commemoration of the crucifixion. In this situation, it is said, that he lived in the open air disdaining to take shelter in any house, or building, from the inclemencies of the weather.

Extravagances the most marvelous, and the most frantic, such as dishonored the name of religion, and rendered men worse than useless, were considered as the most sublime attainments in the Christian life. And thus the demon of superstition, under the mask of superior piety, led men to counteract the designs of providence in the application of their natural powers. The Christian religion is disgraced by such

fooleries, which assimilate it to the very worst of heathen superstitions.

**Yet all the principal fathers of the Catholic Church, both Greek and Latin, employed their authority and eloquence in extolling the perfection of monkery, and recommending its practice.** This they did by writing the lives of particular monks, celebrating their wonderful sanctity and miraculous gifts, and founding monasteries wherever they traveled. "There was a certain shadow of it," says Bellarmine, its great advocate, "in the law of nature before the flood; a plainer expression of it under the Mosaic dispensation; but in the time of the apostles it came to perfection." **Athanasius** was one of the first, who, from the pattern of the Egyptian monasteries, introduced them into Italy and Rome where they had previously been held in utter contempt. It is amazing to read the flights of fancy in which the great oracles of the Catholic church, at that time, indulged, when recommending this stupid practice. **Basil** terms it "an angelical institution; a blessed and evangelic life, leading to the mansions of the Lord." **Jerome** declares the societies of monks and nuns to be "the very flower and most precious stone among all the ornaments of the church." **Chrysostom** calls it, "a way of life worthy of heaven; not at all inferior to that of angels." And **Augustine** styles them upon every occasion "the servants of God." By the influence of these renowned fathers, all of whom flourished in the fourth and following century; and by the many lies and forged miracles which they diligently propagated in honor of the monks, innumerable monasteries, as they themselves tell us, were founded over the western world, but especially in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, whose deserts were covered with them; and some of them in the fifth century, are said to have contained each five thousand monks at a time.

We find Chrysostom frequently haranguing also on the great blessings which the church reaped from the relics of the martyrs, and the daily miracles which were wrought by them; and he concludes one of his homilies on two female martyrs in the following manner: "With this ardor, therefore, let us fall down before their relics: let us embrace their coffins, for these may have some power, since their bones have so great an one; and not only on the day of their festival, but on other days also, let us fix ourselves as it were to them, and entreat them to be our patrons"--and on other occasions he exhorts his hearers "to dwell in their sepulchers, to fix themselves to their coffins; that not only their bones, but their tombs and their urns also overflowed with blessings." Basil informs us, that "all who were pressed with any difficulty or distress, were wont to fly for relief to the tombs of the martyrs; and whosoever did but touch their relics acquired some share of their sanctity." [Introductory Discourse to Dr. Middleton's *Free Inquiry*, p. 52-56. where the reader will find the authorities quoted. Of these, and a thousand other legendary tales, with which the writings of the fathers of this period are prolific, we may say, as Voltaire has said upon a similar occasion; "They have been related by many historians, and cannot be denied without overturning the very foundation of history; but it is certain we cannot give credit to them without overturning the very



foundation of reason!"]

In the beginning of the fifth century, **VIGILANTIUS**, a learned and eminent presbyter of a Christian church, took up his pen to oppose these growing superstitions. His book, which unfortunately is now lost, was directed against the institution of monks -- the celibacy of the clergy, -- praying for the dead and to the martyrs -- adoring their relics -- celebrating their vigils -- and lighting up candles to them after the manner of the Pagans. Jerome, esteemed a great luminary of the Catholic church, who was a most zealous advocate for all these superstitious rites, undertook the task of refuting Vigilantius, whom he politely styles "a most blasphemous heretic," comparing him to the Hydra, to Cerberus, the Centaurs, etc. and considers him only as the organ of the demon. He, however, furnishes us with all the particular articles of his heresy, in the words of Vigilantius himself, which are as follows:

"That the honors paid to the rotten bones and dust of the saints and martyrs, by adoring, kissing, wrapping them up in silk and vessels of gold, lodging them in their churches and lighting up wax candles before them, after the manner of the heathens, were the ensigns of idolatry. That the celibacy of the clergy was a heresy, and their vows of chastity the seminary of lewdness. That to pray to the dead, or to desire the prayers of the dead, was superstitious; for that the souls of the departed saints and martyrs were at rest in some particular place, whence they could not remove themselves at pleasure, so as to be present every where to the prayers of their votaries. That the sepulchers of the martyrs ought not to be worshipped, nor their fasts and vigils to be observed; and lastly, that the signs and wonders said to be wrought by their relics and at their sepulchers, served to no good end or purpose of religion."

These were the sacrilegious tenets, as Jerome calls them, which he could not hear with patience, or without the utmost grief, and for which he declares Vigilantius to be a detestable heretic, venting his foul-mouthed blasphemies against the relics of the martyrs, which were working daily signs and wonders. He tells him to go into the churches of those martyrs, and he would be cleansed from the evil spirit which possessed him, and feel himself burnt, not by those wax candles which so much offended him, but by invisible flames which would force that demon who talked within him, to confess himself to be the same who had personated a Mercury, perhaps, or a Bacchus, or some other of their gods among the heathen."

Such is the wild rate, as Dr. Middleton well observes, at which this renowned father raves on through several pages. [Postscript to *Free Inquiry*, p. 131-134.]

It may probably gratify the reader to see how Jerome refutes the arguments of Vigilantius; and he may take as a specimen the following passage. "If it were such a sacrilege or impiety," says he, "to pay those honors to the relics of the saints, as

Vigilantius contends, then the emperor Constantius must needs be a sacrilegious person, who translated the holy relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy to Constantinople; then Arcadius Augustus also must be held sacrilegious, who translated the bones of the blessed Samuel from Judea, where they had lain so many ages, into Thrace; then all the bishops were not only sacrilegious but stupid too, who submitted to carry a thing the most contemptible, and nothing but mere dust, in silk and vessels of gold; and lastly, then the people of all the churches must needs be fools, who went out to meet those holy relics, and received them with as much joy, as if they had seen the prophet himself, living and present among them, for the procession was attended by swarms of people from Palestine even unto Chalcedon, singing with one voice the praises of Christ, who were yet adoring Samuel, perhaps, and not Christ, whose prophet and Levite Samuel was. [Ubi Supra, p. 137.]

[I subjoin Mr. Gibbon's account of this singular matter;--even as a specimen of the splendid magnificence of that writer's style, it deserves regard. "The grateful respect of the Christians for the martyrs of the faith, was exalted, by time and victory, into religious adoration; and the most illustrious of the saints and prophets were deservedly associated to the honors of the martyrs. One hundred and fifty years after the glorious deaths of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Vatican and the Ostian road were distinguished by the tombs, or rather by the trophies of those spiritual heroes. In the age which followed the conversion of Constantine, the emperors, the consuls, and the generals of armies, devoutly visited the sepulchers of a tent-maker and a fisherman; and their venerable bones were deposited under the altars of Christ, on which the bishops of the royal city continually offered the unbloody sacrifice. The new capital of the eastern world, unable to produce any ancient and domestic trophies, was enriched by the spoils of dependant provinces. The bodies of St. Andrew, St. Luke, and St. Timothy, had reposed, near three hundred years, in the obscure graves, from whence they were transported, in solemn pomp, to the church of the apostles, which the magnificence of Constantine had founded on the banks of the Thracian Bosphorus. About fifty years afterwards, the same banks were honored by the presence of Samuel, the judge and prophet of the people of Israel. His ashes, deposited in a golden vase, and covered with a silken veil, were delivered by the bishops into each other's hands. The relics of Samuel were received by the people, with the same joy and reverence which they would have shown to the living prophet; the highways, from Palestine to the gates of Constantinople, were filled with an uninterrupted procession; and the emperor Arcadius himself, at the head of the most illustrious members of the clergy and senate, advanced to meet his extraordinary guest, who had always deserved and claimed the homage of kings. The example of Rome and Constantinople confirmed the faith and discipline of the Catholic world. The honors of the saints and martyrs, after a feeble and ineffectual murmur of profane reason, were universally established; and in the age of Ambrose and Jerome, something was still deemed wanting to the sanctity of a Christian church, till it had been consecrated by some portion of holy relics, which fixed and inflamed the

devotion of the faithful. In the long period of twelve hundred years, which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the reformation of Luther, the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model; and some symptoms of degeneracy may be observed even in the first generations which adopted and cherished this pernicious innovation."]

Some readers may think the reasoning of Jerome not very conclusive on the question of relics; it is nevertheless certain that his voice prevailed over that of Vigilantius, and that this superstitious practice not only continued, but became more and more prevalent and popular. When the tombs of the Holy Land were exhausted, other tombs and countries supplied the increasing demand. **Saints and martyrs were invented for the sake of their bones, and dreams and miracles were employed in the discovery of obscure names and of sacred graves till then unknown to some.** To write the life of a saint, to make a pilgrimage to his tomb, to bring home fragments of his bones, of his coffin or of his clothes, or to erect a church to his memory, were acts not only honorable and meritorious, but frequently extremely lucrative. Scarcely any one deemed himself safe, especially on a journey or in times of danger, without some scrap of a relic in his possession. It was necessary to the security of every habitation, and to the comfort of every family, and neither church nor monastery was considered as duly consecrated, till it became the repository of the relics of some reputed saint; and, if his name were renowned, the church was crowded with supplicants for health, children, or prosperity: his priests were loaded with presents, and his treasury stored with donations of money and land.

Towards the close of the sixth century, the Greek empress made a pressing application to Pope Gregory I, for the body of the apostle Paul, to be placed in the church at Constantinople which had then recently been erected in honor of that apostle. Gregory wrote to her in reply, that she had solicited what he durst not grant; for, said he, "the bodies of the apostles Paul and Peter are so terrible by their miracles, that there is reason to apprehend danger, even in approaching to pray to them. My predecessor wanted to make some alteration on a silver ornament on the body of St. Peter, at the distance of fifteen feet, when an awful vision appeared to him, which was followed by his death. I myself wished to repair somewhat about the body of St. Paul, and with a view to that had occasion to dig a little near his sepulcher; when, in digging, the superior of the place raising some bones apparently unconnected with the sacred tomb, had a dismal vision after it, and suddenly died. In like manner, the workmen and the monks, not knowing precisely the grave of St. Lawrence, accidentally opened it; and having seen the body, though they did not touch it, died in ten days. Wherefore, Madam, the Romans in granting relics, do not touch the saints' bodies: they only put a little linen in a box, which they place near them; after some time they withdraw it, and deposit the box and linen solemnly in the church which they mean to dedicate. This linen performs as many miracles, as if they had transported the real body! In the time of pope Leo, some Greeks, doubting

the virtue of such relics, he took a pair of scissors, as we are assured, and cutting the linen, forthwith the blood flowed from it. He, however, tells the empress, that he would endeavor to send her a few grains of the chain which had been on Paul's neck and hands, and which had been found peculiarly efficacious, provided they succeeded, which was not always the case, in filing them off." [Fleury's *Eccles. Hist.* tom. 8, p. 91-93.]

This may suffice for giving the reader some idea of the deplorable state to which the "Holy Catholic Church" was reduced in the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era; and I therefore quit the subject to pass on to affairs of a different description.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **GOTHIC INVASION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE -- THE CITY OF ROME BESIEGED AND PLUNDERED -- SETTLEMENT OF THE BARBARIANS IN THE EMPIRE --ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DOMINION OF THE POPES**

**A.D. 408-606**

On the death of the emperor Theodosius, the government of the Roman world devolved upon his two sons, **Arcadius and Honorius**, who, by the unanimous consent of their subjects, were saluted as the lawful emperors of the East, and of the West. Arcadius was then about eighteen years of age, and took up his residence at Constantinople, from whence he swayed the scepter over the provinces of Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, comprising what was termed the Eastern Empire. His brother Honorius assumed, in the eleventh year of his age, the government of Italy, Africa, Gaul, Spain, and Britain, under the denomination of the Western. Their father died in the month of January, 395, and before the end of the winter in the same year, the Gothic nation was in arms; and, from the forests of Scythia, the savage warriors "rolled their ponderous wagons," says one of their Roman poets, "over the broad and icy bank of the indignant river the Danube." But the genius of Rome expired with Theodosius. He was the last of the successors of Augustus and Constantine, who appeared in the field at the head of their armies, and whose authority was universally acknowledged throughout the whole extent of the empire.

Nothing could form a more striking contrast than the character of those Gothic tribes

and that of the Romans at the period of which we speak. The Barbarians, as they were called, breathed nothing but war -- their martial spirit was yet in its rigor -- their sword was their right, and they exercised it without remorse as the right of nature. Simple and severe in their manners, they were unacquainted with the name of luxury; any thing was sufficient for their extreme frugality. Inured to exercise and toil, their bodies seemed impervious to disease or pain; they sported with danger, and met death with expressions of joy. The Roman character was then reduced to the reverse of all this. Accustomed to repose and luxury, they had degenerated into a dastardly and effeminate race, overwhelmed with fear and folly, or, what was still more ignominious, with treachery. That enormous fabric, the Roman empire, had, for a succession of ages, groaned under its own unwieldy bulk, and every method had been resorted to, that human wisdom could devise, for the purpose of preventing the superstructure from crumbling into ruins. Theodosius had attempted to appease the invaders by voluntary contributions of money. Tributes were multiplied upon tributes, until the empire was drained of its treasure. Another expedient was then adopted; large bodies of the Barbarians were taken into pay and opposed to other Barbarians. This mode of defense answered for the moment; but it terminated in the subversion of the empire. Already acquainted with the luxuries, the wealth, and the weakness of the Romans, they turned their arms against their masters, inviting their countrymen to come and share with them in the spoils of a people that were unworthy of so many accommodations. [1 Robertson's *Hist. Charles V.* vol. 1, sect. 1.]

Immense hordes of these savage tribes poured into every part of the empire. Wherever they marched, their route was marked with blood. The most fertile and populous provinces were converted into deserts. The wretched inhabitants of those countries to the south of the Danube, submitted to the calamities, which, in the course of twenty years, were almost grown familiar to their imagination, and the various troops of Barbarians, who gloried in the Gothic name, were irregularly spread from the woody shores of Dalmatia to the walls of Constantinople. Under the bold and enterprising genius of **ALARIC**, their renowned leader, they traversed without resistance the plains of Macedonia and Thessaly, stretching from east to west, to the edge of the sea shore. "The fertile fields of Phocis and Boeotia," says Gibbon, "were instantly covered by a deluge of Barbarians, who massacred the males of an age to bear arms, and drove away the beautiful females, with the spoil and cattle to the flaming villages. Corinth, Argos, Sparta, yielded without resistance to the arms of the Goths, and the most fortunate of their inhabitants were saved, by death, from beholding the slavery of their families and the conflagration of their cities. This invasion, instead of vindicating the honor, contributed, at least accidentally, to extirpate the last remains of Paganism -- and a system which had then subsisted eighteen hundred years, did not survive the calamities of Greece." [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 5, ch. 30.]

Having completely ravaged the entire territory of Greece, Alaric proceeded to invade

Italy, and the citizens of Rome were thrown into the utmost consternation at his approach. The emperor had taken up his residence in his palace at Milan, where he thought himself secured by the rivers of Italy, which lay between him and the Gothic chief. But the season happened to be remarkably dry, which enabled the Goths to traverse, without impediment, the wide and stony beds, whose center was faintly marked by the course of a shallow stream; and as Alaric approached the walls, or rather the suburbs of Milan, he enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing the emperor of the Romans flying before him. The danger to which the latter had been exposed, now urged him to seek a retreat in some inaccessible fortress of Italy, where he might securely remain, while the open country was covered by a deluge of Barbarians; and in the twentieth year of his age, anxious only for his personal safety, **Honorius retired to the perpetual confinement of the walls and morasses of RAVENNA.** His example was imitated by his feeble successors, the Gothic kings, and afterwards the Exarchs, who occupied the throne and palace of the emperors; and, till the middle of the eighth century, Ravenna was considered as the seat of government and the capital of Italy.

During a period of six hundred and nineteen years, the city of Rome, the seat of government, had never been violated by the presence of a foreign enemy; but in the year 408, Alaric commenced the blockade of this proud metropolis.\* By a skillful disposition of his numerous forces, he encompassed the walls, commanded the twelve principal gates, intercepted all communication with the adjacent country, and vigilantly guarded the navigation of the river Tyber, from which the Romans derived the surest and most plentiful supply of provisions. The first emotions of the nobles, and of the people, were those of surprise and indignation, that a vile Barbarian should dare to insult the capital of the world; but their arrogance was soon humbled by misfortune. The unfortunate city gradually experienced the distress of scarcity, and at length the horrid calamities of famine. The daily allowance of three pounds of bread, was reduced to one half -- to one third -- to nothing; and the price of corn still continued to rise in a rapid and extravagant proportion. The poorer citizens, unable to procure the necessaries of life, solicited the precarious charity of the rich; but private and occasional donations were insufficient to appease the hunger of a numerous people. The food the most repugnant to sense or imagination, the aliments the most unwholesome and pernicious to the constitution, were eagerly devoured, and fiercely disputed by the rage of hunger. A dark suspicion was entertained that some wretches fed on the bodies of their fellow creatures, whom they had secretly murdered, and even mothers are said to have tasted the flesh of their slaughtered infants! Many thousands of the inhabitants of Rome expired in their own houses, or in the streets, for want of sustenance; and as the public sepulchers without the walls were in the power of the enemy, the stench which arose from so many putrid and unburied carcasses, infected the air; and the miseries of famine were succeeded and augmented by the contagion of a pestilential disease, and the proud and insolent Romans were at length compelled to seek relief in the clemency, or at least in the

moderation of the king of the Goths.

[\* We seem in general to entertain a very inadequate idea in the present day of what was the extent and magnificence of the city of Rome, at the period of which we are now treating. The subject is somewhat foreign to the object of this work: yet I flatter myself a few hints may be pardoned by the reader, were it merely on the score of exciting attention to a subject of considerable curiosity. When the capital of the empire was besieged by the Goths, the circuit of the walls was accurately measured by Ammonius, the mathematician, who found it equal to twenty-one miles. The form of the city was almost that of a circle. It probably covered a less space of ground than the metropolis of Great Britain; but it contained about one-fifth more inhabitants; for "we may fairly estimate the number of inhabitants," says Mr. Gibbon, referring to this period, "at twelve hundred thousand." The total number of houses, in the fourteen regions of the city, amounted to forty-eight thousand, three hundred, and eighty-two -- a number inferior to those of the British capital; but that is accounted for from the loftiness of the buildings, which were carried to such an enormous elevation, that it was repeatedly enacted, by Augustus, as well as by Nero, in consequence of the frequent and fatal accidents which happened through the hastiness of their erection, and the insufficiency of their materials, that the height of private edifices, within the walls of Rome, should not exceed the measure of SEVENTY FEET from the ground! House rent was immoderately dear -- the rich acquired, at an enormous expense, the ground which they covered with palaces and gardens; but the bulk of the common people was crowded into a narrow space, and the different floors and apartments of the same house were divided among several families. There were seventeen hundred and eighty superb mansions, the residence of wealthy and honorable citizens. No doubt the language of one of their own poets (Claudius Rutilius), who lived at the time of the Gothic invasion, is to be understood as indulging in poetic license, when it describes "each palace as equal to a city, since it included within its own precincts, every thing which could be subservient either to use or luxury; markets race-courses, temples, fountains, baths, porticoes, shady groves, and artificial aviaries." Of the riches and luxury of these nobles, we may form an estimate from this circumstance; that several examples are recorded in the age of Honorius, of persons who celebrated the year of their praetorship by a festival which lasted seven days, and cost above one hundred thousand pounds sterling. Before the Dioclesian persecution, which commenced A.D. 303 the places of Christian worship in Rome were augmented to more than forty in number; and the pastors and teachers to upwards of an hundred and fifty. -- Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. 8, ch. 31, and Optatus de Schism. Donat. lib. 2, p. 40.]

The senate appointed two ambassadors to negotiate with the enemy. When introduced into his presence, they declared, perhaps in a more lofty style than became their abject condition, that the Romans were resolved to maintain their dignity either in peace or war; and that if Alaric refused them a fair and honorable



capitulation, he might sound his trumpets and prepare for battle with an innumerable people, exercised in arms and animated by despair. "The thicker the hay, the easier it is mowed," was the concise reply of the Barbarian, accompanied by a loud and insulting laugh, expressive of his contempt for the threats of an unwarlike populace, enervated by luxury before they were emaciated by famine. He then condescended to fix the ransom which he would receive as the price of his retreat from the walls of Rome. It was ALL the gold and silver in the city, whether it were the property of the state or of individuals; ALL the rich and precious moveables; and ALL the slaves that could prove their title to the name of Barbarians. "If such, O king, are your demands," said they, "what do you intend to leave us?" "Your lives," replied the haughty conqueror! They trembled and retired.

The stern features of Alaric, however, became insensibly relaxed, and he abated much of the rigor of his terms; for he at length consented to raise the siege on the immediate payment of five thousand pounds of gold -- of thirty thousand pounds of silver -- of four thousand robes of silk -- of three thousand pieces of fine scarlet cloth -- and of three thousand pounds weight of pepper. But the public treasury was exhausted; the annual rents of the nobles were intercepted by the calamities of war, the gold and gems had been exchanged, during the famine, for the vilest sustenance. Recourse was, therefore, obliged to be had to the hoards of secret wealth which had been concealed by the obstinacy of avarice, and some remains of consecrated spoils, which afforded the only means of averting the impending ruin of the city. As soon as the Romans had satisfied the rapacious demands of Alaric, they were restored, in some measure, to the enjoyment of peace and plenty. [Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. 5, ch. 23.]

Before he withdrew his army from the gates of Rome, Alaric had stipulated for the payment of an annual subsidy of corn and money, which the treacherous Romans now sought to evade, and in the following year (409) the Gothic chief, resolving to punish their perfidy, a second time laid siege to their city. On this occasion, however, instead of assaulting the capital, he directed his efforts against the port of Ostia, one of the boldest and most stupendous works of Roman magnificence. This port or harbor, which was undertaken by Julius Caesar, and finished in the reign of Claudian, where the corn of Africa was deposited in spacious granaries for the use of the capital, had, by this time, insensibly swelled to the size of an episcopal city. As soon as Alaric was in possession of that important place, he summoned the city to surrender, declaring that a refusal, or even a delay, should be instantly followed by the destruction of the magazines, on which the lives of the Roman people depended. The clamors of the people, and the terror of famine, subdued the pride of the senate -- they listened without reluctance to the proposal which Alaric made them, of placing a new emperor on the throne of the Caesars in place of the unworthy Honorius, and the suffrage of the Gothic conqueror bestowed the purple on Attalus, praefect of the city.

Attalus, however, was not long in evincing his incompetency for the duties of the high station to which he had been raised; and in the following year Alaric publicly despoiled him of the ensigns of royalty, and sent them as the pledge of peace and friendship, to Honorius at Ravenna. Some favorable occurrence, however, happening to turn up in the fortunes of this latter prince, just at that moment, the insolence of his ministers returned with it; and, instead of accepting the friendly overture of Alaric, a body of three hundred soldiers were ordered to sally out of the gates of Ravenna, who surprised and cut in pieces a considerable party of Goths, after which they re-entered the city in triumph. The crime and folly of the court of Ravenna was expiated a third time by the calamities of Rome. Alaric, who now no longer dissembled his appetite for plunder and revenge, appeared in arms under the walls of the capital, and the trembling senate, without any hopes of relief, prepared by a desperate resistance, to delay the ruin of their country. But they were unable to guard against the secret conspiracy of their slaves and domestics, who, either from birth or interest, were attached to the cause of the enemy. At the hour of midnight, the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet.\* In the year 410, eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city, which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia, who, during six days, pillaged the city of all its gold and jewels, stripped the palaces of their splendid furniture - the sideboards of their massy plate, and the wardrobes of their silk and purple, which were loaded on wagons to follow the march of the Gothic army - the most cruel slaughter was made of the Romans - the streets of the city were filled with dead bodies - the females were delivered up to the brutal lust of the soldiers - and many of the noblest edifices of the city destroyed by fire.

[\* There is a very eloquent passage referring to this particular subject, in a letter written by PELAGIUS, the author of the Pelagian heresy, to a Roman lady of the name of Demetrias, and it deserves insertion in this place, were it only to exhibit to the reader a specimen of the superior talents which were possessed by that apostate from the doctrines of grace. Pelagius, whose original name was Morgan, was a native of Wales, and by profession a monk. He was far advanced in life before he began publicly to propagate his heretical sentiments, and until that period it seems that he sustained a blameless reputation; for Augustine, who was contemporary with him, and combated all his errors, does him the justice to own that "he had the esteem of being a very pious man, and a Christian of no vulgar rank." Pelagius happened to be at Rome when that city was besieged by the Goths, and was probably a spectator of all that passed during the sacking of that metropolis. Soon after it was taken he set sail for Africa, and from thence wrote to the Lady Demetrias the letter, of which the following is an extract, referring to the Gothic invasion. "This dismal calamity is but just over, and you yourself are a witness how Rome that commanded the world was astonished at the alarm of the Gothic trumpet, when that barbarous and victorious

nation stormed her walls, and made her way through the breach. Where were then the privileges of birth, and the distinctions of quality? Were not all ranks and degrees leveled at that time, and promiscuously huddled together? Every house was then a scene of misery, and equally filled with grief and confusion. The slave and the man of quality were in the same circumstances, and every where the terror of death and slaughter was the same, unless we may say the fright made the greater impression on those who got the most by living. Now, if flesh and blood has such power over our fears, and mortal men can terrify us to this degree, what will become of us when the trumpet sounds from the sky, and the Arch-angel summons us to judgment; when we are not attacked by sword, or lance, or any thing so feeble as a human enemy: but when all the terrors of nature, the artillery of heaven, and the militia, if I may so speak, of Almighty God, are let loose upon us?" -- In the *Letters of Augustine*, No. 142.]

I have been induced to go more into detail on this subject, than I should otherwise have done, for the sake of giving the uninformed reader some general notion of the misery which resulted from the irruption of these Barbarian hordes into the Roman empire; and, because it ultimately proved the means of its subversion; but it is incompatible with my plan to pursue the matter further than just to add, that new invaders, from regions more remote and barbarous, drove out or exterminated the former colonists, and Europe was successively ravaged, till the countries which had poured forth their myriads, were drained of people, and the sword of slaughter weary of destroying. "If a man were called," says Dr. Robertson, "to fix upon the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most calamitous and afflicted, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Theodosius the Great (A.D. 395) to the establishment of the Lombards in Italy, (A.D. 571). The contemporary authors, who beheld that scene of desolation, labor, and are at a loss for expression, to describe the horror of it. The scourge of God, the destroyer of nations, are the dreadful epithets by which they distinguish the most noted of the barbarous leaders; and they compare the ruin which they had brought on the world, to the havoc occasioned by earthquakes, conflagrations, or deluges -- the most formidable and fatal calamities which the imagination of man can conceive." [*History of Charles V.* vol. 1, sect. 1.]

The overwhelming progress of the Barbarians soon diffused its powerful effects throughout every part of Europe. In the course of the fifth century, the Visigoths took possession of Spain; the Franks of Gaul; the Saxons of England; the Huns of Pannonia; the Ostrogoths of Italy, and the adjacent provinces. New governments, laws, languages; new manners, customs, dresses; new names of men and countries prevailed, and an almost total change took place in the state of Europe. It is, no doubt, much to be lamented, that this revolution was the work of nations so little enlightened by science, or polished by civilization; for the Roman laws, though imperfect, were in general the best that human wisdom had then framed, and its arts

and literature infinitely surpassed any thing found among rude nations, or which those who despised them produced for many ages. Many of the Gothic chiefs were men of great talents, and some of them not wholly ignorant of the policy and literature of the Romans; but they were afraid of the contagious influence of Roman example, and they therefore studied to avoid every thing allied to that name, whether hurtful or beneficial. They erected a cottage in the vicinity of a palace, breaking down the stately building, and burying in its ruins the finest works of human ingenuity. They ate out of vessels of wood, and made their captives be served in vessels of silver. They prohibited their children from acquiring a knowledge of literature and of the elegant arts, because they concluded from the dastardly behavior of the Romans, that learning tends to enervate the mind, and that he who has trembled under the rod of a schoolmaster, will never dare to meet a sword with an undaunted eye. Upon the same principle they rejected the Roman code of laws; it reserved nothing to the vengeance of man -- they, therefore inferred, that it would rob him of his active powers. Nor could they conceive how the person who received an injury could rest satisfied, but by pouring out his fury upon the author of the injustice. Hence arose all those judicial combats, and private wars which, for many ages, desolated Europe.

In one particular only did these barbarian tribes condescend to conform to the institutions of those different nations among whom they settled, viz. in RELIGION. The conquerors submitted to the religion of the conquered, which at this period, indeed, in its established form, approximated closely to the superstition and idolatry of the ancient heathen. But whatever shades of difference there might be found among the numerous kingdoms in which the Roman Western Empire was at this time divided, whether in the forms of their government, or their civil and political institutions; they unanimously agreed to support the hierarchy of the church of Rome, and to defend and maintain it as the established religion of their respective states. Nor is the circumstance altogether unworthy of notice, that when Alaric forced his entrance into Rome, he issued a proclamation which discovered some regard for the laws of humanity and religion. He encouraged his troops boldly to seize the rewards of valor, and to enrich themselves with the spoils of the citizens; but he exhorted them to spare the lives of the unresisting, and to respect the churches of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, as holy and inviolable sanctuaries. [This is the circumstance which gave rise to that ponderous folio volume of St. Augustine, intitled, "THE CITY OF GOD." The writer's object is to justify the ways of Providence in the destruction of the Roman greatness; and he celebrates with peculiar satisfaction, this memorable occurrence, while he insultingly challenges his adversaries to produce one similar example of a town taken by storm, in which the fabulous gods of antiquity had been able to protect either themselves or their deluded votaries -- appealing particularly to the examples of Troy, Syracuse, and Tarentum. Had the life of this great luminary been prolonged about half a century beyond this time, he might have been instructed, by facts and experience, how fallacious his vaunting was. In the year 455, Genseric, a Vandal warrior, invaded Italy, and once

more sacked the city of Rome. "The pillage lasted fourteen days and nights, and all that yet remained of public or private wealth, of sacred or profane treasure, was diligently transported to the vessels of Genseric." Among the spoils were the holy instruments of the Jewish worship,--the golden table, the golden candlesticks with seven branches, etc. which four hundred years before Titus had brought from Jerusalem, and which had been since deposited in the Temple of Peace. He also stripped the Christian churches of every article of plate and grandeur that was moveable.]

"In ages of ignorance and credulity," says Dr. Robertson, "the ministers of religion are the objects of superstitious veneration. When the Barbarians who overran the Roman empire first embraced the Christian faith, they found the clergy in possession of considerable power; and they naturally transferred to those new guides the profound submission and reverence, which they were accustomed to yield to the priests of that religion which they had forsaken. They deemed their persons to be equally sacred with their function, and would have considered it as impious to subject them to the profane jurisdiction of the laity. The clergy were not blind to these advantages which the weakness of mankind afforded them. They established courts, in which every question relating to their own character, their function, and their property, was tried. They pleaded, and obtained an almost total exemption from the authority of civil judges. Upon different pretexts, and by a multiplicity of artifices, they communicated the privilege to so many persons, and extended their jurisdiction to such a variety of cases, that the greater part of those affairs which gave rise to contest and litigation, was drawn under the cognizance of the spiritual courts." [*History of Charles V.* vol. 1, sect. 1.]

The claims to supremacy, which, during the preceding centuries, had been asserted by the bishops of Rome, were at first faintly urged, and promoted by artful and almost imperceptible means. They now, however, began to insist upon superiority as a divine right attached to their see, which, they contended, had been founded by the apostle Peter; and this arrogant claim, which had appeared conspicuously enough in the conduct of the bishops of Rome of the preceding century, was now no longer concealed, or cautiously promulgated. But, however violent their claims, or extensive their authority in affairs both ecclesiastical and civil, they still remained subject, first to the jurisdiction of the Gothic kings, and, upon the retaking of Rome, to the emperors of Constantinople. Such, however, was the extensive influence of the papal intrigues, that there were few among the princes of the Western Empire, that were not virtually brought into a state of subjection to the authority of the bishops of Rome, before the close of the fifth century.

A station so elevated, which lay open to the ambition of numbers, was eagerly contested, and often obtained by fraud, chicanery, or the practice of whatever was most opposite to the spirit of the gospel. **During the sixth century, the peace of the**

**catholic church was thrice disturbed by the contests and squabbles of the rival pontiffs. Symmachus and Laurentins**, who had been elevated to the vacant see by different parties, continued, for several years, to assert their discordant claims. After repeated struggles, the former, at length, prevailed. In this contest he was materially assisted by the pen of Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, who employed the most abject flattery in behalf of Symmachus, whom he blasphemously styles "Judge in the place of God, and Vicegerent of the Most High." The church was again divided by the reciprocal claims of **Boniface and Dioscorus**; the premature death of the latter, however, terminated this clerical war. But the century did not close without a scene alike disgraceful. A prelate of the name of **Vigilius**, intrigued at court to procure the deposition of the reigning bishop **Silverus**. The latter was, in consequence, deprived of his dignities and banished. He appealed to the emperor Justinian, who interfered in his behalf, and encouraged him to return to Rome, with the delusive expectation of regaining his rights; but the artifices of Vigilius prevailed -- his antagonist was resigned to his power, and immediately confined by him in the islands of Pontus and Pandatara, where, in penury and affliction, he terminated his wretched existence.

The advantages attendant upon the acquisition of such enormous power, induced the bishops of Constantinople, who were scarcely less arrogant and ambitious than their brethren at Rome, to refuse acknowledging their preeminence, and prompted them to lay claim to similar authority. The arrogant pretensions of these rival sees involved them in continual dissensions; which were prodigiously increased by the conduct of **John, the faster, a prelate distinguished for his authority; who, in a council held at Constantinople in the year 588, assumed THE TITLE OF UNIVERSAL BISHOP**, which was confirmed to him by the council. This appellation, which implied a pre-eminence difficult to be endured by those who were as ambitious as himself, was opposed vehemently by Pelagius II, then bishop of Rome, who called it an execrable, profane, and diabolical procedure; but his invectives were disregarded, and he died soon after. In the year 560, he was succeeded by **GREGORY THE GREAT**, as he is usually termed; a voluminous writer, and, though superstitious in the extreme, not altogether destitute of talents. His works are still extant, and in high reputation with the Catholics. The following letter written by him to the emperor Maurice, at Constantinople, in consequence of John, the patriarch of that city, assuming the name of "Universal Bishop," casts so much light upon the history of that age, that it cannot, without injury to the subject, be omitted.

"Our most religious lord, whom God hath placed over us, among other weighty cares belonging to the empire, labors, according to the just rule of the sacred writings, to preserve peace and charity among the clergy. He truly and piously considers, that no man can well govern temporal matters, unless he manages with propriety things divine also; and that the peace and tranquillity of the commonwealth depend upon the quiet of the Universal church. For, most gracious sovereign, what human power or strength would presume to lift up

irreligious hands against your most christian majesty, if the clergy, being at unity amongst themselves, would seriously pray to our Savior Christ to preserve you who have merited so highly from us? Or what nation is there so barbarous as to exercise such cruelty against the faithful, unless the lives of us who are called Priests, but in truth are not such, were most wicked and depraved? But whilst we leave those things which more immediately concern us, and embrace those things for which we are wholly unfit, we excite the Barbarians against us, and our offenses sharpen the swords of our enemies, by which means the commonwealth is weakened. For what can we say for ourselves, if the people of God, over whom, however unworthily we are placed, be oppressed through the multitude of our offenses; if our example destroys that which our preaching should build; and our actions, as it were, give the lie to our doctrine? Our bones are worn with fasting, but our minds are puffed up! Our bodies are covered with mean attire, but in our hearts we are quite elated! We lie groveling in the ashes, yet we aim at things exceedingly high! We are teachers of humility, but patterns of pride, hiding the teeth of wolves under a sheep's countenance! The end of all is, to make a fair appearance before men, but God knoweth the truth! Therefore our most pious sovereign hath been prudently careful to place the church at unity, that he might the better compose the tumults of war and join their hearts together. This verily is my wish also, and for my own part I yield due obedience to your sovereign commands. However, since it is not my cause, but God's, it is not myself only but the whole church that is troubled, because religious laws, venerable synods, and the very precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, are disobeyed by the invention of a proud and pompous speech. My desire is, that our most religious sovereign would lance this sore, and that he would bind with the cords of his imperial authority the party affected, in case he makes any resistance. By restraining him the commonwealth will be eased; and by the paring away of such excrescences the empire is enlarged. Every man that has read the gospel knows that, even by the very words of our Lord, the care of the whole church is committed to St. Peter, the apostle -- the prince of all the apostles. For to him it is said, 'Peter, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep.' 'Behold, Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith should not fail.' And, 'thou being at the last converted, confirm thy brethren.' To him it is said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou bindest on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.' Behold! he hath the keys of the kingdom, and the power of binding and loosing is committed to him. The care and the principality of the whole Church is committed to him; and yet he is not called 'Universal Apostle' -- though this holy man, John, my fellow priest, labors to be called 'Universal Bishop!' I am compelled to cry out, 'O the corruption of times and manners?' Behold the Barbarians are become lords of all Europe: cities are destroyed [Gregory here seems to refer to the irruption of the Goths into the Roman empire, and its total subversion by those Barbarians -- Author] -- castles are beaten down -- provinces depopulated -- there is no husbandman to till the ground -- Idolaters rage and domineer over Christians; and yet priests, who ought to lie weeping

upon the pavement, in sackcloth and ashes, covet names of vanity, and glory in new and profane titles. Do I, most religious sovereign, in this plead my own cause? Do I vindicate a wrong done to myself, and not maintain the cause of Almighty God, and of the church universal? Who is he that presumes to usurp this new name against both the law of the gospel and of the canons? I would to God there might be one called universal without doing injustice to others. We know, that many priests of the church of Constantinople have been not only heretics, but even the chief leaders of them. Out of that school proceeded Nestorius, who, thinking it impossible that God should be made man, believed that Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, was two persons, and went as far in infidelity as the Jews themselves. Thence came Macedonius, who denied the Holy Ghost, consubstantial to the Father and the Son, to be God. If, then, every one in that church assumes the name by which he makes himself the head of all good men, the catholic church, which God forbid should ever be the case, must needs be overthrown when he falls who is called UNIVERSAL. But, far from Christians be this blasphemous name, by which all honor is taken from all other priests, while it is foolishly arrogated by one. It was offered to the bishop of Rome by the reverend council of Chalcedon, in honor of St. Peter, prince of the apostles; but none of them either assumed or consented to use it, lest, while this privilege should be given to one, all others should be deprived of that honor which is due unto them. Why should WE refuse this title when it was offered, and another assume it without any offer at all? This man (John) contemning obedience to the Canons, should be humbled by the commands of our most pious sovereign. He should be chastised who does an injury to the holy catholic church! whose heart is puffed up, who seeks to please himself by a name of singularity, by which he would elevate himself above the emperor! We are all scandalized at this. Let the author of this scandal reform himself, and all differences in the church will cease. I am the servant of all priests, so long as they live like themselves -- but if any shall vainly set up his bristles, contrary to God Almighty, and to the Canons of the Fathers, I hope in God that he will never succeed in bringing my neck under his yoke -- not even by force of arms. The things that have happened in this city, in consequence of this new title, I have particularly declared to Sabinianus, the deacon, my agent. Let therefore my religious sovereigns think of me their servant, whom they have always cherished and upheld more than others, as one who desired to yield them obedience, and yet am afraid to be found guilty of negligence in my duty at the last awful day of judgment. Let our most pious Sovereign either vouchsafe to determine the affair, according to the petition of the aforesaid Sabinianus, the deacon, or cause the man, so often mentioned to renounce his claim. In case he submits to your most just sentence, or your favorable admonitions, we will give thanks to Almighty God, and rejoice for the peace of the church, procured by your clemency. But if he persist in this contention, we shall hold the saying to be most true, 'Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased.' And again it is written, 'Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.' In obedience to my sovereign, I have written to my brother priest both gently and humbly, urging him to desist from this vain glory. If he gives ear unto me, he hath a brother devoted unto him, but if he continue in his pride, I foresee what



will befall him -- he will make himself His enemy of whom it is written, 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.' [Epist. Greg. Mag. Ep. 32.]

**It is difficult to determine whether the finesse of the politician, or the envy of the priest, be most prevalent in this artful letter.** It does not, however, appear to have produced any good effect. John, indeed, was soon afterwards removed by death from his archiepiscopal dignity; but Cynacus, who succeeded him as bishop of Constantinople, adopted the same pompous title as his predecessor. Having had occasion to dispatch some agents to Rome, in the letter which he wrote to the Roman Pontiff Gregory, he so much displeased him by assuming the appellation of "Universal Bishop," that the latter withheld from the agents somewhat of the courtesy to which they considered themselves entitled, and, of course, complaint was made to the emperor Maurice of the neglect which had been shown them. This circumstance extorted a letter from the emperor at Constantinople to the Bishop of Rome, in which he advises him to treat them, in future, in a more friendly manner, and not to insist so far on punctilios of style, as to create a scandal about a title, and fall out about a few syllables. To this Gregory replies, "that the innovation in the style did not consist much in the quantity and alphabet; but the bulk of the iniquity was weighty enough to sink and destroy all. And, therefore, I am bold to say," says he, "that whoever adopts, or affects the title of 'UNIVERSAL BISHOP,' has the pride and character of Antichrist, and is in some manner his fore-runner in this haughty quality of elevating himself above the rest of his order. And, indeed, both the one and the other seem to split upon the same rock; for, as pride makes Antichrist strain his pretensions up to Godhead, so whoever is ambitious to be called the only or Universal Prelate, arrogates to himself a distinguished superiority, and rises, as it were, upon the ruins of the rest." [Epist. Greg. 1. 6. Ep. 30.]

But though Gregory artfully disclaimed for himself, and refused to his aspiring brother the title of Universal Bishop, he exercised an authority, says bishop Hurd [*Introductory Sermons to the Study of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, Sermon 7], that can only belong to that exalted character. Gregory died in the year 604, and was succeeded by **POPE BONIFACE III**, who had no scruples about adopting this proud title. He readily accepted, or rather importunately begged it from the emperor Phocas, with the privilege also of transmitting it to all his successors. The profligate emperor, to gratify the inordinate ambition of this court sycophant, deprived the bishop of Constantinople of the title which he had hitherto borne, and conferred it upon Boniface, at the same time declaring the church of Rome to be the head of all other churches.

## APPENDIX TO SECTION 4

A Respectable writer in one of our Monthly Journals, and, as I am informed, a Classical Tutor in one of our Dissenting Academies, appears to think that, in

animadverting on the characters of some of the luminaries of the Catholic church, I have not made sufficient allowance for the darkness of the period in which they lived. His words are, "We apprehend, that Mr. Jones has not quite enough attended to the infelicity of times, the want of a free communication of knowledge, the power of educational prejudices, and the effect of usages venerated as apostolic. Under circumstances so disadvantageous, it is not, we hope, unreasonable to believe that many who in their hearts loved the Redeemer, and in their lives served him, according to the light they had, were found dragged in the train of those who wandered after the beast. Painful and humbling fact! That such men as Athanasius and Gregory, Anselm and Bernard, should have defiled their garments with the blood of persecution, and bowed their knees before relics and wafers."

The Gregory referred to in this quotation, I understand to be "Gregory the Great," as he is commonly termed; the first of the Roman pontiffs of that name; the man to whose exploits the preceding pages refer. He is the only prelate of the Roman church, of that appellation, who, so far as I know, has ever been considered by Protestants to have had any pretensions to the character of a Christian; and his history, certainly, well assorts with that of Athanasius and Bernard; which confirms me in the supposition that he is the person referred to. Now, granting the correctness of this conjecture, I beg leave, with all becoming deference to my critical supervisor, to offer a few remarks by way of apology.

I feel not the smallest disposition to dispute the truth of this very respectable writer's remark, that I have "not sufficiently studied that humiliating part of the philosophy of man, his strange inconsistencies." And I am ready to admit that I may not have made the proper allowances for the infelicity of times, etc. Yea, further; that in the darkest periods of the church, there were individuals dragged in the train of those who wandered after the beast, who, nevertheless, in their hearts loved the Redeemer, and in their lives served him, according to the light they had, is a sentiment to which I cheerfully subscribe, but am not aware that I have said any thing that militates against it in this work. The only disputable point between us is, how far the character of Gregory entitles him to this favorable judgment.

The reader has already seen the fulsome and adulatory strains in which this pontiff addressed the emperor Maurice, in consequence of the patriarch of Constantinople arrogating to himself the title of "Universal Bishop." He styles the emperor his "most religious Lord" -- his "most gracious Sovereign" -- his "most Christian Majesty" -- his "most religious Sovereign," against whom it would be the height of impiety to lift a finger, etc. Let us now mark what followed. Gregory with all his flattery was unable to prevail on the emperor Maurice to second his views; and the former, as might be expected, became not a little dissatisfied with his "most religious Lord." Soon after this the emperor was dethroned by one of his centurions, who first murdered him, and then usurped his crown. This wretch, whose name was **Phocas**, was one of the

vilest of the human race -- a monster, stained with those vices that serve most to blacken human nature. Other tyrants, have been cruel from policy; the cruelties of Phocas are not to be accounted for, but on the hypothesis of the most diabolical and disinterested malice. He caused five of the children of the emperor Maurice to be massacred before the eyes of their unhappy father, whom he reserved to the last, that he might be a spectator of the destruction of his children before his own death. There still remained, however, a brother and son of the emperor's, both of whom he caused to be put to death, together with all the patricians who adhered to the interest of the unhappy monarch. The empress Constantine and her three daughters had taken refuge in one of the churches of the city, under sanction of the patriarch of Constantinople, who defended them for a time with great spirit and resolution, not permitting them to be dragged by force from their asylum. The tyrant, one of the most vindictive and inexorable of mankind, not wishing to alarm the church at the outset of his reign, now had recourse to dissimulation; and by means of the most solemn oaths and promises of safety, at length prevailed on the females to quit their asylum. The consequence was, that they instantly became the helpless victims of his fury, and suffered on the same spot on which the late emperor and five of his sons had been recently murdered. So much for the character of Phocas: now what should we expect would be the reception which the account of all this series of horrid cruelty would meet with at Rome, from a man so renowned for piety, equity, and mildness of disposition as Pope Gregory was? If we look into his letters of congratulation, we find them stuffed with the vilest and most venal flattery; insomuch, that were we to learn the character of Phocas only from this pontiff's letters, we should certainly conclude him to have been rather an angel than a man. He recites the murder of "his most religious Lord" with as much coolness as though religion and morality could be nowise affected by such enormities. Mark how the sanctity of a Gregory congratulates the blood-thirsty rebellious regicide and usurper. Thus he begins -- "Glory to God in the highest; who, according as it is written, changes times and transfers kingdoms. And because he would have that made known to all men, which he hath vouchsafed to speak by his own prophets, saying, that the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men, and to whom he will he gives it." He then goes on to observe, that God in his incomprehensible providence, sometimes sends kings to afflict his people and punish them for their sins. This, says he, we have known of late to our woeful experience.

Sometimes, on the other hand, God, in his mercy, raises good men to the throne, for the relief and exultation of his servants. Then applying this remark to existing circumstances, he adds: "In the abundance of our exultation, on which account, we think ourselves the more speedily confirmed, rejoicing to find the gentleness of your piety equal to your imperial dignity." Then breaking out into a rapture, no longer to be restrained, he exclaims, "Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad; and, for your illustrious deeds, let the people of every realm, hitherto so vehemently afflicted, now be filled with gladness. May the necks of your enemies be subjected to the yoke of your supreme rule; and the hearts of your subjects, hitherto broken and

depressed, be relieved by your clemency." Proceeding to paint their former miseries, he concludes, with wishing that the commonwealth may long enjoy its present happiness. Thus, in language evidently borrowed from the inspired writers, and in which they anticipate the joy and gladness that should pervade universal nature at the birth of the Messiah, does this pope celebrate the march of the tyrant and usurper through seas of blood to the imperial throne. "As a subject and a Christian," says Gibbon, "it was the duty of Gregory to acquiesce in the established government; but the joyful applause with which he salutes the fortune of the assassin, has sullied, with indelible disgrace, the character of the saint. The successor of the apostles might have inculcated with decent firmness the guilt of blood, and the necessity of repentance: he is content to celebrate the deliverance of the people, and the fall of the oppressor; to rejoice that the piety and benignity of Phocas have been raised by Providence to the imperial throne; to pray that his hands may be strengthened against all his enemies; and to express a wish, that, after a long triumphant reign, he may be transferred from a temporal to an everlasting kingdom." -- "I have traced," says the same writer, "the steps of a revolution, so pleasing in Gregory's opinion both to heaven and earth, and Phocas does not appear less hateful in the exercise than in the acquisition of power. The pencil of an impartial historian has delineated the portrait of a monster; his diminutive and deformed person, etc. Ignorant of letters, of laws, and even of arms, he indulged, even in the supreme rank, a more ample privilege of lust and drunkenness; and his brutal pleasures were either injurious to his subjects, or disgraceful to himself. Without assuming the office of a prince, he renounced the profession of a soldier; and the reign of Phocas afflicted Europe with ignominious peace, and Asia with desolating war. His savage temper was inflamed by passion, hardened by fear, and exasperated by resistance or reproach. The flight of Theodosius, the only surviving son of the emperor Maurice, to the Persian court, had been intercepted by a rapid pursuit, or a deceitful message: he was beheaded at Nice; and the last hours of the young prince were soothed by the comforts of religion and the consciousness of innocence." [*Decline and Fall*, ch. 46.]

Now, if there be any thing of either truth or justice in these remarks on the character of Phocas, what are we to think of that of Gregory, who could stoop to the vile practice of panegyrising such a monster; and, with all due deference, I humbly submit it to the consideration of my discreet monitor, "What valuable end can possibly be answered, by shutting our eyes against such flagrant enormities, and eulogizing the men who have perpetuated them?" "To me," says a late candid writer, "Gregory appears to have been a man, whose understanding, though rather above the middle rate, was much warped by the errors and prejudices of the times in which he lived. His piety was deeply tinctured with superstition, and his morals with monkery. His zeal was not pure, in regard to either its nature or its object. In the former respect, it was often intolerant; and in regard to the latter, he evinced an attachment more to the form than to the power of religion, to the name than to the thing. His zeal was exactly that of the Pharisees, who compassed sea and land to make a proselyte,

which, when they had accomplished, they rendered him two-fold more a child of hell than before. He was ever holding forth the prerogatives of St. Peter, nor did he make any ceremony of signifying, that this prime minister of Jesus Christ, like all other prime ministers, would be most liberal of his favors to those who were most assiduous in making court to him, especially to them who were most liberal to his foundation at Rome, and that most advanced its dignity and power. So much for St. Gregory, and for the nature and extent of Roman Papal virtue." [Campbell's *Lectures on Eccles. History*, vol. 2, p. 79.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DOMINION OF THE POPES TO THE RISE OF THE WALDENSES**

### **RETROSPECT OF THE DONATISTS -- INTRODUCTION OF THE WORSHIP OF IMAGES -- RISE OF THE MAHOMETAN IMPOSTURE -- IGNORANCE OF THE CATHOLIC CLERGY -- ORIGIN OF THE SECT OF THE PAULICIANS**

#### **A.D. 606-800**

Having hitherto taken no notice in this history of the sect of **THE DONATISTS**, it seems almost necessary, before we proceed farther with the affairs of the Christian church, to introduce a concise account of them, which I shall here do from the writings of Dr. Lardner, who has collected into a few pages almost every thing that is now interesting, relative to this denomination of Christians.

The Donatists appear to have resembled the followers of Novatian more than any other class of professors in that period of the church, of whom we have any authentic records; but their origin was at least half a century later, and the churches in this connection appear to have been almost entirely confined to Africa. They agreed with the Novatians in censuring the lax state of discipline in the Catholic church, and though they did not, like the former, refuse to readmit penitents into their communion, nor like them condemn all second marriages, they denied the validity of baptism as administered by the church of Rome, and rebaptized all who left its

communion to unite with them. In doctrinal sentiments they were agreed with both the Catholics and the Novatians; while the regard they paid to the purity of their communion, occasioned their being stigmatized with the title of Puritans, and uniformly treated as schismatics by Optatus and Augustine, the two principal writers against them, in the Catholic church. The Donatists are said to have derived their distinguishing appellation from Donatus, a native of Numidia, in Africa, who was elected bishop of Carthage about the year 306. He was a man of learning and eloquence, very exemplary in his morals, and, as would appear from several circumstances, studiously set himself to oppose the growing corruptions of the Catholic church. The Donatists were consequently a separate body of Christians for nearly three centuries, and in almost every city in Africa, there was one bishop of this sect and another of the Catholics. The Donatists were very numerous, for we learn that in the year 411, there was a famous conference held at Carthage, between the Catholics and the Donatists, at which were present 286 Catholic bishops, and of the Donatists 279, which, when we consider the superior strictness of their discipline, must give us a favorable opinion of their numbers, and especially as they were frequently the subjects of severe and sanguinary persecutions from the dominant party. The emperor Constans, who reigned over Africa, actuated by the zeal of his family for the peace of the church, sent two persons of rank, Paul and Macarius, in the year 348, to endeavor to conciliate the Donatists, and if possible to restore them to the communion of the Catholic church. But the Donatists were not to be reconciled to such an impure communion! to all their overtures for peace, they replied, *Quid est imperatori cum ecclesia?* that is, "What has the Emperor to do with the church?" an excellent saying, certainly, and happy had it been for both the church and the world, could all Christians have adopted and acted upon it. Optatus relates another maxim of theirs, which is worthy of being recorded. It was usual with them to say, "*Quid Christianis cum regibus, aut quid episcopis cum palatio?*" What have Christians to do with kings, or what have bishops to do at court? These hints are strikingly illustrative of the principles and conduct of the Donatists, who had among them men of great learning and talents, and who distinguished themselves greatly by their writings. [See Lardner's *Works*, 4to. ed. Vol. 2, p. 295-301, and Long's *History of the Donatists*.] But I pass on from this brief mention of them to notice the state of things during this period in the Catholic church.

The introduction of images into places of Christian worship, and the idolatrous practices to which, in process of time, it gave rise, is an evil that dates its origin soon after the times of Constantine the Great; but, like many other superstitious practices, it made its way by slow and imperceptible degrees. The earlier Christians reprobated every species of image worship in the strongest language; and some of them employed the force of ridicule to great advantage, in order to expose its absurdity. When the empress Constantia desired Eusebius to send her the image of Jesus Christ, he expostulated with her on the impropriety and absurdity of her requisition in the following striking words -- "What kind of image of Christ does your imperial

Majesty wish to have conveyed to you? Is it the image of his real and immutable nature; or is it that which he assumed for our sakes, when he was veiled in the form of a servant? With respect to the former, I presume you are not to learn, that "no man hath known the Son but the Father, neither hath any man known the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." But you ask for the image of Christ when he appeared in human form, clothed in a body similar to our own. Let me inform you, that the body is now blended with the glory of the Deity, and all that was mortal in it is absorbed in life." [White's Bampton Lectures, Notes, p. 8.]

**Paulinus**, who died bishop of Nola, in the year 431, caused the walls of a place of worship to be painted with stories taken out of the Old Testament, that the people might thence receive instruction; the consequence of which was, that the written word was neglected for these miserable substitutes. But about the commencement of the seventh century, during the pontificate of the first Gregory, a circumstance turned up which tends to throw additional light upon this subject. **Serenus**, bishop of Marseilles, in France, observing some of his congregation paying worship to the images that had been placed in the churches of that city, in his zeal, commanded them to be broken and destroyed, which gave so much disgust, that many withdrew from his communion, and complaints against him were made to the bishop of Rome. Gregory wrote to him in consequence of these complaints; and the following is an extract of his letter. "I am lately informed," says he, "that upon your taking notice that some people worshipped images, you ordered the church pictures to be broken and thrown away. Now, though I commend you for your zeal, in preventing the adoration of any thing made with hands, yet, in my opinion, those pictures should not have been broken in pieces. For the design of pictures in churches is to instruct the illiterate, that people may read that in the paint, which they have not education enough to do in the book. In my judgment, therefore, brother, you are obliged to find out a temper to let the pictures stand in the church, and likewise to forbid the congregation the worship of them. That by this provision, those who are not bred to letters, may be acquainted with the scripture history; and the people, on the other hand, preserved from the criminal excess of worshipping images." [Ep. Greg. I. 1. 7. Epist. 109.] Hence, it appears, that the worship of images was not a very general thing in Gregory's time, and that he disapproved of the practice.

But this imprudent concession, sanctioned by the authority and influence of Gregory, was productive of the worst consequences that can be imagined, and tended to accelerate the growing superstition with amazing velocity throughout the countries subject to his pontificate. For as the knowledge of God's true character is only to be fully learned from the revelation which is made of it by means of the gospel of Christ, in proportion as the hearts of men become fortified against that which alone dispels the clouds of ignorance and error from the human mind, their propensity to every kind of superstition and idolatry naturally succeeds. This evil, therefore, made a most rapid progress, during the seventh century, and arrived at its zenith in the next. It



did not, however, succeed without a struggle; and as the conflict ultimately issued in bringing about two important events, viz. the schism between the Greek and Roman churches, and the establishment of the pope as a temporal potentate, I shall endeavor, as concisely as possible, to sketch the leading particulars of this article of ecclesiastical history.

About the beginning of the eighth century, **LEO, the Greek emperor**, who reigned at Constantinople, began openly to oppose the worship of images. One Besor, a Syrian, who appears to have been an officer of his court, and in great favor with the emperor, is said to have convinced him by his arguments that the adoration of images was idolatrous, and in this he was ably seconded by Constantine, bishop of Nacolia, in Phrygia. Leo, anxious to propagate truth and preserve his subjects from idolatry, assembled the people, and with all the frankness and sincerity which mark his character, publicly avowed his conviction of the idolatrous nature of the prevailing practice, and protested against the erection of images. Hitherto no councils had sanctioned the evil, and precedents of antiquity were against it. But the Scriptures, which ought to have had infinitely more weight upon the minds of men than either councils or precedents, had expressly and pointedly condemned it; yet, such deep root had the error at this time taken, so pleasing was it with men to commute for the indulgence of their crimes by a routine of idolatrous ceremonies; and, above all, so little ear had they to bestow on what the word of God taught, that the subjects of Leo murmured against him as a tyrant and a persecutor. And in this they were encouraged by Germanus, the bishop of Constantinople, who, with equal zeal and ignorance, asserted that images had always been used in the church, and declared his determination to oppose the emperor; which, the more effectually to do, he wrote to **Gregory the second**, then bishop of Rome, respecting the subject, who, by similar reasonings, warmly supported the same cause.

Two original epistles from Gregory the second to the emperor Leo, are still extant, and they merit attention on account of the portrait they exhibit of the founder of the papal monarchy. "During ten pure and fortunate years," says Gregory to the emperor, "we have tasted the annual comfort of your royal letters, subscribed in purple ink, with your own hand, the sacred pledges of your attachment to the orthodox creed of our fathers. How deplorable is the change! How tremendous the scandal! You now accuse the Catholics of idolatry; and by the accusation, you betray your own impiety and ignorance. To this ignorance we are compelled to adapt the grossness of our style and arguments; the first elements of holy letters are sufficient for your confusion, and were you to enter a grammar-school, and avow yourself the enemy of our worship, the simple and pious children would be provoked to cast their horn-books at your head." After this decent salutation, the pope explains to him the distinction between the idols of antiquity and the Christian images. The former were the fanciful representations of phantoms or demons, at a time when the true God had not manifested his person in any visible likeness - the latter are the genuine forms of

Christ, his mother, and his saints. To the impudent and inhuman Leo, more guilty than a heretic, he recommends peace, silence, and implicit obedience to his spiritual guides of Constantinople and Rome. "You assault us, O tyrant," thus he proceeds, "with a carnal and military hand; unarmed and naked we can only implore the Christ, the prince of the heavenly host, that he will send unto you a devil, for the destruction of your body, and the salvation of your soul. You declare, with foolish arrogance, 'I will dispatch my orders to Rome; I will break in pieces the images of St. Peter; and Gregory, like his predecessor Martin, shall be transported in chains and in exile to the foot of the imperial throne.' Would to God, that I might be permitted to tread in the footsteps of the holy Martin; but may the fate of Constans serve as a warning to the persecutors of the church. After his just condemnation by the bishops of Sicily, the tyrant was cut off, in the fullness of his sins, by a domestic servant; the saint is still adored by the nations of Scythia, among whom he ended his banishment and his life. But it is our duty to live for the edification and support of the faithful people, nor are we reduced to risk our safety on the event of a combat. Incapable as you are of defending your Roman subjects, the maritime situation of the city may, perhaps, expose it to your depredation; but we can remove to the distance of four and twenty stadia, to the first fortress of the Lombards, and then - you may pursue the winds. Are you ignorant that the popes are the bond of union between the East and the West? The eyes of the nations are fixed on our humility; and they revere as a God upon earth, the apostle Saint Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy. The remote and interior kingdoms of the West present their homage to Christ and his vicegerent, and we now prepare to visit one of the most powerful monarchs, who desires to receive from our hands the sacrament of baptism. The Barbarians have submitted to the yoke of the gospel, while you alone are deaf to the voice of the shepherd. These pious Barbarians are kindled into rage; they thirst to avenge the persecution of the East. Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise; reflect, tremble, and repent. If you persist, we are innocent of the blood that will be spilt in the contest; may it fall on your own head!" [*Acts of the Nicene Council*, tom. 8.]

**The character of Leo has been so blackened by the writers of the Catholic party, that it is difficult to form a just estimate of it; but when we consider that he not only condemned the worshipping of images, but also rejected relics, and protested against the intercession of saints, we cannot doubt of his possessing considerable strength of mind, while it may help us to account for much of the obloquy that was cast upon him.**

In the year 730 he issued an edict against images, and having in vain labored to bring over Germanus, the bishop of Constantinople, to his views, he deposed him from his see, and put **Anastasius** in his place, who took part with the emperor. There was, in the palace of Constantinople, a porch which contained an image of the Savior on the cross. Leo, perceiving that it was made an instrument of idolatry, sent an officer to remove it. Some females, who were then present, entreated that it might

remain, but without effect. The officer mounted a ladder, and with an axe struck three blows on the face of the figure, when the women threw him down, by pulling away the ladder, and murdered him on the spot. The image, however, was removed, and burnt, and a plain cross set up in its room. The women then proceeded to insult Anastasius for encouraging the profanation of holy things. An insurrection ensued -- and in order to quell it, the emperor was obliged to put several persons to death.

The news of this flew rapidly to Rome, where the same rage for idolatry prevailed, and such was the indignation excited by it, that the emperor's statues were immediately pulled down, and trodden under foot. All Italy was thrown into confusion; attempts were made to elect another emperor, in the room of Leo, and the pope encouraged these attempts. The Greek writers affirm that he prohibited the Italians from paying tribute any longer to Leo; but, in the midst of these broils, while defending idolatry and exciting rebellion with all his might, he was stopped short in his wicked career. "**He was extremely insolent,**" says an impartial writer, "though he died with the character of a saint." [Walch's *Compend. Hist. of the Popes*, p. 101.]

He was succeeded in his office by **Gregory the III**, A.D. 731, who entered with great spirit and energy into the measures of his predecessor. The reader cannot but be amused with the following letter which he addressed to the emperor, immediately on his elevation.

"Because you are unlearned and ignorant, we are obliged to write to you rude discourses, but full of sense and the word of God. We conjure you to quit your pride, and to hear us with humility. You say that we adore stones, walls, and boards. It is not so, my lord; but these symbols make us recollect the persons whose names they bear, and exalt our groveling minds. We do not look upon them as gods; but, if it be the image of Jesus, we say, 'Lord help us.' If it be the image of his mother, we say, 'Pray to your Son to save us.' If it be of a martyr, we say, 'St. Stephen pray for us.' We might, as having the power of St. Peter, pronounce punishments against you; but as you have pronounced the curse upon yourself, let it stick to you. You write to us to assemble a general council, of which there is no need. Do you cease to persecute images, and all will be quiet; we fear not your threats."

Few readers will think the style of this letter much calculated to conciliate the emperor; and though it certainly does not equal the arrogance and blasphemy which are to be found among the pretensions of this wretched race of mortals in the subsequent period of their history, it may strike some as exhibiting a tolerable advance towards it. It seems to have shut the door against all further intercourse between the parties; for in 732, Gregory, in a council, excommunicated all who should remove or speak contemptuously of images; and Italy, being now in a state of rebellion, Leo fitted out a fleet with the view of quashing the refractory conduct of his

subjects, but it was wrecked in the Adriatic, and the object of the expedition frustrated.

**The Roman pontiff now acted in all respects like a temporal prince.** He intrigued with the court of France, offering to withdraw his obedience from the emperor, and give the consulship of Rome to Charles Martel, the prime minister of that court (or mayor of the palace, as he is generally called) if he would take him under his protection. But the war in which France had lately been engaged with the Saracens rendered it inconvenient at the moment to comply with the request; and in the year 741, the emperor, the pope, and the French minister were all removed from the stage of life, leaving to their successors the management of their respective views and contentions.

Leo left behind him a son, Constantine Copronymus, who inherited all his father's zeal against images. **Pope Gregory the III was succeeded by Zachary**, an aspiring politician, who, by fomenting discord among the Lombards, contrived to wrest from their king Luitbrand an addition to the patrimony of the church. And **Charles Martel was succeeded by his son Pepin**, who sent a case of conscience to be resolved by the pope, viz. whether it would be just in him to depose his own sovereign, Childeric, and to reign in his stead. The pope answered in the affirmative, in consequence of which, Pepin threw his master into a monastery, and assumed the title of king. **Zachary, the pope, died soon after, namely, in the year 752, and was succeeded by Stephen the III**, who, in his zeal for images was not inferior to any of his predecessors.

Voltaire has remarked, that there prevailed at that time a strange mixture of policy and simplicity, of awkwardness and cunning, which strongly characterized the general decay of the age. Stephen, the new pope, who had quarreled with the king of the Lombards, forged a letter, purporting to be the production of the apostle Peter, addressed to Pepin and his sons, which is too remarkable to be here omitted. "Peter, called an apostle by Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, etc. As through me the whole Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman church, the mother of all other churches, is founded on a rock; and to the end, that Stephen, bishop of this beloved church of Rome, and that virtue and power may be granted by our Lord to rescue the church of God out of the hands of its persecutors: to your most excellent princes, Pepin, Charles, and Carloman, and to all the holy Bishops and Abbots, Priests and Monks, as also to Dukes, Counts, and people, I, Peter, the Apostle, etc. I conjure you, and the Virgin Mary, who will be obliged to you, gives you notice, and commands you, as do also the thrones, dominations, etc. If you will not fight for me, I declare to you, by the Holy Trinity, and by my apostleship, that you shall have no share in heaven."

This letter had its desired effect: Pepin passed the Alps with an army to assist the pope against the Lombards. Intimidated by the presence of the king of the Franks,

Astolphus, the Lombard king, immediately relinquished the whole Exarchate of Ravennata to the pope, including that and twenty-one other cities, who, by this means, became proprietor of the Exarchate and its dependencies; and, by adding rapacity to his rebellion, was established as a temporal monarch! [The Exarch was the chief imperial officer appointed by the emperor of Constantinople for near two centuries past, to superintend as a vicar or praefect, the affairs of Italy. Ravenna was his residence and the seat of government; and Lori, the territory attached to him, was called the Exarchate of Ravenna.] **Thus was the scepter added to the keys; the sovereignty to the priesthood; and thus were the popes enriched with the spoils of the Lombard kings and of the Roman emperors!** He afterwards took a journey into France, where he anointed with oil the king of the Franks; and, by the authority of St. Peter, forbade the French lords, on pain of excommunication, to choose a king of another race. Thus these two ambitious men support one another in their schemes of rapacity and injustice. **The criminality of the pope was, indeed, greatly aggravated by the pretense of religion.** "It is you," says he, addressing Pepin, "whom God hath chosen from all eternity. For whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified."

Yet the question concerning images was far from being put to rest either at Rome or Constantinople, but continued to agitate the Catholic church for a length of time, and gave occasion to the assembling of council after council, one council annulling what the former had decreed. During the reign of the emperor Constantine Copronymus, a synod was held at Constantinople, to determine the controversy. [It was at this time the prevailing fashion in the Catholic church to dignify the Virgin Mary with the title of "Mother of God." The emperor one day said to the patriarch of Constantinople, "What harm would there be in terming the Virgin Mary Mother of Christ?" "God preserve you," answered the patriarch, "from entertaining such a thought. Do you not see how Nestorius is anathematized by the whole church for using similar language?" -- "I only asked for my own information," said the emperor; "let it go no further."] The fathers being met, to the number of three hundred and thirty, after considering the doctrine of scripture, and the opinions of the fathers, decreed, "That every image, of whatsoever materials made and formed by the artist, should be cast out of the Christian church as a strange and abominable thing," adding an "anathema upon all who should make images or pictures, or representations of God, or of Christ, or of the Virgin Mary, or of any of the saints," condemning it as "a vain and diabolical invention" -- deposing all bishops, and subjecting the monks and laity, who should set up any of them in public or private, to all the penalties of the imperial constitution. [Platoon's *Lives of the Popes* - Life of Paul I.] **PAUL I**, who was at that time pope of Rome, sent his legate to Constantinople, to admonish the emperor to restore the sacred images and statues to the churches, threatening him with excommunication in case of refusal. But Copronymus treated his message with the contempt it deserved.

On the decease of Paul I, A.D. 768, the papal chair was filled for one year by a person of the name of Constantine, who condemned the worship of images, and was therefore tumultuously deposed; and **STEPHEN THE IV** substituted in his room, who was a furious defender of them. He immediately assembled a council in the Lateran church, where the renowned fathers abrogated all Constantine's decrees, deposed all the bishops that had been ordained by him, annulled all his baptisms and chrisms, and, as some historians relate, after having beat and used him with great indignity, made a fire in the church and burnt him to death. After this, they annulled all the decrees of the synod of Constantinople, ordered the restoration of statues and images, and anathematized that execrable and pernicious synod, giving this curious reason for the use of images -- "That if it was lawful for emperors, and those who had deserved well of their country, to have their images erected, but not lawful to set up those of God, the condition of the immortal God would be worse than that of man." [Platina - *Life of Stephen*.]

Thus the mystery of iniquity continued to work, until at length, under the reign of **IRENE, THE EMPRESS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AND HER SON CONSTANTINE**, about the close of this century, was convened, what is termed **the seventh general council**. It was held at **Nice**, and the number of bishops present was about three hundred and fifty. In this venerable assembly it was decreed, "that holy images of the cross should be consecrated, and put on the sacred vessels and vestments, and upon walls and boards, in private houses, and in public ways. And especially that there should be erected images of the Lord God, our Savior Jesus Christ, of our blessed Lady, the mother of God, of the venerable angels, and of all the saints. And that whoever should presume to think or teach otherwise, or to throw away any painted books, or the figure of the cross, or any image or picture, or any genuine relics of the martyrs, they should, if bishops or clergymen, be deposed, or if monks or laymen be excommunicated." They then pronounced anathemas upon all who should not receive images, or who should apply what the Scriptures say against idols to the holy images, or who should call them idols, or who should willfully communicate with those who rejected and despised them; adding, according to custom, "Long live Constantine and Irene his mother -- Damnation to all heretics -- Damnation on the council that roared against venerable images -- The holy Trinity hath deposed them." [Platina - *Life of Hadrian I*.] One would think the council of Pandemonium would have found it difficult to carry impiety and profaneness much beyond this.

Irene and Constantine approved and ratified these decrees -- the result of which was, that idols and images were erected in all the churches, and those who opposed them were treated with great severity. And thus, by the intrigues of the popes of Rome, iniquity was established by a law, and the worship of idols authorized and confirmed in the Catholic church, though in express opposition to all the principles of natural religion, and the nature and design of the Christian revelation.

But it is time for us to return and take some notice of another important branch of ecclesiastical history, which belongs to the period of the seventh and eighth centuries, viz. the rise of the Mahomedan imposture. [The story of this extraordinary man, the pretended Arabian prophet, has been written by the author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," with all that felicity of diction, for which he stands unrivaled; but at much too great a length to be introduced into this sketch. I have endeavored to seize the more prominent features of the portrait.]

**MAHOMET** was born in the year 569 or 570, at Mecca, a city in Arabia Felix. He was descended from the tribe of Koreish, and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious of the Arabs, the princes of Mecca, and the hereditary guardians of their code of religious institutions. In his early infancy he was deprived of his father, his mother, and his grand-father; but his uncles were numerous and powerful, and in the division of the inheritance, the orphan's share was reduced to five camels and an Ethiopian female slave. At home and abroad, in peace and war, Abu-Taleb, the most respectable of his uncles, was the guide and guardian of his youth. In his twenty-fifth year, he entered into the service of Cadijah, a rich and noble widow of Mecca, who soon rewarded his fidelity with the gift of her hand and fortune. By this alliance he was raised from a humble sphere in life to the station of his ancestors; and the lady who had thus elevated him, was content with his domestic virtues, till, in the fortieth year of his age, he assumed the title of a prophet, and proclaimed the religion of the Koran.

According to the tradition of his companions, Mahomet was distinguished by the beauty of his person. Before he spoke, the orator engaged on his side the affections of his audience, who applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life, he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country; his respectful attention to the rich and powerful was dignified by his condescension and affability to the poorest citizens of Mecca. His memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid, and decisive. With all these advantages, Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian; his youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing; the common ignorance exempted him from shame or reproach, but he was reduced to a narrow circle of existence, and deprived of those faithful mirrors which reflect to our mind the minds of sages and heroes. Yet the volume of nature and of man was open to his view. When only thirteen years of age, he twice accompanied his uncle's caravan into Syria, to attend the fairs of Bostra and Damascus, but his duty obliged him to return home as soon as he had disposed of the merchandise with which he was entrusted. From his earliest youth, Mahomet was addicted to religious contemplation; and every year during the month of Ramadan, he withdrew from the world and from the society of

his wife, to the cave of Heva, three miles from Mecca, where he consulted the spirit of fraud or enthusiasm, and where he at length matured the faith which, under the name of ISLAM, he at last preached to his family and nation; a faith compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction -- THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, AND THAT MAHOMET IS HIS APOSTLE.

Such are the first principles of the religion of Mahomet, which are illustrated, and enlarged upon with numerous additional articles in the **KORAN**, or, as it is sometimes termed, the Alcoran. The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle, that whatever rises must set; that whatever is born must die; that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish. According to his own account, or the tradition of his disciples, "the substance of the Koran is uncreated and eternal; subsisting in the essence of the Deity, and inscribed with a pen of light on the table of his everlasting decrees. A paper copy, in a volume of silk and gems, was brought down to the lowest heaven by the angel Gabriel -- who successively revealed the chapters and verses to the Arabian prophet. Instead of a perpetual and perfect measure of the divine will, the fragments of the Koran were produced at the discretion of Mahomet; each revelation is suited to the emergency of his policy or passion, and all contradiction is removed by the saving maxim, that any text of the Alcoran is abrogated or modified by any subsequent passage. In the spirit of enthusiasm or of vanity, the prophet rests the truth of his mission on the merit of his book; audaciously challenges both men and angels to imitate the beauties of a single page; and presumes to assert that God alone could dictate this incomparable performance. Yet his loftiest strains must yield to the sublime simplicity of the book of Job, composed in a remote age in the same country, and in the same language. [I am aware that this subject has been much disputed among the learned; but the reader who wishes to see it critically examined will find it done by the learned and judicious Bishop Lowth, in his *Lectures of Hebrew Poetry*. See Lect. 32, 33, 34. See also the *Biblical Cyclopaedia*, Article Job, and Clark's *Succession of Sacred Literature*, vol. 1, p. 13-15. Also Du Pin on the Canon; and the Notes of Michaelis on Lowth's Lectures.] The contents of the Koran were at first diligently recorded by his disciples on palm leaves and the shoulder bones of mutton; and the pages, without order or connection, were cast into a chest in the custody of one of his wives. Two years after the death of Mahomet, the sacred volume was collected and published by his friend and successor Abubeker. At the end of two hundred years, the Sonna, or oral law was fixed and consecrated by the labors of Al Boeheri, who distinguished seven thousand two hundred and seventy-five genuine traditions, from a mass of three hundred thousand reports of a more doubtful or spurious character!

According to the Koran, some rays of prophetic light, commencing with the fall of Adam, and extending in one unbroken chain of inspiration to the days of Mahomet, had been imparted to one hundred and twenty-four thousand of the elect, discriminated by their respective measure of virtue and grace -- three hundred and



thirteen apostles were sent with a special commission to recall their country from idolatry and vice -- one hundred and four volumes had been dictated by the Holy Spirit, and six legislators of transcendent brightness have announced to mankind the six successive revelations of various rites, but of one immutable religion. The authority and station of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mahomet, rise in just gradation above each other; but whosoever hates or rejects any one of the prophets is numbered with the infidels. For the author of Christianity, the Mahometans are taught by the prophet to entertain a high and mysterious reverence. "Verily, Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his word, which he conveyed into Mary, and a spirit proceeding from him, honorable in this world, and in the world to come; and one of those who approach near to the presence of God." Yet, he teaches that Jesus was a mere mortal, and that at the day of judgment, his testimony will serve to condemn both the Jews, who reject him as a prophet, and the Christians who adore him as the Son of God. The malice of his enemies, we are told, aspersed his reputation, and conspired against his life; but their intention only was guilty; a phantom, or a criminal was substituted on the cross, and the innocent saint was translated to the seventh heaven. During six hundred years, the gospel was the way of truth and salvation; but the Christians insensibly forgot both the laws and example of their founder, and Mahomet was instructed to accuse the church as well as the synagogue, of corrupting the integrity of the sacred text. The piety of Moses and of Christ rejoiced in the assurance of the future prophet, more illustrious than themselves, and the promise of "the Comforter," was prefigured in the name, and accomplished in the person of Mahomet, the greatest and last of the apostles of God.

The mission of the ancient prophets, of Moses and of Christ, had been confirmed by many splendid prodigies, and Mahomet was repeatedly urged by the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina, to produce a similar evidence of his divine mission; to call down from heaven the angel, or the volume of his revelation, to create a garden in the desert, or to kindle a conflagration in the unbelieving city. But as often as he is pressed upon this subject, he involves himself in the obscure boast of vision and prophecy, appeals to the internal proofs of his doctrine, and shields himself behind the providence of God, who refuses those signs and wonders that would depreciate the merit of faith, and aggravate the guilt of infidelity. But the very tone of his apologies betrays his weakness and vexation, while the numerous passages of scandal are more than sufficient to settle the question respecting the integrity of the Koran. The votaries of Mahomet are more confident than he himself was of his miraculous gifts, and their credulity increased as they were removed from the time and place of his exploits. They believe, or affirm, that trees went forth to meet him; that he was saluted by stones; that water gushed from his fingers, that he fed the hungry, cured the sick, and raised the dead; that a beam groaned to him; and that a camel complained to him; that a shoulder of mutton informed him of its being poisoned; and that both animate and inanimate nature were alike subject to this apostle of God. His dream of a nocturnal journey is seriously described as a real and

corporeal transaction -- a mysterious animal, the Borak, conveyed him from the temple of Mecca to that of Jerusalem; with his companion Gabriel, he successively ascended to the seven heavens, where he both received and repaid the salutations of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the angels, in their respective mansions. Beyond the seventh heaven, Mahomet alone was permitted to proceed; he passed the Veil of Unity, approached within two bow-shots of the throne; and felt a cold that pierced him to the heart, when his shoulder was touched by the hand of God. After this familiar though important conversation, he again descended to Jerusalem, remounted the Borak, returned to Mecca, and performed in the tenth part of a night, the journey of many thousand years. Such are the marvelous tales with which the vulgar are amused.

Prayer, fasting, and alms, are the religious duties of a Mahometan; and he is encouraged to hope that prayer will carry him half way to God -- fasting will bring him to the door of his palace -- and alms will gain him admittance. During the month of Ramadan, from the rising to the setting of the sun, the Mussulman abstains from eating and drinking and women and baths and perfumes; from all nourishment that can restore his strength; from all pleasure that can gratify his senses. In the revolution of the lunar year, the month Ramadan coincides by turns with the winter cold and with the summer heat; but the patient martyr, without assuaging his thirst with a drop of water, must wait for the close of a tedious and sultry day. The interdiction of wine is converted by Mahomet into a positive and general law: but these painful restraints are often infringed by the libertine, and eluded by the hypocrite.

The Koran acknowledges the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead and the future judgment. At the blast of the trumpet, new worlds will start into being; angels, genii, and men, will arise from the dead, the human soul will again be united to the body; and this will be succeeded by the final judgment of mankind. After the greater part of mankind has been condemned for their opinions, the true believers only will be judged by their actions. The good and evil of each Mussulman will be accurately weighed in a balance, and a singular mode of compensation will be allowed for the payment of injuries; the aggressor will refund an equivalent of his good actions, for the benefit of the person he has wronged, and if he should be destitute of any moral property, the weight of his sins will be loaded with an adequate share of the demerits of the sufferer. According as the shares of guilt or virtue shall preponderate, the sentence will be pronounced, and all, without distinction, will pass over the sharp and perilous bridge of the abyss; but the innocent, treading in the footsteps of Mahomet, will gloriously enter the gates of Paradise, while the guilty will fall into the first and mildest of the seven hells. The term of expiation will vary from nine hundred to seven thousand years; but the prophet has judiciously promised that all his disciples, whatever may be their sins, shall be saved, by their own faith and his intercession from eternal damnation.

It is natural enough that an Arabian prophet should dwell with rapture on the groves, the fountains, and the rivers of Paradise; but instead of inspiring the blessed inhabitants with a liberal taste for harmony and science, conversation and friendship, he idly celebrates the pearls and diamonds, the robes of silk, palaces of marble, dishes of gold, rich wines, artificial dainties, numerous attendants, and the whole train of sensual and costly luxury, which becomes insipid to the owner, even in the short period of this mortal life. Seventy-two Houris, or black-eyed damsels, of resplendent beauty, blooming youth, virgin purity, and exquisite sensibility, will be created for the use of the meanest believer; a moment of pleasure will be prolonged to a thousand years, and his faculties will be increased a hundred-fold to render him worthy of his felicity.

Such are the outlines of the religion of Mahomet, which he began to preach at Mecca, in the year 609. His first converts were his wife, his servant, his pupil, and his friend. In process of time, ten of the most respectable citizens of Mecca were introduced to the private lessons of the prophet; they yielded to the voice of enthusiasm and repeated the fundamental creed, -- "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his apostle." Their faith, even in this life, was rewarded with riches and honors, with the command of armies and the government of kingdoms! Three years were silently employed in the conversion of fourteen proselytes, the first fruits of his mission. But in the fourth he assumed the prophetic office, and resolving to impart to his family the benefits of his religion, he prepared a banquet for the entertainment of forty guests of the race of Hashem. "Friends and kinsmen," said Mahomet to the assembly, "I offer you, and I alone can offer, the most precious of gifts, the treasures of this world and of the world to come. God has commanded me to call you to his service. Who among you will support my burden? Who among you will be my companion and my vizir?" No answer was returned, till the silence of astonishment, and doubt, and contempt, was at length broken by the impatient courage of Ali, a youth in the fourteenth year of his age. "O prophet, I am the man; whosoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip up his belly. O prophet, I will be thy vizir over them." Mahomet accepted his offer with transport. His uncle Abu-Taleb, advised the prophet to relinquish his impracticable design. "Spare your remonstrances," replied the fanatic, to his uncle and benefactor, "if they should place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, they should not divert me from my course." He persevered ten years in the exercise of his mission, during which time the religion that has since overspread the East and the West advanced with a slow and painful progress within the walls of Mecca.

In his uncle Abu-Taleb, though no believer in his mission, the impostor found a guardian of his fame and person, during the life of that venerable chief; but at his death, which took place in the year 622, Mahomet was abandoned to the power of his enemies, and that too at the moment when he was deprived of his domestic comforts

by the loss of his faithful and generous wife Cadijah. The tribe of the Koreishites and their allies were, of all the citizens of Mecca, the most hostile to his pretensions. His death was resolved upon, and it was agreed that a sword from each tribe should be buried in his heart, to divide the guilt of his blood, and to baffle the vengeance of his disciples. An angel or a spy revealed their conspiracy, and flight was the only resource of Mahomet. At the dead of night, accompanied by his friend Abubeker, he silently escaped from his house -- three days they were concealed in the cave of Thor, three miles from Mecca, and in the close of each evening they received from the son and daughter of Abubeker a supply of intelligence and food. The most diligent search was made after him; every haunt in the neighborhood was explored; his adversaries even arrived at the entrance of the cave, but the sight of a spider's web and a pigeon's nest are supposed to have convinced them that the place was solitary and inviolate. "We are only two," said the trembling Abubeker. "There is a third," replied the prophet, "it is God himself." No sooner was the pursuit abated, than the two fugitives issued from the den, and mounted their camels: on the road to Medina they were overtaken by the emissaries of the Koreish; but they redeemed themselves with prayers and promises from their hands. In this eventful moment the lance of an Arab might have changed the history of the world.

The religion of the Koran might have perished in its cradle, had not Medina embraced with faith and reverence the outcasts of Mecca. But some of its noblest citizens were converted by the preaching of Mahomet. Seventy-three men and two women of Medina held a solemn conference with Mahomet, his kinsman and his disciples, and pledged themselves to each other by a mutual oath of fidelity. They promised, in the name of the city, that if he should be banished, they would receive him as a confederate, obey him as a leader, and defend him to the last extremity.

"But if you are recalled by your country," said they, "will you not abandon your new allies?" "All things," replied Mahomet, "are now common between us; your blood is as my blood; your ruin as my ruin. We are bound to each other by the ties of honor and interest. I am your friend and the enemy of your foes." "But if we are killed in your service," said they, "what will be our reward?" "PARADISE," replied the prophet. "Stretch forth thy hand." He stretched it forth, and they reiterated the oath of allegiance and fidelity.

From his establishment at Medina, Mahomet assumed the exercise of the regal and sacerdotal office. On a chosen spot of ground he built a house and a mosque, venerable for their rude simplicity. When he prayed and preached in the weekly assembly, he leaned against the trunk of a palm tree; and it was long before he indulged himself in the use of a chair or pulpit. After a reign of six years, fifteen hundred of his followers, in arms, and in the field, renewed their oath of allegiance, and their chief repeated the assurance of his protection.

From this time Mahomet became a martial apostle -- he fought in person at nine battles or sieges, and fifty enterprises of war were achieved in ten years by himself or his lieutenants. He continued to unite the professions of merchant and a robber, and his petty excursions for the defense or the attack of a caravan insensibly prepared his troops for the conquest of Arabia. The distribution of the spoil was regulated by the law of the prophet; the whole was collected in one common mass; a fifth of the gold and silver, the cattle, prisoners, etc. was reserved for pious and charitable uses; the remainder was shared in adequate portions by the soldiers. From all sides the roving Arabs were allured to the standard of religion and plunder; the apostle sanctified the license of embracing the female captives as their wives or concubines, and the enjoyment of wealth and beauty was the type of their promised paradise. "The sword," says Mahomet, "is the key of heaven and hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer; whoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims."

Till the age of sixty-three, the strength of Mahomet was equal to the fatigues of his station. He had, by that time made an entire conquest of Arabia, and evinced a disposition to turn his arms against the Roman empire; but his followers were discouraged. They alleged the want of money, or horses, or provisions; the season of harvest, and the intolerable heat of the summer. "Hell is much hotter," said the indignant prophet; but he disdained to compel their service. He was then at the head of ten thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, in the way that leads from Medina to Damascus, intent upon the conquest of Syria, when he was stopped short in his career, having been poisoned, as he himself seriously believed, at Chaibar, in revenge by a Jewish female. Its fatal effect, however, was not immediate, for **during four years the health of Mahomet declined; his infirmities increased, and he was at last carried off by a fever of fourteen days continuance, which, at intervals, deprived him of the use of his reason, and he died in the year 632.** His death occasioned the utmost consternation among his followers. The city of Medina, and especially the house of the prophet, was a scene of clamorous sorrow, or of silent despair. "How can he be dead?" exclaimed his deluded votaries, "our witness, our intercessor, our mediator with God. He is not dead. Like Moses and Jesus, he is wrapt in a holy trance, and speedily will he return to his faithful people." The evidence of sense was disregarded, and Omar, unsheathing his scimitar, threatened to strike off the heads of the infidels who should dare to affirm that the prophet was no more. But the tumult was appeased by the weight and moderation of Abubeker. "Is it Mahomet," said he to Omar and the multitude, "or the God of Mahomet whom you worship?. The God of Mahomet liveth for ever, but the apostle was a mortal like ourselves, and, according to his own prediction, he has experienced the common fate of mortality." He was piously interred by the hands of his nearest kinsman, on the same spot on which he expired. Medina has been rendered famous by the death and

burial of Mahomet, and the innumerable pilgrims of Mecca often turn aside from the way to bow in voluntary devotion, before the simple tomb of the prophet. Having thus briefly glanced at the rise and progress of Mahometanism, I quit the subject, to notice the state of the Catholic Church.

The emperors of Rome and Constantinople, who professed Christianity, had now been lavishing on the clergy riches, immunities, and privileges, during three succeeding centuries; and these seducing advantages had contributed to a relaxation of discipline, and the introduction of such a mass of disorders as wholly destroyed the spirit of the Christian profession. Under the dominion of the Barbarian kings, **the degeneracy increased, till the pure principles of Christianity were lost sight of in the grossness of superstition**, in consequence of which, men were led to endeavor to conciliate the favor of heaven by the same means that satisfied the justice of man, or by those employed to appease their fabulous deities. As the punishments due for civil crimes, among the Barbarian conquerors, might be bought off by money, they attempted, in like manner, to bribe heaven, by benefactions to the church, in order to supersede all future inquest. They seem to have believed, says the Abbe de Mably, that avarice was the first attribute of the Deity, and that the saints made a traffic of their influence and protection. "Our treasury is poor," said Chilperic, king of the Franks, "Our riches are gone to the church; the bishops are the kings." And true it is, that the superior clergy, by the influx of wealth and the acquisition of lands, combined the influence of worldly grandeur with that of religion, insomuch that they were often the arbiters of kingdoms, and disposed of the crown, while they regulated the affairs of the state.

Historians have exhibited to us the most melancholy picture of the universal darkness and ignorance, which, at the beginning of the seventh century, had overspread all ranks of men. Even the ecclesiastical orders scarcely afforded an exception to this general description. Among the bishops, the grand instructors and defenders of the Christian church, few, we are told, could be found whose knowledge and abilities were sufficient to compose the discourses, however mean and incoherent, which their office sometimes obliged them to deliver to the people. The greater part of those among the monastic orders, whom the voice of an illiterate age had dignified with the character of learning, lavished their time and talents in studying the fabulous legends of pretended saints and martyrs, or in composing histories equally fabulous, rather than in the cultivation of true science, or the diffusion of useful knowledge. The want even of an acquaintance with the first rudiments of literature was so general among the higher ecclesiastics of those times, that it was scarcely deemed disgraceful to acknowledge it. In the acts of the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, many examples occur, where subscriptions are to be found in this form -- "I, such an one, have subscribed by the hand of such an one, because I cannot write." And, such a bishop having said that he could not write, I, whose name is underwritten, have subscribed for him." [White's Bampton Lectures,

## Serm. 2 and Notes, p. 6.]

We may take a specimen of the divinity that was current during the seventh century, from the description given of a good Christian by the highly revered **St. Eloi, bishop of Noyon**, in one of his famous homilies. We are informed by the writer of his life, that, "besides his other miraculous virtues, one was especially bestowed on him of the Lord; for on his diligent search, and persevering with singular ardor of faith in this investigation, many bodies of holy martyrs, concealed from human knowledge for ages, were discovered to him, and brought to light!" Let the reader mark the divinity of this renowned bishop.

"He is the GOOD CHRISTIAN," says he, "who comes often to church, and brings his oblation to be presented on God's altar; who presumes not to taste of the fruits he hath gathered, till he hath first made his offering of them to God; who, on the return of the sacred solemnities, for many days preceding, observes a sacred continence, even from his own wife, that he may approach God's altar with a safe conscience; and who can repeat from memory, the creed and the Lord's prayer." So much for his good Christian; on which the learned translator of Mosheim very properly remarks, "We see here a large and ample description of the character of a good Christian, in which there is not the least mention of the love of God, resignation to his will, obedience to his laws, or of justice, benevolence, and charity to men, and in which the whole of religion is made to consist in coming often to the church, bringing offerings to the altar, lighting candles in consecrated places, and such like vain services."

But let us hear this luminary of the seventh century once more. "Redeem your souls," says he "from the punishment due to your sins, whilst you have the remedies in your power. Offer your tithes and oblations to the churches -- light up candles in the consecrated places, according to your abilities -- come frequently to church, and with all humility pray to the saints for their patronage and protection; which things if ye do, when at the last day ye stand at the tremendous bar of the eternal Judge, ye may say confidently to him, "Give Lord, because I have given." [Surely the late Mr. Milner must have been very much off his guard when, writing of this bishop, he tells his reader -- "Eloi, bishop of Noyon, carefully visited his large diocese -- and was very successful among the people. -- But God was with him both in life and doctrine." *History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 116.] *Da Domine quia dedi.*

In several churches of France, a festival was celebrated in commemoration of the Virgin Mary's flight into Egypt -- it was called **the feast of the ass**. A young girl, richly dressed, with a child in her arms, was placed upon an ass superbly decorated with trappings. The ass was led to the altar in solemn procession -- high mass was said with great pomp -- the ass was taught to kneel at proper places -- a hymn, no less childish than impious, was sung in his praise; and when the ceremony was ended, the priest, instead of the usual words with which he dismissed the people,

brayed three times like an ass; and the people, instead of the usual response, brayed three times in return. [Roberton's *History of Charles V.* vol. 1.]

"Every thing sacred in religion," says Mons. Voltaire, when treating of this period, "was disfigured in the West, by customs the most ridiculous and extravagant. The festivals of fools and asses were established in most churches. On days of solemnity, they created a bishop of fools; and an ass was led into the body of the church, dressed in a cape and four cornered cap. **Church dances, feastings on the altar, revelry and obscene farces were the ceremonies observed on those festivals**, and in many dioceses these extravagances were continued for seven centuries. Were we to consider only the usages here related, we should imagine we were reading an account of Hottentots or Negroes; and it must be confessed that in many things we did not fall much short of them." [*General History*, vol. 1, ch. 35.]

But it is disgusting to relate such mummery, and perhaps I ought to apologize to my reader for laying it before him. He may rest assured, however, that it is only a sample from a fruitful crop which it were easy to produce. If he be shocked, as he well may, at contemplating such disgraceful things coupled with the name of the pure and holy religion of the Son of God, he will be glad to turn his attention with me to a more pleasing subject.

## PAULICIANS

While the Christian world, as it has been the fashion to call it, was thus sunk into an awful state of superstition -- at a moment when "darkness seemed to cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" -- it is pleasing to contemplate a ray of celestial light darting across the gloom. About the year 660, a new sect arose in the east, under the name of PAULICIANS, which is justly entitled to our attention. **[It is much to be regretted that of this class of Christians, all our information is derived through the medium of their enemies.** The two original sources of intelligence concerning them are Photius, b. 1. *Contra Manichaeos*; and Siculus Hist. *Manicheor.* and from them Mosheim and Gibbon have deduced their account of the Paulicians. The latter writer has entered far more fully into the subject than the former, and, what is singular enough, he has displayed more candor! I have collected from these two modern authors the concise account given as follows, and have aimed at impartiality.]

In Mananalis, an obscure town in the vicinity of Somosata, a person of the name of **CONSTANTINE** entertained at his house a deacon, who, having been a prisoner among the Mahometans, was returning from Syria, whither he had been carried away captive. From this passing stranger, **Constantine received the precious gift of the New Testament in its original language**, which, even at this early period, was so concealed from the vulgar, that Peter Siculus, to whom we owe most of our



information on the history of the Paulicians, tells us, the first scruples of a Catholic, when he was advised to read the Bible, was, "it is not lawful for us profane persons to read those sacred writings, but for the priests only." Indeed, the gross ignorance which pervaded Europe at that time, rendered the generality of the people incapable of reading that or any other book; but even those of the laity who could read, were dissuaded by their religious guides from meddling with the Bible. Constantine, however, made the best use of the deacon's present -- he studied his New Testament with unwearied assiduity -- and more particularly the writings of the apostle Paul, from which he at length endeavored to deduce a system of doctrine and worship. "He investigated the creed of primitive Christianity," says Gibbon, "and whatever might be the success, a Protestant reader will applaud the spirit of the enquiry." [*Decline and Fall*, vol. 10, ch. 54.] The knowledge to which Constantine himself was, under the Divine blessing, enabled to attain, he gladly communicated to others around him, and a Christian church was collected. In a little time several individuals arose among them qualified for the work of the ministry; and several other churches were collected throughout Armenia and Cappadocia. It appears from the whole of their history to have been a leading object with Constantine and his brethren to restore, as far as possible, the profession of Christianity to all its primitive simplicity.

Their public appearance soon attracted the notice of the Catholic party, who immediately branded them with the opprobrious appellation of Manichaeans; but "they sincerely condemned the memory and opinions of the Manichaean sect, and complained of the injustice which impressed that invidious name on them." [Gibbon, *Ubi supra*.] **There is reason, therefore, to think, that they voluntarily adopted the name of Paulicians, and that they derived it from the name of the great apostle of the Gentiles.** Constantine now assumed or received the name of **Sylvanus**, and others of his fellow laborers were called Titus, Timothy, Tichicus, etc. and as the churches arose and were formed in different places, they were named after those apostolic churches to which Paul originally addressed his inspired writings, without any regard to the name of the city or town in which they assembled for worship.

The labors of Constantine -- Sylvanus, were crowned with much success. Pontus and Cappadocia, regions once renowned for Christian piety, were again blessed with a diffusion of the light of divine truth. He himself resided in the neighborhood of Colonia, in Pontus, and their congregations, in process of time, were diffused over the provinces of Asia Minor, to the westward of the Euphrates. "The Paulician teachers," says Gibbon, "were distinguished only by their scriptural names, by the modest title of fellow-pilgrims; by the austerity of their lives, their zeal and knowledge, and the credit of some extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit. But they were incapable of desiring, or at least of obtaining the wealth and honors of the Catholic prelacy. Such anti-christian pride they strongly censured."

Roused by the growing importance of this sect, **the Greek emperors began to persecute the Paulicians with the most sanguinary severity**; and the scenes of Galerius and Maximin were re-acted under the Christian forms and names. "To their excellent deeds," says the bigoted [Roman Catholic] Peter Siculus, "the divine and orthodox emperors added this virtue, that they ordered the Montanists and Manichaeans (by which epithets they chose to stigmatize the Paulicians) **to be capitally punished; and their books, wherever found, to be committed to the flames; also that if any person was found to have secreted them, he was to be put to death, and his goods confiscated.**" A Greek officer, armed with legal and military powers, appeared at Colonia, to strike the shepherd, and, if possible, reclaim the lost sheep to the Catholic fold. "By a refinement of cruelty, Simeon (the officer) placed the unfortunate Sylvanus before a line of his disciples, who were commanded, as the price of their own pardon, and the proof of their repentance, to massacre their spiritual father. They turned aside from the impious office; the stones dropt from their filial hands, and of the whole number, only one executioner could be found; a new David, as he is styled by the Catholics, who boldly overthrew the giant of heresy." [Gibbon, ut supra.] This apostate, whose name was **Justus**, stoned to death the father of the Paulicians, who had now labored among them twenty-seven years. The treacherous Justus betrayed many others, probably of the pastors and teachers, who fared the fate of their venerable leader; while Simeon himself, struck with the evidences of divine grace apparent in the sufferers, embraced at length the faith which he came to destroy -- renounced his station, resigned his honors and fortunes, became a zealous preacher among the Paulicians, and at last sealed his testimony with his blood.

[It has been already stated that we derive all our information concerning the Paulicians, through the medium of their adversaries, the writers belonging to the Catholic church. It should not, therefore, surprise us to find them imputing the worst of principles and practices to a class of men whom they uniformly decry as heretics. Mosheim says, that of the two accounts of Photius and Peter Siculus, he gives the preference for candor and fairness to that of the latter -- and yet I find Mr. Gibbon acknowledging, that "the six capital errors of the Paulicians are defined by Peter Siculus with much prejudice and passion" (*Decline and Fall*, vol. 10, ch. 54.) **One of their imputed errors is, that they rejected the whole of the Old Testament writings; a charge which was also brought, by the writers of the Catholic school, against the Waldenses and others, with equal regard to truth and justice. But this calumny is easily accounted for.** The advocates of popery, to support their usurpations and innovations in the kingdom of Christ, were driven to the Old Testament for authority, adducing the kingdom of David for their example. And when their adversaries rebutted the argument, insisting that the parallel did not hold, for that the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, is a very different state of things from the kingdom of David, their opponents accused them of giving up the divine authority of the Old Testament. **Upon similar principles, it is not difficult to**

**vindicate the Paulicians from the other charges brought against them;** but to do that would require more room than can be here allotted to the subject.]

During a period of one hundred and fifty years, these Christian churches seem to have been almost incessantly subjected to persecution, which they supported with Christian meekness and patience; and **if the acts of their martyrdom, their preaching and their lives were distinctly recorded, I see no reason to doubt, that we should find in them the genuine successors of the Christians of the first two centuries.** And in this as well as former instances, the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church. A succession of teachers and churches arose, and a person named **Sergius**, who had labored among them in the ministry of the gospel thirty-seven years, is acknowledged, even by their vilest calumniators, to have been a most exemplary Christian. The persecution had, however, some intermissions, until at length **Theodora, the Greek empress, exerted herself against them, beyond all her predecessors. She sent inquisitors throughout all Asia Minor in search of these sectaries, and is computed to have killed by the gibbet, by fire, and by the sword, A HUNDRED THOUSAND PERSONS.** Such was the state of things at the commencement of the ninth century.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER 4**

### **A VIEW OF THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE NINTH TO THE END OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY**

**A.D. 800-1200**

#### **SECTION 1**

### **A CONCISE DESCRIPTION OF THE VALLEYS OF PIEDMONT, AND OF THE PYRENEES; WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DOCTRINE OF CLAUDE, BISHOP OF TURIN**

The principality of Piedmont derives its name from the circumstance of its being situated at the foot of the Alps -- a prodigious range of mountains, the highest indeed in Europe, and which divide Italy from France, Switzerland, and Germany. [The term "Piedmont" is derived from two Latin words, viz. Pede montium, "at the foot of the mountains."] It is bounded on the east by the duchies of Milan and Montferrat; on the south by the county of Nice and the territory of Genoa; on the west by France; and on the north by Savoy. In former times it constituted a part of Lombardy, but more recently has been subject to the king of Sardinia, who takes up his residence at Turin, the capital of the province, and one of the finest cities in Europe. It is an extensive tract of rich and fruitful valleys, embosomed in mountains which are encircled again with mountains higher than they, intersected with deep and rapid rivers, and exhibiting in strong contrast, the beauty and plenty of Paradise, in sight of frightful precipices, wide lakes of ice, and stupendous mountains of never-wasting

snow. The whole country is an interchange of hill and dale; mountain and valley -- traversed with four principal rivers, viz. the Po, the Tanaro, the Stura, and the Dora, besides about eight and twenty rivulets great and small, which, winding their courses in different directions, contribute to the fertility of the valleys, and make them resemble a watered garden.

The principal valleys are Aosta and Susa on the north -- Stura on the south -- and in the interior of the country, Lucerna, Angrogna, Raccapiatta, Pramol, Perosa, and S. Martino. The valley of Clusone, or Pragela, as it is often called, was in ancient times a part of the province of Dauphiny in France, and has been, from the days of Hannibal, the ordinary rout of the French and other armies, when marching into Italy. Angrogna, Pramol, and S. Martino are strongly fortified by nature on account of their many difficult passes and bulwarks of rocks and mountains; as if the all wise Creator, says Sir Samuel Morland [*History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 5.], had, from the beginning, designed that place as a cabinet, wherein to put some inestimable jewel, or in which to reserve many thousand souls, which should not bow the knee before Baal.

Several of these valleys are described by our geographers as being remarkably rich and fruitful -- as fertile and pleasant as any part of Italy. In the mountains are mines of gold, silver, brass, and iron; the rivers abound with a variety of exquisite fish; the forests and the fields with game; while the soil yields every thing necessary to the enjoyment of human life, -- abundance of corn, rice, wine, fruits, hemp, and cattle. Throughout the whole territory, except on the tops of the mountains, there is to be found great plenty of fruits, especially of chestnuts which the inhabitants gather in immense quantities, and after drying them in an oven or upon a kiln, they manufacture from them an excellent kind of biscuit, which in France they call marroons, and where they are in high estimation as a species of confectionary. They first of all string them, as they do their beads or chaplets, and then hang them up in some humid place for their better preservation. As the bread made from the chestnut constitutes a considerable part of the food of the inhabitants of Piedmont, it is a common practice among them, after reserving what may be necessary for their own sustenance, to sell or exchange the surplus with the inhabitants of the plain for corn or other commodities.

In the patriarchal age of the world, when the people of the east had parceled out the country into many separate states, some savage and others civilized, it is said of the Hebrews, that they went from one nation to another; from one kingdom to another people. In the middle ages, the same spirit prevailed over the west. Petty chiefs assumed independence, and formed a vast number of separate kingdoms. Reputed heretics, like the ancient Israelites, emigrated from place to place, taking up their abode only where they could enjoy the privileges of religious liberty.

The Pyrenean mountains, which separate France and Spain, extend from the Mediterranean sea to the Atlantic ocean, that is, at least two hundred miles, and in breadth at several places more than one hundred. The surface is, as may naturally be expected, wonderfully diversified. Hills rise upon hills, and mountains over mountains, some bare of verdure, and others crowned with forests of huge cork trees, oak, beech, chestnuts, and evergreens. When travelers of taste pass over them, they are in raptures and seem at a loss for words to express what they behold. The landscape, say they, on every side is divine. More delightful prospects never existed even in the creative imagination of Claude Lorraine [Swinburne's *Travels*, ch. 44]. In some places are bleak, perpendicular rocks and dangerous precipices; in others beautiful, fertile, and very extensive valleys, adorned with aloes, and wild pomegranates; enriched with olives, lemons, oranges, apples, corn, flax; and perfumed with aromatic herbs, and animated with venison and wild fowl. Numerous flocks of sheep and goats enliven the hills, manufacturers of wool inhabit the valleys, and corn and wine, flax and oil, hang on the slopes. Inexhaustible mines of the finest iron in the world abound there, and the forests supply them with plenty of timber. There are whole towns of smiths, who carry on the manufacture of all sorts of iron work, especially for the use of the military and navy, and their workmanship is much extolled. This chain of mountains runs from the Bay of Biscay to the Bay of Roses, and the sea-ports about each of them were accustomed to be crowded with inhabitants, commerce, plenty and wealth.

A spectator, taking his stand on the top of the ridge of these mountains, will observe, that at the foot, on the Spanish side, lie Asturias, Old Castile, Arragon, and Catalonia; and on the French side, Guienne and Languedoc, Toulouse, Bearn, Alby, Roussillon, and Narbonne, **all of which places were remarkable in the darkest times for harboring Christians who were reputed heretics** [Robinson's *Eccles. Researches*, p. 280]. Indeed, from the borders of Spain, throughout the greatest part of the south of France, among and below the Alps, along the Rhine, and even to Bohemia, thousands of the disciples of Christ, as will hereafter be shown, were found, even in the very worst of times, preserving the faith in its purity, adhering to the simplicity of Christian worship, patiently bearing the cross after Christ: men distinguished by their fear of God and obedience to his will, and persecuted only for righteousness' sake.

Voltaire has so justly and beautifully described the general state of Italy, as it existed at a period some little time subsequent to that of which I am about to treat, that, I shall here introduce his words. "In the beautiful and trading cities of Italy," says he, "the people lived in ease and affluence. With them alone the sweets of life seem to have taken up their residence, and riches and liberty inspired their genius and elevated their courage. Notwithstanding the dissensions that prevailed every where, they began to emerge from that brutality which had in a manner overwhelmed Europe after the decline of the Roman empire. The necessary arts had never been

entirely lost. The artificers and merchants, whose humble station had protected them from the ambitious fury of the great, were like ants, who dug themselves peaceable and secure habitations, while the vultures and eagles of the world were tearing one another in pieces" [*General History*, ch. 69].

This pleasing picture, which, no doubt, is very correct, as it respects the civil affairs of men, is equally applicable to the inhabitants of Piedmont and the Pyrenees, as to those states of Italy of whom Voltaire speaks; but if applied to the concerns of the kingdom of heaven, the felicity resulting from it will be found to have been almost exclusively theirs, during several of the succeeding centuries. I shall not, however, with the view of justifying this remark, here anticipate occurrences which will come more properly under the reader's notice in prosecuting that branch of ecclesiastical history, on which we are about to enter.

The former chapter affords an ample insight into the gradual encroachments and domineering influence of the church of Rome, during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. But it ought to be noticed, that neither the prevailing corruptions of that church, nor the arrogant claims of its successive popes, were implicitly allowed by all the other bishops and churches, even in Italy itself. "In the year 590, the bishops of Italy and the Grisons (Switzerland), to the number of nine, rejected the communion of the Pope, as of an heretic. This schism had already continued from the year 553, and towards the close of the century, the emperor Maurice, having ordered them to be present at the council of Rome, they were dispensed with by the same emperor, upon their protesting that they could not communicate with Pope Gregory I; so little were they persuaded at that time of the Pope's infallibility, that to lose communion with him was to lose the communion of the church, or that they held their ordinations from the hand of the Popes, and from the bishops subjected to their jurisdiction" [Dr. Allix's *Remarks on the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, ch. 5, p. 32].

In the following century a firm and noble stand was made against the papal usurpations by **PAULINUS**, bishop of the church of Aquileia, in Italy. This venerable man was born about the year 726, near Friuli; but of the earlier part of his life, we know little more than that he was in great favor with Charles the Great, king of France, and preached the gospel to the Pagans of Carinthia and Styria, and to the Avars, a nation of Huns. In the year 776, he was ordained bishop of Aquileia, in which office he continued laboring till his death, which took place in 804. He seems to have possessed a strong and an enlightened mind, for there are few of the abominations of his times which he does not appear to have combated. In the year 787, he, and some other Italian bishops agreed to condemn the decrees of the famous second council of Nice, which had established the worship of images, declaring it to be idolatrous, and that, too, notwithstanding the council had received the sanction of pope Adrian, who was present at its deliberations, and exerted all his authority to maintain its decisions. **This shows that, at this time, the despotism of Antichrist**

**was not universally owned, even throughout Italy itself. The city of Rome and its environs seem to have been at that period the most corrupt part of Christendom in Europe.**

Amongst other corruptions which prevailed, the doctrine of transubstantiation then began to be generally propagated. Paulinus undertook to refute that absurdity, in a treatise on the eucharist, which he wrote at the request of Charles the Great, and which he dedicated to that monarch. He affirms that the eucharist was a morsel or bit of bread, and that it is either death or life to him that partakes of it, according as he hath or hath not faith in that which is signified by it. He pours the utmost contempt upon the sacrifice of the mass, opens up the scripture doctrine of Christ's priestly office, as after the order of Melchisedec, vindicates his incarnation and crucifixion as the true propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and thunders out the boldest anathemas against all human satisfactions, maintaining that the blood of none of those who have themselves been redeemed is capable of blotting out the least sin, for that this privilege comes alone through the Lord Jesus Christ. "The Son of God," says he, "our Almighty Lord, because he redeemed us by the price of his blood, is properly called the true Redeemer by all that are redeemed by him. He, I say, was not redeemed, because he was never captive; but we are redeemed, who were captives sold under sin, and bound by the handwriting that was against us, which he took away, blotting it out with his blood, which the blood of no other redeemer could do, and fixed it to his cross, openly triumphing over it in himself."

In opposition to the Arians, who attributed to Christ only an adopted Sonship, he thus illustrates John 6:32-58.

"Is it said, that he who doth not eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, hath not eternal life? 'He that eats my flesh,' saith Christ, 'and drinks my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.' The power of raising up at the last day belongs to none but the true God; for the flesh and blood cannot be referred to his divine, but to his human nature, by which he is the Son of man. And yet if that Son of man, whose flesh and blood this is, (for that one and the same person is both the Son of God and Son of man) were not really God, his flesh and blood could not procure eternal life to those that eat them. Hence the evangelist John saith, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin.' Moreover, whose flesh and blood is it that gives life to those that eat and drink them, but the Son of Man's, whom God the Father hath sealed; who is the true and almighty Son of God. For HE, the bread of life, came down from heaven for us, and gives his life for the world, to the end that whosoever eats thereof, shall live for ever."

In reference to Christ's intercession, he says, "He is called the Mediator, because he is a middle person between both the disagreeing parties, and reconciles both of them



in one. Paul is not a mediator, but a faithful ambassador of the Mediator." He then quotes his words, "We are ambassadors for Christ, praying you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." "Our advocate," says he, "is one that intercedes for those that are already reconciled, even as our Redeemer doth, when he shows his human nature to God the Father, in the unity of his person, being God-man. John doth not intercede for us, but declares Him (Jesus) to be the propitiation for our sins."

These extracts, which might be enlarged to a great extent, are sufficient to give the intelligent reader some idea of the doctrinal principles of Paulinus. He denied the supremacy of Peter over the rest of the apostles -- lays it down as an inviolable maxim of Christianity, that God alone is the object of our faith, in opposition to what was taught in the church of Rome and, in short, to quote the words of a learned writer, -- "Whoever examines the opinions of this bishop, will easily perceive that he denies what the church of Rome affirms with relation to many of its leading tenets, and affirms what the church of Rome denies: and whatever colorable pretexts may be employed, it will be difficult not to perceive this opposition through them all" [Allix's *Remarks*, p. 52].

But the succession of events now leads me to call the reader's attention to the life and labors of **CLAUDE, BISHOP OF TURIN**. This truly great man, who has not improperly been called the first Protestant reformer, was born in Spain. In his early years he was a chaplain in the court of the emperor Lewis the Meek (Ludovicus Pius, king of France and emperor of the West) and was even then in high repute for his knowledge of the Scriptures, and his first-rate talents as a preacher; in consequence of which, says the Abbe Fleury, Lewis perceiving the deplorable ignorance of a great part of Italy, in regard to the doctrines of the gospel, and desirous of providing the churches of Piedmont with one who might stem the growing torrent of image worship, promoted Claude to the see of Turin, about the year 817. In this event, the attentive reader will hereafter perceive the hand of God so ordering the course of events in his holy providence as, in the very worst of times, to prepare, "a seed to serve him, and a generation to call him blessed." The expectations of the emperor were amply justified in the labors of Claude; by his writings he ably illustrated the sacred Scriptures, and drew the attention of multitudes to their plain and simple meaning, unadulterated by the corrupt glosses of the Catholic priesthood. "In truth," says Fleury, himself a Catholic writer, "he began to preach and instruct with great application." **His first zeal was directed against images, relics, pilgrimages, and crosses.** It is not to be supposed that efforts such as his, directed against the prevailing superstitions of the age, should produce no ostensible effect; the monks were presently up in arms against him, reviling him as a blasphemer and a heretic, and his own people became so refractory that, in a little time, he went about in fear of his life. Supported, however, by the testimony of a good conscience, and a confidence in the goodness of his cause, Claude persevered, and wrote comments on several books of scripture, of which, unfortunately, the only one that has been printed is his *Exposition of the*

*Epistle to the Galatians*. "He bore a noble testimony," says Mr. Robinson (in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 447) against the prevailing errors of his time, and was undoubtedly a most respectable character."

Of one whose reputation stands so high, it cannot be necessary to enter upon any formal vindication against the calumnies of his opponents, but it may be satisfactory to the reader to have before him a summary of the principles which he held, and for which he nobly contended. Let it be observed then, that, throughout the whole of his writings, he maintains that "Jesus Christ is the alone head of the church." This, the reader will perceive, struck immediately at the root of the first principle of Popery--the vicarious office of the bishop of Rome. He utterly discards the doctrine of human worthiness in the article of justification, in such a manner, as overthrows all the subtle distinctions of Papists on the subject. He pronounces anathemas against traditions in matters of religion, and thus drew the attention of men to the word of God, and that alone, as the ground of a Christian's faith. He maintained, that men are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law -- the doctrine which Luther, seven hundred years afterwards, so ably contended for, and which so excessively provoked the advocates of the church of Rome. He contended that the church was subject to error, and denied that prayers for the dead can be of any use to those that have demanded them; while he lashed, in the severest manner, the superstition and idolatry which every where abounded under the countenance and authority of the see of Rome.

The writings of Claude were voluminous; for he was indefatigable in explaining the Scriptures, and in opposing the torrent of superstition. He wrote three books upon Genesis in the year 815, and also a Commentary on the Gospel by Matthew, of which there are several copies in England. He wrote a Commentary on Exodus in the year 821, and another on Leviticus in 823, besides which, he wrote comments on all the apostolic epistles, which have been since found, in manuscript in two vols. in the Abbey of Fleury, near Orleans, in France. These latter were drawn up at the express request of the emperor, Ludovicus Pius, to whom he dedicated his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians; also of Justus, bishop of Charroux, and of Dructeramnus, an abbot of celebrity, to whom he dedicated his Comment on the Epistle to the Galatians. As a specimen of his style and sentiments, the reader may take the following extracts from his illustration of the Lord's supper.

"The apostles being sat down at table, Jesus Christ took bread, blessed and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying to them, Take, and eat -- this is my body. The ancient solemnities of the passover, which were used in commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel, being ended, he passeth on to the new, because he would have the same to be celebrated in his church, as a memorial of the mystery of her redemption, and to substitute the sacrament of his body, and of his blood, instead of the flesh and blood of the

paschal lamb; and to show that it was he himself to whom God had sworn, and shall never repent, 'Thou art the eternal Priest according to the order of Melchisedec.' Moreover, he himself breaks the bread which he gives the disciples, that he might represent and make it appear, that the breaking of his body would not be contrary to his inclination, or without his willingness to die; but as he himself elsewhere says, that he had power to give his life, and to deliver it up himself, as well as to take it again, and raise himself from the dead. He blessed the bread before he brake it, to teach us that he intended to make a sacrament of it. When he drew nigh to the time of his death and passion, it is said, that, having taken the bread and cup, he gave thanks to his Eternal Father. He who had taken upon him to expiate the iniquities of others, gave thanks to his Father, without having done any thing that was worthy of death: He blesseth it with profound humility at the very time that he saw himself laden with stripes, no doubt to teach us that submission which we ought to exercise [under the chastening hand of God.] If he, who was innocent, endured, with meekness and tranquillity, the stripes due to the iniquities of others, it was to teach and instruct us what we ought to do when corrected for our own transgressions. In regard to his saying, 'This is my blood of the New Testament,' it is to teach us to distinguish between the new covenant and the old -- the latter of which was consecrated by the effusion of the blood of goats and oxen, as the [Jewish] lawgiver said at the sprinkling of it, 'This is the blood of the covenant that God hath commanded you.' For it was necessary that the patterns of true things should be purified by these, but that the heavenly places should be purified with more excellent sacrifices, according to what the apostle Paul declares throughout his whole epistle to the Hebrews, where he makes a distinction between the law and the gospel. Jesus Christ, when about to suffer, says, 'I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine, until the day that I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father.' As if he had plainly said, 'I will no longer take delight in the carnal ceremonies of the synagogue, amongst the number of which, the great festival of the paschal lamb was one of the chiefest; for the time of my resurrection is at hand; that day will arrive, when I shall be lifted up to my heavenly kingdom, even to a state of glorious immortality, where I shall be filled together with you, with a new joy for the salvation of my people, which shall be born again in the spring of one and the same grace.' The 'new wine,' may also import the immortality of our renewed bodies; for when he saith, 'I will drink it with you,' he promises them the resurrection of their bodies, in order to their being clothed with immortality."

In the year 828, Claude was attacked most fiercely by a French monkish writer of the name of Dungalus, who censures him for taking upon himself, after a lapse of more than eight hundred and twenty years, to reprove those things that had hitherto been in continual use, as if there had been none before himself that had ever had any zeal for religion. About the same time another writer of the same school, whose name was Theodemirus, wrote to him, giving him to understand that his opinions and behavior every where gave great offense. His answer to these writers was such as made it quite unnecessary for him to write another treatise on the same or a similar occasion; and

in the following extracts from it, the reader may almost persuade himself that he is perusing the pages of the immortal Luther.

"I have received," says he to Theodemirus, "by a special messenger, your letter, with the articles, wholly stuffed with babbling and fooleries. You declare in these articles, that you have been troubled that my fame was spread not only throughout all Italy, but also in Spain and elsewhere; as if I were preaching a new doctrine, or setting myself up as the founder of a new sect, contrary to the rules of the ancient Catholic faith, which is an absolute falsehood. But it is no wonder that the members of Satan should talk of me at this rate, since they called [Christ] our Head a deceiver, and one that had a devil, etc. For, I teach no new heresy, but keep myself to the pure truth, preaching and publishing nothing but that. On the contrary, as far as in me lies, I have repressed, opposed, cast down, and destroyed, and do still repress, oppose and destroy, to the utmost of my power, all sects, schisms, superstitions, and heresies, and shall never cease so to do, God being my helper, as far as in me lies.

"When I came to Turin, I found all the churches full of abominations and images; and because I began to destroy what every one adored, every one began to open his mouth against me. These kind of people against whom we have undertaken to defend the church of God, tell us, if you write upon the wall, or draw the images of Paul, of Jupiter, of Saturn, or Mercury, neither are the one of these gods, nor the other apostles, and neither the one nor the other of these are men, and therefore the name is changed. But, surely, if we ought to worship them, we ought rather, to worship them during their life time, than as thus represented as the portraits of beasts, or (what is yet more true) of stone or wood, which have neither, life, feeling, nor reason. For if we may neither worship nor serve the works of God's hand, how much less may we worship the works of men's hands and pay adoration to them in honor of those whose remembrance we say they are? For if the image you worship is not God, wherefore dost thou bow down to false images; and wherefore, like a slave, dost thou bend thy body to pitiful shrines, and to the work of men's hands? Certainly, not only he who serves and honors visible images, but also whatsoever creature else, whether heavenly or earthly, spiritual or corporeal, serves the same instead of God, and from it expects the salvation of his soul, which he ought to look for from God alone. All such are of the number of those concerning whom the apostle said, that 'they worshipped and served the creature more-than the Creator.'

"But mark what the followers of superstition and false religion allege! They tell us it is in commemoration and honor of our Savior that we serve, honor, and adore the cross -- persons whom nothing in the Savior pleaseth, but that which was pleasing to the ungodly, viz. the reproach of his sufferings and the token of his death. Hereby they evince that they perceive only of him, what the wicked saw and perceived of him, whether Jews, or heathens, who do not see his resurrection, and do not consider him but as altogether swallowed up of death,

without regarding what the apostle says, 'We know Jesus Christ no longer according to the flesh.'

"God commands one thing, and these people do quite the contrary. God commands us to bear our cross, and not to worship it; but these are all for worshipping it, whereas they do not bear it at all -- to serve God after this manner, is to go a-whoring from him. For if we ought to adore the cross, because Christ was fastened to it, how many other things are there which touched Jesus Christ, and which he made according to the flesh? Did he not continue nine months in the womb of the virgin? Why do they not then on the same score worship all that are virgins, because a virgin brought forth Jesus Christ? Why do they not adore mangers and old clothes, because he was laid in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes? Why do they not adore fishing-boats, because he slept in one of them, and [from it] preached to the multitudes, and caused a net to be cast out, wherewith was caught a miraculous quantity of fish? Let them adore asses, because he entered into Jerusalem upon the foal of an ass; and lambs, because it is written of him, 'Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' But these sorts of men would rather eat live lambs than worship their images! Why do they not worship lions, because he is called 'the lion of the tribe of Judah?' or rocks, since it is said 'and that rock was Christ?' or thorns, because he was crowned with them? or lances, because one of them pierced his side?

"All these things are ridiculous, and rather to be lamented than set forth in writing; but we are compelled to state them in opposition to fools, and to declaim against those hearts of stone, which the arrows and sentences of the word of God cannot pierce. Come to yourselves again, ye miserable transgressors; why are ye gone astray from the truth, and why, having become vain, are ye fallen in love with vanity? Why do you crucify again the Son of God, and expose him to open shame, and by these means make souls, by troops, to become the companions of devils, estranging them from their Creator, by the horrible sacrilege of your images and likenesses, and thus precipitating them into everlasting damnation?

"As for your reproaching me, that I hinder men from running in pilgrimage to Rome, I demand of you yourself, whether thou thinkest that to go to Rome is to repent, or to do penance? If indeed it be, why then hast thou for so long a time damned so many souls by confining them in thy monastery, and whom thou hast taken into it, that they might there do penance, if it be so that the way to do penance is to go to Rome, and yet thou hast hindered them? What hast thou to say against this sentence, 'Whosoever shall lay a stone of stumbling before any of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hung about his neck, and he cast into the bottom of the sea?'

"We know very well that this passage of the gospel is quite misunderstood -- 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and I will give unto

thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;' under the pretense of which words, the stupid and ignorant multitude destitute of all spiritual knowledge, betake themselves to Rome, in the hope of acquiring eternal life. But the ministry [of the gospel] belongs to all the true presbyters and pastors of the church, who discharge the same as long as they are in this world, and when they have paid the debt of death, others succeed in their places, who possess the same authority and power.

"Return, O ye blind, to your light; return to him who enlightens every man that cometh into the world. All of you, however numerous ye may be, who depart from this light, ye walk in darkness, and know not whither ye go, for the darkness has put out your eyes. If we are to believe God when he promiseth, how much more when he swears, and saith, If Noah, Daniel, and Job, (that is, if the saints whom you call upon, were endowed with holiness, righteousness, and merit, equal to theirs,) they shall neither deliver son nor daughter; and it is for this end he makes the declaration, that none might place their confidence, in either the merits or the intercession of saints. Understand ye this, ye people without understanding? Ye fools, when will ye be wise? Ye who run to Rome, there to seek for the intercession of an apostle.

"The fifth thing for which you reproach me is -- that you are much displeased, because 'the apostolic lord' (for so you are pleased to nominate the late Pope Paschal) had honored me with this charge. But you should remember, that he only is apostolic who is the keeper and guardian of the apostle's doctrine, and not he who boasts himself of being seated in the chair of the apostle, and in the mean time neglects to acquit himself of the apostolic charge; for the Lord saith, that the Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat" [Allix's *Remark*, ch. 9, p. 64-77].

From these extracts, some estimate may be formed of the principles and character of Claude of Turin -- a name less known in the present day, and a character less honored, than they deserve. By his preaching, and by his valuable writings, he disseminated the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven -- and, although the seed were as a grain of mustard seed cast into the earth, the glorious effects ultimately produced by it, justify the truth of our Lord's parable, that when it is grown up, it produceth a tree, whose branches are so ramified and extended, that the birds of the air come and lodge therein. His doctrine grew exceedingly -- the valleys of Piedmont were in time filled with his disciples, and while midnight darkness sat enthroned over almost every portion of the globe, **the WALDENSES**, which is only another name for the inhabitants of these valleys, preserved the gospel among them in its native purity, and rejoiced in its glorious light. **Claude continued his labors at Turin at least twenty years, for he was alive in eight hundred and thirty-nine -- but we have no documents existing that enable us to trace out the operation of his principles in the formation of independent churches, in a state of separation from the world; and it is very probable that during the life of this venerable**

**man, but few attempts of this kind were made.** The Catholic writers, particularly Genebrard in his *Chronology*, and also Rorenco, have explicitly owned, that "the valleys of Piedmont, which belonged to the bishoprick of Turin, preserved the opinions of Claude in the ninth and tenth centuries;" and, in the account of the PATERINES, which we shall soon arrive at, we shall see how extensively they spread not only in Piedmont, but throughout the neighboring country of the Milanese. "It is admitted," says Mr. Robinson, "that if the Waldenses had reasoned consequentially on the principles of their master, they would, after his death, have dissented, but there is no evidence that they did reason so." He, therefore, is of opinion, that some considerable time elapsed (probably half-a-century,) before they broke off all communion with the established church.

**It will, no doubt, appear a matter of surprise to some, that an opposer so zealous and intrepid as Claude certainly was, should have escaped the fury of the church of Rome. But it should be remembered, that the despotism of that wicked court had not yet arrived at its plenitude of power and intolerance.** To which may be added as another very probable reason, that some of the European monarchs viewed the domineering influence of the bishops of Rome with considerable jealousy, and gladly extended their protection to those whose labors had a tendency to reduce it; such was at this time the case with the court of France in regard to Claude. **It is, nevertheless, sufficiently manifest, that this great man held his life in continual jeopardy.** "In standing up," says he, "for the confirmation and defense of the truth, I am become a reproach to my neighbors, to that degree, that those who see us do not only scoff at us, but point at us one to another. But God, the father of mercies, and author of all consolation, hath comforted us in all our afflictions, that we may be able, in like manner, to comfort those that are cast down with sorrow and affliction. We rely upon the protection of him who hath armed and fortified us with the armor of righteousness and of faith, the tried shield of our salvation" [Collection of his Works, tom. 1, quoted by Dr. Allix, p. 72].

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **THE STATE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FROM THE NINTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY**

**A.D. 800 - 1200**

The ninth and tenth centuries of the Christian era, are universally allowed to form the lowest point of depression to which the profession of the religion of Jesus was reduced in regard to darkness and superstition. It will not, therefore, be necessary to detain the reader long from subjects of a more pleasing nature, by dwelling very minutely upon the state of things during this period. The fact is acknowledged by the papists themselves; by Caranza, Genebrard, Baronius, and others, who describe the tenth century as a monstrous age. The language of the latter writer indeed, is so remarkable, that it deserves to be quoted. Alluding to Psalm 44:23, he says, "Christ was then, as it would appear, in a deep sleep, and the ship was covered with waves; and what seemed worse, when the Lord was thus asleep, there were no disciples, by their cries to awaken him, being themselves all fast asleep." **It may not, however, be without its use to take a rapid glance at the proceedings of the court of Rome, and mark the stages by which the antichristian power arrived at its zenith.**

On entering upon this subject, there is one remarkable circumstance which merits the reader's notice as he proceeds, for the fact is worthy of his attention. It has fallen to our lot, through the good providence of God, to see this monstrous power, which for a succession of ages tyrannized over the bodies and souls of men, virtually annihilated by the power of France. What the reader should particularly remark is, that it was by the aid of that same power, in a very especial manner, that the "Man of



Sin" was elevated to his throne. It can scarcely be necessary to recall to his recollection the intrigues between the popes and French monarchs, of which I have given a short detail in a former section. The sequel will appear to be quite in character; but we must go back a little to trace the subject in order.

On the death of Pepin, king of France, in the year 768, his dominions were divided between his two sons, Charles and Carloman, the latter of whom dying two years afterwards, **Charles** [known as **CHARLES THE GREAT, OR CHARLEMAGNE**] became sole monarch of that country. In his general character, he somewhat resembled our English Alfred, and is deservedly ranked amongst the most illustrious sovereigns that have appeared -- a rare instance of a monarch, who united his own glory with the happiness of his people. In private life he was amiable; an affectionate father, a fond husband, and a generous friend. Though engaged in many wars, he was far from neglecting the arts of peace, the welfare of his subjects, or the cultivation of his own mind. Government, morals, religion, and letters, were his constant pursuits. He frequently convened the national assemblies, for regulating the affairs both of church and state. His attention extended to the most distant corner of his empire, and to all ranks of men. His house was a model of economy, and his person of simplicity and true grandeur. "For shame," he would say to some of his nobles, who were more finely dressed than the occasion required, "learn to dress like men, and let the world judge of your rank by your merit, not your dress. Leave silks and finery to women, or reserve them for those days of pomp and ceremony when robes are worn for show, not use." He was fond of the company of learned men, and assembled them from all parts of Europe, forming in his palace a kind of royal academy, of which he condescended to become a member, and of which he made **ALCUIN**, our learned countryman, the head; at the same time honoring him as his companion and particular favorite. "The dignity of his person, the length of his reign, the prosperity of his arms, the vigor of his government, and the reverence of distant nations, distinguish Charles from the royal crowd: and Europe dates a new era from his restoration of the western empire" [2 Gibbon, vol. 9, ch. 49].

[For the honor of our country, I here record a few particulars concerning Alcuin. He was born in the north of England, and educated at York, under the direction of archbishop Egbert, whom in his letters he frequently styles his beloved master, and the clergy of York the companions of his youthful studies. Being sent on an embassy by Offa, king of Mercia, to the emperor Charlemagne, his talents and his virtues so won upon the latter, that he contracted a high esteem for him, and a mutual friendship ensued. Charles earnestly solicited, and at length prevailed upon him to settle in his court and become his preceptor in the sciences. He accordingly instructed that prince in rhetoric, logic, mathematics, and divinity, and was treated with so much kindness and familiarity by the emperor, that by way of eminence, the courtiers called him "the emperor's delight." Alcuin, having passed many years in the most intimate familiarity with Charlemagne, at length, with great difficulty, obtained

leave to retire to his Abbey of St. Martins at Tours. Here he kept up a constant correspondence with the emperor, and their letters evince their mutual regard for religion and learning, and their anxiety to promote them in the most munificent manner. In one of these letters, which Dr. Henry has translated, there is a passage which throws some light on the learning of the times. "The employments of your Alcuin," says he to the emperor, "in his retreat, are suited to his humble sphere, but they are neither inglorious nor unprofitable. I spend my time in the halls of St. Martin, in teaching some of the noble youths under my care the intricacies of grammar, and inspiring them with a taste for the learning of the ancients; in describing to others the order and revolutions of those shining orbs which adorn the azure vault of heaven; and in explaining to others the mysteries of divine wisdom, which are contained in the Holy Scriptures; suiting my instructions to the views and capacities of my scholars, that I may train up many to be ornaments to the church of God and to the court of your imperial majesty. In doing this, I find a great want of several things, particularly of those excellent books in all arts and sciences, which I enjoyed in my native country, through the expense and care of my great master Egbert. May it, therefore, please your majesty, animated with the most ardent love of learning, to permit me to send some of your young gentlemen into England, to procure for us those books which we want, and transplant the flowers of Britain into France, that their fragrance may no longer be confined to York, but may perfume the palaces of Tours." Charlemagne often solicited Alcuin to return to court, but he excused himself, and remained at Tours until his death, May 19, 804. He understood the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages extremely well; was an excellent orator, philosopher, and mathematician. His works, which consist of fifty-three treatises, homilies, commentaries, letters, poems, etc. are comprised in 2 vols. folio.]

**But with all these amiable traits in the character of Charles the Great (or Charlemagne, as he is usually called) a superstitious attachment to the see of Rome, unhappily mingled itself with all his policy,** and led him to engage in theological disputes and quibbles unworthy of his character.\* It would have been well for his memory, indeed, had he stopped there; but **a blind zeal for the propagation of Christianity, which extinguished his natural feelings, made him guilty of severities which shock humanity. One of the leading objects of his reign, was the conversion of the Saxons,** a nation of Germany, to the Christian faith. He seems to have considered a reception of the mild doctrines of Christianity as the best means of taming a savage people, and to accomplish this he sent his armies to invade their country. After a number of battles gallantly fought, and many cruelties committed on both sides, the Saxons were totally subjected; but as they were no less tenacious of their religious than of their civil liberty, persecution marched in the train of war, and stained with blood the fetters of slavery. Four thousand five hundred of their principal men, because they refused, on a particular occasion, to give up their celebrated general, Witikind, were ordered to be massacred -- an instance of severity scarcely to be paralleled in the history of mankind, especially if we consider that the

Saxons were not the natural subjects of Charles, but an independent people struggling for freedom. **He compelled the Saxons, under pain of death, to receive baptism;** condemned to the severest punishments the breakers of Lent, and every where substituted force for persuasion. As the little learning which, at that period, remained among mankind, was monopolized by the clergy, it cannot excite our surprise that they obtained the most signal marks of his favor. He established the payment of tithes, and admitted the clergy into the national assemblies, associating them with the secular nobles in the administration of justice; in return for which, they honored him with the most marked distinctions, permitting him to sit in councils purely ecclesiastical. Accordingly, in the year 794, we find him seated on a throne in the council of Frankfort, with one of the pope's legates on each hand, and three hundred bishops waiting his nod.

[\* The following short letter written by Charlemagne, and addressed to Odilbert, archbishop of Metz, while it exhibits a striking proof of this monarch's concern to promote attention to the means of instruction and learning, is not less deserving regard on account of the disclosure which it makes of the state of religion in his day. "We have often wished," says he, "if we could accomplish it, to converse with you and your colleagues familiarly on the utility of the holy church of God. But although we are not ignorant of the real concern with which you watch over divine things, yet we must not omit, while we trust in the co-operating influence of the Holy Spirit, by our authority to exhort and admonish you to labor in word and doctrine in the church of God, more and more studiously, and with watchful perseverance; so that by your pious diligence the word of God may spread and flourish extensively, and the number of the Christian people may be multiplied, to the praise and glory of our Savior. Wherefore we desire to know in writing, or from your own mouth, in what manner you and your clergy teach and instruct both those who are candidates for the holy office of the ministry, and the people committed to you in the Sacrament of Baptism. That is, Why does a child first become a Catechuman? and what is a Catechuman? And so of other things in their order. Of examination, what is it? Of the creed; what is the interpretation, or meaning of it among the Latins? Of belief, in what manner are we to believe in God the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ his Son, and in the Holy Spirit? etc. Of renouncing Satan, and his works and pomp, what is this renunciation? What is the meaning of breathing on the person, and exorcising him? Why does the Catechuman receive salt? Why are the ears touched? the breast anointed with oil? the arms crossed? and the breast and arms washed? Why are white garments put on? Why is the head anointed with the holy chrism? Why is it covered with a mystical vail? And why is conformation made with the body and blood of Christ? All these things we require you by careful study to examine, and to report an accurate account of them to us in writing; and further, to state whether you so maintain and preach these things, and govern your own life by the doctrines which you preach." Rankin's *History of France*, vol. 1, p. 406. Now all this had been well, if the Scriptures had said any thing about these things; but it was unfortunate for the

zeal of this monarch, that the things here enumerated, and about which he was concerned, were almost entirely the corruptions of Christianity, with which that divine institution has nothing to do, except to condemn them as the doctrines and commandments of men. One cannot but feel curious to know what kind of answers the archbishop would return to these sage questions.]

The object of that council was to investigate the sentiments of two Spanish bishops, who, to refute the accusation of Polytheism, brought against the Christians by the Jews and Mahommedans, gave up the proper divinity of Jesus Christ, and maintained that he was the Son of God only by adoption. The monarch opened the assembly, and proposed the condemnation of this heresy. The council decided conformably to his will; and in a letter to the churches of Spain, in consequence of that decision, Charles expressed himself in these remarkable words: "You entreated me to judge of myself; I have done so. I have assisted as an auditor and an arbiter in an assembly of bishops; we have examined; and by the grace of God, we have settled what must be believed!"

**It was during the reign of Charles the Great, that the empress Irene convened the second council of Nice for the purpose of re-establishing the use of images,** which Leo IV and his son Constantine Copronymus had exerted themselves so much to suppress. That council accordingly decreed that we ought to render to images an honorary worship, but not a real adoration, the latter being due to God alone. Whether designedly or not, but so it was, that in the translation of the Acts of this council, which **pope Adrian** sent into France, the meaning of the article which respected images was entirely perverted, for it ran thus: "I receive and honor images according to that adoration which I pay to the Trinity." Charles was so shocked at this impiety, that in the effervescence of his zeal, and with the aid of the clergy, he drew up a treatise, called the Caroline books, in which he treated the Nicene council with the utmost contempt and abuse. He transmitted his publication to Adrian, desiring him to excommunicate the empress and her son. The pope excused himself on the score of images, rectifying the mistake upon which Charles had proceeded; but at the same time insinuated, that he would declare Irene and Constantine heretics, unless they restored some lands which formerly belonged to the church. He also took the opportunity of hinting at certain projects which he had formed for the exaltation of the Romish church, and of the French monarchy [Millot's *Elements of General History*, part 2]. "I cannot," said he, "after what the council of Nice has done, declare Irene and her son heretics; but I shall declare them to be such, if they do not restore to me my patrimony in Sicily."

In the year 796, **Leo III**, who had succeeded Adrian in the papacy, transmitted to Charles the Roman standard, requesting him to send some person to receive the oath of fidelity from the Romans, an instance of submission with which that monarch was highly flattered. Accordingly **in the year 800, we find Charles at Rome, where he**

**passed six days in private conferences with the pope.** On Christmas day, as the king assisted at mass in St. Peter's church, in the midst of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and while upon his knees before the altar, the pope advanced and put an imperial crown upon his head. As soon as the people perceived it, they exclaimed, "Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by the hand of God! Long live the great and pious emperor of the Romans." The supreme pontiff then conducted him to a magnificent throne, which had been prepared for the occasion, and as soon as he was seated, paid him those honors which his predecessors had been accustomed to pay to the Roman emperors. Leo now presented him with the imperial mantle, on being invested with which, Charles returned to his palace amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

Favors such as these that were conferred by the pontiff on the French monarch, imperiously called for an adequate return, and it is due to Charlemagne to say that he was by no means deficient in gratitude. His name, and those of his successors, are consecrated as the saviors and benefactors of the Roman church. The Greek emperor had abdicated or forfeited his right to the exarchate of Ravenna, and the sword of Pepin, the father of Charles, had no sooner wrested it from the grasp of Astolphus, than he conferred it on the Roman pontiff, as a recompense "for the remission of his sins and the salvation of his soul." The splendid donation was granted in supreme and absolute dominion, and **the world then beheld, for the first time, a Christian bishop invested with the prerogatives of a temporal prince**; the choice of magistrates, and the exercise of justice; the imposition of taxes, and the wealth of the palace of Ravenna.

"Perhaps," says Gibbon, "the humility of a Christian priest should have rejected an earthly kingdom which it was not easy for him to govern without renouncing the virtues of his profession." I feel no disposition to controvert the justice of this remark; but humility does not appear to have been a very prominent trait in the characters of the Roman pontiffs; and the profuse liberality of the French kings, at this time, was not much calculated to promote it among them. By their bounty, the ancient patrimony of the church, which consisted of farms and houses, was converted into the temporal dominion of cities and provinces. The cities and islands which had formerly been annexed to the exarchate of Ravenna, were now also, by the gratitude of Charles, yielded to the pope, to enlarge the circle of the ecclesiastical state; and the new emperor lived to behold in his ecclesiastical ally, a greatness which, in the cool moments of reflection, he was unable to contemplate without jealousy. But **Charles died in the year 814**, at Aix-la-Chapelle, his usual residence, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the forty-sixth of his reign. He had previously associated **HIS SON LOUIS** with him in the administration of government; and, as if this great man had foreseen the approaching usurpations of the church, he placed the imperial crown upon the altar, and ordered the prince to put it on his own head, thereby intimating that he held it only of God. The young prince, though very amiable in his

disposition and manners, appears to have been much inferior to his father in strength of mind. I have already had occasion to mention him in a former section as the friend and patron of Claude of Turin. His piety and parental fondness are praised by historians, but his abilities were inadequate to the support of so great a weight of empire. He rendered himself odious to the clergy, by attempting to reform certain abuses among them, not foreseeing that this powerful body would not pay the same deference to his authority, which had been yielded to the superior capacity of his father. Three years after his accession to the throne, he admitted his eldest son, Lothaire, to a participation of the French and German territories, declared his son Pepin, king of Aquitaine, and Louis king of Bavaria. This division gave offense to his nephew, Bernard, at that time king of Italy, who revolted, and levied war against his uncle, in contempt of his imperial authority, to which he was subject -- a rebellious conduct, in which he was encouraged by the archbishop of Milan and the bishop of Cremona. Louis, on this occasion, acted with rigor. He raised a powerful army, and was preparing to cross the Alps, when Bernard was abandoned by his troops, and the unfortunate prince, being made prisoner, was condemned to lose his head. His uncle mitigated the sentence to the loss of his eyes, but the unhappy prince died three days after the punishment was inflicted; and Louis, to prevent future troubles, ordered three natural sons of Charlemagne to be shut up in a convent.

In a little time the emperor was seized with keen remorse for his conduct. He accused himself of the murder of his nephew, and of tyrannic cruelty to his brothers. In this melancholy humor he was encouraged by the monks; and it at last grew to such a height, that he impeached himself in an assembly of the states, and requested the bishops to enjoin him public penance. The clergy, now sensible of his weakness, set no bounds to their usurpations. The popes concluded that they might do any thing under so pious a prince. They did not wait for the emperor's confirmation of their election; **the bishops exalted themselves above the throne, and the whole fraternity of the Catholic clergy claimed an exemption from all civil jurisdiction.** Even the monks, while they pretended to renounce the world, seemed to aspire to the government of it.

**In the year 822, the three sons of Louis were associated in a rebellion against their father, -- an unnatural crime, in which they were encouraged by some of the reigning clergy.** The emperor, abandoned by his army, was made prisoner; and in all probability would have lost his crown had not the nobility pitied their humbled sovereign, and by sowing dissension among the three brothers, contrived to restore him to his dignity. In 832, the three brothers formed a new league against their father, and **Gregory IV**, then pope, went to France in the army of Lothaire, the eldest brother, under pretense of accommodating matters, but in reality with an intention of employing against the emperor that power which he derived from him, happy in the opportunity of asserting the supremacy and independence of the Holy See. The presence of the pope, in those days of superstition, was of itself sufficient to

determine the fate of Louis. After a deceitful negotiation, and an interview with Gregory on the part of Lothaire, the unfortunate emperor found himself at the mercy of his rebellious sons. He was deposed in a tumultuous assembly, and Lothaire proclaimed in his stead; after which infamous transaction the pope returned to Rome. To give stability to this revolution, and at the same time to conceal the deformity of their own conduct, the bishops of Lothaire's faction had recourse to a curious artifice. "A penitent," said they, "is incapable of all civil offices; a royal penitent must therefore be incapable of reigning; let us subject Louis to a perpetual penance, and he can never rescind the throne." **He was accordingly arraigned in an assembly of the states, by Ebbo, archbishop of Rheims, and condemned to do penance for life.** Louis was then prisoner in a monastery at Soissons, and being greatly intimidated, he patiently submitted to a ceremony no less solemn than degrading, lie prostrated himself on a hair cloth, which was spread before the altar, and owned himself guilty of the charges brought against him, in the presence of many bishops, canons, and monks -- Lothaire being also present, that he might enjoy the sight of his father's humiliation. Nor was this all; the degraded emperor was compelled to read aloud a written confession, in which he was made to accuse himself of sacrilege and murder; and to enumerate among his crimes, the marching of troops in Lent, calling an assembly on Holy Thursday, and taking up arms to defend himself against his rebellious children! So easy is it for superstition to transform into crimes the most innocent, and even the most necessary actions. After having made this humiliating confession, Louis, at the command of the archbishop, laid aside his sword and belt, divested himself of his royal robes, put on the penitential sackcloth, and retired to the cell that was assigned him.

But the feelings of nature, and the voice of humanity, at length prevailed over the prejudices of the age and the policy of the clergy. Lothaire became an object of general abhorrence, and his father of compassion. His two brothers united against him, in behalf of that father whom they had contributed to humble. The nobility returned to their obedience, paying homage to Louis as their lawful sovereign; and the ambitious Lothaire was obliged to crave mercy in the sight of the whole army, at the feet of a parent and an emperor, whom he had lately insulted. Louis died in the year 840 near Mentz, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-seventh of his reign, leaving to his unnatural son Lothaire a crown, a sword, and a very rich scepter. The bishop of Mentz observing that he had left nothing to his son Louis, reminded him that at the least, forgiveness was his duty; "Yes, I forgive him," cried the dying prince, with great emotion; "but tell him from me that he ought to seek forgiveness of God, for bringing my gray hairs in sorrow to the grave" [Vita Ludov. Pii. Passim].

**Lothaire succeeded his father** in the imperial dignity, and, after a reign of fifteen years, took the habit of a monk, that, according to the language of those times, he might atone for his crimes, and though he had lived a tyrant, die a saint. In this

pious disguise he expired, before he had worn it a week.

His father Louis, by a second marriage, had a son who was afterwards known by the name of **Charles the Bald**. At the time of his father's death he was only seventeen years of age; but his father, in bequeathing the empire to Lothaire, had stipulated for a portion of territory to his youngest child, and the former to fulfill the wishes of his indulgent father and intreaties of a fond mother, consented to resign to him a part of his territories. But scarcely was Charles warm in his seat, when he conspired with his brother Louis to dispossess Lothaire of the empire. Here fraternal hatred appeared in all its horrors. A battle was fought at Fontenoy, in Burgundy, than which, few engagements that are upon record were more bloody; for 100,000 men are said to have fallen on the spot [Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. 9, ch. 49]. Lothaire was defeated, and obliged to abandon France to the armies of his victorious brothers. To secure their conquest the latter applied to the clergy, and with the more confidence of success, as Lothaire, in order to raise his troops with greater expedition, had promised the Saxons the liberty of renouncing Christianity, the very idea of which was abhorred by the church of Rome. The bishops assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle, and after examining the misconduct of the emperor, inquired of the two princes, whether they chose to follow his example, or to govern according to the laws of God -- by which they meant, in enforcing Christianity upon the Saxons. Their answer may be easily anticipated. "Receive then the kingdom by the divine authority," added the prelates: "we exhort you, we command you to receive it." But Lothaire, by means of his indulgence to the Saxons, and other expedients, was enabled to raise a new army, and to recover his throne [Russel's *Modern Europe*, vol. 1, let. 10].

Nothing is more clear, than that the clergy now aspired to the right of disposing of crowns, which they founded on the ancient Jewish practice of anointing kings. They had recourse to the most miserable fictions and sophisms to render themselves independent. They refused to take the oath of fidelity, "because sacred hands could not, without abomination, submit to hands impure!" One usurpation led to another; abuse constituted right -- a quibble appeared a divine law. Ignorance sanctified every thing, and the most enormous usurpations of the clergy obtained a ready sanction from the slavish superstition of the laity. One very popular argument which the former much insisted on was, that the splendor of their dignity was to the majesty of the emperors and kings as the effulgence of the sun to the borrowed light of the moon; and therefore they demanded and extorted from crowned heads the most extravagant marks of respect and the most debasing humiliations. **They trumped up a collection of forged acts, known at present by the name of "The DECRETALS," spurious writings, in which are supposed the existence of ancient canons, ordaining that no provincial council shall be held without the permission of the pope; and that all ecclesiastical causes shall be under his jurisdiction.** The words of the immediate successors of the apostles are also therein quoted, and they are supposed to have left writings behind them. All these being written in the wretched



style of the eighth century, and the whole filled with blunders of the grossest kind, both historical and geographical, the artifice was sufficiently apparent; but they had only ignorant persons to deceive. **These false decretals imposed upon mankind for eight hundred years, and though the fraud was at length detected, the customs established by them still subsist in some countries: their antiquity supplied the place of truth!** The papal chair was filled about the middle of the ninth century by **NICHOLAS I**, one of the most obstinate, inflexible, and ambitious prelates that ever disgraced the priesthood. Even his own clergy, the bishop of Treves and Cologne accused him of making himself emperor of the world, an expression which, though somewhat strained, was not wholly without foundation. He asserted his dominion over the French clergy, and received appeals from all ecclesiastics, dissatisfied with their bishops. Hence he taught the people to acknowledge a supreme tribunal at a distance from their own country, and of course a foreign sway. He issued his orders in the most authoritative style, to regulate the disputed succession to the kingdom of Provence. "Let no one prevent the emperor," says he, "from governing the kingdoms which he holds in virtue of a succession confirmed by the holy see, and by the crown which the sovereign pontiff has set on his head."

**It is, however, pleasing to find that, deplorable as was the state of things, this domineering conduct of the popes did not always go without remonstrance, even from some of the clergy themselves.** Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, for example, about the year 875, raised his voice in the most spirited manner against the arrogant pretensions of **Adrian II**, the successor of Nicholas. This bold and independent prelate desired the pope to call to mind that respect and submission which the ancient pontiffs had always paid to princes, and to reflect that his dignity gave him no right over the government of kingdoms; that he could not be at the same time pope and king: that the choice of a sovereign belongs to the people; that anathemas ill applied have no effect upon the soul; and that free men are not to be enslaved by a bishop of Rome [Fleury's *Eccles. Hist.*]. But the voice of an individual is easily drowned in the clamors of a mob. The evil proceeded in defiance of the expostulation of Hincmar. About the year 877, Pope **John VIII** convened a council at Troyes in France, one of the canons of which is sufficiently remarkable to be adduced as a specimen of the spirit of the times. It expressly asserts, that "the powers of the world shall not dare to seat themselves in the presence of the bishops, unless desired." To dwell minutely upon this subject, and to illustrate the reign of the antichristian power by a copious detail of historical facts, though an easy task, would require more room than can be conveniently allotted to such a discussion in this sketch. The reader will probably be satisfied with this concise detail. Indeed, all our historians, civil and ecclesiastical, agree in describing the tenth century of the Christian era as the darkest epoch in the annals of mankind. "The history of the Roman pontiffs that lived in this [tenth] century," says the learned Mosheim, "is a history of so many monsters, and not of men; and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous, and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the

Romish communion, unanimously confess." Nor was the state of things much better in the Greek church at this period; as a proof of which, the same learned writer instances the example of Theophylact, patriarch of Constantinople, "This exemplary prelate, who sold every ecclesiastical benefice as soon as it became vacant, had in his stable above two thousand hunting horses, which he fed with pignuts, pistachios, dates, dried grapes, figs steeped in the most exquisite wines, to all which he added the richest perfumes. One Holy Thursday, as he was celebrating high mass, his groom brought him the joyful news that one of his favorite mares had foaled; upon which he threw down the Liturgy, left the church, and ran in rapture to the stable, where having expressed his joy at that grand event, he returned to the altar to finish the divine service, which he had left interrupted during his absence" [Quoted from Fleury's *Eccles. Hist.*].

To avoid the necessity of recurring to a topic so replete with every thing that can excite disgust in the mind of a humble Christian, I shall take leave of it by a short review of the state of things as they existed in the middle of the eleventh century.

In the year 1056, **Henry IV, surnamed the Great, though only five years old, ascended the throne of his father as emperor of Germany.** During the first years of his reign, the empire was harassed with civil wars, and Italy was a prey to intestine disorders. **Nicholas II**, then filled the pontifical chair; and he caused a council to be convened which consisted of a hundred and thirteen bishops, who passed a decree, by which it was ordained, that in future the cardinals only should elect the pope, and that the election should be confirmed by the rest of the Roman clergy and the people, "saving the honor," it was added, "due to our dear son Henry, now king; and who, if it please God, shall one day be emperor, according to the privilege which we have already conferred upon him; and saving the honor of his successors, on whom the apostolic see shall confer the same high privilege.

There resided at this time at Rome, one **HILDEBRAND**, a monk of the order of Cluny, who had recently been created a cardinal; a man of a restless, fiery, and enterprising disposition; but chiefly remarkable for his furious zeal for the pretensions of the church. He was born at Soana in Tuscany, of obscure parents, brought up at Rome, and had been frequently employed by that court to manage various political concerns which required dexterity and resolution, and he had rendered himself famous in all parts of Italy for his zeal and intrepidity. Hildebrand had interest enough to procure himself to be elected to the pontifical chair, in the year 1073, by the title of **GREGORY VII**, and the papacy has not produced a more extraordinary character. "All that the malice or flattery of a multitude of writers have said of this pope, is concentrated in a portrait of him drawn by a Neapolitan artist, in which Gregory is represented as holding a crook in one hand, and a whip in the other, trampling scepters under his feet, with St. Peter's net and fishes on either side of him" [Voltaire's *Universal History*, vol. 1, ch. 36]. Gregory was installed by the people

of Rome, without consulting the emperor, as had hitherto been customary; but though Henry had not been consulted upon the occasion, Gregory prudently waited for his confirmation of the choice before he assumed the tiara. He obtained it by this mark of submission: the emperor confirmed his election, and the new pontiff was not dilatory in pulling off the mask, for in a little time he raised a storm which fell with violence upon the head of Henry, and shook all the thrones in Christendom. He began his pontificate with excommunicating every ecclesiastic who should receive a benefice from a layman, and every layman by whom such benefice should be conferred. This was engaging the church in an open war with all the sovereigns of Europe. But the thunder of the holy see was more particularly directed against Henry, who, sensible of his danger and anxious to avert it, wrote a submissive letter to Gregory, and the latter pretended to take him into favor, after severely reprimanding him for the crimes of simony and debauchery, of which he now confessed himself guilty. **The pope at the same time proposed a crusade, the object of which was to deliver the holy sepulcher at Jerusalem from the hands of the Turkish infidels;** offering to head the Christians in person, and desiring Henry to serve as a volunteer under his command! Gregory next formed the project of making himself lord of Christendom, by at once dissolving the jurisdiction which kings and emperors had hitherto exercised over various orders of the clergy, and subjecting to the papal authority all temporal princes, rendering their dominions tributary to the see of Rome; and however romantic the undertaking may appear, it was not altogether without success. Solomon, king of Hungary, was at that time dethroned by his cousin Geysa, and fled to Henry for protection, renewing his homage to the latter as head of the empire. Gregory, who favored the cause of the usurper, exclaimed against this act of submission, and said in a letter to Solomon, "You ought to know, that the kingdom of Hungary belongs to the Roman church; and learn, that you will incur the indignation of the holy see, if you do not acknowledge that you hold your dominions of the pope, and not of the emperor." This presumptuous declaration, and the neglect with which it was treated, brought the quarrel between the empire and the church to a crisis: it was directed to Solomon, but intended for Henry.

Hitherto the princes of Christendom had enjoyed the right of nominating bishops and abbots, and of giving them investiture by the ring and crosier. The popes, on their part, had been accustomed to send legates to the emperors to entreat their assistance, to obtain their confirmation, or to desire them to come and receive papal sanction. Gregory now resolving to push the claim of investitures, sent two of his legates to summon Henry to appear before him as a delinquent, because he still continued to bestow investitures, notwithstanding the papal decree to the contrary: adding, that if he failed to yield obedience to the church, he must expect to be excommunicated and dethroned.

This arrogant message, from one whom he regarded as his vassal, greatly provoked

Henry, who abruptly dismissed the legates, and lost no time in convoking an assembly of princes and dignified ecclesiastics at Worms; where after mature deliberation, they came to this conclusion, that Gregory having usurped the chair of St. Peter, by indirect means, infected the church of God with many novelties and abuses, and deviated from his duty to his sovereign in several instances, the emperor, by the supreme authority derived from his predecessors, ought to divest him of his dignity, and appoint a successor. Henry, consequently, sent an ambassador to Rome, with a formal deprivation of Gregory; who, in his turn, convoked a council, at which were present one hundred and ten bishops, who, unanimously agreed, that the pope had just cause to depose Henry, to annul the oath of allegiance which the princes and states had taken in his favor, and to prohibit them from holding any correspondence with him on pain of excommunication. And this execrable sentence was immediately fulminated against the emperor and his adherents. "In the name of Almighty God, and by your authority," said Gregory, addressing the members of the council, "I prohibit Henry from governing the Teutonic kingdom and Italy. I release all Christians from their oath of allegiance to him; and I strictly forbid all persons to serve or attend him as king."

**This is the first instance of a pope presuming to deprive a sovereign of his crown;** but, unhappily, it was too flattering to ecclesiastical pride to be the last. No preceding prelate had hitherto dared to use such imperious language as Gregory; for, though Louis, the son of Charles the Great, had been deposed by his bishops, there was at least some color for that step; they condemned him in appearance only to do public penance.

The circular letters written by Gregory breathe the same spirit as his sentence of deposition. In them he repeatedly asserts, that "bishops are superior to kings, and made to judge them" -- expressions equally artful and presumptuous. His object is said to have been that of engaging in the bonds of fidelity and allegiance to the pope as vicar of Christ, all the potentates of the earth, and to establish at Rome an annual assembly of bishops, by whom the contests which, from time to time, might arise between kingdoms and sovereign states were to be decided, the rights and pretensions of princes to be examined, and the fate of nations and empires determined [Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* vol. 2, cent. 11, part 2].

Gregory well knew what consequences would result from the thunders of the church. The bishops in Germany immediately came over to his party, and drew with them many of the nobles. The Saxons took the opportunity of revolting: even the emperor's favorite, Guelf, a nobleman to whom he had given the duchy of Bavaria, supported the mal-contents with that very power which he owed to his sovereign's bounty; and the princes and prelates who had assisted in deposing Gregory, gave up their monarch to be tried by the pope, who was requested to come to Augsburg for that

purpose.

To avoid the odium of this impending trial, **Henry took the strange resolution of suddenly passing the Alps, accompanied only by a few domestics, and of throwing himself at the feet of Gregory, in order to implore his absolution.** The pontiff was at that time on a visit to the countess or duchess Matilda, at Canosa, a fortress on the Appenines. At the gate of this mansion, the emperor presented himself as an humble penitent. He alone was admitted within the outer court, where, being stripped of his robes, and wrapped in sackcloth, **he was compelled to remain three days, in the month of January (A.D. 1077), barefoot and fasting, before he was permitted to kiss the feet of his holiness!** The indulgence was, however, at length granted him -- he was permitted to throw himself at the feet of the haughty pontiff, who condescended to grant him absolution, after he had sworn obedience to the pope in all things, and promised to submit to his solemn decision at Augsburg; so that Henry reaped nothing but disgrace and mortification from his journey, while the pontiff, elate with triumph, and now considering himself as the lord and master of all the crowned heads in Christendom, said in several of his letters, that "it was his duty to pull down the pride of kings." Happily for Henry, all sense of propriety and of common decency was not banished from the earth. The princes of Italy were disgusted with the strange accommodation that had taken place between him and the pope. They never could forgive the insolence of the former, nor the abject humility of the latter. But their indignation at Gregory's arrogance over-balanced their detestation of their monarch's meanness. He took advantage of this temper, and, by a change of fortune hitherto unknown to the German emperors, found a strong party in Italy, when abandoned by his own subjects. All Lombardy took up arms against the pope, while the latter was raising all Germany against the emperor. The former had recourse to every art to procure the election of another emperor in Germany, while Henry, on his part, left nothing undone to persuade the people of Italy to choose another pope. The Germans chose Rodolph, duke of Suabia, who was solemnly crowned at Mentz; and this gave Gregory an opportunity of exercising all his finesse in order to extort submission from Henry. He affected to be displeased that Rodolph was consecrated without his order. He had deposed Henry, but it was still in his power to pardon him -- he therefore declared that he would acknowledge as emperor and king of Germany that claimant who should be most submissive to the holy see.

But Henry was not now to be duped. He chose rather to trust to the valor of his arms than to the generosity of the pope, and therefore marched his troops against his rival Rodolph, whom he defeated in several engagements. Gregory, seeing no hopes of submission, thundered out a second sentence of excommunication, in which, after depriving Henry of strength in combat, and condemning him never to be victorious -- he desires the world to take notice that it is in the pope's power to take away empires, kingdoms, principalities, etc. and to bestow them on whom he pleases. The whole concludes with the following extraordinary apostrophe to the apostles, Peter

and Paul: "Make all men sensible that, as you can bind and loose every thing in heaven, you can also upon earth, take from or give to, every one according to his deserts, empires, kingdoms, principalities. Let the kings and princes of the age instantly feel your power, that they may not dare to despise the orders of your church; and let your justice be so speedily executed upon Henry, that nobody may doubt of his falling by your means and not by chance" [Fleury's *Eccles. History*].

But the apostles were either deaf to the prayer of their pretended successor, or declined their co-operation with it. Henry triumphed over his enemies. Rodolph had his hand cut off in a battle which was fought with great fury near Mersburgh, in Saxony, and, discouraged by the misfortune of their chief, his followers gave way. Rodolph, perceiving his end approaching, ordered the amputated member to be brought him, and thus addressed his officers. "Behold the hand with which I took the oath of allegiance to Henry -- an oath which, at the instigation of Rome, I have violated, in perfidiously aspiring to an honor that was not due to me." The affairs of Henry now revived apace. A new pope was elected, who took the title of **Clement III**, and the emperor, thus delivered from his formidable antagonist, soon dispersed the rest of his enemies in Germany, and proceeded to Italy, to settle the new pontiff in the papal chair. The gates of Rome being shut against him, he was compelled to attack the city in form. After a siege of two years, it was taken by assault, and with difficulty saved from pillage, but Gregory retired into the castle of St. Angelo, from whence he hurled defiance, and fulminated his thunder against the conqueror. The siege of St. Angelo was now prosecuted with vigor, but in the absence of Henry, Gregory found means to escape, and died soon after at Salerno, A.D. 1085. His last words were, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile" [*Life of Gregory VII* by Dithmar].

But the troubles of Henry did not terminate with the life of Gregory. The pontiffs who succeeded proved as inimical to his peace and tranquillity as their predecessor had been. **Urban II** contrived, in conjunction with the countess Matilda, to seduce the emperor's son into a rebellion against his father. This young prince, whose name was Conrad, assumed the title of king of Italy, and succeeded so well in his usurpation, that the greater part of the cities of Italy and their nobles acknowledged him as their sovereign. The emperor, despairing of being able to reduce him to obedience by arms, assembled the German princes, who put the delinquent to the ban\* of the empire, and declared his brother Henry king of the Romans. Two years afterwards both Conrad and the pope died -- the latter being succeeded in the papal chair by **Pascal II** (another Gregory) and the former by his younger brother Henry as king of Italy. [\* The word *ban* originally signified banner, afterwards edict, and lastly, a declaration of outlawry, which was thus intimated: "We declare thy wife a widow, thy children orphans, and send thee, in the name of the devil, to the four corners of the earth."]

The new pope was scarcely invested with office ere he contrived to excite young Henry

to rebel against his father. He called a council, to which he summoned the aged monarch; and as the latter did not obey the citation, he excommunicated him for the schisms which he had introduced into the church; stimulating his son to rebellion, by alleging that he was bound to take upon himself the reins of government, as he could not acknowledge an excommunicated king or father. In vain did the emperor use every paternal remonstrance to dissuade his son from proceeding to extremities; the breach became wider, and each prepared for the decision of the sword. But the son, dreading his father's superiority, and confiding in his tenderness, had recourse to a stratagem as base as it was effectual. He threw himself unexpectedly at the emperor's feet, and implored pardon for his undutiful behavior, which he attributed to the influence of evil counselors. In consequence of this submission, he was taken into favor by his indulgent parent, who instantly dismissed his army. The ungrateful youth now revealed the perfidy that was in his heart; he ordered his father to be confined -- assembled a diet of his own confederates, at which the pope's legate presided, and repeated the sentence of excommunication against the emperor, whose dignity was instantly transferred to his rebellious son.

The archbishops of Mentz and Cologne were sent as deputies to the old emperor, to intimate his deposition and demand his regalia. Henry received this deputation with equal surprise and concern; and finding that the chief accusation against him was "the scandalous manner in which he had set bishopricks to sale," he thus addressed the audacious ecclesiastics: "If I have prostituted the benefices of the church for hire, you, yourselves, are the most proper persons to convict me of that simony. Say then, I conjure you in the name of the eternal God! what have I exacted, or what have I received, for having promoted you to the dignities that you now enjoy?" They acknowledged that he was innocent, so far as regarded their preferments. "And yet," continued he, "the archbishops of Mentz and Cologne, being two of the best in my gift, I might have filled my coffers by exposing them to sale. I bestowed them, however, upon you, out of free grace and favor, and a worthy return you make to my benevolence! Do not, I beseech you, become abettors of those who have lifted up their hands against their lord and master in defiance of faith, gratitude, and allegiance."

As the unfeeling prelates, deaf to this pathetic address, insisted on his compliance with the object of their mission, Henry retired, and put on his regal ornaments; then returning to the apartment he had left, and seating himself on a chair of state, he renewed his remonstrance in these words: "Here are the marks of that royalty with which I was invested by God, and the princes of the empire; if you disregard the wrath of heaven, and the eternal reproach of mankind, so much as to lay violent hands on your sovereign, you may strip me of them, I am not in a condition to defend myself."

Regardless of these expostulations, the two archbishops snatched the crown from his head, and dragging him from his chair, forcibly pulled off his robes. While thus

employed, Henry exclaimed, "Great God! (the tears flowing down his venerable cheeks) thou art the God of vengeance, and wilt repay this outrage. I have sinned, I own, and merited such shame by the follies of my youth; but thou wilt not fail to punish those traitors for their violence, ingratitude, and perjury."

To such a degree of wretchedness was this prince afterwards reduced by the barbarity of his son, that, destitute of the common necessities of life, he entreated the bishop of Spire, whom he had promoted to that see, to grant him a canonry for his subsistence, representing that he was capable of performing the office of "chanter or reader." Disappointed in that humble request, he shed a flood of tears, and turning to those who were present, said, with a deep sigh, "My dear friends, at least have pity upon my condition, for I am touched by the hand of the Lord."

Yet in the midst of these distresses, when every one thought his courage was utterly extinguished, and his soul overwhelmed by despondence, Henry found means to escape from custody and reached Cologne, where he was recognized as lawful emperor. Repairing next to the Netherlands, he found friends who raised a considerable body of men to assert his claims, and facilitate his restoration; he also issued circular letters, calling upon the princes of Christendom to interest themselves in his cause. He even wrote to the pope, intimating that he was inclined to an accommodation, provided it could be settled without prejudice to his cause. But before any thing material could be executed in his favor, Henry died at Leige (Aug. 7, 1106) in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the forty-ninth of his reign. He was a prince of great courage and excellent endowments both of body and mind. In his appearance there was an air of dignity which spoke the greatness of his soul. He possessed a natural fund of eloquence and vivacity, his temper was placid and merciful, his kindness and benevolence extensive, and his life exhibited an admirable pattern of fortitude and resignation. [Russell's *Modern Europe*, vol. 1, part 1, letter 23, and the authors there quoted on this subject.]



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **SKETCH OF THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION FROM THE DEATH OF CLAUDE OF TURIN TO THE TIMES OF PETER WALDO**

**A.D. 843-1160**

During the dark ages which succeeded the invasion of Europe by the barbarous nations, when feudal anarchy distracted the civil governments, and a flood of superstition had deluged the church, **Christianity, banished from the seats of empire, and loathing the monkish abodes of indolence and vice, meekly retired into the sequestered valleys of Piedmont.** Finding there a race of men unarrayed in hostile armor, uncontaminated by the doctrines and commandments of an apostate church, unambitious in their temper, and simple in their manners, she preferred their society, and among them took up her abode. The turbulence of the times, which drove many from the more fertile plains of France and Italy, in search of freedom and tranquillity, greatly augmented the population of this remote district; and, in the ninth century, the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven had been held forth among them with considerable clearness and ability by Claude, bishop of Turin. [See chap. 4, sect. 1, and 1 See chap. 4, sect. 1, and *L'Hist. Generale des Eglises Vaud.* par. Giles Juan Leger, ch. 20, 21, 22, 28. Rankin's *Hist. France*, vol. 3.]

Remote from the influence of noisy parties, and little conversant with literature, we can scarcely expect any notice of them, until their increase and prosperity excited the attention of ambition and avarice, and occasioned it to be rumored in the neighboring ecclesiastical states, that **a numerous people occupied the southern valleys of the**

**Alps, whose faith and practice differed from those of the Romish church; who paid no tithes, offered no mass, worshipped no saints, nor had recourse to any of the prescribed means for redeeming their souls from purgatory.**

The archbishops of Turin, Milan, and other cities, heard this report with anxiety, and the necessary measures were accordingly adopted for ascertaining its truth or falsehood; the former turning out to be the result, and finding that these people were not to be controlled by the authority and denunciations of the church of Rome, the aid of the civil power was demanded. The princes and nobles of the adjacent countries at first refused to disturb them; they had beheld with pleasure their simple manners, their uprightness and integrity, their readiness to oblige, and their fidelity in the discharge of all the duties of civil and social life. The clamor of the Romish clergy, however, ultimately prevailed, and the civil power was armed against the peaceable and inoffensive inhabitants of the valleys. Scaffolds were erected and fires kindled at Turin and other cities around them. The fortitude and confidence of the martyrs, however, increased as their faith and constancy were tried. "Favor me," said Catalan Girard, who was one of their number, as he sat upon the funeral pile at Reuel -- "favor me with those two flint stones," which he saw near him. Being handed to him, he added, as he threw them to the ground, "Sooner shall I eat these stones, than you shall be able by persecution to destroy the religion for which I die" [Perrin's *History of the Vaudois*, part 2, b. 2, ch. 4].

Multitudes, however, fled like innocent and defenseless sheep from these devouring wolves. They crossed the Alps; and traveled in every direction as Providence and the prospect of safety conducted them, into Germany, England, France, Italy, and other countries. There they trimmed their lamps and shone with new lustre. Their worth every where drew attention, and their doctrine formed increasing circles around them. The storm which threatened their destruction, only scattered them as the precious seeds of the future glorious reformation of the Christian church. [Dr. Rankin's *History of France*, vol. 3, p. 193-198.]

In the present section, we shall endeavor to mark their dispersions into different countries, and the treatment they met with during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, prior to the appearance of Peter Waldo of Lyons. **Our materials of information are scanty, and even those we must be content to receive chiefly from their implacable enemies;** but by a little patient research, and the aid of a discriminating judgment in selecting the probable from the fictitious, we shall be furnished with some interesting information relative to this obscure portion of their history.

But before we proceed, it may be proper to remark, that about the middle of the eleventh century, and during the pontificate of **Pope Leo IX** (A.D. 1050) rose up **BERENGARIUS**, a person of great learning and talents, who **denied the doctrine of**

**the real presence**, as it was then commonly termed; and by writing against it, called forth all the learned of the church of Rome to defend the doctrine of transubstantiation. Berengarius was a native of France, educated under Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, a very learned man; and taking orders in the church, became deacon of St. Maurice, and ultimately archbishop of Angers, in the province of Anjou. He was also principal of the academy of Tours. The prevalent sentiment of his day relative to the eucharist was, that the bread was the identical body, and the wine the very blood of Christ -- not only figuratively, but substantially and properly. Berengarius, on the contrary, insisted that the body of Christ is only in the heavens; and that the elements of bread and wine are merely the symbols of his body and blood. Several of the bishops wrote against him, most bitterly complaining of his heresy; but not feeling the force of their arguments, Berengarius remained unmoved, and defended his opinions with the utmost pertinacity. He wrote a letter on the subject to Lanfrank, who was at that time at the head of the convent of St. Stephens, at Caen, in Normandy, and called from thence by William the Conqueror to be archbishop of Canterbury, which being opened while the latter was from home, was officiously transmitted by the convent to Pope Leo. The pontiff, shocked at its heretical contents, summoned **a council at Vercelli**, at which Berengarius was commanded to be present. His friends, however, advised him against going, and he consequently sent two persons to attend the council, and answer in his behalf. Lanfrank also was present and pleaded for Berengarius, but the latter was condemned, the two persons who appeared for him imprisoned, and Lanfrank commanded by the Pope to draw up a refutation of the heresy of Berengarius on pain of being himself reputed a heretic; with which injunction he thought it prudent to comply. This example was followed also by **the council of Paris**, summoned the very same year by Henry I, in which Berengarius and his numerous adherents, were threatened with all sorts of evils both spiritual and temporal -- evils which were in part executed against the heretical prelate, for the monarch deprived him of all his revenues. But neither threatenings nor fines, nor the decrees of Synods, could shake the firmness of his mind, or oblige him to retract his sentiments. In the mean while, the opinions of Berengarius were every where spreading rapidly, insomuch that if we may credit contemporary writers, "his doctrine had corrupted all the English, Italian, and French nations." Thuanus adds, that "in Germany were many of the same doctrine, and that Bruno, bishop of Treves, banished them all out of his diocese, sparing only their blood." During the remainder of the life of Leo IX, Berengarius and his friends enjoyed a temporary respite, but no sooner had **Victor II** succeeded to the pontifical chair, than the flame of religious discord was rekindled, and **a council was assembled at Tours, in 1055**, to examine anew the doctrine of Berengarius. At this council the famous Hildebrand, who was afterwards created Pope **Gregory VII**, appeared in the character of legate, and opposed the new doctrine with the utmost vehemence. Berengarius was also present at this assembly, and overawed, by threats rather than convinced by argument, he professed to abandon his opinions, solemnly abjured them in the presence of the council, and made his peace with the church. In

this, however, he appears to have been insincere, for soon after this period he taught anew, though with more circumspection, the opinions he had formerly professed. The account of his perfidy reaching Rome, he was summoned to attend a council which was convened there in 1059, and on this occasion, so terrified was Berengarius, that he declared his readiness to embrace and adhere to the doctrines which that venerable assembly should think proper to impose upon him. A confession of faith was accordingly drawn up, which he publicly signed and ratified by an oath. In that confession the following declaration was contained, -- that the bread and wine after consecration were not only a sacrament, but also the real body and blood of Jesus Christ; and that this body and blood were handled by the priests, and consumed by the faithful, not sacramentally, but in reality and truth, as other sensible objects are. This doctrine was so monstrously absurd; it was such an impudent insult upon common sense and the very first principles of reason, that it is impossible it should impose upon the acute mind of Berengarius for a moment, nor could it possibly become the object of his serious belief; and his conduct, almost immediately after, proved that his profession of it was an odious act of dissimulation; for no sooner was he returned into France, than he expressed the utmost detestation and abhorrence of the doctrines he had been obliged to profess at Rome, solemnly abjured them in his discourse and writings; and returned zealously to the profession and defense of his former real opinion.

The controversy, however, was still prolonged during many years, and a multitude of writings on both sides of the question, were continually issuing, and the followers of Berengarius every where increasing. His adversaries now had recourse to the seducing influence of soft and friendly expostulation, to engage him to dissemble anew; or, in other words, to return from his pretended apostasy; but these proved ineffectual. At length, **Gregory VII** was raised to the papal chair, a man whose enterprising spirit no difficulties or opposition could discourage. This prelate, resolving to put an end to this wide-spreading controversy, sent an order to Berengarius to repair to Rome in the year 1078. Gregory had a high esteem for the latter, and though to silence the clamors of the multitude he found it necessary to oppose him, he did it with all possible mildness. He permitted Berengarius to draw up a new confession of his faith, and to renounce that which he had formerly sworn to abide by.

This new confession not proving satisfactory to his enraged adversaries, though Gregory himself approved it, a second was drawn up, which was indeed less vague and equivocal, but then it contained all the quintessence of absurdity which characterized the original one; for he now professed to believe, that "the bread and wine were, by the mysterious influences of the holy prayer, and the words of Christ, substantially changed into the true, proper, and vivifying body and blood of Christ." No sooner had he made this strange declaration than the pope loaded him with caresses and sent him back to France, graced with the most honorable testimonies of

his liberality and friendship. Solemn, however, as the declaration had been at Rome, Berengarius had no sooner returned to his residence than he began to compose an elaborate refutation of his last confession, which excited afresh the flames of theological controversy. Berengarius, however, amidst the clamors of his enraged adversaries, from this time observed a profound silence. Disgusted with a controversy in which the first principles of reason were so impudently insulted, and exhausted by an opposition which he was unable to overcome, he abandoned all his worldly concerns and retired into solitude, to pass the remainder of his days in fasting, prayer, and the exercise of piety. "In the year 1088 death put a period to the affliction which he suffered in his retirement, occasioned by a bitter reflection upon the dissimulation he had been guilty of at Rome; leaving behind him, in the minds of the people, a deep impression of his extraordinary sanctity, and his followers were as numerous as his fame was illustrious" [Mosheim, vol. 2, Cent. 11, part 2].

This controversy was too remarkable to be wholly passed over in this place, but having said thus much of it, I now pass on to a more pleasing and profitable subject.

A little before the year 1140, Evervinus, of Stainfield, in the diocese of Cologne, in Germany, addressed a letter to the celebrated **Saint Bernard**, concerning certain heretics in his neighborhood. This letter has been preserved by Mabillon, and the learned Dr. Allix has furnished us with a translation of it in his *Remarks on the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, p. 140. A few extracts from it will enable us to form some judgment concerning this class of men. Evervinus was much perplexed in his mind about them; and to obtain a solution of his doubts, he wrote as follows, to the renowned Bernard, whose word, at that time, was as law throughout Christendom.

"There have lately been some heretics discovered among us near Cologne, of whom some have with satisfaction returned again to the church. One that was a bishop among them and his companions, openly opposed us in the assembly of the clergy and laity, the lord archbishop himself being present, with many of the nobility, maintaining their heresy from the words of Christ and his apostles. But finding that they made no impression, they desired that a day might be fixed, upon which they might bring along with them men skillful in their faith, promising to return to the church, provided their teachers were unable to answer their opponents; but that otherwise they would rather die than depart from their judgment. Upon this declaration, having been admonished to repent for three days, they were seized by the people in their excess of zeal, and burnt to death; and, what is most astonishing, they came to the stake, and endured the torment of the flames, not only with patience, but even with joy. In this case, O holy father, were I present with you, I should be glad to ask you, how these members of Satan could persist in their heresy with such constancy and courage as is rarely to be found among the most religious in the faith of Christ.

"Their heresy is this: -- They say that the church is only among themselves,

because they alone follow the ways of Christ, and imitate the apostles, not seeking secular gains, possessing no property, following the pattern of Christ, who was himself perfectly poor, nor permitted his disciples to possess any thing. [We shall see reason hereafter to believe that, in this particular, Evervinus misrepresented them. Author] Whereas ye, say they to us, join house to house, and field to field, seeking the things of this world, -- yea, even your monks and regular canons possess all these things -- describing themselves as the poor of Christ's flock, who have no certain abode, fleeing from one city to another, like sheep in the midst of wolves -- enduring persecution with the apostles and martyrs; though strict in their manner of life, abstemious, laborious, devout and holy, and seeking only what is needful for bodily sustenance, living as men who are not of the world. But you, say they, lovers of the world, have peace with the world because ye are of it. False apostles, who adulterate the word of God, seeking their own things, have misled you and your ancestors. **Whereas we and our fathers having been born and brought up in the apostolic doctrine, have continued in the grace of Christ, and shall continue so to the end.** 'By their fruits ye shall know them' saith Christ; and our fruits are the footsteps of Christ. **The apostolic dignity, say they, is corrupted by engaging itself in secular affairs, while it sits in the chair of Peter. They do not hold the baptism of infants,** alleging that passage of the gospel, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' **They place no confidence in the intercession of saints;** and all things observed in the church which have not been established by Christ himself or his apostles, they call superstitious. **They do not admit of any purgatory** fire after death, contending that the souls as soon as they depart out of the bodies, do enter into rest, or punishment, proving it from that passage of Solomon, 'Which way soever the tree falls, whether to the south or to the north, there it lies,' by which means **they make void all the prayers and oblations of believers for the deceased.**

"We, therefore, beseech you, holy father, to employ your care and watchfulness against these manifold mischiefs; and that you would be pleased to direct your pen against these wild beasts of the reeds, not thinking it sufficient to answer us that the tower of David, to which we may betake ourselves for refuge, is sufficiently fortified with bulwarks, that a thousand bucklers hang on the walls of it, all shields of mighty men. For we desire father, for the sake of us simple ones, and that are slow of understanding, you would be pleased by your study, to gather all these arms into one place, that they may be the more readily found, and more powerful to resist these monsters. I must inform you also, that those of them who have returned to our church, tell us, that they had great numbers of their persuasion scattered almost every where, and that amongst them were many of our clergy and monks. And as for those who were burnt, they, in the defense they made for themselves, told us, that this heresy had been concealed from the time of the martyrs - and that it had existed in Greece and other countries."

The letter of Evervinus had all the effect upon Bernard that he could desire. The mighty champion immediately prepared himself for the combat. He was then publishing a set of sermons on the Canticles, and in the 65th and 66th of them he enters the lists most vehemently with these heretics. **He is extremely offended with them for deriding the Catholics because they baptized infants, and prayed for the dead, and asserted purgatory** -- condemns their scrupulous refusal to swear at all, which, according to him, was one of their peculiarities -- upbraids them with their secrecy in the observance of their religious rites, not considering the necessity which persecution imposed upon them -- finds fault with a practice among them of dwelling with women in the same house without being married to them, by which we are no doubt to understand, that they did not think it necessary to solemnize their marriages according to the ceremonies of the church of Rome, though he expresses himself as knowing very little of the manners of the sect; and from the numberless rumors propagated against them, he suspects them of hypocrisy. Yet his testimony in favor of their general conduct seems to overbalance all his invectives. "If," says he, "you ask them of their faith, nothing can be more Christian; if you observe their conversation, nothing can be more blameless, and what they speak, they prove by deeds. You may see a man, for the testimony of his faith, frequent the church, honor the elders, offer his gift, make his confession, receive the sacrament. What more like a Christian? As to life and manners, he circumvents no man, over-reaches no man, and does violence to no man. He fasts much, and eats not the bread of idleness, but works with his hands for his support. The whole body, indeed, are rustic and illiterate, and all whom I have known of this sect are very ignorant." Such was the testimony of the great Saint Bernard in their behalf.

[Dr. Haweis loses all patience with his brother Milner, for attempting to introduce the great Bernard into the calendar of saints. "I am astonished," says he, "at his attempt to enroll Bernard in his catalogue of evangelical religion. Saint added to such a name would be impious. However orthodox some of his sentiments may be, can false miracles, lying prophecies, bloody persecutions of the faithful, and servitude to the papacy and her dominion, constitute a saint of the first water? A protestant divine disgraces his page by these commendations, and renders even the truths which he supports, and contends for as evangelical, suspicious." *Impartial Hist.* vol 2, p. 230. In all this I fully agree with Dr. Haweis; but then it furnishes me with a powerful plea against his own consistency, who has no scruple to enroll in his catalogue the names of **Athanasius and Augustine -- men equally renowned for their lust of power, their persecuting principles, their false miracles, their lying prophecies, and abject servitude to the prevailing corruption of their respective times.** To the character of Bernard, however, let us not be unjust. He was not a blind and slavish supporter of the court of Rome, even in those days. On the contrary, he used the greatest freedom of speech in lashing the vices of the clergy of his time, and made himself extremely obnoxious to them by his free remonstrances. "Who at the outset," says he, "when the order of monks began, would ever have imagined that monks

would become so wicked as they since have? Oh, how unlike are we to those in the days of Anthony? Did Macarius live in such a manner? Did Basil teach so? Did Anthony ordain so? Did the fathers in Egypt carry themselves so? How is the light of the world become darkness? How is the salt of the earth become unsavory? I am a liar," says he, "if I have not seen an abbot having above sixty horses in his train! When ye saw them riding, ye might say, 'These are not fathers of monasteries, but lords of castles - not shepherds of souls, but princes of provinces!' -- Oh, vanity of vanities! the walls of churches are glorious, while the poor are starving." Even the popes themselves were not spared by Bernard. He wrote to Eugenius and to Innocent the Second, imputing to them the blame of all the wickedness in the church, -- though he approved of its constitution, and defended all its rights and ceremonies. This inconsistent conduct gave rise to a saying which passed into a proverb, and was common for centuries after, viz. Bernardus *non vidit omnia* -- **Bernard does not see every thing.**]

We have some additional information concerning these people, given us by **Egbert**, a monk, and afterwards abbot of Schonaue, who tells us that he had often disputed with these heretics, and that he had learned still more of their opinions from those who had through the force of torments and the threat of being burned, renounced their communion. He says, "they are commonly called Cathari, [Puritans] a sort of people very pernicious to the catholic faith, which, like moths, they corrupt and destroy." **He adds, that they were divided into several sects, and maintained their opinions by the authority of scripture. He takes particular notice of their denying the utility of baptism to infants**, which, say they, through their incapacity, avails nothing to their salvation; insisting that baptism ought to be deferred till they come to years of discretion, and that even then those only should be baptized who make a personal profession of faith, and desire it. [See his Sermon against the Cathari in Bib. Pat. tom. 2, p. 99, 106. D'Anver's *Hist. Bapt.* p. 249.] "They are armed," says he, "with the words of the holy scripture which in any way seem to favor their sentiments, and with those they know how to defend their errors, and to oppose the catholic truth; though in reality they are wholly ignorant of the true meaning couched in those words, and which cannot be discovered without great judgment. They are increased to great multitudes throughout all countries, to the great danger of the church for their words eat like a canker, and, like a flying leprosy, runs every way, infecting the precious members of Christ. These, in our Germany we call **Cathari**; in Flanders they call them **Piphles**; in French, **Tisserands**, from the art of weaving, because numbers of them are of that occupation" [Dr. Allix's *Remarks*, p. 150].

Thus by comparing together these several fragments of information, we may acquire some distinct notion of these Cathari. They were a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious race of Christians, patiently bearing the cross after Christ, and both in their doctrine and manners condemning the whole system of idolatry and



superstition which reigned in the church of Rome, placing true religion in the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, maintaining a supreme regard to the authority of God, in his word, and regulating their sentiments and practices by that divine standard. Even in the twelfth century their numbers abounded in the neighborhood of Cologne, in Flanders, the south of France, Savoy, and Milan. **"They were increased," says Egbert, "to great multitudes, THROUGHOUT ALL COUNTRIES,"** and although they seem not to have attracted attention in any remarkable degree previous to this period, yet, as **IT IS OBVIOUS THEY COULD NOT HAVE SPRUNG UP IN A DAY, IT IS NOT AN UNFAIR INFERENCE THAT THEY MUST HAVE LONG EXISTED AS A PEOPLE WHOLLY DISTINCT FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THOUGH, AMIDST THE POLITICAL SQUABBLES OF THE CLERGY, IT WAS THEIR GOOD FORTUNE TO BE ALMOST ENTIRELY OVERLOOKED.**

The same Egbert, speaking of them, says, "Concerning the souls of the dead, they hold this opinion, that at the very instant of their departure out of the body, they go to eternal bliss or endless misery, for they do not admit the belief of the universal church, that there are some purgatory punishments, with which the souls of some of the elect are tried for a time, on account of those sins from which they have not been purified by a plenary satisfaction in this life. On which account they think it superfluous and vain to give alms for the dead and celebrate masses; and they scoff at our ringing of bells, which, nevertheless, for pious reasons, are used in our churches, to give others warning that they may pray for the dead, and to put them in mind of their own death. As for masses, they altogether despise them, regarding them as of no value, for they maintain that the sacerdotal order has entirely ceased in the church of Rome and all other catholic churches, and that true priests are only to be found in their sect" [Serm. 1, p. 889, in Bib. pp. Colon. ed. quoted by Dr. Allix, p. 152].

**Throughout the whole of the twelfth century, these people were exposed to severe persecution.** The zeal of **Galdinus**, archbishop of Milan, was roused against them to such a pitch, that after making them the objects of unrelenting persecution, during a period of eight or nine years, he, at length, fell a martyr to his own zeal, dying in the year 1173, in consequence of an illness contracted through the excess of his vehemence in preaching against them.

Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a small society of these **Puritans**, as they were called by some, or **Waldenses**, as they are termed by others, or **Paulicians**, as they are denominated by our old monkish historian, William of Neuburg, **made their appearance in England.** This latter writer speaking of them, says, "they came originally from Gascoyne, where, being as numerous as the sand of the sea, they sorely infested both France, Italy, Spain, and England." The following is the account given by Dr. Henry, in his *History of Great Britain*, vol. viii p. 338. Oct. ed. of this emigrating party, which, in substance, corresponds with what is said of them by

Rapin, Collier, Lyttleton, and other of our writers.

"A company, consisting of about thirty men and women, who spoke the German language, **appeared in England at this time (1159)**, and soon attracted the attention of government by the singularity of their religious practices and opinions. **It is indeed very difficult to discover with certainty what their opinions were, because they are recorded only by our monkish historians, who speak of them with much asperity.** They were apprehended and brought before a council of the clergy at Oxford. Being interrogated about their religion, their teacher, named Gerard, a man of learning, **answered in their name, that they were Christians, and believed the doctrines of the apostles.** Upon a more particular inquiry, it was found that **they denied several of the received doctrines of the church, such as purgatory, prayers for the dead, and the invocation of saints;** and refusing to abandon these damnable heresies, as they were called, they were condemned as incorrigible heretics, and delivered to the secular arm to be punished. The king, (Henry II) at the instigation of the clergy, **commanded them to be branded with a red hot iron on the forehead, to be whipped through the streets of Oxford, and, having their clothes cut short by their girdles, to be turned into the open fields,** all persons being forbidden to afford them any shelter or relief under the severest penalties. **This cruel sentence was executed in its utmost rigor; and, it being the depth of winter, all these unhappy persons perished with cold and hunger.** These seem to have been the first who suffered death in Britain, for the vague and variable crime of heresy, and it would have been much to the honor of the country if they had been the last."

There is an account of the punishing of these Waldenses, in the *Archaeologia*, vol. 9, p. 292-305, written by the Rev. Mr. Denne, of Wilmington; from which I shall here give a short extract by way of supplement to the preceding narrative.

"These persons, having been believers of the essential doctrines of Christianity, (as is admitted by the bishops) and, as it may be inferred from the silence of the historian, that these sectaries were in their manners inoffensive, nothing but the evil spirit of persecution could have prompted their judges to deliver them up to the civil magistrate. It was the more culpable in the prelates, because there was so little ground for an alarm of their propagating with success their peculiar tenets. For though they seem to have resided for some time in England, they only converted one woman of inferior rank, and she was so slightly attached to them, that she was soon prevailed on to recant and forsake their society. And as they were not disturbers of the public peace, it is somewhat strange that the king, whose disposition was humane, should think those people merited branding and exile. But it was during the contest between Henry and Becket, in support of the just rights of the crown, that this occurrence happened; and his hard usage of these foreigners has been attributed to an unwillingness of affording a pretext to the pope and his adherents to charge them with profaneness, or an inattention to the cause of religion. **By the**

**council of Tours, held in 1163, princes were exhorted and directed to imprison all heretics within their dominions, and to confiscate their effects.** Of this injunction Henry could not be ignorant, and he might be actuated by it to treat the delinquents with more rigor than he otherwise would have done."

Mr. Denne has fixed the sitting of the council at Oxford in the year 1166.

But the Cathari, or Puritans, were not the only sect which, during the twelfth century, appeared in opposition to the superstition of the church of Rome. About the year 1110, in the South of France, in the provinces of Languedoc and Provence, appeared **PETER DE BRUYS**, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, and exerting the most laudable efforts to reform the abuses and remove the superstitions which disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel worship. His labors were crowned with abundant success. He converted a great number of persons to the faith of Christ, and **after a most indefatigable ministry of twenty years continuance, he was burnt at St. Giles's**, a city of Languedoc in France, in the year 1130, by an enraged populace, instigated by the clergy, who apprehended their traffic to be in danger from this new and intrepid reformer. His followers were called **PETROBRUSIANS**; but of his doctrinal sentiments the following are those alone which we can, be sure of at this remote period -- that the ordinance of baptism was to be administered only to adults -- that it was a piece of idle superstition to build and dedicate churches to the service of God, who in worship has a peculiar respect to the state of the heart, and who cannot be worshipped with temples made by hands -- that crucifixes were objects of superstition, and ought to be destroyed -- that in the Lord's supper the real body and blood of Christ were not exhibited, but only represented in the way of symbol or figure -- and lastly, that the oblations, prayers, and good works of the living, could in no respect be beneficial to the dead. [Mosheim's *Church History*, vol. 3, cent. 12 part 2, ch. 5 and the authors there referred to.]

A few years after the death of Peter Bruys, rose up an Italian by birth, of the name of **HENRY**, said to have been his disciple, and who was the founder of a sect called the **HENRICIANS**. He had been both a monk and a hermit; but having received the knowledge of the truth, he labored to reform the superstitions of the times. Quitting Lausanne, a city of Switzerland, he traveled to Mans, and being banished from thence, removed successively to Poitiers, Bourdeaux, and other cities in France; and at length, in the year 1147, to Toulouse, preaching the gospel in all those places with the greatest acceptance, and declaiming with vehemence and fervor against the vices of the clergy, and the superstitions introduced by them into the Christian church. At Toulouse he was warmly opposed by the great St. Bernard, that luminary of the Catholic church, who, though he wrote against him with great bitterness, is nevertheless constrained to admit that Henry was a learned man, and greatly

respected by his numerous followers. The latter, however, to avoid his fury, was compelled to save himself by flight. He was, nevertheless, seized in his retreat, and carried before **Pope Eugenius III**, who assembled a council at Rheims, in which he presided in person, and having received a number of accusations against Henry, **committed him in the year 1158 to a close prison, in which he soon ended his days.** His doctrinal sentiments have not been handed down to us in a manner so full and explicit as could be wished. **"All we know is, that he rejected infant baptism; censured with severity the corrupt and licentious manners of the clergy; treated the festivals and ceremonies of the Catholic church with the utmost contempt; and held private assemblies, in which he explained and inculcated his peculiar sentiments"** [Mosheim, vol. 3, cent. 12, part 2, ch. 5].

I feel some hesitation in adding to the list of reformers who arose during this benighted period, the name of **ARNOLD OF BRESCIA**, because Mosheim and other writers have described him as a man of a turbulent and impetuous spirit; and, though he is universally allowed to have been possessed of extensive erudition, and remarkable for the austerity of his manners, he is represented by those writers as not confining himself to the apostolic weapons of the Christian warfare. Yet, the spirit of candor and fairness would seem to require that allowance should be made for those exaggerations which the malignity of his enraged adversaries prompted them to vent against him. **There are few things more difficult than to combine the *leniter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*, and gentleness seems almost incompatible with the zeal of a reformer.** I shall, however, adduce a few impartial testimonies to the character of Arnold, and leave the reader to his own reflections on them. The following account of him is given in a recent publication of great merit.

"Arnold, at an early period of life traveled into France, and became the disciple of the celebrated Abelard. Having imbibed some of the heretical sentiments, and a portion of that freedom of thought, which distinguished his master, he returned to Italy, and in the habit of a monk, began to propagate his opinions in the streets of Brescia. The zeal of this daring reformer was at first directed against the wealth and luxury of the Romish clergy. Insisting that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, he maintained that the temporal power of the church was an unprincipled corruption of the rights of secular princes, and that all the corruptions which disgraced the Christian faith, and all the animosities which distracted the church, sprang from the power and overgrown possessions of the clergy. These bold truths were propagated not as mere points of speculation, or as an explanation of the various calamities which then affected the church; they were held as the foundation of a system of reform which the people were excited to carry into execution; and the clergy were called upon to renounce their usurped possessions, and to lead a frugal and abstemious life on the voluntary contributions of the people. The inhabitants of Brescia were roused by the eloquent appeals of their countryman. They revered him as the apostle of religious liberty, and rose in rebellion against their lawful

bishop. The church took alarm at these dangerous commotions, and **in a general council of the Lateran, held in 1139, by Innocent II, Arnold was condemned to perpetual silence.** He sought for refuge beyond the Alps, and found an hospitable shelter in the Canton of Zurich. Here he again began his career of reform, and had the ability to seduce from their allegiance the bishop of Constance, and even the pope's legate. The exhortations of St. Bernard, however, reclaimed these yielding ecclesiastics to a sense of their duty, and Arnold was driven by persecution to hazard the desperate expedient of fixing the standard of rebellion in the very heart of Rome.

"Protected, perhaps, if not invited, by the nobles, Arnold harangued the populace with his usual fervor, and inspired them with such a regard for their civil and ecclesiastical rights, that **a complete revolution was effected in the city.** Innocent struggled in vain against this invasion of his power, and at last sunk under the pressure of calamity. His successors, Celestine and **Lucius**, who reigned only a few months, were unable to check the popular frenzy. The leaders of the insurrection waited upon Lucius, demanded the restitution of the civil rights which had been usurped from the people, and insisted that his holiness and the clergy should trust only to pious offerings of the faithful. Lucius survived this demand but a few days, and was succeeded by **Eugenius III**, who, dreading the mutinous spirit of the inhabitants, withdrew from Rome, and was consecrated in a neighboring fortress. As soon as Arnold was acquainted with the escape of the pontiff, he entered Rome, and animated with new rigor the licentious fury of the populace. He called to their remembrance the achievements of their forefathers -- he painted in the strongest colors, the sufferings which sprung from ecclesiastical tyranny; and he charged them as men and as Romans, never to admit the pontiff within their walls, till they had prescribed the limits of his spiritual jurisdiction, and fixed the civil government in their own hands. Headed by the disaffected nobles, the frenzied populace attacked the cardinals and clergy, who still continued in the city. They set fire to the palaces, and forced the inhabitants to swear allegiance to the new system of things.

"The Roman pontiff could no longer view with patience the excesses of this ungovernable mob. At the head of his troops, chiefly composed of Tiburtines, he marched against the city, and after some trifling concessions on his part, was reinstated on the papal throne. Notwithstanding the triumph over the malecontents, the friends of Arnold were still numerous, and continued to disturb the peace of the city, till our countryman, **Adrian IV** was raised to the chair of St. Peter. On the first appearance of a riot, during which a cardinal was either killed or wounded in the street, Adrian held an interdict over the guilty city, and from Christmas to Easter deprived it of the privilege of religious worship. This bold and sagacious contrivance gave a sudden turn to the minds of the people. **Arnold and his followers were banished from the city, and fled for protection to the viscounts of Campania.** His holiness, however, was not satisfied with restoring peace to his capital. A spirit of revenge burned

within him, till he instigated Frederic Barbarossa to force Arnold from his asylum in Campania. **This intrepid reformer was immediately seized by cardinal Gerard in 1155, and was burned alive in the midst of a fickle people, who gazed with stupid indifference on the expiring hero, who had fallen in defense of their dearest rights, and whom they had formerly regarded with more than mortal veneration;** his ashes were thrown into the Tiber; but though no corporeal relic could be preserved to animate his followers, the efforts which he made in the cause of civil and religious freedom were cherished in the breasts of future patriots, and inspired those mighty attempts which have chained down and finally destroyed the monster of superstition.

It is impossible not to admire the genius and persevering intrepidity of Arnold. To distinguish truth from error in an age of darkness, and to detect the causes of spiritual corruption in the thickest atmosphere of ignorance and superstition, evinced a mind of more than ordinary stretch. To adopt a plan for recovering the lost glory of his country, and fixing the limits of spiritual usurpation, demanded a degree of resolution which no opposition could control. But to struggle against superstition entrenched in power, to plant the standard of rebellion in the very heart of her empire, and to keep possession of her capital for a number of years, could scarcely have been expected from an individual who had no power but that of his eloquence, and no assistance but what he derived from the justice of his cause. Yet such were the individual exertions of Arnold, which posterity will appreciate as one of the noblest legacies which former ages have bequeathed. Every triumph that is gained over ecclesiastical power stretched beyond its just limits, in whatever country it is sanctioned, and under whatever system of faith it is exercised, is the triumph of right reason over the worst passions of the heart. It is the greatest step which the human mind can take in its progress to that knowledge and happiness to which the Almighty has destined it to arrive" [Brewster's *Edinburgh Encyclop. Art. ARNOLD*].

"We may truly say," says Dr. Allix, "that scarcely any man was ever so torn and defamed on account of his doctrine as was this Arnold of Brescia. Would we know the reason of this? It was because, with all his power, he opposed the tyranny and usurpation which the popes began to establish at Rome over the temporal jurisdiction of the emperors. He was the man who, by his counsel, renewed the design of re-establishing the authority of the senate in Rome, and of obliging the pope not to meddle with any thing but what concerned the government of the church, without invading the temporal jurisdiction: -- this was his crime, and this indeed is such an one as is unpardonable with the Pope, if there be any such" [Allix's *Remarks*, p. 169].

"But there was a still more heinous thing laid to his charge, which was this: *Praeter haec de sacramento altaris et baptismo parvulorum, non sane dicitur sensisse!* that is, "He was unsound in his judgment about the sacrament of the altar and infant

baptism" -- (in other words, **he rejected the popish doctrine of transubstantiation and of the baptism of infants.**) And this alone was sufficient ground for his condemnation; for as he set himself industriously to oppose the accumulating errors in the church of Brescia, his native place, in which he was supported by Maifredus, the consul of that city, accusations against him were transmitted to pope *Innocent II*, who immediately imposed silence upon him, lest such pernicious doctrine should spread further. On this, Arnold retired from Italy, and settled at Zurich, in the diocese of Constance, where he continued to disseminate his doctrine until the death of the Pope, at which time he returned to Rome."

Otho Frisingensis, a Catholic bishop, gives the following account of the death of this great man. "Being entered into the city [Rome] and finding it altogether in a seditious uproar against the Pope, he was so far from following the advice of the wise man, not to add fuel to the fire, that he greatly increased it, proposing to the multitude the examples of the ancient Romans, who, by the maturity of their senators' counsels, and the valor and integrity of their youth, made the world their own. He therefore advised them to rebuild the capital, to restore the dignity of the senate, and reform the order of knights. He maintained that the civil government of the city did not belong to the Pope, who ought to confine himself to matters purely ecclesiastical. And so far did the mischief of this infectious doctrine prevail, that the mob pulled down several of the houses of the nobility and cardinals, treating the latter with personal abuse, and even violence. He could not hope to escape long, after committing so heinous a crime against persons so extremely jealous of their tyranny. Having persisted for a length of time, incessantly and irreverently, in these and similar enterprises, contemning the sentence of the clergy justly and canonically pronounced against him as altogether void, and of no authority; he at length fell into the hands of some, on the borders of Tuscany, who took him prisoner, and being preserved for the prince's trial, he was at last, by the praefect of the city, hanged, (**Mosheim says he was crucified**) and his body burnt to ashes, to prevent the foolish rabble from expressing any veneration for his body, and the ashes of it cast into the Tiber" [Dr. Allix's Remarks, p. 172].

Such was the end of Arnold of Brescia, whose memory, however, was long and fondly cherished by the people of Rome, whose interests he had so courageously advocated against the tyranny of the popes, and whose hatred he had thereby incurred. His tragical end occasioned deep and loud murmurs; it was regarded as an act of injustice and cruelty, the guilt of which lay upon the bishop of Rome and his clergy, who had been the occasion of it. The disciples of Arnold, who were numerous, and obtained the name of **ARNOLDISTS, separated themselves from the communion of the church of Rome, and long continued to bear their testimony against its numerous abominations.**

This seems to be the proper place for introducing some particular mention of the sect

of the **PATERINES**. The most copious account of them that I have met with, is that given by Mr. Robinson in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*; and as it appears to be well supported by the authorities which he has adduced, and to correspond with what is said of the same people by Dr. Allix, Mosheim, and others, I present it to the reader mostly in his own words.

Much has been written on the etymology of the word PATERINE; but as the Italians themselves are not agreed on the derivation, it is not likely foreigners should be able to determine it. In Milan, where it was first used, it answered to the English words, vulgar, illiterate, low-bred; and these people were so called, because they were chiefly of the lower order of men; mechanics, artificers, manufacturers, and others, who lived of their honest labor. GAZARI, is a corruption of Carthari, Puritans; and it is remarkable that in the examinations of these people, they are not taxed with any immoralities, but were condemned for speculations, or rather for virtuous rules of action, which all in power accounted heresies. They said a Christian church ought to consist of only good people; a church had no power to frame any constitutions; it was not right to take oaths; it was not lawful to kill mankind; a man ought not to be delivered up to officers of justice to be converted; the benefits of society belonged alike to all the members of it; faith without works could not save a man; the church ought not to persecute any, even the wicked: -- the law of Moses was no rule to Christians; there was no need of priests, especially of wicked ones; the sacraments, and orders, and ceremonies of the church of Rome were futile, expensive, oppressive, and wicked; with many more such positions, all inimical to the hierarchy.

As the Catholics of those times baptized by immersion, the Paterines, by what name soever they were called, as Manichaeans, Gazari, Josephists, Passigines, etc. made no complaint of the mode of baptizing, but when they were examined, **they objected vehemently against the baptism of infants**, and condemned it as an error. Among other things, they said, that a child knew nothing of the matter, that he had no desire to be baptized, and was incapable of making any confession of faith, and that the willing and professing of another could be of no service to him. **"Here then," says Dr. Allix, very truly, "we have found a body of men in Italy, before the year one thousand and twenty-six, five hundred years before the Reformation, who believed contrary to the opinions of the church of Rome, and who highly condemned their errors." Atto, bishop of Verceulli, had complained of such people eighty years before, and so had others before him, and there is the highest reason to believe that they had always existed in Italy.** It is observable that those who are alluded to by Dr. Allix, were brought to light by mere accident. No notice was taken of them in Italy, but some disciples of **Gundulf**, one of their teachers, went to settle in the Low Countries, (Netherlands) and Gerard, bishop of Cambray, imprisoned them, under pretense of converting them.

**From the tenth to the thirteenth century, the dissenters in Italy**



**continued to multiply and increase;** for which several reasons may be assigned. The excessive wickedness of the court of Rome and the Italian prelates was better known in Italy than in the other countries. There was no legal power in Italy in these times to put dissenters to death. **Popular preachers in the church, such as Claude of Turin, and Arnold of Brescia, increased the number of dissenters, for their disciples went further than their masters.** The adjacency of France and Spain too, contributed to their increase, for both abounded with Christians of this sort. Their churches were divided into sixteen compartments, such as the English Baptists would call associations. Each of these was subdivided into parts, which would be here termed churches or congregations. In Milan there was a street called Pataria, where it is supposed they met for divine worship. At Modena they assembled at some water-mills. They had houses at Ferrara, Brescia, Viterbe, Verona, Vicenza, and several in Rimini, Romandiola, and other places. Reinerius says, in 1259 the Paterine church of Alba consisted of above five hundred members; that at Concorezzo of more than fifteen hundred; and that of Bagnolo of about two hundred. The houses where they met seem to have been hired by the people, and tenanted by one of the brethren. There were several in each city, and each was distinguished by a mark known by themselves. They had bishops, or elders, pastors and teachers, deacons, and messengers; that is, men employed in traveling to administer to the relief and comfort of the poor, and the persecuted. In times of persecution they met in small companies of eight, twenty, thirty, or as it might happen; but never in large assemblies, for fear of the consequences.

**The Paterines were decent in their deportment, modest in their dress and discourse, and their morals irreproachable.** In their conversation there was no levity, no scurrility, no detraction, no falsehood, no swearing. Their dress was neither fine nor mean. **They were chaste and temperate, never frequenting taverns, or places of public amusement.** They were not given to anger and other violent passions. They were not eager to accumulate wealth, but content with the necessities of life. They avoided commerce, because they thought it would expose them to the temptation of collusion, falsehood, and oaths, choosing rather to live by labor or useful trades. They were always employed in spare hours either in giving or receiving instruction. Their bishops and officers were mechanics, weavers, shoemakers, and others, who maintained themselves by their industry. About the year 1040, the Paterines had become very numerous at Milan, which was their principal residence, and here they flourished at least two hundred years. **They had no connection with the [Catholic] church; for they rejected not only Jerome of Syria, Augustine of Africa, and Gregory of Rome, but Ambrose of Milan; considering them, and all other pretended fathers, as corrupters of Christianity.** They particularly **condemned pope Sylvester as Antichrist.** They called [the adoration of] the cross the mark of the beast. They had no share in the state, for they took no oaths and bore no arms. The state did not trouble them, but **the clergy preached, prayed, and published books against them with unabated zeal.**

About the year 1176, the archbishop of Milan, an old infirm man, while preaching against them with great vehemence, dropped down in a fit, and expired as soon as he had received extreme unction! About fourteen years afterwards, one Bonacursi, who pretended he had been one of these Paterines, made a public renunciation of his opinions, and embraced the Catholic faith, filling Milan with fables, as all renegades do. He reported that cities, suburbs, towns, and castles, were full of these false prophets -- that it was the time to suppress them, and that the prophet Jeremiah had directed the Milanese what to do, when he said, "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood!" Advice which we shall presently see was but too implicitly followed. [Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 407-412. and p. 455. As it may afford satisfaction to some readers to know from what sources of authority Mr. R. has drawn his account of the PATERINES, I here subjoin them. MURATORI, *Antiq. Ital.* tom. 5. GREGORII, *contra Manichaeos, qui Paterini dicuntur, opusculi specimen*, cap. 6. SICARDI *Episcopi Cremonensis chronicon*, ad. An. 1213. BONACURSI *Vitae haereticorum. Manifestatio haeresis Catharorum D'ARCHERII Spicilegium*, tom. 1. 208. *De Catharis monitum*.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **HISTORY OF THE CRUSADES TO ASIA, FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE HOLY LAND AND THE CITY OF JERUSALEM FROM THE TURKS**

**A.D. 1096-1270**

It has been remarked by a late eminent historian, that "there is no event in the history of mankind more singular than that of **THE CRUSADES**." [Robertson's *History of Charles V.* vol. 1. Appendix, Note 13. Mr. Hume terms them "the most signal and most durable monument of human folly that has yet appeared in any age or nation," *Hist. of England*, vol. 1, ch. 5.] The subject is indeed very remotely, if at all, connected with the kingdom of Christ; but as **it forms a prominent feature in the history of the Antichristian apostasy**; and as these extravagant enterprises took place towards the end of the eleventh, and during a considerable part of the twelfth century, and especially as the relation of them throws a portion of light upon the history of Europe during this benighted period, it may not be without its use here to give a concise account of them. I have purposely reserved the article for a separate section, to prevent its being mingled with what regards the Waldenses and Albigenses, who had nothing to do with these frantic expeditions, except to condemn them.

Pope Gregory VII, among his other vast ideas, had formed the project of uniting the Christians of the Western empire against the Mahometans, and of recovering Palestine from the hands of those infidels: but his quarrels with the emperor Henry IV prevented the enterprise from being achieved during his pontificate. The work, however, was reserved for a meaner instrument; for a man, whose condition could

excite no jealousy; and whose hand was as weak as his imagination was warm. But previous to entering upon his history, it will be proper to describe the state of the East at that time, and of the passion for pilgrimages which then prevailed in Europe.

The veneration and delight with which we view those places that have been the residence of any illustrious personage, or the theater of any great event, has been frequently remarked by philosophers and moralists. Hence the enthusiasm with which the learned still visit the ruins of Athens and Rome; and from this source also flowed the superstitious devotion with which Christians from the earliest time were accustomed to visit that country whence their religion originated, and that city in particular in which the Savior died for the redemption of sinners. Pilgrimages to the shrines of saints and martyrs were also common; and in proportion to the difficulty with which they were performed to distant countries, was their merit appreciated, till they came at length to be considered as an expiation for almost every crime.

**Moreover, an opinion began to prevail over Europe towards the close of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century, that the thousand years mentioned by the writer of the book of the Revelation, ch. 20:2-4, were nearly accomplished, and the end of the world at hand -- a persuasion which greatly augmented the number and ardor of the credulous devotees who undertook this tedious journey.** A general consternation seized the minds of men; numbers relinquished their possessions, forsook their families and friends, and hastened to the Holy Land, where **they imagined Christ would suddenly appear to judge the living and the dead.**

But in these pious journeys, the pilgrims had the mortification to find the holy sepulcher, and the other places which had been rendered sacred by the Savior's presence, fallen into the hands of infidels. The Mahometans had made themselves masters of Palestine, soon after the death of their prophet; but they gave little disturbance to the zealous pilgrims who daily flocked to Jerusalem; and they allowed every person, on payment of a moderate tribute, to visit the holy sepulcher, to perform his religious duties, and to return in peace. But, about the middle of the eleventh century, the Turks, who had also embraced Mahometanism, wrested Syria from the Saracens who had now been in possession of it for several centuries, and making themselves masters of Jerusalem, the pilgrims became exposed to outrages of every kind from those fierce barbarians. Every person who returned from Palestine related the dangers that he had encountered in visiting the holy city, and described the cruelty and vexation of the Turks, who, to use the language of the pilgrims, not only profaned the sepulcher of the Lord by their presence, but derided the sacred mysteries in the very place of their completion, and where the Son of God was expected immediately to judge the world.

While the minds of men were thus roused, a fanatical monk, commonly known by the name of **Peter the Hermit**, a Frenchman, born at Amiens in Picardy, **conceived the**

**project of leading all the forces of Christendom against the infidels, and driving them out of the Holy Land.** He had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and was so deeply affected with the danger to which his fellow pilgrims were now exposed, that, on his return, he ran from province to province, with a crucifix in his hand, exciting princes and people to undertake this holy warfare; and he succeeded in everywhere kindling the same enthusiastic ardor for it with which he himself was animated. "When he painted the suffering of the natives and pilgrims of Palestine, every heart was melted to compassion; every breast glowed with indignation when he challenged the warriors of the age to defend their brethren and rescue their Savior" [Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. 6, p. 3].

**Pope Urban II, who at first hesitated about the success of such a project, at length entered into Peter's views, and summoned a council at Placentia,** at which, so immense was the multitude of attendants, that it was found necessary to hold it in the open fields. It consisted of four thousand ecclesiastics and thirty thousand of the laity, who all declared for the war against the Infidels, though but few of them discovered any alacrity to engage personally in the enterprise. The Pope, therefore, was under the necessity of calling another council, during the same year, at Clermont in Auvergne, which was attended by prelates, nobles, and princes of the first distinction. On this occasion the pontiff and the hermit exerted all their eloquence, by the most pathetic exhortations, to stimulate the audience to embark in this pious cause; at the conclusion of which the whole assembly, as if impelled by an immediate inspiration, exclaimed with one voice, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" "It is indeed the will of God," replied the pope; "and let this memorable saying, the inspiration surely of the Holy Spirit, be for ever adopted as your cry of battle to animate the devotion and courage of the champions of Christ. His cross is the symbol of your salvation; wear it: a red, a bloody cross, as an external mark on your breast or shoulders; as a pledge of your sacred and irrevocable engagement." The words were accordingly adopted as the motto for the sacred standard, and as the signal of rendezvous and battle in all the future exploits of the champions of the Cross; the symbol chosen by the devout combatants, as the badge of union; and it was affixed to their right shoulder; **whence their expedition obtained the name of a Crusade.**

Persons of all ranks now flew to arms with the utmost ardor; not only the gallant nobles of that age and their martial followers, whom the boldness of a romantic enterprise might be supposed to allure, but persons in the more humble and pacific stations of life, ecclesiastics of every order, and even females concealing their sex beneath the disguise of armor, engaged with emulation in a cause which was deemed so sacred and meritorious. The greatest criminals entered with alacrity into a service which they regarded as a propitiation for all their offenses: if they succeeded, they flattered themselves with the hope of making their fortunes in this world; and if they died, they were promised a crown of glory in the world to come. Devotion, passion, prejudice, and habit, all contributed to the same common end, and the combination

of so many causes produced that wonderful emigration which induced the daughter of Alexis Comnenus, the emperor of Constantinople, to say, that **"Europe loosened from its foundations, and impelled by its moving principle, seemed in one united body to precipitate itself upon Asia."**

The number of adventurers soon became so great, that their more experienced leaders were apprehensive the greatness of the armament would defeat its own purpose. They therefore wisely permitted an undisciplined multitude, computed at three hundred thousand men, to go before them, under the command of Peter the Hermit, Walter the Moneyless, and other wild fanatics.

Peter, at the head of his army, with sandals on his feet and a rope about his waist, marched through Hungary and Bulgaria towards Constantinople. A German priest of the name of Godescaldus, followed by a numerous banditti, took the same route; and trusting to heaven for a miraculous supply of all their wants, they made no provision for subsistence on their march. They were not long, however, in finding themselves reduced to the necessity of obtaining by plunder what they presumptuously expected from miracles. **The Jews were the first victims of their plunder.** Considering themselves as enlisted in the service of Christ, they concluded that they were fully warranted to take vengeance on his murderers, and they, therefore, put to the sword without mercy such as refused to be baptized, seizing their property without the smallest regard to the rights of justice. **In Bavaria alone twelve thousand Jews were massacred, and many thousands more in the other provinces of Germany.** But Jews were not to be found everywhere: these pious robbers, having tasted the sweets of plunder, and being subject to no military regulations, **began of course to pillage without distinction**, till the inhabitants of the countries through which they passed rose in defense of themselves and families, and nearly destroyed them all. Peter, however, with the remnant of his army, consisting of about twenty thousand starving wretches, at length reached Constantinople, where he was reinforced by a multitude of the rabble from Germany and Italy, who, by pillaging the churches, and practicing the greatest disorders, had contrived so far to follow their leader.

Alexis Comnenus, the Greek emperor, was astonished to see his dominions deluged with an inundation of licentious barbarians, strangers alike to order and discipline; and especially on being told of the multitudes that were following under different leaders. Thus circumstanced, however, he very wisely considered that the most prudent step he could take, was to get rid of such troublesome guests as soon as possible, by furnishing them with vessels to transport themselves to the other side of the Bosphorus; and Peter, the general of the Crusade, soon found himself in the plains of Asia, at the head of a Christian army, ready to give battle to the Infidels. Their first engagement was with Soliman, Sultan of Nice, who fell upon the disorderly crowd, and slaughtered them almost without resistance. Walter the Moneyless, and many other leaders of equal celebrity, were slain; but Peter the Hermit found his way

back to Constantinople, where he was regarded as a maniac who had enlisted a multitude of infatuated people to follow him.

**ASIA** was then divided into a number of petty states, comprehended under the great ones. The princes of the lesser states paid homage to the Caliphs, though they were in effect their masters: and the Sultans, who were very numerous, still further enfeebled the Mahometan empire by continual wars with each other, the certain consequence of divided sway. The crusaders, therefore, who, when mustered on the banks of the Bosphorus, amounted to the incredible number of one hundred thousand horsemen and six hundred thousand foot, were sufficient to have conquered all Asia, had they been properly disciplined, united under one head, or commanded by leaders who acted in concert; but they were conducted by men of the most independent, intractable spirits, unacquainted with discipline, and enemies to civil and military subordination. Their zeal, however, their courage, and their irresistible force, still carried them forward, and advanced them to the object of their expedition in defiance of every obstacle. After an obstinate siege, they took Nice, the seat of old Soliman, Sultan of Syria; they also made themselves masters of Antioch, the seat of another Sultan, and entirely broke the strength of the Turks, who had for a long time tyrannized over the Arabs.

On the fall of the Turkish power, the Caliph of Egypt, whose alliance the crusaders had hitherto courted, recovered the authority of the Caliphs of Jerusalem. He therefore sent ambassadors to the leaders of the Crusades, informing them, that if they would throw away their arms they might now perform without molestation or inconvenience their religious vows in the holy city, and that all pilgrims, who should from that time visit the holy sepulcher, might expect the same good treatment which they had ever received from their predecessors. His offer was, however, rejected: he was required to yield up the city to the Christians; and on his refusal, Jerusalem was besieged, the possession of which was the great object of their armament, and the consummation of their labors.

The army of the Crusaders was now greatly reduced in number, partly by disasters, and partly by the detachments they had been obliged to make in order to keep possession of the places they had conquered, insomuch, that, according to the testimony of historians, they scarcely exceeded twenty thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, while the garrison of Jerusalem consisted of forty thousand men. Yet, notwithstanding this diminution of force, **after a siege of five weeks, they took the city by assault, and put the garrison and inhabitants to the sword without distinction.** The brave were not protected by arms, nor the timid by submission; neither age nor sex were spared; infants perished by the same sword that pierced the supplicating mother. The streets of Jerusalem were covered with heaps of slain; and the shrieks of agony or despair resounded from every house, when these triumphant warriors, glutted with slaughter, threw aside their arms, still streaming with blood,

and advanced, with naked feet and bended knees to the sepulcher of the Prince of Peace! sung anthems to that Redeemer who had purchased their salvation by his death, and while deaf to the cries of distress from their fellow-creatures, dissolved in tears for the sufferings of the Messiah! So inconsistent is human nature with itself; and so easily does the most degrading superstition associate both with the most heroic courage and with the fiercest barbarity.

**This important event, the conquest of Jerusalem, was achieved in 1099**, the last year of the eleventh century; but towards the middle of the twelfth, the power of the crusaders began to decline, and was growing weaker every day in those countries which they had conquered. The small kingdom of Edessa, had been retaken by the Turks, and Jerusalem itself was threatened. **Europe was solicited for a new armament**; and, as the French had taken the lead in the former armament, they were on the present occasion honored with the first application for a renewal. The papal chair was at that time filled by **Eugenius III**, to whom the deputies of the East had been sent; and he wisely pitched upon the celebrated Bernard, as the instrument of this pious warfare. A more suitable character could scarcely have been found. Bernard was learned for the times in which he lived; he was naturally eloquent, austere in his life, irreproachable in morals, enthusiastically zealous, and inflexible in his purpose. He had long held the reputation of a saint, was regarded as an oracle, and revered as a prophet; no wonder then that he found means to persuade **the young king of France, Lewis VII**, to engage in **THIS FRESH CRUSADE**. The French monarch, who had but recently ascended the throne, found himself at the commencement of his reign engaged in one of those civil wars which the feudal governments rendered almost unavoidable;. and having in an expedition into Champagne, made himself master of Vitry, he caused the church to be set on fire, by which means thirteen hundred persons, who had taken refuge in it, all perished in the flames -- a piece of cruelty which, on reflection, sunk deep into the king's mind, and filled him with dreadful remorse. Bernard availed himself of this penitentiary state, and persuaded the king of France, that to expiate his guilt, it was his indispensable duty to make an expedition to the Holy Land.

At Vezelar, a city in the province of Burgundy, a scaffold was erected in the market place, on which Bernard appeared by the side of Lewis VII. The saint first harangued the multitude, and was then seconded by the king, after receiving the cross from his hands. The queen who was present, also took the cross; and the example of the royal pair was followed by all the company, among whom were many of the nobility. In vain did Suger, who was prime minister to the king, labor to dissuade his royal master from abandoning his dominions, by assuring him that he might make a much more suitable atonement for his sins by remaining at home, and governing his dominions in a wise and prudent manner; the eloquence of Bernard, and the frenzy of the times prevailed. The minister, however, retained his opinion; and made no scruple to predict the inconveniences that would attend an expedition to Palestine, whilst the



monk pledged himself for its success, and extolled it with an enthusiasm that passed for inspiration.

From France, Bernard proceeded to preach the Crusade in Germany; where through the force of his irresistible eloquence, he prevailed on the emperor Conrad III, as well as on Frederic Barbarossa, who was afterwards emperor, and an immense number of persons of all ranks, to take the cross, promising them in the name of the Most High, complete victory over the Infidels. He ran from city to city, every where communicating his enthusiasm; and, if we may credit the historians of those times, working miracles. It is not indeed pretended that he restored the dead to life; but it is affirmed that the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the sick were healed, and to these bold assertions we may add a fact no less incredible, that while St. Bernard's eloquence operated so powerfully on the minds of the Germans, he always preached to them in French, a language which they did not understand!

**The confident hopes of success in this new enterprise, induced the greatest part of the knights in their respective dominions to enroll themselves under the banners of the emperor, and king of France; and it is said, that in each army there were seventy thousand men in complete armor, with a prodigious number of light horse, besides the infantry, making this second emigration at least equal to the number of three hundred thousand men; which added to thirteen hundred thousand sent on the former occasion, makes a sum total of one million six hundred thousand of the inhabitants of Europe transplanted to Asia on these crusading expeditions.** The Germans advanced first, the French followed them; and the same excesses that had been committed by the soldiers of the first Crusade were repeated by those of the second.

When the emperor Conrad had passed the Bosphorus, he acted with that imprudence which is very characteristic of such expeditions. Instead of joining those Christians who remained in Syria, and there waiting the arrival of the king of France, jealous of all competitors, he marched his army into the heart of Asia Minor, where the Sultan of Iconium, a more experienced general than himself, drew his heavy German cavalry among the rocks and cut his army in pieces. He fled to Antioch, and from thence proceeded to Jerusalem as a pilgrim, instead of appearing as the leader of an army, and at last returned to Europe with an handful of men, A.D. 1148. The king of France was not more successful in his enterprise. He fell into the same snare that had entrapped the emperor; and being surprised among the rocks near Laodicea, was defeated as Conrad had been, and the conclusion of the whole expedition was, that Lewis, like Conrad, returned to Europe with the wreck of a great army, A.D. 1149, after visiting the holy sepulcher. **A thousand ruined families in vain exclaimed against Bernard for his prophecies:** he excused himself upon the example of Moses, who he said, had like himself promised the children of Israel to conduct them into a happy country, and yet saw the first generation perish in the

deserts.

The failure of this second Crusade reduced the affairs of the Oriental Christians to a state of great distress, which was still further augmented by the bold and enterprising conduct of Saladin the Great, a prince of Persian extraction, who, having by his bravery fixed himself on the throne of Egypt, began to extend his conquests over all the East, but finding the settlement of the Christians in Palestine an obstacle to the progress of his arms, he bent the whole force of his policy and valor to subdue that small though important territory. Taking advantage of the dissensions that prevailed among the champions of the cross, and having secretly gained over to his interest the Count of Tripoli, who commanded their armies, he invaded Palestine with a mighty force, and obtained a complete victory over them, utterly annihilating the rigor of the already languishing kingdom of Jerusalem. The holy city itself fell into his hands in the year 1187, after a feeble resistance; the kingdom of Antioch was almost entirely subdued; and, excepting some maritime towns, nothing of importance remained of those boasted conquests, which, nearly a century before, had cost the efforts of all Europe to acquire.

The papal chair was then filled by **Clement III**, who no sooner received the melancholy tidings, than **he ordered a Crusade** to be preached throughout all the countries of Christendom. Europe was filled with grief and consternation. The emperor of Germany, Frederic Barbarossa, assembled a diet at Mentz in 1188, in order to deliberate with the states of the empire on this unhappy event. To encourage his subjects, he himself took the cross; his son Frederic, duke of Suabia, followed his father's example, as did also sixty-eight of the first German nobles, ecclesiastics as well as laymen. Ratisbon was appointed the place of rendezvous; and to prevent the inconvenience arising from too great a multitude, Frederic decreed that no person should take the cross, who could not afford to expend three marks of silver. Yet, notwithstanding this regulation, so great was the zeal of the Germans, that an army was formed, consisting of a hundred and fifty thousand military adventurers, well armed, and provided with necessaries for undertaking **THE THIRD CRUSADE**.

The emperor in person marched at the head of thirty thousand men, by way of Vienna to Presburg, where he was joined by the rest of his army. He thence proceeded through Hungary, into the territories of the Greek emperor, who, notwithstanding his professions of friendship, had been detached by Saladin's promises and insinuations, to give up the interests of Frederic, in consequence of which he took every opportunity of harassing the Germans in their march. Enraged at his perfidy, Frederic laid the country under contribution; captured and plundered Philipopolis; defeated a body of Greek troops that attacked him by surprise, and compelled the emperor of Constantinople to sue for peace. He wintered at Adrianople; crossed the Hellespont in the spring; refreshed his troops a short time at Laodicea; defeated the Turks in several battles; took and pillaged the city of Iconium, and

crossed Mount Taurus, so that all Asia was filled with the terror of his name. Among the crusaders, Frederic was as renowned as Saladin among the Turks. The Christians in Syria and Palestine flattered themselves that, from his assistance, they should obtain effectual relief, but their hopes were suddenly blasted. This great prince who was an expert swimmer, one day plunged into the cold river Cydnus, to refresh himself from the sultry heat of summer, which brought on a fatal illness that at once put a period to his life and heroic exploits.

**The kings of England and France had entered with considerable ardor into the third Crusade.** Philip Augustus reigned at that time over France; and in our own country the throne was filled by the first Richard. Both of these monarchs considered the recovery of the Holy Land as the ultimate purpose of their government; yet neither of them was so much impelled to the pious enterprise by superstition, as by the love of military glory. Richard, in particular, had so little regard to sanctity in his external deportment, that when a zealous preacher of the Crusade advised him to rid himself of his pride, avarice, and voluptuousness, which the priest called his majesty's three favorite daughters, Richard replied, "You counsel well; and I hereby dispose of the first to the Templars, the second to the Benedictines, and the third to my Bishops!"

Resolving to profit by the disasters that had attended the former crusading expeditions, the kings of France and England determined to make trial of another road to the Holy Land, which was to conduct their armies thither by sea; to carry provisions along with them; and by means of their naval power, to maintain an open communication with their own states, and with the western parts of Europe. Their first place of rendezvous was the plain of Vezelai, on the borders of Burgundy, where Philip and Richard found their armies amount to one hundred thousand men. Here they pledged each other in promises of mutual friendship, and engaged not to invade each other's dominions during the Crusade; their barons and prelates exchanged oaths to the same effect; after which they separated. Philip took the road to Genoa, Richard that to Marseilles, with a view of meeting their fleets, which were severally appointed to assemble in those harbors. They put to sea at the same time, and both were compelled by stress of weather to take shelter in the harbor of Messina, where they were detained during the whole winter.

In the spring of the year 1191, both fleets arrived in Asia, where, the troops being embarked, they laid siege to Ptolemais, which had been attacked about two years before, by the combined force of all the Christians in Palestine, and defended by the utmost efforts of Saladin and the Saracens. Before this place, Frederic, duke of Suabia, son of the emperor Barbarossa, had perished; and along with him the remains of the German army. But the arrival of the armies of England and France, with Richard and Philip at their head, infused fresh rigor into the besiegers, and the emulation that prevailed between these rival kings and rival nations, produced

extraordinary feats of valor. Richard, in particular, drew upon himself the attention of the world, and acquired a great and splendid reputation. Ptolemais was taken; the Saracen garrison reduced to the last extremity, surrendered themselves prisoners of war, and the wood of the true cross was restored! And thus this famous siege, which had engaged the attention of all Europe and Asia, was at last achieved -- with the loss of three hundred thousand men.

The French monarch, instead of pursuing his conquests further, and redeeming the holy city from slavery, declared his resolution of returning into France, disgusted, as it is said, by the ascendancy which the king of England had acquired by his more precipitate courage, and romantic spirit; pleading the ill state of his health, however, as the reason of his deserting the common cause. The heroic actions of Richard, while in Palestine, were the best apology for his conduct. On opening the campaign of 1192, he determined to attempt the siege of Ascalon, the conquest of which fortress was a necessary step to prepare the way for that of Jerusalem; and leaving Ptolemais, he marched with the army under his command along the sea coast with that intention. Saladin determined to intercept their passage, and placed himself upon the road with an army of three hundred thousand men. On this occasion was fought one of the most formidable battles of that age, and the most celebrated for the military genius of the commanders; for the number and valor of the troops, and for the variety of events which attended it. The right wing of the Christian army, commanded by D'Avesnes, and the left under that of the duke of Burgundy, were, in the former part of the day, broken and defeated; when Richard, who led on the main body, restored the fortunes of the day. He attacked the enemy with the greatest intrepidity and valor; with all the skill of a consummate general and gallant soldier; and not only gave his two wings the opportunity of recovering from their confusion, but obtained a complete victory over the Saracens; forty thousand of whom, it is said, were left dead upon the field. Ascalon surrendered to the crusaders; other sieges were carried on with success. Richard advanced within sight of Jerusalem, when he had the mortification to find that he must abandon all hopes of present success, and put a stop to his career of victory.

The zeal and ardor with which the crusaders were animated for some time carried them forward in the prosecution of their romantic expedition, regardless of all the rules of prudence or safety; and, confident of the approbation of heaven, they set nothing before them but fame and victory in this world, and a crown of glory in the next: but long absence from home, famine, fatigue, and disease, added to the varieties of fortune which naturally attend war, had greatly abated that fury which nothing was able directly to withstand. All, but the king of England, expressed a desire to return to Europe; so that there appeared an imperious necessity of abandoning for the present all future conquests, and of securing their present acquisitions by a treaty of peace with Saladin. Richard, therefore, concluded a truce with that monarch: and stipulated that Ptolemais, Joppa, and other seaport towns of

Palestine, should remain in the hands of the Christians, and that every one of that religion should enjoy the privilege of performing his pilgrimage unmolested. This truce was ratified A.D. 1192, and was to remain in force for three years, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours; a magical number, suggested by a superstition well suited to the object of the war.

Saladin died at Damascus soon after the ratification of this truce with the leaders of the Crusade. He was a prince of great valor, and of generous sentiments; and it is memorable, that during his last illness, he gave orders for his winding sheet to be carried as a standard through every street of the city, while a cryer preceded it proclaiming with a loud voice, "This is all that remains to the mighty Saladin, the conqueror of the East." His last will is also remarkable: he ordered alms to be distributed to the poor without regard to distinction of Jew, Mahometan, or Christian; thereby intimating that he considered all men as brethren, and as equally entitled to the exercise of our compassion when in distress -- a lesson, though coming from a Mussulman, which deserves the imitation of Christians. But the advantages of science, of moderation, and of humanity, were indeed at that time wholly on the side of the former.

Richard, having no further business in Palestine, took shipping for Europe, but was unfortunately wrecked in the Adriatic; and, reaching land, he disguised himself in the habit of a pilgrim, hoping by that means to pass safely through Germany. But being betrayed by his liberalities and expenses, he was arrested by Leopold, duke of Austria, whom he had offended at the siege of Ptolemais, who to gratify his revenge threw him into prison, and then sold him to the emperor Henry VI. The latter had also taken offense at some part of Richard's conduct, and was therefore glad to have him in his power. Thus the gallant king of England, who had filled the world with his renown, was confined to a dungeon in the heart of Germany, loaded with chains, and entirely at the mercy of his enemy, one of the basest and most sordid of mankind! Richard, however, in a little time succeeded in bringing his case before a diet of the empire, at which he personally attended; and by his eloquence and spirit, made such an impression on the German princes, that they exclaimed loudly against the conduct of the emperor, whom the pope also threatened with excommunication. In the issue, Henry concluded a treaty with Richard for his ransom, and agreed to liberate him for the sum of about three hundred thousand pounds of our present money -- an enormous sum in those days.

But notwithstanding the reiterated disasters and ill-success that attended the frantic expeditions to the Holy Land, so resolutely was the court of Rome bent on the achievement of its grand object, that the popes were continually urging the princes of Europe to renew their efforts. Their power and influence were, by this time, become so predominant, that it was at the peril of the latter they declined compliance with their sovereign will. The papal chair was at this time filled by **Celestine III**, by whom

Henry VI was crowned emperor of Germany. He was then a very old man, being in his eighty-sixth year; the ceremony of coronation was performed on Easter Monday; **the pope placed his crown on the head of Henry, which he had no sooner done, than he kicked it off again, as a testimony of the power residing in their sovereign pontiffs to make and unmake emperors at their pleasure!**

In the year 1196, Henry was solicited by the pope to engage in **A NEW CRUSADE** for the relief of the Christians in Palestine; and the emperor consented, though he had prudence enough to study his own interest in the compliance. He convoked a general diet at Worms, at which he avowed his determination to employ all his resources, and even to risk his own life for the accomplishment of so holy an enterprise; and so eloquently did he expatiate upon the subject, that nearly the whole assembly took the cross. Their example prevailed throughout the empire, and so great was the number who enlisted themselves, that Henry divided them into three large armies: the first, under the command of the bishop of Mentz, took the rout of Hungary, where it was joined by Margaret, queen of that country, who herself entered as a volunteer on this pious expedition, and actually ended her days in Palestine: the second was assembled in Lower Saxony, and embarked in a fleet furnished by the inhabitants of Lubec, Hamburg, Holstein, and Friesland; while the emperor in person, conducted the third into Italy, to avenge himself of the Normans in Naples and Sicily, who had revolted from their allegiance to him.

The state of Europe was at this time full of perplexity and confusion. **Innocent III** succeeded Celestine in the papal chair, an able and ambitious pontiff, whose ruling passion was the aggrandizement of the holy see. He quarreled with Philip, duke of Suabia, who had recently been elected king of the Romans, excommunicating him and all his adherents; and labored with all his might to detach the princes and prelates from his cause, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the king of France, to whom he proudly replied, "Either Philip must lose the empire, or I the papacy."

But all these dissensions and troubles in Europe did not prevent the formation of another Crusade to Asia. Those who enrolled themselves were principally French and Germans. Baldwin, Count of Flanders, was their commander; and the Venetians, as greedy of wealth and power as the Carthaginians of old, furnished them with ships, for which they took care to be amply repaid both in money and territory. The city of Zara, in Dalmatia, had recently withdrawn itself from the government of the republic of Venice; the crusaders undertook to reduce it to obedience; and they besieged and took it, notwithstanding the pope threatened to excommunicate them -- a striking proof of the reigning spirit of those fanatical adventurers.

The army of the cross, as they called themselves, **next fell upon Constantinople**, under the pretext of avenging the cause of Isaac Angelus, the Greek emperor, who had been dethroned and deprived of his sight in 1195, by his own brother Alexis.

Baldwin and his followers, eagerly embraced this as an apology for their violence; and under the pretext of adjusting the quarrel between the two brothers, they made themselves masters of Constantinople. They entered the city without much resistance, putting every one to the sword who opposed them, and gave themselves up to all the excesses of avarice and fury. The booty of the French lords alone, was valued at four hundred thousand marks of silver: the very churches were pillaged; and what strongly marks the character of that volatile and giddy nation, it is related that the French officers danced with the ladies of Constantinople in the church of St. Sophia, after having robbed the altar and drenched the city in blood! Thus was this noble city, in that age the most flourishing in the Christian world, for the first time taken and sacked by Christians who had made a vow to fight only against Infidels. **One consequence of this was, that the pope gained, for a time, the whole Eastern church; an acquisition of much greater consequence to him than that of Palestine.** Of this indeed the conquerors seemed fully sensible; for, notwithstanding the vow they had taken to go and succor Jerusalem, it was only a very inconsiderable part of the crusaders that proceeded into Syria, and those were such as could obtain no share in the plunder of Constantinople.

In 1215, Frederic II was crowned emperor of Germany with great magnificence at Aix-la-Chapelle; and to secure the favor of the pope to the other solemnities of his coronation, he added a vow to make an expedition to the Holy Land. Pope Innocent died the following year, and was succeeded by **Honorius III**, who expressed great eagerness to have the Crusade carried into effect. He therefore ordered it to be preached up through all the provinces of Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Bohemia, and Hungary, and his exertions were crowned with extraordinary success. The emperor himself declined the performance of his vow until he should have regulated the affairs of Italy, and most of the other princes of Europe were detained at home by domestic disturbances. But an infinite number of private noblemen and their vassals took the cross, ranging themselves under the dukes of Austria and Bavaria, the archbishop of Mentz, and the bishops of Munster and Utretch; and the king of Hungary, who brought with him a body of fine troops, was declared *generalissimo* of the Crusade. The fate of this expedition pretty nearly resembled those of the preceding. The army was embarked in three hundred sail of transports, equipped in the ports of Lower Saxony, which joining a squadron that was fitted out by the Frieslanders, Flemings, and people of Brabant, proceeded for the Straits of Gibraltar in their way to Ptolemais. On their arrival at that port, a council of war was held, at which it was resolved to besiege Damietta, in Egypt, which was accordingly invested by sea and land, and taken, after a tedious siege of eighteen months, in the year 1219. Their possession of this place, however, was of no great duration. A dispute arose among the chiefs of the crusaders about precedence, which it was found impossible to adjust without consulting his holiness, who, in his great wisdom, at length directed that the supreme command should be vested in a cardinal of the church of Rome. This monkish general brought the army of the cross between two

branches of the river Nile, just at the time when that river, which fertilizes and defends Egypt, began its periodical inundation. The Sultan, informed of their situation, opened the sluices, and overflowed the camp of the crusaders; and while he burnt their ships on one side, the Nile increasing on the other, threatened the hourly destruction of the whole army. The pope's legate finding himself and his troops reduced to the last extremity, restored Damietta, and was glad to conclude with the Sultan a dishonorable treaty, by which he bound himself and his army not to serve against the former for eight years.

When the leaders of the crusading army arrived in Europe, the pope was extremely incensed at the loss of Damietta, and wrote a severe letter to the emperor, accusing him of having sacrificed the interests of Christianity by so long delaying the performance of his vow, and threatening him with immediate excommunication, if he did not instantly depart with an army into Asia. Frederic, exasperated at these reproaches, renounced all correspondence with the court of Rome, filled up vacant sees and benefices, and even expelled some bishops, who were creatures of the pope, on pretense of their being concerned in practices against the state. The pontiff at first attempted to repel force by force, threatening the emperor with the thunder of the church, for presuming to lift his hand against the sanctuary; but finding that Frederic was not to be intimidated, he became sensible of his own imprudence, in wantonly incurring the resentment of so powerful a prince, whose temper he now thought proper to soothe by submissive apologies and gentle exhortations. A reconciliation accordingly took place; and the emperor, as a proof of his sincere attachment to the church, published four severe edicts against the Paterines, Waldenses, and others to which we shall have occasion afterwards to advert, and which tended greatly to promote the establishment of the Inquisition.

Not long after this a solemn assembly was held at Ferentino, at which both the emperor and pope attended, together with **John de Brienne, the titular king of Jerusalem**, who had come to Europe to demand succors against the Sultan of Egypt. This monarch had an only daughter whom he offered in marriage to the emperor, with the kingdom of Jerusalem as her dowry, on condition that he, within two years performed the vow he had made of leading an army to the Holy Land. Frederic married her on these terms, because he chose to please the pope; and since that time, the kings of Sicily have taken the title of king of Jerusalem. But Frederic evinced no impatience to go and conquer his wife's portion, having business at home of more importance that required his attendance. The principal cities of Lombardy had entered into a league to renounce his authority; to counteract which, he convoked **a diet at Cremona, A.D. 1227**, where all the princes and nobles of Germany and Italy were summoned to attend. The interference of the pope produced an accommodation, and it was agreed that the emperor should lay aside his resentment against the confederate towns, and that those towns should furnish and maintain four hundred knights for the relief of the Holy Land. Peace being thus



concluded, his holiness reminded the emperor of his vow; Frederic promised compliance, but the pope died before the execution of a project which he seemed to have so much at heart. He was succeeded by **Gregory IX**, who, pursuing the same line of policy, urged the departure of Frederic for the Holy Land, and finding him still backward, declared him incapable of holding the imperial dignity, as having incurred the sentence of excommunication. Frederic, incensed at such insolence, ravaged the patrimony of St. Peter, and was excommunicated. Wearied, however, at length with increasing contentions, and desirous of gratifying the prejudices of a superstitious age, Frederic resolved to perform his vow, and accordingly embarked for the Holy Land. The pope now prohibited his departure until he was absolved from all the censures of the church; but the emperor proceeded in contempt of the pope's threatening, and with better success than his predecessors. He did not indeed desolate Asia, and gratify the barbarous zeal of the times, by shedding the blood of infidels; but he concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Egypt, by which the end of his expedition was fully answered. The Sultan ceded to him Jerusalem and its territory as far as Joppa, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and all the country between Jerusalem and Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and the neighboring districts: and in return for these concessions, the emperor granted him a truce for ten years. A.D. 1229.

About twenty years after this, the Sultan of Egypt having regained his authority in the Holy Land, **these frantic expeditions were resumed by LOUIS IX, king of France**, commonly called Saint Louis. This prince no sooner came of age than he was universally acknowledged one of the greatest potentates in Europe; and his character is perhaps one of the most singular in the annals of history. To the abject superstition of a monk, he united all the magnanimity of a hero; but what may be deemed still more wonderful, the justice and integrity of the sincere patriot, and where religion was not concerned, the mildness and humanity of the true philosopher. But Louis had his foibles. **Persuaded that heretics, or those who dissented from the Roman church, deserved the punishment of death, he favored the tribunal of the Inquisition; and the same turn of thinking led him to ascribe merit to a war against Infidels.** His humane heart became a prey to the barbarous superstition of the times. When a dangerous illness deprived him of his senses, and almost of his life, his heated imagination took fire, and he thought he heard a voice commanding him to shed the blood of Infidels. He accordingly made a vow that, as soon as he recovered, he would engage in a new Crusade, and he immediately took the cross. Nor could any remonstrances induce him to forego his purpose; he considered his vow as a sacred and indissoluble obligation. A.D. 1244. But though not to be dissuaded from his Eastern expedition, Louis was in no haste to depart. Four years were spent in making preparations and settling the government of his kingdom, which he committed to the care of his mother; and at length, in 1248, he set sail for Cyprus, accompanied by his queen, his three brothers, and almost all the knights of France. Arriving at Cyprus, it was resolved to make a descent upon Egypt, as it was supposed that Jerusalem and the Holy Land could not

be preserved while that country remained in the hands of the Infidels. Louis and his army therefore landed on the Egyptian coast, near to the city of Damietta; which, contrary to all expectation, was abandoned to them. Here he received fresh succors from France and found himself in the plains of Egypt at the head of sixty thousand men, the flower of his kingdom, by whom he was both obeyed and loved. **Yet this Crusade, like all the rest, ended only in sorrow and disappointment.** One-half of these fine troops fell a prey to sickness and debauchery; the other part was defeated by the Sultan, at Massoura, where Louis beheld his brother Robert, Count of Artois, killed by his side, and himself taken prisoner, with his two other brothers, the Counts of Anjou and Poitiers, and all his nobility, A.D. 1250.

During the king's captivity, **the queen mother granted permission to a fanatical monk to preach a new Crusade for her son's release;** and this man, availing himself of the pastoral circumstances attending our Lord's nativity, assembled nearly a hundred thousand of the rabble, whom he denominated "shepherds." It soon appeared, however, that their more appropriate title would have been that of wolves; for, wherever they came, they robbed and pillaged without either regard to justice or mercy; so that it was at length found necessary to disperse them by force of arms; and even that was not effected without some difficulty. The death of the queen mother in the meantime, made it necessary for Louis to return to France; and to effect this, after a captivity of more than three years, he purchased his ransom, and that of his nobles, for a thousand pieces of gold; but **he returned only to prepare for a new Crusade,** so strongly had this mania infected his mind! A.D. 1254.

But it is needless to prosecute this subject further in detail. Enough, and more than enough, has been said to convince the reader of the deplorable state of darkness and superstition which reigned throughout Europe, to say nothing of Asia and Africa, during this period. Yet these romantic expeditions, though barbarous and destructive in themselves, were not without some beneficial results to the state of society: they were rendered subservient to the welfare of the community and of individuals. The Crusades being conducted under the immediate protection of the Roman church, and its heaviest anathemas being denounced against all who should molest their persons or their property, private hostilities were for a time suspended or extinguished; the feudal sovereigns became more powerful, and their vassals less turbulent; a more steady administration of justice was introduced, and some advances were made towards regular government. Nor were the commercial effects of the Crusades less considerable than their political influence. Many ships were necessary to transport the prodigious armies which Europe poured forth, as well as to supply them with provisions. Those ships were principally furnished by the Venetians and Genoese, who thereby acquired immense sums of money, and at the same time opened to themselves a new source of wealth, by importing into Europe the commodities of Asia. The cities of Italy grew rich and powerful, and obtained extensive privileges; and some of them erected themselves into independent states, or communities, the

establishment of which may be considered as the first grand step towards civilization in modern Europe. [Hume's *History of England*, vol. 1, ch. 5. Robertson's *Charles V.* vol. 1, APPENDIX. Russel's *History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, LETT. 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 34.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES AND ALBIGENSES, FROM THE TIME OF PETER WALDO, A.D. 1160, TO THE DAYS OF WICKLIFFE, A.D. 1360**

#### **SECTION 1**

#### **ORIGIN OF THE NAMES WALDENSES AND ALBIGENSES, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF PETER WALDO OF LYONS, AND THE SANGUINARY EDICT OF POPE LUCIUS III AGAINST THE DISCIPLES OF WALDO**

Having sketched the more prominent features of the Christian Church, for the first ten centuries, and arriving at that period in which we are to give the reader some account of the Waldenses, it will be proper to introduce the subject by an attempt to ascertain the origin of their distinguishing appellation. The learned Mosheim contends with considerable pertinacity that they derived their name from Peter Waldo, an opulent merchant of Lyons, whose history will presently come under our notice; but in this he is contradicted by his learned translator, and, I believe, I may truly add, by most writers of authority since his time.

The most satisfactory definition that I have met with of the term Waldenses, is that given by Mr. Robinson, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*; and, in the confidence that it is the true one, and that I may not unnecessarily trespass on the reader's time and patience, I submit it to his consideration.

From the Latin word VALLIS, came the English word *valley*, the French and Spanish *valle*, the Italian

*valdesi*, the Low Dutch *valkye*, the Provencal *vaux*, *vaudois*, the ecclesiastical *Valdenses*, *Ualdeases*, and *Waldenses*. The words simply signify vallies, inhabitants of vallies, and no more. It happened that the inhabitants of the vallies of the Pyrenees did not profess the Catholic faith; it fell out also that the inhabitants of the vallies about the Alps did not embrace it; it happened, moreover, in the ninth century, that one Valdo, a friend and counselor of Berengarius, and a man of eminence who had many followers, did not approve of the papal discipline and doctrine; and it came to pass about an hundred and thirty years after, that a rich merchant of Lyons, who was called Valdus, or Waldo, openly disavowed the Roman Catholic religion, supported many to teach the doctrines believed in the valleys, and became the instrument of the conversion of great numbers; ALL THESE PEOPLE WERE CALLED WALDENSES. [*Ecclesiastical Researches*, page 302,303,]

This view of the matter, which to myself appears indisputably the true one, is also supported by the authority of their own historians, Pierre Gilles, Perrin, Leger, Sir S. Morland, and Dr. Allix. To the preceding account of the derivation of the term Waldenses, I shall now add the explanation given by these writers of various other appellations, that were bestowed on this class of Christians, and particularly that of Albigenses.

The names imposed on them in France by their adversaries, they say, have been intended to vilify and ridicule them, or to represent them as new and different sects. Being stripped of all their property, and reduced by persecution to extreme poverty, they have been called "the poor of Lyons." From their mean and famished appearance in their exiled and destitute state, they have been called in provincial jargon "Siccan," or pickpockets. Because they would not observe saints' days, they were falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also, and called "Inzabbatati or Insabbathists."\* As they defiled transubstantiation, or the personal and divine presence of Jesus Christ in the host, or wafer exhibited in the mass, they were called "Arians." Their adversaries, premising that all power must be derived from God through his vicegerent the pope, or from an opposite and evil principle inferred, that the Waldenses were "Manichaeans," because they denied the pope's supremacy over the emperors and kings of the earth. [\* Dr. Mosheim traces the derivation of this word to a kind of slipper which they wore, as a distinguishing badge of the sect, and Gibbon has adopted his opinion. But I agree with Mr. Robinson in thinking it very unlikely, that people who could not descend from their mountains into neighboring states, without hazarding their lives through the furious zeal of inquisitors, should tempt danger by affixing a visible mark on their shoes. The above opinion, therefore, appears to me much more probable.]

In Languedoc, the Catholics affirmed that the origin of these heretics was recent, and that they derived their name of Vaudois, or Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, one of their barbes or preachers, whose immediate followers were called Waldenses; **but this was rather the renovation of the name from a particular cause than its original**: accordingly it extended over that district only, in France, where Peter Waldo preached; **for in other districts the people who were branches of the same original sect**, as in Dauphine, were, from a noted preacher called **Josephists**--in Languedoc, they were called **Henricians** -- and in other provinces, from Peter Bruys, they were called **Petrobrusians**. Sometimes they received their name from their manners, as "**Catharists**," (**Puritans**) and from the foreign country whence it was presumed they had been expelled, they were called "**Bulgarians**" or **Bougres**. In Italy they were commonly called **Fratricelli**, that is, "men of the brotherhood;" because they cultivated

brotherly love among themselves, acknowledging one another as brethren in Christ. Sometimes they were denominated "**Paulicians**," and, by corruption of the word, "Publicans," considering them as sprung from that ancient sect which, in the seventh century, spread over Armenia and Thrace, [see volume 1, chapter 3, section 4] and which, when persecuted by the Greek emperor might migrate into Europe, and mingle with the Waldenses in Piedmont. Sometimes they were named from the country or city in which they prevailed, as **Lombardists**, **Toulousians**, and **Albigenses**. All these branches, however, sprang from one common stock, and were animated by the same religious and moral principles.

**ALBIGENSES** became latterly their common name in France, from the great number of them that inhabited the city of Alby, and the district of Albigeois, between the Garonne and the Rhone: but that name was not general and confirmed till after the council of Alby in the year 1254, which condemned them as heretics. Their number and prevalence in that country are ascribed to the patronage and protection which they received from Roger, Count of Alby, after they had been persecuted in other countries. **Some writers have labored to prove that the Waldenses and Albigenses were quite different classes of Christians, and that they held different principles and opinions: but there seems no solid ground for maintaining such a distinction. When the popes issued their fulminations against the Albigenses, they expressly condemn them as Waldenses;** their legates made war against them as professing the faith of the Waldenses; the monks of the Inquisition formed their processes of indictment against them as being Waldenses; the people persecuted them as such; and they uniformly adopted the title when it was given them, and even thought themselves honored by it. To this may be added, that historians do not trace their origin to any local causes in Albigeois, and about Toulouse, but represent them as emigrants from other regions. Neither do they represent their origin as recent before the council of Alby, but as strangers from adjacent countries about a hundred years before.

Farther, the provincial councils of Toulouse, in 1119, and of Lombez, in 1176, and the general councils of Lateran in 1139, and 1179, do not treat of them, nor condemn them as Albigenses but as heretics, and when they particularize them, they denominate them "bons hommet"--(i.e. good men)--"Cathari"--"Paterini"--"Publicani," etc. which shows that they existed before they were generally known as Albigenses. **It is also proved, from their books, that they existed as Waldenses, before the times of Peter Waldo,** who preached about the year 1160. Perrin, who wrote their history, had in his possession a New Testament in the Vallese language, written on parchment, in a very ancient letter, and a book entitled in their language, "Qual cosa sia l'Antichrist"--that is, "What is Antichrist?" under date of the year 1120, which carries us back at least twenty years before Waldo. Another book entitled, "The Noble Lesson," is dated A.D. 1100.

Their enemies confirm their great antiquity. **Reinerius Saccho, an inquisitor, and one of their most implacable enemies, who lived only eighty years after Waldo, admits that the Waldenses flourished five hundred years before that preacher.** Gretzer, the Jesuit, who also wrote against the Waldenses, and had examined the subject fully, not only admits their great antiquity, but declares his firm belief that the Toulousians and Albigenses condemned in the years 1177, and 1178, were no other than Waldenses. In fact, their doctrine, discipline, government, manners, and even the errors with which they have been charged (by the Catholics,) show that the Albigenses and Waldenses were distinct

branches of the same sect, or that the former were sprung from the latter. [Dr. Rankin's *History of France*, volume 3. p. 198-202. To this contemporary and able writer, I have much pleasure in tendering my acknowledgments for the eminent services which, in this instance, he has rendered to the cause of truth and virtue. His patient research, and his cool, correct, and discriminating judgment, have greatly abridged my labor on this branch of the subject.]

From the death of Claude, bishop of Turin, who may not improperly be termed the Wickliff of that city, to the times of Peter Waldo of Lyons, a considerable period intervened, during which, the history of the disciples of that great man is involved in much obscurity. They seem to have had no writers among themselves capable of detailing their proceedings during this period; or, if any records of their ecclesiastical history were committed to writing, the zeal of their opponents hath prevented their transmission to our times. In the writings of their adversaries, indeed, we have abundant proof of their existence, as a class of Christians separated in faith and practice from the catholic church, and of the multiplication of their numbers; but of their proceedings in the formation of churches, and of their order, worship, and discipling, we are very imperfectly informed.

Of the Catharists, in Germany, and of the Paterines, in the duchy of Milan, etc. during this period, both of which held the same principles as the Waldenses, we have already taken some notice in the preceding chapter. But it was not till the twelfth century that the Vaudois appear in ecclesiastical history as a people obnoxious to the church of Rome. And even then it seems, in great measure, to have been occasioned by the indefatigable labors, the ardent zeal, and the amazing success which crowned the ministry of Peter Waldo of Lyons, whose followers first obtained the name of **Leonists**, and who, when persecuted in France, fled into Piedmont, incorporating themselves with the Vaudois. The following is the account which Mr. Robinson gives of this intricate article of ecclesiastical history, and as it appears to myself more probable than any other that I have seen, I incline to admit it as the true one.

"In the twelfth century, towards the close, a great reformation was begun at Lyons, under the auspices of a merchant there, who procured a translation of the four Gospels from Latin into French, and who both preached in person, and engaged others to do so in various parts of the country. Reinerius Saccho thought all the believers (*Credenti*) sprung from this stock; and he therefore calls them all Leonists. Whether the merchant received his name (*Valdus*) from the Vaudois, or whether they received theirs from him, is uncertain; the former is the more, probable opinion of the two, and the fact seems to be, that till then the Vaudois were (comparatively speaking) few and obscure, and the Leonists at once numerous and popular; that the Vaudois and Leonists soon incorporated themselves together; that the Vaudois communicated their name, which passed for that of a low, rustical, and obscure people to the Leonists; and that the Leonists emboldened the Vaudois to separate openly from the church. This view of things in part reconciles the opinion of the catholic bishop, Bossuet, with that of Dr. Allix and other Protestants. Bossuet says, the separation of the Vaudois was for a long time a mere schism in the church, and that Waldo was their parent. Protestants deny this, and say that the Vaudois were the parents of the Leonists. It should seem the Vaudois were the first, and that they continued in the church a sort of party till Waldo emboldened them to separate, and so became not the founder of the party, but the parent of their

separation."

But the history of Peter Waldo, his exemplary life, his zeal in the cause of truth and virtue, the noble sacrifices which he made to religious principle, and the extraordinary success which crowned his labors in the promulgation of the gospel of peace, entitle him to somewhat more than an incidental mention in the history of the times it, which he lived. He was an opulent merchant in the city of Lyons--a city which, in the second century of the Christian era, as we have formerly seen [5 see volume 1, p. 222] was blessed with the clear light of divine truth--where Christ had planted a numerous church to serve as a pillar on which his truth was inscribed, or a candlestick on which he had placed the lamp of life. But the lamp had long been extinguished, and the pillar removed. Lyons, in the times of Peter Waldo, was sunk into a state of the grossest darkness and superstition. About the year 1160, the doctrine of transubstantiation, which some time afterwards pope Innocent III confirmed in a very solemn manner, was required by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men. A most pernicious practice of idolatry was connected with the reception of this doctrine. Men fell down before the consecrated wafer and worshipped it as God; an abomination, the absurdity and impiety of which forcibly struck the mind of Waldo, who opposed it in a most courageous manner. [Perrin *Histoire des Vaudois*, chapter 1.]

But although the conscience or common sense of Waldo revolted against this novel piece of superstition, he seems not to have entertained, at that time, the most distant idea of withdrawing himself from the communion of the Romish church, nor indeed to have had much sense of religion upon his mind. God, however, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and who turns them as the rivers of water, had destined him for great usefulness in his kingdom. To him, also, whatever means seem necessary for effecting his purposes in the world, are equally at command. An extraordinary occurrence in providence was the means of awakening the mind of Peter Waldo, to the "one thing needful." One evening after supper, as he sat conversing with a party of his friends, and refreshing himself among them, one of the company fell down dead on the floor, to the consternation of all that were present. Such a lesson on the uncertainty of human life, and the very precarious tenure on which mortals hold it, most forcibly arrested his attention. The Latin Vulgate Bible was the only edition of the Scriptures at that time in Europe [D.W. Cloud -- this is probably an not accurate statement; see my book *Rome and the Bible* for documentation]; but that language was inaccessible to all, except one in an hundred of its inhabitants. Happily for Waldo, his situation in life had enabled him to surmount that obstacle. "Being somewhat learned" says Reinerius Saccho, when speaking of him, "he taught the people the text of the New Testament in their mother tongue." The sudden death of his friend led him to think of his own approaching dissolution, and under the terrors of an awakened conscience, he had recourse to the Holy Scriptures for instruction and comfort. There, in the knowledge of the true character of God, as the just God and the Savior, he found the pearl of great price--the way of escape from the wrath which is to come. The belief of the testimony which God hath given of his Son, diffused peace and joy into his own mind, raised his views and conceptions above "the smoke and din of this dim spot which men call earth," and led him to look for glory, honor, and immortality, even eternal life, in the world to come. But Christian love is an operative principle. It expands the mind in which it dwells, and fills it with generous sentiments--with supreme love to God, and the most disinterested benevolence to man. Waldo was desirous of communicating to others a portion of that happiness which he himself enjoyed. He abandoned his mercantile pursuits, distributed his wealth to the poor as occasion required; and, while the



latter flocked to him to partake of his alms, he labored to engage their attention to the things which belonged to their everlasting peace.

One of the first objects of his pursuit was to put into their hands the word of life; and he either himself translated, or procured some one else to translate the four Gospels into French; and the next was to make them acquainted with their sacred contents. Matthias Illyrius, a writer who prosecuted his studies under Luther and Melancthon, and was one of the Magdeburgh Centuriators, speaking of him, says, "His kindness to the poor being diffused, his love of teaching and their love of learning growing stronger and stronger, greater crowds came to him, to whom he explained the Scriptures. He was himself a man of learning; so I understand from some old parchments--nor was he obliged to employ others to translate for him as his enemies affirm." But whether Waldo himself translated these Scriptures or employed others to do it, or, which is most probable, executed it himself with the assistance of others, certain it is, that the inhabitants of Europe were indebted to him for the first translation of the Bible into a modern tongue, since the time that the Latin had ceased to be a living language--a gift of inestimable value.

As Waldo became more acquainted with the Scriptures, he began to discover that a multiplicity of doctrines, rites, and ceremonies which had been introduced into the national religion, had not only no foundation in the word of God, but were most pointedly condemned in that book. Inflamed with zeal for the glory of God, on the one hand, and with concern for the souls of his fellow-sinners on the other, he raised his voice loudly against them, condemning the arrogance of the pope, and the reigning vices of the clergy. Nor did he satisfy himself with mere declamation against what was wrong in others. He taught the truth in its simplicity, and enforced its practical influence on the heart and life; and by his own example, as well as by an appeal to the lives of those who first believed in Christ, he labored to demonstrate the great difference that existed between the Christianity of the Bible and that of the church of Rome.

The consequence of all this may be easily supposed by a reflecting mind. The archbishop of Lyons heard of these proceedings, and became indignant. Their tendency was obvious; the honor of the church was involved in them, and, in perfect consistency with the usual mode of silencing objectors among the Catholic party, he forbade the new reformer to teach any more on pain of excommunication, and of being proceeded against as an heretic. Waldo replied, that though a layman, he could not be silent in a matter which concerned the salvation of his fellow-creatures. Attempts were next made to apprehend him; but the number and kindness of his friends, the respectability and influence of his connections, many of whom were men of rank; the universal regard that was paid to his character for probity and religion; and the conviction that his presence was highly necessary among the people whom he had by this time gathered into a church, and of which he had taken the oversight, all operated so strongly in his favor, that he lived concealed at Lyons during the space of three whole years. [Perrin's *History*, chapter 1.]

Information of these things was then conveyed to pope Alexander III who no sooner heard of such heretical proceedings than he anathematized the reformer and his adherents, commanding the archbishop to proceed against them with the utmost rigor. Waldo was now compelled to quit Lyons; his flock in a great measure followed their pastor; and hence a dispersion took place not unlike that which arose in the

church of Jerusalem on the occasion of the death of Stephen. The effects were also similar. Waldo himself retired into Dauphiny, where he preached with abundant success; his principles took deep and lasting root, and produced a numerous harvest of disciples who were denominated Leonists, Vaudois, Albigenses, or Waldenses; for the very same class of Christians is designated by these various appellations at different times, and according to the different countries or quarters of the same country in which they appeared. [8 Ibid. chapter 1.]

Persecuted from place to place, Waldo retired into Picardy, where also success attended his labors. Driven from thence, he proceeded into Germany, carrying along with him the glad tidings of salvation; and, according to the testimony of Thuanus, a very authentic French historian, he at length settled in Bohemia, where he finished his course, in the year 1179, after a ministry of nearly twenty years. He was evidently a man of very singular endowments; and one of those extraordinary persons whom God in his providence occasionally raises up and qualifies for eminent usefulness in his kingdom; but he has met with no historian capable of doing justice to his talents and character. Numbers of his people fled for an asylum into the valleys of Piedmont, taking with them the new translation of the Bible. In the ensuing section, we shall have an opportunity of examining their doctrinal sentiments; and their history in that country, as well as in the south of France, and wherever else we can trace them, will occupy, in one way or other, the remaining pages of this volume.

The persecution of Waldo and his followers, with their flight from Lyons, is a remarkable epoch in the annals of the Christian church. Wherever they went, they sowed the seeds of reformation. The countenance and blessing of the King of kings accompanied them. The word of God grew and multiplied, not only in the places where Waldo himself had planted it, but in more distant regions. In Alsace and along the Rhine, the doctrines of Waldo spread extensively. Persecutions ensued--**thirty-five citizens of Mentz were burned in one fire at the city of Bingen, and eighteen at Mentz itself.** The bishops of both Mentz and Strasburgh breathed nothing but vengeance and slaughter against them; and at the latter city, where Waldo himself is said to have narrowly escaped apprehension, **eighty persons were committed to the flames.** In the treatment, and in the behavior of the Waldenses, were renewed the scenes of martyrdom of the second century.

Multitudes died praising God, and in the confident hope of a blessed resurrection. But **the blood of the martyrs again became the seed of the church; and in Bulgaria, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Hungary, churches were planted, which flourished throughout the thirteenth century,** and which are said to have owed their rise chiefly to the labors of one **Bartholomew**, a native of Carcassone, a city not far distant from Toulouse, in the south of France, and which may be not improperly termed the metropolis of the Albigenses. In Bohemia, and in the country of Passau, it has been computed that there were not less than eighty thousand of this class of Christians in the year 1315. In short we shall find in the sequel, that they spread themselves throughout almost every country in Europe; but they were everywhere treated as the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all things. [Perrin's *History*, chapter 2.]

It shall excite no surprise that their increasing numbers should rouse the court of Rome to adopt the most vigorous measures for suppressing them. The inquisition had not yet been established; but council after council had been convened in France; and about twenty years after Waldo had been driven from Lyons,

the following persecuting edict was issued from Rome.

## THE DECREE OF POPE LUCIUS III AGAINST HERETICS, A.D. 1181

"To abolish the malignity of diverse heresies which are lately sprung up in most parts of the world, it is but fitting that the power committed to the church should be awakened, that by the concurring assistance of the Imperial strength, both the insolence and malpertness of the heretics in their false designs may be crushed, and the truth of Catholic simplicity shining forth in the holy church, may demonstrate her pure and free from the execrableness of their false doctrines. Wherefore we, being supported by the presence and power of our most dear son, Frederic, the most illustrious Emperor of the Romans, always increaser of the empire, with the common advice and council of our brethren, and other patriarchs, archbishops, and many princes, who from several parts of the world are met together, do set themselves against these heretics who have got different names from the several false doctrines they profess, by the sanction of this present general decree, and by our apostolical authority according to the tenor of these presents, we condemn all manner of heresy, by what name soever it may be denominated.

"More particularly, we declare all Catharists, Paterines, and those who call themselves 'the Poor of Lyons;' the Passignes, Josephists, Arnoldists, to lie under a perpetual anathema. And because some, under a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, as the apostle saith, **assume to themselves the authority of preaching;** whereas the same apostle saith, 'how shall they preach except they be sent' -- we therefore conclude under the same sentence of a perpetual anathema, all those who either being forbid or not sent do notwithstanding presume to preach publicly or privately, **without any authority received either from the Apostolic See,** or from the bishops of their respective dioceses: As also all those who **are not afraid to hold or teach any opinions concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, baptism, the remission of sins, matrimony, or any other sacraments of the church, differing from what the holy church of Rome doth preach and observe:** and generally all those whom the same church of Rome, or the several bishops in their dioceses, with the advice of their clergy, or the clergy themselves, in case of a vacancy of the See, with the advice if need be of neighboring bishops, shall judge to be heretics. And we likewise declare all entertainers and defenders of the said heretics, and those that have showed any favor or given countenance to them, thereby strengthening them in their heresy, whether they be called comforted, believers, or perfect, or with whatsoever superstitious name they disguise themselves, to be liable to the same sentence.

"And though it sometimes happens that the severity of ecclesiastical discipline, necessary to the coercion of sin, is condemned by those who do not understand the virtue of it, we notwithstanding by these presents decree, That whosoever shall be notoriously convicted of these errors, if a clergyman, or one that endeavors to conceal himself under any religious order, he shall be immediately deprived of all prerogative of

the church orders, and so being divested of all office and benefice, **be delivered to the secular power to be punished** according to demerit, unless immediately upon his being detected he voluntarily returns to the truth of the Catholic faith, and publicly abjures his errors, at the discretion of the bishop of the diocese, and makes suitable satisfaction. And as for a layman who shall be found guilty either publicly or privately of any of the aforesaid crimes, unless by abjuring his heresy and making satisfaction he immediately return to the orthodox faith, we decree him to be left to the sentence of the secular judge, to receive condign punishment according to the quality of the offense.

"And as to those who are taken notice of by the church as suspected of heresy, unless at the command of the bishop they give full evidence of their innocence, according to the degree of suspicion against them and the quality of their persons, they shall be liable to the same sentence. But those who after having abjured their errors, or cleared themselves upon examination to their bishop, if they be found to have relapsed into their abjured heresy--We decree that without any further hearing **they be forthwith delivered up to the secular power, and their goods confiscated to the use of the church.**

"And we further decree, That this excommunication, in which our will is that all heretics be included, shall be repeated and renewed by all patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, in all the chief festivals and on any public solemnity, or upon any other occasion to the glory of God and the putting a stop to all heretical pravity: ordering by our apostolic authority, that if any bishop be found wanting or slow herein, he be suspended for three years from his episcopal dignity and administration.

"Furthermore, with the counsel and advice of bishops, and intimation of the emperor and princes of the empire, we do add, That every archbishop or bishop, either in his own person or by his archdeacon, or by other honest and fit persons, shall once or twice in the year visit the parish in which it is reported that heretics dwell, and there cause two or three men of good credit, or, if need be, the whole neighborhood, to swear that if they know of any heretics there, or any that frequent private meetings, or that differ from the common conversation of mankind, either in life or manners, they will signify the same to the bishop or archdeacon: The bishops also or archdeacon shall summon before them the parties accused, who, unless they at their discretion, according to the custom of the country, do clear themselves of the guilt laid to their charge; or if, after having so cleared themselves, they relapse again to their former unbelief, they shall be punished at the bishop's discretion. And if any of them, by a damnable superstition, shall refuse to swear, that alone shall suffice to convict them of being heretics, and liable to the punishments before-mentioned.

"We ordain further, That all earls, barons, governors and consuls of cities and other places, in pursuance of the commonition of the respective archbishops and bishops, shall promise upon oath, that in all these particulars, whenever they are required so to do, they will powerfully and effectually assist the church against heretics and their accomplices; and endeavor faithfully, according to their office and power, to execute the ecclesiastical and imperial statutes concerning the matters herein-mentioned.

"But if any of them shall refuse to observe this, they shall be deprived of their honors and charges, and be rendered incapable of receiving others; and, moreover, be involved in the sentence of excommunication, and their goods be confiscated to the use of the church. And if any city shall refuse to yield obedience to these Decretal Constitutions, or that contrary to the episcopal commonition they shall neglect to punish opposers, we ordain the same to be excluded from all commerce with other cities, and be deprived of the episcopal dignity.

"We likewise decree, That all favorers of heretics, as men stigmatized with perpetual infamy, shall be incapable of being attorneys or witnesses, or of bearing any public office whatsoever. And, as for those who are exempt from the law of diocesan jurisdiction, as being immediately under the jurisdiction of the apostolic see; nevertheless, as to these constitutions against heretics, we will, That they be subject to the judgment of the archbishop and bishops, and that in this case they yield obedience to them, as to the delegates of the apostolic see, the immunity of their privileges notwithstanding."

Ildefonsus, king of Arragon, also testified his zeal against the Waldenses, by an edict published in the year 1194, from the tenor of which we are authorized to infer, that the doctrine of Waldo had not only found its way into Spain, but that it had got such footing there as to create no little alarm, and call forth the determined interference of the government. The following is a copy of this severe edict, as given by Pegna, in his notes on the "Directory of the Inquisitors."

"ILDEFONSUS, by the grace of God, King of Arragon, Earl of Barcelona, Marquis of Provence, to all archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church of God, earls, viscounts, knights, and to all people of his kingdom, or belonging to his dominions, wisheth health, and the sound observance of the Christian religion.

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased God to set us over his people, it is but fit and just, that according to our might we should be continually solicitous for the welfare and defense of the same; wherefore we, in imitation of our ancestors, and in obedience to the canons which determine and ordain heretics, as persons cast out from the sight of God and all Catholics, to be condemned and persecuted everywhere, do command and charge that the Waldenses, Inzabbati, who otherwise are called "the poor of Lyons," and all other heretics who cannot be numbered, being excommunicated from the holy church, adversaries to the cross of Christ, violaters and corrupters of the Christian religion, and the avowed enemies of us and our kingdom, do depart out of our kingdom and all our dominions. **Whosoever, therefore, from this day forward, shall presume to receive the said Waldenses, and Inzabbati, or any other heretics of whatsoever profession, into their houses, or to be present at their pernicious sermons, or to afford them meat, or any other favor, shall thereby incur the indignation of Almighty God, as well as ours, and have his goods confiscated, without the remedy of an appeal, and be punished as if he were actually guilty of high treason.** And we strictly charge and command, that this our edict and perpetual constitution be publicly read on the Lord's days by the bishops and other rectors of churches, in all the cities, castles, and towns of our kingdom, and throughout all our dominions: and that the

same be observed by vicars, bailiffs, justices, etc. and all the people in general; and that the aforesaid punishment be inflicted on all transgressors.

"We further will, that if **any person, noble or ignoble**, shall in any part of our dominions find any of these wicked wretches, who shall be known to have had three days notice of this our edict, and that do not forthwith depart, but rather are obstinately found staying or lingering; let such know that if **they shall any way plague, despitefully use or distress them**, wounding unto death and maiming of them only excepted, **he will in so doing perform nothing but what will be very grateful and pleasing to us, and shall be so far from fearing to incur any penalty thereby, that he may be sure rather to deserve our favor**. Furthermore, we give these wicked miscreants respite, though that may seem somewhat contrary to reason and our duty, till the day after All Saints day: but that all those who either shall not be gone by that time, or at least preparing for their departure, **shall be spoiled, beaten, cudgeled, and shamefully ill-treated**."

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 2**

### **SOME ACCOUNT OF THE DOCTRINAL SENTIMENTS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE WALDENSES, COLLECTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF THEIR ADVERSARIES.**

It is intended, in this and the two following sections, to lay before the reader a more detailed account of the principles and practices of the Waldenses, than hath hitherto been given; and there appears no method of doing this more satisfactory, than by first hearing the charges alleged against them by their adversaries of the Romish church; and then attending to the apologies, reasonings, and confessions of faith which, from time to time, the ever laudable principle of self-defense necessarily extorted from them. This is the plan, therefore, which I intend to pursue, and the present section shall be devoted to the testimony of their adversaries.

**REINERIUS SACCHO**, whose name I have had occasion more than once to mention, was for seventeen years of the earlier part of his life, in some way or other, connected with the Waldenses; but he apostatized from their profession, entered the catholic church, was raised in it to the dignified station of an inquisitor, and became one of their most cruel persecutors. He was deputed by the pope to reside in Lombardy, in the south of France; and about the year 1250, published a catalogue of the errors of the Waldenses under three and thirty distinct heads. The reader who wishes to peruse the original Latin, may find it in Dr. Allix's *Remarks upon the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 188-191. The following is a faithful translation.

"Their first error," says he, "is a contempt of ecclesiastical power, and from thence they have been delivered up to Satan, and by him cast headlong into innumerable errors, mixing the erroneous doctrines

of the heretics of old with their own inventions. And being cast out of the Catholic church, they affirm that they alone are the church of Christ and his disciples. They declare themselves to be the apostles' successors, to have apostolical authority, and the keys of binding and loosing. **They hold the church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon**, (Revelation chapter 17) and that all that obey her are damned, especially the clergy that have been subject to her since the time of pope Sylvester. [This pontiff was bishop of Rome in the days of Constantine the Great, about the year 330. 395.] They deny that any true miracles are wrought in the church, because none of themselves ever worked any. **They hold, that none of the ordinances of the church, which have been introduced, since Christ's ascension, ought to be observed, as being of no value.** The feasts, fasts, orders, blessings, offices of the church, and the like, they utterly reject. They speak against consecrating churches, church-yards, and other things of the like nature, declaring that it was the invention of covetous priests, to augment their own gains, in spunging the people by those means of their money and oblations. **They say, that a man is then first baptized when he is received into their community. SOME OF THEM HOLD THAT BAPTISM IS OF NO ADVANTAGE TO INFANTS, because they cannot actually believe.** They reject the sacrament of confirmation, but instead of that, their teachers lay their hands upon their disciples. They say, the bishops, clergy, and other religious orders are no better than the Scribes and Pharisees, and other persecutors of the apostles. **They do not believe the body and blood of Christ to be the true sacrament**, but only blessed bread, which by a figure only is called the body of Christ, even as it is said, "and the rock was Christ," etc. Some of them hold that this sacrament can only be celebrated by those that are good,\* others again by any that know the words of consecration. This sacrament they celebrate in their assemblies, repeating the words of the gospel at their table, and participating together, in imitation of Christ's supper. **They say that a priest who is a sinner, cannot bind or loose any one**, as being himself bound; and that any good and intelligent layman may absolve another, and impose penance. **They reject extreme unction**, declaring it to be rather a curse than a sacrament. Marriage, say they, is nothing else but sworn fornication, unless the parties live continently, and account any filthiness preferable to the conjugal rites. They praise continence indeed, but in the meantime give way to the satisfying of burning lust by any filthy means whatsoever, expounding that place of the apostle, 'It is better to marry than to burn,' thus: that it is better to satisfy one's lust by any filthy act, than to be tempted therewith in the heart.\*\* But this they conceal as much as possible, that they may not be reproached therewith. If any honest woman among them that has the repute of chastity, is brought to bed of a child, they carefully conceal it, and send it abroad to be nursed, that it may not be known. They hold all oaths to be unlawful, and a mortal sin, yet they dispense with them when it is done to avoid death, lest they should betray their accomplices, or the secret of their infidelity. They hold it to be an unpardonable sin to betray an heretic, yea the very sin against the Holy Ghost. They say that malefactors ought not to be put to death by the secular power. Some of them hold it unlawful to kill brute animals, as fishes, or the like; but when they have a mind to eat them, they hang them over the fire or smoke till they die. Fleas and such sort of insects they shake off their clothes, or else dip their clothes in hot water, supposing them thus to be dead of themselves.\*\*\* Thus they cheat their own consciences in this and other observances. From whence we may see, that having forsaken truth, they deceive themselves with their own false notions. **According to them there is no purgatory**, and all that die, immediately pass either into heaven or hell. That therefore the prayers of the church for the dead are of no use, because those that are in heaven do not want them, nor can those that are in hell be relieved by them. And from thence they infer, that all offerings made for the dead are only of use to the clergymen that eat them, and



not to the deceased, who are incapable of being profited by them. **They hold, that the saints in heaven do not hear the prayers of the faithful**, nor regard the honors which are done to them, because their bodies lie dead here beneath, and their spirits are at so great a distance from us in heaven, that they can neither hear our prayers nor see the honors which we pay them. **They add, that the saints do not pray for us**, and that therefore, we are not to entreat their intercession, because, being swallowed up with heavenly joy, they cannot attend to us, nor indeed to any thing else. Hence they deride all the festivals which we celebrate in honor of the saints, and all other instances of our veneration for them. Accordingly, wherever they can do it, they secretly work upon holy days, arguing, that since working is good, it cannot be evil to do that which is good on a holy day. **They do not observe Lent, or other fasts of the church**, alleging that God does not delight in the afflictions of his friends, as being able to save without them. Some heretics indeed afflict themselves with fasting, watchings, and the like, because without these they cannot obtain the reputation of being holy among the simple people, nor deceive them by their reigned hypocrisy. They do not receive the Old Testament, but the Gospel only, that they may not be overthrown by it, but rather be able to defend themselves therewith; pretending that upon the introduction of the gospel dispensation all old things were to be laid aside.\*\*\*\* In like manner they select the choicest sayings and authorities of the holy fathers, such as Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, Chrysostom, and Isidore, that with them they may support their opinions, oppose others, or the more easily seduce the simple, by varnishing over their sacrilegious doctrine with the good sentences of the saints, at the same time very quietly passing over those parts of the writings of the holy fathers that oppose and confute their errors. Such as are teachable and eloquent among them, **they instruct to get the words of the gospel, as well as the sayings of the apostles, and other holy men by heart**, that they may be able to inform others, and draw in believers, beautifying their sect with the goodly words of the saints, that the things they persuade and recommend may pass for sound and wholesome doctrine;-- thus by their soft speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple. And not only the men, but even their women also teach\*\*\*\*\* amongst them, because women have an easier access to those of their own sex, to pervert them, that afterwards, by their means, the men may be perverted also, as the serpent deceived Adam by means of Eve. They teach their disciples to speak in dark and obscure words, and instead of speaking truth, to endeavor to speak lies; that when they are asked about one thing, they might perversely answer about another, and thus craftily deceive their hearers, especially when they fear that by confessing the truth, they should discover their errors. In the same dissembling manner they frequent our churches, are present at divine service, offer at the altar, receive the sacrament, confess to the priests, observe the church fasts, celebrate festivals, and receive the priest's blessing, reverently bowing their heads, though in the meantime they scoff at all these institutions of the church, looking upon them as profane and hurtful. **They say it is sufficient for their salvation if they confess to God, and not to man.**"

[\* The meaning of this does not seem very obvious. The words in the original are, *Quidam autem hoc dicunt tantum per bonos fleri, alii per omnes qui verba consecrationis sciunt*; and the reason of the obscurity is, that, as I shall hereafter shew, they did not allow any but pastors to administer the eucharist.]

[\*\* There appears something like a consciousness about Reinerius, that in this monstrous accusation he was calumniating the Waldenses, for in the following words he qualifies the charge by describing them as not avowing it. The reader will presently see their sentiments on the subject of marriage, and be

convinced of the foulness of this slander. I shall, therefore, at present, only quote from their own apology a short extract, in which they repel the charge of countenancing lasciviousness. "It was this vice," say they, "that led David to procure the death of his faithful servant, that he might enjoy his wife -- and Ammon to defile his sister Tamar. This vice consumes the estates of many, as it is said of the prodigal son, who wasted his substance in riotous living. Balaam made choice of this vice to provoke the children of Israel to sin, which occasioned the death of twenty-four thousand persons. This sin was the occasion of Samson's losing his sight; it perverted Solomon, and many have perished through the beauty of a woman. The remedies for this sin are fasting, prayer, and keeping at a distance from it. Other vices may be subdued by fighting; in this we conquer by flight; of which we have an example in Joseph." -- Perrin's *Hist.* chapter 4.]

[\*\*\* Many will think that Reinerius must have been at great loss for substantial grounds of accusation against the Waldenses, when he could condescend to enumerate such childish things as these.]

[\*\*\*\* This is precisely the charge which was brought against the Paulicians; see Note, volume 1, chapter 3, sect 4, and the remarks there offered upon it.]

[\*\*\*\*\* The reader must not understand the teaching here alluded to as referring to public teaching in the church, for the Waldenses permitted nothing of that kind in their females, and the Scriptures pointedly forbid it: but he refers to their mode of propagating their sentiments by conversation, and I shall have an opportunity of shewing, in a future section, from the writings of this same Reinerius, the very simple and striking manner in which they did this.]

Such is the view which Reinerius gave of the principles of the Waldenses, about eighty years subsequent to the times of Peter Waldo; and we must understand this description as applicable to one general class of Christians, scattered throughout the south of France, the valleys of the Pyrenean mountains, the valleys of Piedmont, and the country of the Milanese; though probably distinguished in different places by the different names of Puritans, or Catharists, Paterines, Arnoldists, Leonists, Albigenses, or Waldenses, the last of which ultimately became their more general appellation. ["Nothing is so well known to the curious in these matters, as the following verse, upon the Vaudois (Waldenses) in the year 1100: Que non vogli maudir ne jura, ne mentir, N'occir, ne avoutrar, ne prenre de altrui, Ne s'avengear deli suo ennemi, Loz dison qu' es Vaudes & los feson morir. THAT IS, Whosoever refuses to curse, to swear, to lie, to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, to be revenged of his enemy--they say he is a VAULDOIS, and therefore they put him to death." Voltaire's *Genesis History*, chapter 59.] **No doubt there were shades of difference in sentiment among them on points of minor importance, even as there are among Christians in the present day; and it is very certain that the catholic writers sometimes class under the general name of Waldenses or Albigenses, persons whose theological sentiments and religious practices were very opposite to those which were professed by the followers of Peter Waldo.** "The practice of confounding heretics of all kinds in one common herd," says Mr. Robinson, "hath been an ancient custom with ecclesiastical historians, and it hath obscured history" [*Eccles. Researches*, p. 463]. This is a very just remark, and the reader who would not be imposed upon by those writers, will find it of great importance to attend to it. He himself, however, tells us that the Albigenses were Manichaeans,\* or nearly so, and that they differed from the Vaudois and

Waldenses. That individuals, or even a sect, holding those wild and extravagant opinions, may have existed at that time, and been classed by the catholic writers under the head of Albigenses, is not impossible, though I have met with no evidence that puts the fact beyond dispute; and the historians of the latter give a very easy and natural solution of the reason of their being accused of Manichaeism. **But, whatever may be in this, the following facts are indisputable; that the general body of the Albigenses received the doctrines of Peter Waldo--that these doctrines had no connection with Manichaeism--and that the Waldenses and Albigenses were two branches of the same sect, inhabiting different countries, each deriving its appellation from its local residence.** In the sketch which Reinerius has furnished of the principles of the Waldenses, it is to be remarked, that there is not the slightest allusion to any erroneous opinions maintained by them, regarding the faith and doctrines of the gospel, and this is a noble testimony to the soundness of their creed. For having himself been connected with them,--a man of learning and talents, he doubtless was intimately acquainted with their doctrinal sentiments; and, having apostatized from their profession and become their determined adversary, he did not want inclination to bring forward any accusation against them which could be done with the smallest regard to decency on his own part. The errors of which he accuses them (a few instances excepted, and on which they repelled his slanderous charges) are such as no protestant dissenter of the present day would shrink from the odium which is connected with holding, since they will all be found in one way or other to resolve themselves into the unfounded claims of the clergy, or the introduction of human traditions and the basest superstition into the worship of God.

[\* The sect of the **MANICHAEANS** derived its origin from a person of the name of Manes, or Manichaeus, as he is sometimes called by his disciples. He was by birth a Persian, educated among the Magi, and himself one of their number before he embraced the profession of Christianity, about the end of the third century. **His doctrine was a motley mixture of the tenets of Christianity, with the ancient philosophy of the Persians,** in which he had been instructed during his youth. The following view of his system is given by Dr. Mosheim, Volume 1. Cent. 3. chapter 5: "That there are two principles from which all things proceed--the one a most pure and subtle matter, called LIGHT, the other a gross and corrupt substance called DARKNESS. The being who presides over light is called God--he that rules the land of darkness bears the name of Hyle, or Demon. The ruler of the light is supremely happy, and consequently benevolent and good--the prince of darkness is unhappy in himself, and desiring to render others partakers of his misery, is evil and malignant. These two beings have produced an immense multitude of creatures, resembling themselves, whom they have distributed through their respective provinces. He held that Christ is that glorious intelligence whom the Persians called Mithras -- a splendid substance, endowed with life, and having his residence in the sun. The Holy Ghost a luminous and animated body, diffused throughout every part of the atmosphere which surrounds this terrestrial globe. He held that the God of the Jews was the prince of darkness -- affirmed that the Old Testament was not the word of God, but of the prince of darkness, and rejected as spurious the four Gospels, and indeed most of the canonical Scriptures -- maintained the transmigration of souls," etc., etc. It is really surprising that Mr. Robinson, the acute, the ingenious, the liberal minded Mr. Robinson, should have charged the Albigenses with adopting this absurd system, without producing any evidence to support such an opinion. Few writers have combated the foul misrepresentations of the Catholics with more zeal and success than he has done; but in this instance he has joined their senseless clamor against the Albigenses. It is a very questionable point, whether the sect of the Manichaeans had any existence at

the period of which Mr. R. is treating, and I am strongly inclined to think they had not, at least in Europe. But even though that could be proved, I may venture to affirm that it was utterly out of the power of Mr. R. or any other person to produce from the confessions, catechisms, testimonies, or conduct of the Albigenses the least trace of Manichaeism. I am tempted on this occasion to adopt the lofty language of Dr. Allix, when defending the Piedmontese Waldenses from the same charge brought against them by the catholic bishop Bossuet. "I defy the impudence of the devil himself," says he, "to find in their writings the least shadow of Manichaeism."--Remarks, chapter 17. **The fact is, that, on this subject, the catholic writers misled Mosheim and Limborch; and these latter historians have misled Mr. Robinson.** Indeed, an impartial reader will easily perceive throughout this gentleman's account of "the Vallies of Piedmont," in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, the strongest indications of a jaundiced eye. Speaking of Leger's *History of the Waldenses*, he adds, "Orthodoxy is proved and overproved in it, for it will be allowed that an apostolical church with the Athanasian creed is above par." He cannot therefore believe that the Catholics inflicted upon the "poor Waldenses," the horrible cruelties which are detailed by Leger, though he has no difficulty in believing them to have inflicted cruelties full as great upon others!]

It will be recollected that, towards the close of the former section, it was stated that Peter Waldo, after disseminating his doctrines in France and Germany, was at length driven into **BOHEMIA**, where he spent the last years of his life in preaching the gospel, which he did with the most astonishing success. That kingdom comprehended what is now included in the duchy of Silesia, and the marquisate of Moravia. The country is about three hundred miles long, and two hundred and fifty broad, almost wholly surrounded with impenetrable forests and lofty mountains. The soil, where it is cultivated, is fruitful, and yields corn enough for the use of its inhabitants, which are computed at three millions in number, leaving a considerable surplus frequently for exportation. Its pasture-lands produce abundance of cattle, particularly horses fit for war. They have inexhaustible mines of gold, silver, copper, tin, iron, lead, sulfur and niter; and their carbuncles, emeralds, and other precious stones, are rended all over Europe. **Crantz, who wrote the history of the Bohemian brethren, mentions a colony of Waldenses as obtaining permission to settle at Saltz and Lun, on the river Eger, so early as the twelfth century,** which the coincidence of time renders it highly probable, refers to the persecuted Waldo and his brethren. Certain it is, that his labors were crowned with great success in that country; and we have two noted authors who have left us a particular account of the faith and practices of the Waldenses in Bohemia, during the fourteenth century, at which time their numbers had increased very considerably, and they had to sustain the fire of papal persecution. The first is an inquisitor of the church of Rome, who says "he had exact knowledge of the Waldenses," at whose trials he had often assisted, in several countries. The other is **AENEAS SYLVIUS**, who wrote the history of Bohemia, and afterwards ascended the pontifical chair with the title of pope Pius II. Thus, writes the inquisitor concerning the Waldenses of Bohemia.

The first error of the Waldenses, says he, is, that **they affirm the church of Rome is not the church of Jesus Christ, but an assembly of ungodly men, and that she has ceased from being the true church, from the time of pope Sylvester**, at which time the poison of temporal advantages was cast into the church--That all vices and sins reign in that church, and that they alone live righteously--That they are the true church of Christ, and **that the church of Rome is the whore mentioned in the Revelation.**

They despise and reject all the ordinances and statutes of the church, as being too many and very burdensome. **They insist that the pope is the head and leader of all error**--That the prelates are the scribes and seemingly religious pharisees--That the popes and their bishops, on account of the wars they foment, are murderers--That our obedience is due to God alone, and not to prelates, which they found on Acts 4:9. -- **That none in the church ought to be greater than their brethren**, according to Matthew 20:25, etc.--That no man ought to kneel to a priest, because the angel said to John (Revelation 19:10.) "See thou do it not" -- That tithes ought not to be given to priests, because there was no use of them in the primitive church -- That the clergy ought not to enjoy any temporal possessions, because it was said in the law, "The tribe of Levi shall have no inheritance with the children of Israel, the sacrifices being their portion" (Deuteronomy 18) --That it is wrong to endow and found churches and monasteries, and that nothing ought to be bequeathed to churches by way of legacy. They condemn the clergy for their idleness, saying they ought to work with their hands as the apostles did. They reject all the titles of prelates, as pope, bishop, etc. They affirm that no man ought to be forcibly compelled in matters of faith. They condemn all ecclesiastical offices, and the privileges and immunities of the church, and all persons and things belonging to it, such as councils and synods, parochial rights, etc., declaring that the observances of the religious are nothing else than pharisaical traditions.

As to the second class of their errors--**They condemn all the sacraments of the church**. Concerning the sacrament of baptism they say, that the catechism signifies nothing, **that the absolution pronounced over infants avails them nothing**--that the godfathers and godmothers do not understand what they answer the priest. That the oblation which is called *Al wogen* is nothing but a mere human invention. **They reject all exorcisms** and blessings. Concerning the eucharist they say, that a wicked priest cannot celebrate that sacrament--that transubstantiation is not performed by the hands of him who celebrates unworthily, and that it (the eucharist) may be celebrated on our common tables, alleging for this the words of Malachi 1:11. "In every place shall a pure offering be offered to my name." They condemn the custom of believers communicating no more than once a year, whereas they communicate daily. [I suspect this should have been every Lord's-day, or first day of the week, for it is certain they did not come together for worship every day; nor indeed was the thing practicable.] **That the mass signifies nothing: that the apostles knew nothing of it**; and that it is only done for gain. They reject the canon of the mass, and only make use of the words of Christ in the vulgar tongue--affirming that the offering made by the priest in the mass is of no value. They reject the kiss of peace, that of the altar, of the priest's hands, and the pope's feet. They condemn marriage as a sacrament, saying, that those that enter into the state of marriage without hope of children, are guilty of sin. They have no regard to the degrees of carnal or spiritual affinity in marriage which the church observes, nor the impediments of order and public decency, or to the prohibition of the church in that matter. They contend that a woman after child-birth doth not stand in need of any blessing or churching. **That it was an error of the church to forbid the clergy to marry**. They **disallow the sacrament of extreme unction** -- they hold the sacrament of different orders of the clergy to be of no use, every good layman being a priest, and the apostles themselves being all laymen. That the preaching of a wicked priest cannot profit any body, and that which is uttered in the Latin tongue can be of no use to those laymen who do not understand it. They deride the tonsure of priests and reproach the church that she raiseth bastards, boys, and notorious sinners to high ecclesiastical dignities. -- **Whatsoever is preached without scripture proof, they account no better than fables. They hold that the Holy Scripture is of the same efficacy in the**

**vulgar tongue as in Latin**, and accordingly they communicate and administer the sacraments in the vulgar tongue. **They can say a great part of the Old and New Testament by heart.** They despise the decretals, and the sayings and expositions of holy men, and **CLEAVE ONLY TO THE TEXT OF SCRIPTURE.** They condemn excommunication, neither do they value absolution, which they expect alone from God. **They reject the indulgences of the church**, and deride its dispensations. They admit none for saints except the apostles, and **they pray to no saint.** They condemn the canonization, translation, and vigils of the saints. They laugh at those laymen who choose themselves saints at the altar. They never read the liturgy. **They give no credit to the legends of the saints**, make a mock of the saints' miracles, and despise their relics. They abhor the wood of the cross, because of Christ's sufferings on it; neither do they sign themselves with it. They contend that the doctrine of Christ and his apostles is sufficient to salvation without any church statutes and ordinances, and **affirm that the traditions of the church were no better than the traditions of the Pharisees**--insisting, moreover, that greater stress is laid on the observation of human tradition, than on the keeping of the law of God. **They refute the mystical sense of scripture**, especially as delivered in sayings and actions, and published by the church, such as that the cock upon steeples signifies the pastor!

Their third class of errors is as follows. **They condemn all approved ecclesiastical customs which they do not read of in the gospel**, such as the observation of Candlemas, Palm-Sunday, the reconciliation of penitents, and the adoration of the cross on Good-Friday. They despise the feast of Easter, and all other festivals of Christ and the saints, and say that one day is as good as another, working upon holy-days, where they can do it without being taken notice of. They disregard the church fasts, alleging Isaiah 58: "Is this the fast that I have chosen?" They deride and mock at all dedications, consecrations, and benedictions of candles, ashes, palm-branches, oil, fire, wax-candles, Agnus Dei's, churching of women, strangers, holy places and persons, vestments, salt and water. They look upon the church built of stone to be no better than a common barn, neither do they believe that God dwells there, quoting Acts 7:48. "God doth not dwell in temples made with hands" -- and that prayers offered up in them are of no more efficacy than those which we offer up in our closets, according to Matthew 6:6. "But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet." They set no value on the dedication of churches, and call the ornaments of the altar "the sin of the church," saying, that it would be much better to clothe the poor than to decorate walls. Of the altar they say, that it is wastefulness to let so much cloth lie rotting upon stones; and that Christ never gave to his disciples vests, or rockets, or miters. They celebrate the eucharist in their household cups, and say that the corporal, or cloth on which the host is laid, is no holier than the cloth of their breeches. Concerning lights used in the church, they say that God, who is the true light, stands in no need of light, and that it can have no further use than to hinder the priests from stumbling in the dark. They reject all censings; estimating holy water no better than common water. **The images and pictures in the church they pronounce to be idolatrous.** They mock at the singing [chanting] in churches, saying that the efficacy is in the words and not in the music. They deride the cries of the laymen, and **reject all festival processions**, as those of Easter, as well as mournful processions at Rogation-week and at funerals. They laugh at the custom of bringing sick persons on a bench before the altar. **They dissuade people from going on a pilgrimage to Rome**, and other places beyond sea, though they themselves pretend to go on pilgrimage, whereas it is only with a design to visit their bishops who live in Lombardy. They express no value for the Lord's sepulcher, nor for those of the saints, and condemn the burying in churches, which they found on Matthew 23:29. "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees,

because ye build the tombs," etc. and would prefer burying in the field to the church-yard, were they not afraid of the church. They maintain that the offices for the dead, masses for the deceased, offerings, funeral pomps, last wills, legacies, visiting of graves, the reading of vigils, anniversary masses, and similar suffrages, are of no avail to departed souls. They condemn watching with the dead by night, because of the folly and wickedness which are practiced on those occasions. They hold all these errors because **they deny purgatory**, saying that there are only two ways, the one of the elect to heaven, the other of the damned to hell, according to Ecclesiastes 11:3. "Which way soever the tree falleth there it must lie." They contend that a good man stands in no need of intercessions, and that they cannot profit those that are wicked -- That all sins are mortal, and none of them venial -- That once praying in the words of the Lord's prayer is of more efficacy than the ringing of ten bells, yea, than the mass itself. They think that all swearing is sinful, because Christ says, Matthew 5:34. "Swear not at all, but let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay." They are against punishing malefactors with death, which they found on Romans 12:19. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay it, saith the Lord" [*Hist. Script. Bohem.* p. 222. et seq. in Dr. Allix's *Remarks*, p. 211-219].

Thus far the testimony of this inquisitor; to which I shall now subjoin the short account which the celebrated Aeneas Sylvius gives of the Waldenses of Bohemia, in his history of that Kingdom.

**They hold**, says he, **that the Pope of Rome is not superior to bishops**, and that there is no difference (as to rank or dignity,) for that grace and virtue alone give the preference -- **That the souls of the deceased are either immediately plunged into hell, or advanced to eternal joys [in heaven]**. That there is **no purgatory fire**--that **it is a vain thing to pray for the dead**, and merely an invention of priestly covetousness -- That the images of God and of the saints ought to be destroyed--That the blessing of water and palm-branches is ridiculous--That the religion of the Mendicants [begging Friars] was invented by evil spirits--That priests ought to be poor, and content themselves with alms--That every one has liberty to preach [or instruct.] -- No capital sin ought to be tolerated under pretense of avoiding a greater evil--That he who is guilty of mortal sin, ought not to enjoy any ecclesiastical dignity--That the confirmation which is celebrated with anointing and extreme unction, is none of the sacraments of the church of Christ -- **That auricular confession is a piece of foppery**--that every one ought, in his closet, to confess his sins to God -- That baptism ought to be administered without the addition of holy oil--That the use of church-yards is vain, and nothing but a covetous invention, and that it signifies nothing in what ground the bodies of the dead are laid -- That the temple of the great God is the universe, and that to build churches, monasteries, and oratories to him under the supposition that the divine goodness could be more favorably found in them than in other places, is a limiting the Divine Majesty--That the priestly vestments, altar, ornaments, pall, corporals, chalices, patins, and other vessels, are of no efficacy--That it is vain to implore the suffrages of the saints reigning with Christ in heaven, because they cannot help us--That it is to no purpose to spend one's time in singing and saying the canonical hours--That we are to cease from working on no day except the Lord's day--That the holidays of saints are to be rejected, and that there is no merit in observing the fasts instituted by the church. [*Hist. Bohem.* p. 141. ubi supra.]

**CLAUDIUS SEISSELIUS**, was archbishop of Turin, towards the close of the fifteenth century, a little before the time of the Reformation, and wrote a treatise against the Waldenses. His residence in the very

heart of the valleys of Piedmont must have furnished him with the best opportunities of becoming acquainted with the principles and practices of his non-conformist neighbors, and he has transmitted to posterity a narrative sufficiently circumstantial and explicit to enable any impartial person to form a tolerably correct judgment of them. His testimony is, therefore, of too much importance to be omitted: but I must entreat the reader to bear in mind that it is the testimony of an adversary, whose papal zeal he will perceive to blaze forth against them occasionally with no little fury.

Alluding to the churches of the Waldenses in Piedmont, and those scattered throughout the diocese of Italy, he tells us, that the most cruel persecutions had not been able to extirpate them, or hinder them from a constant defense of that doctrine which they had received from their ancestors. "All sorts of people," says he "have repeatedly endeavored, but in vain, to root them out; for even yet, contrary to the opinion of all men, they still remain conquerors, or at least wholly invincible." He then proceeds thus to describe them.

"The Pope of Rome, and the rest of the prelates and priests of that church," these Waldenses affirm, "neither follow the life nor the precepts of Christ, but do quite the contrary; and that not only in secret, but so openly and manifestly that it can no longer be disguised, because they chiefly value themselves on things that are contrary to religion, and not only condemn but even mock at the precepts of the apostles. The latter lived in great poverty, humility, chastity, continence as to carnal things, and contempt of the world; whereas we prelates and priests live in great pomp, luxuriousness, and dissoluteness. We think it a brave thing to excel in royal power rather than in sacerdotal sanctity; and all our endeavors and studies tend only to the acquisition of glory amongst men, not by means of virtue, holiness, and learning, but by the abundance of all [temporal] things; by arms and warlike magnificence, and by vast expense in equipage, furniture of horses, gold, and other things of that nature. The apostles would not possess any thing as their own, neither would they receive any into their society who had not forsaken all and laid it in common: whereas we, not contented with what we already possess, fish for other people's goods more greedily and impudently than heathens themselves. Hence it is that we make wars, and incite Christian princes and people to take up arms. The apostles traveling through towns and villages, and sowing the word of God with power, exercised many other offices of charity, according to the several gifts they had received: whereas we, not only do nothing like this, and give no good examples of holy conversation, but on the contrary frequently resist and oppose those that do, thus opening the way to all manner of dissoluteness and avarice. They, as it were, against their wills and with reluctance, by the divine command or inspiration of God, received ordination to promote the salvation of others: whereas we buy benefices and preferments for money, or procure them by force, or through the favor of princes and other indirect means, merely to satiate our lusts, to enrich our relations, and for the sake of worldly glory. Moreover, they spent their lives in manifold fastings, watchings, and labors, terrified neither by trouble nor danger, that they might show to others the way of salvation: whereas we pass our time in idleness, in pleasures, and other earthly or wicked things. They, despising gold and silver, as they had freely received the divine grace, so they freely dispensed it to others; whereas we set all holy things to sale, and barter with the heavenly treasures of God himself, and, in a word, confound all things both divine and human. So that the church of Rome cannot be said to be the spouse of Christ, but that common prostitute described by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and St. John. in the Revelations, in such lively colors. For Christ hath joined his church to him to be his bride, holy, pure, fair, adorned with



the ornaments and jewels of every virtue, without spot or wrinkle, such as the Holy Spirit figuratively describes her in the Canticles. Far be it, therefore, that Christ should ever think of changing this his beautiful and loving bride for such a stinking, loathsome harlot."

Further, Seisselius thus proceeds. "We do not deny," say the Waldenses, "that God alone is the searcher of hearts, for, as the Scripture saith, 'He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins;' and therefore that he alone knows whether the works of men are pleasing unto him and obtain his favor, which others can only know by conjecture. But he himself hath taught us how to form our judgment when he saith, 'Ye shall know them by their fruits; for an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor a good tree evil fruit.'" Hence, though it be a difficult thing to judge of good works, because they receive their value from the intention of the doer, yet wicked works discover themselves, and the intention cannot make them good, especially when they are open, barefaced, and obviously repugnant to the law of God. Therefore, if I see the bishops and priests every day living in dissoluteness and luxury, robbing others of their goods, smiting their neighbors, persecuting those that are good, blaspheming the name of God, prodigally wasting the patrimony of the church in voluptuousness and damnable crimes, may I not undoubtedly affirm, that they who commit these things are not the ministers of God, but his public and avowed enemies? Surely such they are, though we should suppose them created or confirmed by an universal synod of Christians, or by the pope, or by Peter himself. But how much more may we conclude them such, when those that ordained them are worse than themselves, and their works obviously worse than theirs? What shall we say, if it appear that they have publicly and notoriously bought the papacy--that they openly set to sale sacerdotal functions, and that they set over the churches, not by mistake, but out of malice, those who are known to be wholly unworthy of that charge, and who never in all their lifetime did any thing worthy either of a priest, or even of a Christian? Shall we obey such priests and prelates who lead us the way to salvation neither by word nor work, but rather endeavor all they can to drag us into the same pit of destruction as themselves? Doth not our Savior tell us that we must not suffer ourselves to be led by blind guides, lest when one blind man leads another, they both fall into the ditch? Hath he not declared that such as these are cut off from the life of the church and the body of Christ, and destined to the fire? How can he be the vicegerent of Christ, who is not so much as a Christian, or a member of the mystical body of Christ, but whom he commands us to avoid as a heathen and publican, so long as he continues incorrigible?

"The apostolic authority, the faith of Peter, which Christ said should not fail the catholic church, and with which church he promiseth to abide forever, is to be found amongst us who walk after the example of the apostles, and according to our weak measure, observe the commands and ordinances they have given us. We are those of whom the apostle Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Corinthians, 'Brethren consider your calling, that ye are not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty; and the base things of this world, and things that are despised, yea, and the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are.' And the same apostle tells us, that he was sent to preach the gospel, not in the mightiness of man's wisdom, but in plainness and simplicity; alleging to this purpose what the Lord saith elsewhere, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to naught the prudence of the prudent.'"

**Such is the description given us, by the archbishop of Turin, of the Waldenses of Piedmont, before Luther was born, or Calvin thought of, or the term reformation even mentioned.** And yet the Catholics have had the effrontery to ask us, "Where was your religion before Luther?" But let us further attend to the account which he gives us of the articles of their faith. On this particular he thus writes.

**"They receive only what is written in the Old and New Testaments. They say that the popes of Rome and other priests have corrupted the Scriptures by their doctrines and glosses--that they owe neither tithes nor first-fruits to the clergy--that the consecration of churches, indulgences, and similar benedictions, are the inventions of false priests. They do not celebrate the festivals of the saints. They say that men do not stand in need of the suffrages of the saints,** Christ abundantly sufficing in all things. They affirm that marriage may be contracted in any degree, excepting only one or two at the most; as if the popes had no power to prohibit marriage in any other degree! **They say that whatever is done to deliver the souls of the dead from the pains of purgatory is useless, lost, and superstitious--that our priests have not the power of forgiving sins.** They say that they alone observe the evangelic and apostolic doctrine, on which account, by an intolerable impudence, they usurp the name of the catholic church! Their barbs [pastors] do greatly err," saith Seisselius, "because they are neither sent of God, nor by the pastors of the [catholic] church, but of the devil, as appears from their damnable doctrine. They say that the authority of hearing confessions belongs to all Christians that walk according to the apostolic precepts, (which their barbs attribute to themselves) because the apostle James saith, 'Confess your faults one to another.' They say that we ought not to have any kind of [set form of] prayer, except it appear that it was composed by some certain [inspired] author, and approved of God. Their barbs have often preached this doctrine to abolish the service of the glorious Virgin and of other saints. They do not think that Christians ought to say the angelical salutation to the mother of God, alleging that it has not the form of a prayer, but a salutation: but that they do only that they may rob the Virgin of this service, **saying, that it is not lawful to worship or serve her any more than the rest of the saints. They affirm that the blessings of the priests are of no virtue at all.** Did not Christ bless the bread in the desert? When the apostles sat down to eat bread, they blessed what was set upon the table. **They say there is no need of holy water** in the churches, because neither Christ nor his apostles either made it or commanded it: as if we ought to say or do nothing but what we read was done by them. **They say, that the indulgences allowed of by the church are despicable, useless things:-- that the souls of the dead, without being tried by any purgation, immediately on their parting from the body, enter into happiness or misery;** and that the clergy, blinded by their covetousness, have invented purgatory. They say that the saints cannot take notice of what is done here below. **They detest and abhor all images,** and the sign of the cross, much more than we honor them. They make no distinction between the worship of Latria, which is due to God only, and that of Dulia, which belongs to the saints. As to the fasts which the catholic church has instituted for the honor of God and the saints, they have yet less reason to object these to us. They affirm that a lie is always a mortal sin, because David says, 'God shall destroy all liars.' And as to transubstantiation he tells us, "that the Waldenses made a mock of all the artifices which the Catholics had recourse to with the view of making it appear to them more plausible."

Upon this part of their conduct, the reflections of the learned archbishop are sufficiently pertinent to be here introduced. "I think," saith he, "that those took pains to little purpose, who, when writing against

this sect, made it their chief business to insist upon the difficulties about the sacrament of the eucharist, and who, in order to clear them, have spoken so sharply and subtly, not to say confusedly, that I have great reason to doubt whether they ever understood the thing themselves. Yet I will not say that because I do not myself comprehend it, (for that I ingenuously confess) I think it also to surpass the capacity of others; but because it has always appeared to me to be a point of that difficulty, that the ablest have been ready to own that the strength of human understanding must in this case be subject to faith."

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

First Edition 1812  
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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 3**

### **A VIEW OF THE DOCTRINAL SENTIMENTS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE WALDENSES, COLLECTED FROM THEIR OWN WRITINGS.**

Having in the former section laid before the reader the sentiments imputed to the Waldenses by four of their avowed adversaries, there can be no reasonable objection to our now permitting them to make their own apology. Their historian, John Paul Perrin, in his "Histoire des Vaudois," published at Geneva in 1619, has furnished us with two of their "Confessions of Faith," of which the following are faithful translations. Sir Samuel Morland has fixed the date of the first of them in the Year 1120. [Morland's *History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 30.]

#### ***THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE WALDENSES (A.D. 1120)***

1. We believe and firmly maintain all that is contained in the twelve articles of the symbol, commonly called the apostles' creed, and we regard as heretical whatever is inconsistent with the said twelve articles.
2. We believe that there is one God,--the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. **We acknowledge for sacred canonical scriptures the books of the Holy Bible.** (Here follows the title of each, exactly conformable to our received canon, but which it is deemed, on that account, quite unnecessary to particularize.)

4. The books above-mentioned teach us--That there is ONE GOD, almighty, unbounded in wisdom, and infinite in goodness, and who, in his goodness, has made all things. For he created Adam after his own image and likeness. But through the enmity of the devil, and his own disobedience, Adam fell, sin entered into the world, and we became transgressors in and by Adam.
5. That Christ had been promised to the fathers who received the law, to the end that, knowing their sin by the law, and their unrighteousness and insufficiency, they might desire the coming of Christ to make satisfaction for their sins, and to accomplish the law by himself.
6. That at the time appointed of the Father, Christ was born--a time when iniquity everywhere abounded, to make it manifest that it was not for the sake of any good in ourselves, for all were sinners, but that He, who is true, might display his grace and mercy towards us.
7. **That Christ is our life, and truth, and peace, and righteousness--our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and priest, who died for the salvation of all who should believe, and rose again for their justification.**
8. And we also firmly believe, that **there is no other mediator**, or advocate with God the Father, but Jesus Christ. And as to the Virgin Mary, she was holy, humble, and full of grace; and this we also believe concerning all other saints, namely, that they are waiting in heaven for the resurrection of their bodies at the day of judgment.
9. We also believe, that, after this life, there are but two places--one for those that are saved, the other for the damned, which [two] we call paradise and hell, **wholly denying purgatory** of Antichrist, invented in opposition to the truth.
10. **Moreover, we have ever regarded all the inventions of men (in the affairs of religion) as an unspeakable abomination before God;** such as the festival days and vigils of saints, and what is called holy-water, the abstaining from flesh on certain days, and such like things, but above all, the masses.
11. We hold in abhorrence all human inventions, as proceeding from Antichrist, which produce distress, [alluding probably to the voluntary penances and mortification imposed by the Catholics on themselves] and are prejudicial to the liberty of the mind.
12. We consider the Sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that believers use these symbols or visible forms when it can be done. Notwithstanding which, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them.
13. **We acknowledge no sacraments (as of divine appointment) but baptism and the Lord's supper.**
14. We honor the secular powers, with subjection, obedience, promptitude, and payment. [Perrin's *Hist.*

*des Vaudois*, ch. 12.]

### ***ANOTHER WALDENSIAN CONFESSION OF FAITH (A.D. C.1150)***

The Centuriators of Magdeburgh, in their *History of the Christian Church*, under the twelfth century, recite from an old manuscript the following epitome of the opinions of the Waldenses of that age.

**In articles of faith the authority of the Holy Scriptures is the highest; and for that reason it is the standard of judging; so that whatsoever doth not agree with the word of God, is deservedly to be rejected and avoided.** The decrees of Fathers and Councils are [only] so far to be approved as they agree with the word of God. The reading and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is open to, and is necessary for all men, the laity as well as the clergy; and moreover the writings of the prophets and apostles are to be read rather than the comments of men. **The sacraments of the church of Christ are two, baptism and the Lord's supper:** and in the latter, Christ has instituted the receiving in both kinds, both for priests and people. **Masses are impious; and it is madness to say masses for the dead.** **Purgatory is the invention of men;** for they who believe go into eternal life; they who believe not, into eternal damnation. **The invoking and worshipping of dead saints is idolatry. The church of Rome is the whore of Babylon.** We must not obey the pope and bishops, because they are the wolves of the church of Christ. **The pope hath not the primacy over all the churches** of Christ; neither hath he the power of both swords. That is the church of Christ, which hears the pure doctrine of Christ, and observes the ordinances instituted by him, in whatsoever place it exists. **Vows of celibacy are the inventions of men,** and productive of uncleanness. So many orders [of the clergy,] so many marks of the beast. Monks are a filthy carcass. So many superstitious dedications of churches, commemorations of the dead, benedictions of creatures, pilgrimages, so many forced fastings, so many superfluous festivals, those perpetual bellowings, [alluding to the practice of chanting] and the observations of various other ceremonies, manifestly obstructing the teaching and learning of the word, are **DIABOLICAL INVENTIONS.** The marriage of priests is both lawful and necessary.

**About the time of the Reformation, the Waldenses who resided in the South of France, and who of course were subjects of the French king, were persecuted with the most sanguinary severity,** particularly those resident in the country of Provence. In the year 1540, the parliament of Aix, the chief judicature of the province, passed a law, that "they should all of them promiscuously be destroyed, that their houses should be pulled down, the town of Merindole be leveled with the ground, all the trees cut down, and the country adjacent converted into a desert." Voltaire, speaking of this cruel decree, says, "The Waldenses, terrified at this sentence, sent a deputation to cardinal Sadoletus, bishop of Carpentras, who at that time was in his diocese. This illustrious scholar, this true philosopher, this humane and compassionate prelate, received them with great goodness, and interceded in their behalf, and the execution of the sentence was for a time suspended" [Voltaire's *Univ. Hist.* ch. 116]. The sentence, nevertheless, was executed in all its rigor five years afterwards, as will be related in a future section. In the preceding year, however, (1544) as we are informed by Sleiden, in his history of the Reformation, p. 347, the Waldenses, to remove the prejudices that were entertained against them, and to manifest their innocence, transmitted to the king, in writing, the following confession of their faith.

**THIRD WALDENSIAN CONFESSION (1544)**

1. We believe that there is but one God, who is a Spirit--the Creator of all things--the Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all; who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth--upon whom we are continually dependent, and to whom we ascribe praise for our life, food, raiment, health, sickness, prosperity, and adversity. We love him as the source of all goodness; and reverence him as that sublime being, who searches the reins and trieth the hearts of the children of men.

2. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son and image of the Father--**that in Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells**, and that by Him alone we know the Father. He is our Mediator and advocate; nor is there any other name given under heaven by which we can be saved. In His name alone we call upon the Father, using no other prayers than those contained in the Holy Scriptures, or such as are in substance agreeable thereunto.

3. We believe in the Holy Spirit as the Comforter, proceeding from the Father, and from the Son; by whose inspiration we are taught to pray; being by Him renewed in the spirit of our minds; who creates us anew unto good works, and from whom we receive the knowledge of the truth.

4. We believe that there is one holy church, comprising the whole assembly of the elect and faithful, that have existed from the beginning of the world, or that shall be to the end thereof. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the head -- it is governed by his word and guided by the Holy Spirit. In the church it behooves all Christians to have fellowship. For her He [Christ] prays incessantly, and his prayer for it is most acceptable to God, without which indeed there could be no salvation.

5. **We hold that the ministers of the church ought to be unblameable both in life and doctrine**; and if found otherwise, that they ought to be deposed from their office, and others substituted in their stead; and that no person ought to presume to take that honor unto himself but he who is called of God as was Aaron -- that the duties of such are to feed the flock of God, not for filthy lucre's sake, or as having dominion over God's heritage, but as being examples to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, and in chastity.

6. We acknowledge, that kings, princes, and governors, are the appointed and established ministers of God, whom we are bound to obey [in all lawful and civil concerns.] For they bear the sword for the defense of the innocent, and the punishment of evil doers; for which reason we are bound to honor and pay them tribute. From this power and authority, no man can exempt himself as is manifest from the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who voluntarily paid tribute, not taking upon himself any jurisdiction of temporal power.

7. **We believe that in the ordinance of baptism the water is the visible and external sign, which represents to us that which, by virtue of God's invisible operation, is within us -- namely, the renovation of our minds, and the mortification of our members through [the faith of] Jesus Christ. And by this ordinance we are received into the holy congregation of God's people, previously**

## **professing and declaring our faith and change of life.**

8. We hold that the Lord's supper is a commemoration of, and thanksgiving for, the benefits which we have received by his sufferings and death--and that it is to be received in faith and love--examining ourselves, that so we may eat of that bread and drink of that cup, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures.

9. We maintain that marriage was instituted of God that it is holy and honorable, and ought to be forbidden to none, provided there be no obstacle from the divine word.

10. We contend, that all those in whom the fear of God dwells, will thereby be led to please him, and to abound in the good works [of the gospel] which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them--which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, sobriety, and the other good works enforced in the Holy Scriptures.

11. On the other hand, we confess that we consider it to be our duty to beware of false teachers, whose object is to divert the minds of men from the true worship of God, and to lead them to place their confidence in the creature, as well as to depart from the good works of the gospel, and to regard the inventions of men.

**12. We take the Old and the New Testament for the rule of our life**, and we agree with the general confession of faith contained in [what is usually termed] the apostles' creed. (See Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois*, ch. 13.)

[Note: It is obvious from article # 7 above that the Waldenses of the mid-16th century rejected all of the heresies of baptism held by Rome, including infant baptism and baptismal regeneration. D.W. Cloud]

## ***A TREATISE CONCERNING ANTICHRIST, PURGATORY, THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS, AND THE SACRAMENTS (12th or 13th centuries)***

Amongst the writings of the ancient Waldenses that have reached our times, is "A Treatise concerning Antichrist, Purgatory, the Invocation of Saints, and the Sacraments." [This is the work to which the late Bishop Hurd refers us, in his "Introductory Sermons on the Study of the Prophecies," vol. 2: p. 30. Ser. 7. note (t.) where he says, "In this (twelfth century) was composed a very remarkable tract on the subject of Antichrist, which may be seen in Mede's *Works*, p. 721." ] Their historian, John Paul Perrin, to whom we are indebted for rescuing it from oblivion, informs us that *the original manuscript, in which are also many sermons by their pastors, bears date, A.D. 1120*; which is nearly half a century before the time of Peter Waldo, and about the period when Peter de Bruys was discharging his ministry in France. *The treatise has indeed been attributed, and not without probability, to the pen of Peter de Bruys*. Perrin says, it was carefully preserved among the inhabitants of the Alps, from whence he procured it. If we could depend with certainty upon the correctness of the date of this manuscript, it would be a very important document in the history of the Waldensian churches, because it bears internal evidence of having been written for the express purpose of exhibiting a public declaration of their reasons for



separating from the communion of the church of Rome, and consequently it would throw much light upon the question of their antiquity. But it is proper to apprise the reader of one circumstance attending it, which ought to excite a doubt upon the subject; and that is, that the Scriptures are quoted in it as divided into chapters and verses, which we know was not done until after the middle of the thirteenth century. [Mr. Milner has overlooked this circumstance altogether, and reasons from this *Treatise* in behalf of the antiquity of those churches, as though the date it bears was unquestionable. See his *History*, volume 3. p. 477.] If, therefore, the original was written at the period fixed by Perrin, the chapters must have been added by a copyist.

[Note: This last statement by Jones is very important. The fact that the Scripture references are divided into chapters and verses, in itself, does not prove that the *Treatise* originated after the middle of the 13th century. The *Treatise* was copied many times from generation to generation, and it would have been very natural for scribes who copied it after the 13th century to add the chapter and verse divisions to assist the readers in locating the proper Scripture passages. I have made similar modifications when producing electronic editions of old Baptist histories. It seems to me to be very presumptuous for modern historians, on such a flimsy basis, to overthrow a date which was assigned to a document by ancient people who were in a much better position to know the truth of the matter. D.W. Cloud]

The treatise, nevertheless, whensoever written, is very interesting, and though the whole of it be too long for insertion, I shall submit to the reader a few extracts. Thus it describes Antichrist:

"ANTICHRIST is a falsehood, or deceit varnished over with the semblance of truth, and of the righteousness of Christ and his spouse, yet in opposition to the way of truth, righteousness, faith, hope, charity, as well as to moral life. **It is not any particular person ordained to any degree, or office, or ministry, but it is a system of falsehood, opposing itself to the truth, covering and adorning itself with a show of beauty and piety, yet very unsuitable to the church of Christ, as by the names, and offices, the Scriptures, and the sacraments, and various other things, may appear.** The system of iniquity thus completed with its ministers, great and small, supported by those who are induced to follow it with an evil heart and blind-fold--this is the congregation, which, taken together, comprises what is called Antichrist or Babylon, the fourth beast, the whore, the man of sin, the son of perdition. His ministers are called false prophets, lying teachers, the ministers of darkness, the spirit of error, the apocalyptic whore, the mother of harlots, clouds without water, trees without leaves, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, wandering stars, Balaamites and Egyptians.

"He is termed Antichrist, because being disguised under the names of Christ and of his church and faithful members, he opposes the salvation which Christ wrought out, and which is truly administered in his church -- and of which salvation believers participate by faith, hope, and charity. Thus he opposes the truth by the wisdom of this world, by false religion, by counterfeit holiness, by ecclesiastical power, by secular tyranny, and by the riches, honors, dignities, with the pleasures and delicacies of this world. It should therefore be carefully observed, that Antichrist could not come, without a concurrence of all these things, making up a system of hypocrisy and falsehood -- these, must be, the

wise of this world, the religious orders, the pharisees, ministers, and doctors; the secular power, with the people of the world, all mingled together. For although Antichrist was conceived in the times of the apostles, he was then in his infancy, imperfect and unformed, rude, unshapen, and wanting utterance, he then wanted those hypocritical ministers and human ordinances, and the outward show of religious orders which he afterwards obtained. As he was destitute of riches and other endowments necessary to allure to himself ministers for his service, and to enable him to multiply, defend, and protect his adherents, so he also wanted the secular power to force others to forsake the truth and embrace falsehood. But growing up in his members, that is, in his blind and dissembling ministers, and in worldly subjects, he at length arrived at full maturity, when men, whose hearts were set upon this world, blind in the faith, multiplied in the church, and by the union of church and state, got the power of both into their hands.

"Christ never had an enemy like this; so able to pervert the way of truth into falsehood, insomuch that **the true church, with her children, is trodden under foot.** The worship that belongs alone to God he transfers to Antichrist himself -- to the creature, male and female, deceased -- to images, carcasses, and relics. **The sacrament of the eucharist is converted into an object of adoration,** and the worshipping of God alone is prohibited. He robs the Savior of his merits, and the sufficiency of his grace in justification, regeneration, remission of sins, sanctification, establishment in the faith, and spiritual nourishment; ascribing all these things to his own authority, to a form of words, to his own works, to the intercession of saints, and to the fire of purgatory. He seduces the people from Christ, drawing off their minds from seeking those blessings in him, by a lively faith in God, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and teaching his followers to expect them by the will and pleasure and works of Antichrist.

**"He teaches to baptize children into the faith, and attributes to this the work of regeneration;** thus confounding the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, with the external rite of baptism, and on this foundation bestows orders, and indeed grounds all his Christianity. He places all religion and holiness in going to mass, and has mingled together all descriptions of ceremonies, Jewish, Heathen, and Christian; and by means thereof, the people are deprived of spiritual food, seduced from the true religion and the commandments of God, and established in vain and presumptuous hopes. All his works are done to be seen of men, that he may glut himself with insatiable avarice; and hence every thing is set to sale. He allows of open sins, without ecclesiastical censure, and even the impenitent are not excommunicated. He does not govern, nor does he maintain his unity by the Holy Spirit, but by means of the secular power, making use of the same to effect spiritual matters. **He hates, and persecutes, and searches after, and plunders, and destroys the members of Christ.** These are some of the principal of the works of Antichrist against the truth, but the whole are past numbering or recording.

"On the other hand, he makes use of an outward confession of faith; and therein is verified the saying of the apostle -- 'They profess in words that they know God, but in works they deny him.' He covers his iniquity by pleading the length of his duration, or succession of time, and the multitudes of his followers--concerning whom it is said in the Revelation, that 'power is given him over every tribe, language, and nation, and all that

dwell on the earth shall worship him.' He covers his iniquity by pleading the spiritual authority of the apostles, though the apostle expressly says, 'We can do nothing against the truth'--and 'there is no power given us for destruction.' He boasts of numerous miracles, even as the apostle foretold -- 'Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all miracles and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.' He has an outward show of holiness, consisting in prayers, fastings, watchings, and alms-deeds, of which the apostle testified, when he said, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.'

"Thus it is that Antichrist covers his lying wickedness as with a cloak or garment, that he may not be rejected as a pagan or infidel, and under which disguise he can go on practicing his villanies boldly, and like a harlot. But it is plain from both the Old and New Testaments, that **a Christian stands bound by express command to separate himself from Antichrist.** [Here the following scriptures are quoted at large from the Old Testament, Isaiah 52:11,12, Jeremiah 1:8, Numbers 16:21, and verse 6, Leviticus 20:24-27, Exodus 34:12,15, Leviticus 15:31, Ezekiel 2, Deuteronomy 20.] Now it is manifest from the New Testament, John 12 that the Lord is come, and hath suffered death that he might gather together in one the children of God; and it is on account of this unity in the truth, and their separation from others, that it is said in Matthew 10, 'I am come to separate a man from his father, and to set the daughter against the mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and those of a man's own household shall be his enemies.' Christ hath enjoined this separation upon his disciples, when he said, 'Whosoever doth not forsake father and mother, etc. cannot be my disciple.' And again, 'Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep's clothing.' Again, 'Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees' -- and 'take heed lest any man seduce you, for many shall come in my name and seduce many.' And in the book of the Revelation he warns by his own voice, and charges his people to go out of Babylon, saying, 'Come out of her, my people, and be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins are come up unto heaven, and the Lord remembereth her iniquity.' The apostle says the same, 'Have no fellowship with unbelievers, for what communion hath righteousness with iniquity, or what agreement hath light with darkness, or what concord hath Christ with the devil, or what part hath a believer with an infidel, or the temple of God with idols? Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'

"From what has been said, we may learn wherein consist the perverseness and wickedness of Antichrist, and that God commands his people to separate from him, and to join themselves to the holy city, Jerusalem. And since it hath pleased God to make known these things to us by his servants, believing it to be his revealed will, according to the Holy Scriptures, and admonished thereto by the command of the Lord, we do, both inwardly and outwardly, depart from Antichrist. We hold communion, and maintain unity, one with another, freely and uprightly, having no other object to propose herein, but purely and singly to please the Lord, and seek the salvation of our own souls. Thus, as the Lord is pleased to enable us, and so far as our understandings are instructed into the path of duty, we attach ourselves to the truth of Christ, and to his church, how mean

soever she may appear in the eyes of men. We therefore, have thought it good to make this declaration of our reasons for departing from Antichrist, as well as to make known what kind of fellowship we have, to the end that, if the Lord be pleased to impart the knowledge of the same truth to others, those that receive it may love it together with us. It is our desire also, that if peradventure, others are not sufficiently enlightened, they may receive assistance from this service, the Lord succeeding it by his blessing. On the other hand, if any have received more abundantly from him, and in a higher measure, we desire with all humility to be taught, and instructed better, that so we may rectify whatever is amiss."

The Treatise then proceeds to sketch and succinctly to confute the numerous abominations of popery, and to show how they all tend to subvert the faith of Christ, and destroy the souls of men; but my limits will only allow of a very abridged view of this masterly statement.

"Be it known, to all in general, and to every one in particular, that **these are the reasons of our separation**, viz. **It is for the truth's sake which we believe**--for the knowledge which we have of the only true God, and the unity of the divine essence in three persons, a knowledge which flesh and blood cannot communicate -- it is for the worship due to that only true God -- for the love we owe him above all things -- for the sanctification and honor which are due to him supremely, and above every name--for the lively hopes which we have in God through Christ--for regeneration and the renewing of our minds by faith, hope, and charity--for the worthiness of Jesus Christ, with the all-sufficiency of his grace and righteousness--for the communion of saints--the remission of sins--an holy conversation--for the sake of a faithful adherence to all the commands in the faith of Christ--for true repentance--for final perseverance, and everlasting life.

"A various and endless idolatry, in opposition to the express command of God and Christ, marks the genius of Antichrist--divine worship offered, not to the Creator, but to the creatures, visible and invisible, corporeal and spiritual, male and female--unto which creatures they present the worship of faith and hope, works, prayers, pilgrimages, and alms, oblations and sacrifices of great price--honoring and adoring them in various ways, by hymns and songs, speeches and solemnities, and celebration of masses, vespers peculiarly appropriated to them, with vigils and feast-days, hoping thereby to obtain that grace which is essentially in God alone, which is meritoriously in Christ, and which is obtained only by faith through the Holy Spirit.

"Another feature which characterizes Antichrist is the excessive love of the world, whence springs an endless train of sin and mischief in the church, as well in those that govern, as in them that officiate--both of whom sin without control. With this is connected the false hopes which Antichrist holds out, of pardon, grace, justification, and everlasting life, as things not to be sought from and obtained in Christ, nor in God through Christ, but in men, living or dead--**not by that true and living faith which worketh by love, producing repentance, and influencing the mind to depart from evil, and give itself up to God.**"

These extracts will give the reader some notion of the manner in which the subject is handled in this Treatise; and it is unnecessary to indulge in more copious extracts. The articles entitled, "The Dream of Purgatory," and "The Invocation of Saints," are discussed with equal judgment; and in the latter, especially, the doctrine of the mediation of Jesus Christ--the perfection and all-sufficiency of his sacrifice for sin--his office as high priest, advocate, and intercessor of his church, are most clearly and nobly maintained, in opposition to the papal worship and invocation of saints. "Christ alone," say they, "hath the prerogative of interceding for his guilty people, and he obtains whatsoever he requests in behalf of those whom he hath reconciled by his death. He is the only and sole mediator between God and man, the advocate and intercessor with the Father for sinners; and so sufficient is he, that God the Father denies nothing to any one which he asks in his name. For, being near unto God, and living of himself, he prays to God continually for us; and "such an high-priest became us, who was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens." Hence they argue, that as there is nothing attainable at the hand of God but through Jesus the mediator, how great is the folly of seeking any other intercessor! He having made expiation for the sins of his people, and having approached unto God for them, where he ever lives to intercede. "No man comes to the Father but by him." Hence he himself says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, I will do it." "Thou, O Lord, art worthy to receive the book and to unloose the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God." [Perrin's *Histoire des Vaudois*, part 2, book 5, ch. 8.]

### **WALDENSIAN APOLOGY (1508)**

In the year 1508, about ten years before Luther began the Reformation, and during the reign of Ladislaus, king of Hungary and Bohemia, a dreadful persecution broke out against that class of his subjects, who held the principles of the Waldenses. The latter, to justify themselves from several charges erroneously imputed to them by their adversaries, drew up an apology addressed to the king, which was still extant in the time of Perrin, and as he has handed down to us the substance of it, I shall here extract a few of the more interesting particulars.

1. It was said of them, by their adversaries, that a man might leave his wife when he pleased. On which they reply, that "matrimony is a bond which nothing but death can dissolve, except the crime of fornication, as saith the Lord Jesus Christ;" and also the apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 7, saith, "Let not the wife depart from her husband, nor the husband put away his wife."

2. A second calumny regards a community of goods and wives--to which they reply, "that marriage was of old ordained by God in Paradise; that it was designed as an antidote against adultery; and that it is recorded by the apostle, when speaking of this subject, "Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." Also, that "the husband ought to love his wife as Christ loveth the church," and that such as are married ought to live holily together with their children in the fear of God. **That as for goods, every one hath possessed his own at all times and in all places--they never having had any such intercommunity among them, as tended in the smallest degree to derogate from that lawful propriety which every one has by right to his own estate.**

3. Another scandalous charge was, that they worshipped their barbs or pastors. The grossness of this calumny, indeed, sufficiently refuted itself. At one time they are represented as setting aside the necessity of the pastoral office altogether, and making its peculiar duties common to every member--at others they are charged with holding their pastors in such estimation, that they paid them divine honors. The Waldenses refer, on this subject, to their own writings, in which they have shown that God alone is the object of worship, and that they never intended to give that to any creature. And that as to their pastors, regarding them as those by whom they have heard the word of reconciliation, they consider themselves as bound in conscience and duty to treat them with kindness, and to esteem them in love for their work's sake.

4. They have been accused of maintaining that it was in no instance lawful to swear. In reply to that, they say that "some oaths are certainly lawful, tending both to the honor of God and the edification of their neighbor," instancing Hebrews 6:17. That "men swear by a greater than themselves, and an oath made for confirmation is an end of all strife." They also allege that it was enjoined upon the people of Israel, Deuteronomy 6, to swear by the name of the Lord--and also the oath made betwixt Abimelech and Isaac, Genesis 26, and that of Jacob, Genesis 31.

5. Another calumny was, that they showed no reverence to sacred places, maintaining that it is not a more grievous sin to burn a church than to break open another house. To defend themselves against this charge they say, "That neither the place nor the pulpit makes a man holy--and that those are greatly deceived who think the better of themselves because of the dignity of the place. For what was greater than Paradise, or what more pure than heaven." Notwithstanding which, man was driven out of Paradise, because he sinned there; and the angels were expelled from heaven, that they might be an example to all succeeding ages, teaching us that it is neither the place, nor its grandeur and dignity, but innocence of life that makes a man holy."

6. Again; they were charged with holding, that the civil magistrate ought not to sentence any one to death. To which they answer, "that it is written, a malefactor shall not be suffered to live; and that without correction and discipline, doctrine serves to no purpose, neither would judgments be known or wickedness punished. That therefore, just anger is the mother of discipline, and patience without reason the seed of vices, encouraging the wicked to proceed in their excesses." True it is, that they complained of the conduct of the magistrates in delivering them up to death, without any other knowledge of them than they had obtained from the priests and monks who pretended to discover errors in them, and then exclaiming against them as abuses which they had introduced into the church, condemned them as heretics, and delivered them up to the secular power. Moreover, they regarded it as both unwise and cruel, on the part of the magistrates, to give credit to men so carried away with passion as were the priests, and that they should put to death so many poor innocent persons without having either heard or examined them.

7. Allied to the foregoing was another slander, tending to render them odious to kings and princes, namely, "that a layman in a state of grace hath more authority than a prince living in mortal sin." In reply to that imputation, they said, "that every one ought to be subject to those who are placed in authority--

that it is their duty to obey them, to honor them with double honor, to be subject to them with allegiance, and promptly paying them tribute," etc.

8. The next charge was, that the Waldenses affirmed the pope had no authority over the kings and princes of the earth, who derived their authority from God alone; and on which account they took occasion to call them Manichaeans. They replied, "We believe that the holy Trinity created all things, both visible and invisible, and that [Jehovah] is Lord of all things in heaven, earth, and hell, as it is written, 'All things were created by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.'"

9. It was further alleged against them, that they objected to the payment of tithes--that priests might lawfully be put to death, or dispossessed of their tithes, which any one might retain without scruple of conscience. And it is certain, says their historian, that could the Waldenses have appropriated their tithes to any other purpose than the maintenance of those whom they regarded as "dumb dogs," drowsy watchmen, slow bellies, deceivers, and deceived, they would have done it; but as they had not power to detain them, none of them made any disturbance about the matter. It indeed appears, that in what depended upon their own voluntary choice, they gave nothing to such persons, nor cared for any of their helps after death, of which the priests complained, and thence took occasion to accuse them as heretics. But let us hear them upon the subject of revenge. "The Lord knowing that we should be delivered up, said 'Beware of men.' But he never teaches or counsels his elect to slay any one, but on the contrary, to 'love their enemies.' When the disciples said to him, 'shall we call for fire from heaven and consume them?' Christ answered, 'Ye know not what spirit ye are of.' Also the Lord said to Peter, 'Put up thy sword into its place,' etc. Besides, temporal distresses ought to be despised and sustained with patience, for in them nothing happens that is new. Whilst we are here, we are the Lord's threshold, to be beaten like corn when it is separated from the chaff."

10. Claude de Rubis, a virulent catholic writer, who compiled the history of the city of Lyons, defames them by saying, that, having retired from the city of Lyons, and taken refuge among the Alps, the Waldenses, like the rest of the inhabitants of the vallies had become sorcerers -- and indeed, says he, there are two things which commonly accompany each other, that is heresy and sorcery, as hath been verified in the cities and provinces which have admitted heresy amongst them. To justify themselves against this foul aspersion, they say, "Those act against the first precept of the decalogue, who believe the planets can control the free-will of man. Such do, in effect, esteem the planets to be gods; for they attribute to the creature that which is the peculiar province of the Creator. Against such the prophet Jeremiah saith, "Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not afraid of those things at which the heathen are dismayed." Paul also says to the Galatians, "Ye observe days and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labor in vain." They also act against this commandment who believe in sorcerers and diviners, for such believe the demons to be gods. The reason is, because they ask that of demons which God alone can grant, viz. to discover things that are secret, and to reveal the truth of things to come, which is forbidden by God. Leviticus 19. "Thou shalt not regard them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards. Moreover, thou shalt not divine nor give any heed to dreams. Thou shalt not be an enchanter, neither take counsel with familiar spirits, or wizards, nor inquire the truth among the dead, for all these things are an abomination to the Lord." And as to the punishment which God, in a way of vengeance, inflicts upon such, we read in the book of Kings, that "Elijah

demanding of Ahaziah, saying, What! is there no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die." Saul died, because he had prevaricated with the commandment that God had given him: he kept it not, neither put his trust in the Lord, but asked counsel of a witch: wherefore the Lord slew him, and transferred his kingdom to David the son of Jesse. It is also said, in the book of Leviticus, that, "whosoever shall turn aside to enchanter and wizards, I will lay my hand upon him, and cut him off from the midst of his people." Every one ought to know that all enchantment, or conjuration, or charms, or spells, carried for a remedy to men or beasts, are of no avail, but on the contrary a snare and ambush of the old adversary the devil, through which he endeavors to deceive mankind.

11. One more charge against them is, that they compelled their pastors to follow some trade. Their answer to this is surely a very satisfactory one. "We do not think it necessary, say they, that our pastors should work for their bread. They might be better qualified to instruct us if we could maintain them without their own labor; but our poverty has no remedy." [Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois* b. ch. 4, and Usher *de Christ. Ecclea. succ. et statu*. 1243.]

The catholic writers frequently reproach them with making little or no account of the pastoral office--affirming that they made the duty of preaching the gospel common to every member of the church, both male and female; and that they allowed persons who had not the suffrages of the church, to administer the ordinances of gospel worship. That this was an unfounded accusation has been very satisfactorily shown by Dr. Allix, whose researches into the history of those churches entitle him to the gratitude of posterity. I subjoin the substance of his defense of them against this charge.

1. Bernard, abbot of Foncaud, in his *Treatise against the sect of the Waldenses* ch. 6, accuses only some of them of having no pastors; which shows, as he very properly remarks, that the body of that church had a fixed ministry before the end of the twelfth century. There is, therefore, nothing in this to support the charge of their making light of the pastoral office; for it is only what has happened to societies of Christians in every age of the world, to be for a time without presbyters or pastors, until the great Head of the Church raises up among them persons properly qualified by age, experience, and gifts, to take the oversight of their brethren, to labor in the word and doctrine, and rule the church of God. It is plain that it was so with the first churches for a time. Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5.

2. Reinerius Saccho, who lived about the year 1250, acknowledges that in Lombardy, where he himself resided, they had their bishops or pastors; "Lombardiam intrantes, visitant episcopos suos," are his words, chap. 5, that is, "when they come into Lombardy they visit their elders." Again, Matthew Paris (under the year 1243) speaks of a bishop of the Paterines in Cremona, who was deposed by them for fornication. And, further, Pilickdorf, a writer quoted by Bossuet in his history of the *Variations*, p. 223, says, "they do not approve of a layman's celebrating the eucharist," ch. 1, which sufficiently proves, says Dr. Allix, that they made a signal difference between the people and their pastors. [Dr. Allix's *Remarks*, p. 239.]



3. Commenius, who published a Synopsis of the discipline of the churches of Bohemia, dwells particularly upon this article; and shows that "a stated ministry was always considered as a matter of great importance among the Waldensian churches." A dreadful persecution broke out against the Bohemian brethren, in the days of Commenius, which produced such havoc among them, that he himself was "the only surviving bishop that escaped." The scattered brethren, in process of time, elected three persons as qualified for the pastoral office, but "found themselves greatly perplexed about their ordination." Having understood that there were some Waldensian churches on the confines of Moravia and Austria, to satisfy their own scruples, as well as those of others, they resolved to send Michael Zambergius, one of their pastors, with two other persons, to find out those Waldenses, and give them an account of what had passed among them, and especially to ask their advice upon the matter in hand. They met with one Stephen, a Waldensian bishop, who sent for others also residing in that quarter, with whom they had a conference upon the doctrines of the gospel and the state of their churches, and by them the said three pastors were ordained by the imposition of hands. "Hence," says Dr. Allix, "it is abundantly evident, that as the Waldenses have preserved the faith that was committed to them, so have they been as careful to preserve entire amongst them the ancient discipline of the church -- and, hence it will follow, that nothing can be more false than what is pretended, viz. that they had no kind of lawful ministry among them, but that laymen took upon themselves the power of preaching, of ordaining ministers, and administering ordinances." [Allix's *Remarks*, p. 245.]



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 4**

### **ADDITIONAL TESTIMONIES IN FAVOR OF THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE WALDENSES, COLLECTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF BOTH FRIENDS AND FOES; WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THEIR CHARACTER AND HISTORY.**

Having, in the two preceding sections, endeavored to lay before the reader a fair and impartial representation of the doctrinal sentiments, and social religious practices of the Waldenses, and especially as these stood in opposition to the whole prevailing system of popery, I shall, before proceeding to a detail of their general history, adduce a few additional particulars of a more miscellaneous nature than hath been hitherto submitted to his consideration.

The enemies of the Waldenses, while they stigmatize them as heretics, and think no cruelties too horrid to be inflicted upon them, on account of their opposition to the whole system of the papal hierarchy, are, nevertheless, constrained by the force of truth, to bear the most honorable testimony to the integrity, uprightness, and exemplary deportment, which so conspicuously characterized this denomination of Christians. In proof of this, let us attend to the testimony of their adversaries.

**An ancient inquisitor**, to whose writings against the Waldenses, I had occasion to refer in a former section, thus describes them. "These heretics are known by their manners and conversation, for they are orderly and modest in their behavior and deportment. They avoid all appearance of pride in their dress; they neither indulge in finery of attire, nor are they remarkable for being mean or ragged. They avoid commerce, that they may be free from deceit and falsehood. They get their livelihood by manual industry, as day-laborers or mechanics; and their teachers are weavers or tailors. They are not anxious about amassing riches, but content themselves with the necessities of life. They are chaste, temperate, and sober. They abstain from anger. Even when they work, they either learn or teach. In like manner also, their women are very modest, avoiding backbiting, foolish jesting, and levity of speech, especially abstaining from lies or swearing, not so much as making use of the common asseverations, "in truth," "for certain," or the like, because they regard these as oaths--contenting themselves with simply answering "yes" or "no." [Allix's *Remarks*, p. 235.]

**Claudius Seisselius**, archbishop of Turin, from whose Treatise against the Waldenses I have quoted largely in a former section, is pleased to say, that "their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians. They never swear but by compulsion, and rarely take the name of God in vain. They fulfill their promises with punctuality; and, living for the most part in poverty, they profess to preserve the apostolic life and doctrine. They also profess it to be their desire to overcome only by the simplicity of faith, by purity of conscience, and integrity of life; not by philosophical niceties and theological subtleties." And he very candidly admits, that "In their lives and morals they are perfect, irreprehensible, and without reproach among men, addicting themselves with all their might to observe the commands of God" [Usher de Christ. Ecclesiastes success, et statu; Perrin, book 1, chapter 5].

**Lielenstenius**, a Dominican, speaking of the Waldenses of Bohemia, says, "I say that in morals and life they are good; true in words, unanimous in brotherly love; but their faith is incorrigible and vile, as I have shown in my Treatise" [Usher, *ubi supra*].

**Samuel de Cassini**, a Franciscan friar, speaking of them in his "Victoria Trionfale," explicitly owns in what respect their faith was incorrigible and vile, when he says, "That all the errors of these Waldenses consisted in this, that they denied the church of Rome to be the holy mother church, and would not obey her traditions" [*History of Popery*, Volume 1. p. 421].

**Jacobus de Riberia**, who published a work entitled, "Collections of the city of Toulouse," and who, in his time, assisted in persecuting the Waldenses, nevertheless acknowledges, that for a long time they had obtained the highest esteem in Norbonne [a city and province in the south of France], as well as in the diocese of Alby, Rhodes, Cahors, and Agen; and that those who would be styled priests and bishops [in the catholic church] were then but little accounted of, which he resolves into their ignorance and unworthy conduct, by reason of which, says he, it was an easy matter for the Waldenses to obtain the preference among the people for the excellency of their doctrine. He acknowledges that they were so well instructed in the Holy Scriptures, that he had seen peasants who could recite the book of Job verbatim, and several others who could perfectly repeat all the New Testament.

**Cardinal Baronius**, in his *Ecclesiastical Annals*, tom. 13, styles the Waldenses of Toulouse "good men," and acknowledges that they were "peaceable persons," though he elsewhere falsely lays to their account many heinous accusations. [Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois*, chapter 5.]

In the time of a great persecution of the Waldenses of Merindol and Provence, a certain monk was deputed by **the bishop of Cavaillon**, to hold a conference with them, that they might be convinced of their errors, and the effusion of blood prevented. But the monk returned in confusion, owning that in his whole life he had never known so much of the Scriptures, as he had learned during those few days that he had been conversing with the heretics. The bishop, however, sent among them a number of doctors, young men, who had lately come from the Sorbonne, which, at that time, was the very center of theological subtlety at Paris. One of these publicly owned, that he had understood more of the doctrine of salvation from the answers of the little children in their catechisms, than by all the disputations which he had ever before heard. [Vesembecius's *Oration on the Waldenses*, quoted by Perrin, in his *Hist. des Vaudois*, chapter 5.]

**FRANCIS I**, king of France, being informed that the parliament of Provence brought very heavy charges against the Waldenses, whom they were then severely persecuting at Merindol, Cabriers, and other neighboring places, was desirous of ascertaining the truth of those accusations. With a view to this, he commanded one of his nobles, the Lord of Langeai, who was at that time his lieutenant in Piedmont, to investigate this matter, and report to him the true state of things. His lordship consequently sent into Provence two clergymen, giving them a strict charge to inquire into the lives and religious principles of the Waldenses, and of the proceedings of the parliament against them. On their return, they reported that "they were a laborious race of people, who, about two hundred years ago, had emigrated from Piedmont, to dwell in Provence, -- that betaking themselves to husbandry and feeding of cattle, they had restored many villages destroyed by the wars, and rendered other desert and uncultivated places extremely fertile by their industry. That by the information given them in the said country of Provence, they found they were a very peaceable people, beloved by their neighbors--men of good behavior, of godly conversation, faithful to their promises, and punctual in paying their debts. That they were a charitable people, not permitting any among them to fall into want. That they were, moreover, liberal to strangers and the traveling poor, as far as their ability extended. And that the inhabitants of Provence affirmed, they were a people who could not endure to blaspheme, or name the devil, or swear at all, unless in making some solemn contracts, or in judgment. Finally, that they were well known by this, that if they happened to be cast into any company, where the conversation was lascivious or blasphemous, to the dishonor of God, they instantly withdrew. [Joachim Camerarius, in his *History*, p. 352. quoted by Perrin, book 1, chapter 5.]

**LOUIS XII**, king of France, being informed by the enemies of the Waldenses, inhabiting a part of the province of Provence, that several heinous crimes were laid to their account, sent the master of requests, and a certain doctor of the Sorbonne, who was confessor to his majesty, to make inquiry into this matter. On their return, they reported that they had visited all the parishes where they dwelt, had inspected their places of worship, but that they had found there no images, nor signs of the ornaments belonging to the mass, nor any of the ceremonies of the Romish church; much less could they discover any traces of those crimes with which they were charged. On the contrary, they kept the sabbath-day, observed the

ordinance of baptism, according to the primitive church, instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God. The king having heard the report of his commissioners, said with an oath that they were better men than himself or his people. [Vesembeclus's *Oration on the Waldenses*, in Perrin, chapter 5.]

The same monarch having been told that in the valley of Fraissiniere, in the diocese of Ambrun, and province of Dauphiny, there was a class of people who lived like beasts, without religion, and strongly opposed to the Romish worship, deputed one of his confessors and the official of Orleans to investigate the truth or falsehood of this report. The confessor, with his colleague, accordingly repaired to the place, where he examined the Waldenses who inhabited the valley, respecting their faith and conversation. The archbishop of Ambrun, well knowing that the goods of the Waldenses were liable to confiscation for the crime of heresy, and that they would be annexed to the domains of his archbishopric, strongly pressed the commissioners to condemn them as heretics. They, however, not only resisted his application, but even expressed their admiration of the Waldenses, insomuch that the king's confessor publicly declared, in the presence of a number of his friends, who were with him at his lodgings at the Angel in Ambrun, that he wished he was as good a Christian as the worst of the valley of Fraissiniere. [*Memorials of Rostain*, Archbishop of Ambrun, quoted in Perrin, chapter 5.]

These are, unquestionably, very important testimonies to the Waldenses who resided in France; but I shall now lay before the reader a still more interesting document; it is the testimony which is borne to these people, by that eminent historian **Thuanus**--an enemy indeed to the Waldenses, himself being a catholic; but he was, nevertheless, a fair and candid one. Quoting the words of **Guy de Perpignan**, bishop of Elna, in Roussillon, who exercised the office of inquisitor against the Waldenses, he informs us that "their fixed opinions are said to be these--that the church of Rome, because she hath renounced the true faith of Christ, is the whore of Babylon, and that barren tree which Christ himself hath cursed and commanded to be rooted up; therefore we must by no means obey the pope and the bishops who cherish his errors--that the monastic life is the sink of the church, and a hellish institution; its vows are vain, and subservient only to the filthy love of boys--the orders of the presbytery are the marks of the great beast mentioned in the Apocalypse--the fire of purgatory, the sacrifice of the mass, the feast of the dedications of churches, the worship of saints, and propitiations for the dead, are the inventions of Satan. To these the principal and certain heads of their doctrine, others were fictitiously added concerning marriage, the resurrection, the state of the soul after death, and concerning meats."

Again, describing the inhabitants of the valley of Fraissiniere, he thus proceeds--"Their clothing is of the skins of sheep--they have no linen. They inhabit seven villages, their houses are constructed of flint stone, having a flat roof covered with mud, which, when spoiled or loosened by the rain, they again smooth with a roller. In these they live with their cattle, separated from them, however, by a fence. They have also two caves set apart for particular purposes, in one of which they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being, through constant practice, excellent marksmen. Poor as they are, they are content, and live in a state of seclusion from the rest of mankind. One thing is very remarkable, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation. They can all read and write. They know French sufficiently for the understanding of the Bible and the singing of Psalms. **You can scarcely find a boy among them, who**

**cannot give you an intelligible account of the faith which they profess.** In this, indeed, they resemble their brethren of the other valleys. They pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is peculiarly noted in their confession of faith. If, by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity pay it to the king's tax-gatherers" [Thuani *Hist. sui temporis*, lib. 6, sect. 16. and lib. 27].

But of all the catholic writers, who have treated of the Waldenses, there is none whose testimony is more important than that of **Reinerius Saccho**. He had himself been one of their number, and consequently could speak of them from personal knowledge. He had apostatized from their profession; was "by merit raised to the bad eminence" of an inquisitor in the catholic church; and of course was become one of their bitterest persecutors. He wrote a book against them, (A.D. 1258) from which I have already quoted largely in a former section. But that extract is almost wholly confined to an enumeration of the articles on which they did not agree with the catholic church. Let the reader now remark his unsought testimony in their favor. "Of all the sects that have risen up against the church of Rome," says he, "the Waldenses have been the most prejudicial and pernicious, inasmuch as their opposition has been of very long continuance. Add to which, that this sect is become very general, for there is scarcely a country to be found in which this heresy is not planted. And, in the third place, because while all other sects beget in people a dread and horror of them on account of their blasphemies against God, this, on the contrary, hath a great appearance of godliness; for, they live righteously before men, believe rightly concerning God in every particular, holding all the articles contained in the [apostles'] creed--but hating and reviling the church of Rome, and on this subject they are readily believed by the people" [Reinerius *contra Waldenses*, in Perrin, book 2, chapter 1].

"The first lesson," says he, in another place, "that the Waldenses teach those whom they bring over to their party, is to instruct them what kind of persons the disciples of Christ ought to be; and this they do by the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles, saying, that those only are the followers of the apostles who imitate their manner of life. Inferring from thence," says he, "that the pope, the bishops, and the clergy, who possess the riches of this world, and make them the object of their pursuit, do not tread in the footsteps of the apostles, and therefore are not the true guides of the church; it never having been the design of the Lord Jesus Christ to commit his chaste and well-beloved spouse to those who would rather prostitute her by their bad example and abominable works, than preserve her in the same state of purity in which they at first received her, a virgin chaste and without spot" [Idem. cap. de studio pervertendi alios et medo docendi, fol. 98].

The same author has furnished us with an interesting account of the manner in which the Waldenses privately disseminated their principles among the gentry; and a proper attention to it will sufficiently explain to the reader the amount of various charges brought against them, from time to time, by the catholic writers, viz. that they allowed their women to teach. It seems to have been a common practice with their teachers, the more readily to gain access for their doctrine among persons in the higher ranks of life, to carry with them a small box of trinkets, or articles of dress, something like the hawkers or peddlers of our day, and Reinerius thus describes the manner in which they were wont to introduce themselves. "SIR, will you please to buy any rings, or seals, or trinkets? MADAM, will you look at any handkerchiefs, or pieces of needlework for veils? I can afford them cheap." If after a purchase the

company ask, "Have you any thing more?" the salesman would reply, "O yes, I have commodities far more valuable than these, and I will make you a present of them, if you will protect me from the clergy." Security being promised, on he would go. "The inestimable jewel I spoke of, is the word of God, by which he communicates his mind to men, and which inflames their hearts with love to him." "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth"--and so he would proceed to repeat the remaining part of the first chapter of Luke. [The reader should keep in mind, that at this time the use of the Bible was not allowed by the pope to the laity, and indeed very few of the clergy knew any thing about its contents.] Or, he would begin with the thirteenth of John, and repeat the last discourse of Jesus to his disciples. If the company should seem pleased, he would proceed to repeat the twenty-third of Matthew. "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat -- Woe unto you; ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, ye devour widows' houses." -- "And pray," should one of the company say, "Against whom are these woes pronounced think you?" he would reply, "Against the clergy and the monks. The doctors of the Roman church are pompous, both in their habits and their manners--they love the uppermost rooms, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi. For our parts, we desire no such Rabbis. They are incontinent; we live each in chastity with his own wife. They are the rich and avaricious, of whom the Lord says, "Woe unto you, ye rich, for ye have received your consolation;" but we, "having food and raiment are therewith content." They are voluptuous and devour widows' houses--we only eat to be refreshed and supported. They fight and encourage wars, and command the poor to be killed and burnt, in defiance of the saying, "he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." For our part, they persecute us for righteousness' sake. They do nothing, but eat the bread of idleness. We work with our hands. They monopolize the giving of instruction, and "woe be to them that take away the key of knowledge." But among us, women teach as well as men, and one disciple, as soon as he is informed himself, teaches another. Among them, you can hardly find a doctor who can repeat three chapters of the New Testament by heart--but of us there is scarcely man or woman who doth not retain the whole. And because we are sincere believers in Christ, and all teach and enforce a holy life and conversation, these Scribes and Pharisees persecute us to death, as their predecessors did Jesus Christ [Reineri. cap. 8. Quomodo se ingerant familiaritati magnorum].

The plan adopted by the Waldenses, for engaging the attention of others to the word of God, as described by Reinerius in the foregoing extract, is both simple and striking, and deserves the attention of missionaries in the present day. It seems to have been prosecuted for several centuries, even beyond the times of the Reformation, as appears from the following circumstance:--The first editor of the complete book of Reinerius, was Father Gretzer, who published it in the year 1613. In the margin of that work, opposite to the passage above quoted, he has placed these words: "This is a true picture of the heretics of our age, particularly of the Anabaptists" [Vera effigies hereticorum nostrae aetatis [1613] praesertim Anabaptistarum]. There are few of the Baptists of the present day, it is to be hoped, who would blush to own an alliance with either the old Waldensian preachers, or the heretical Baptists referred to by this father of the catholic church, at least in this part of their conduct; and, **indeed, it would be well if all our Missionaries and private Christians of the present day were as conversant with the word of God as the Waldenses even in that dark age appear**, from the testimony of their very enemies, to have been.

But not to enlarge, I close this section by laying before the reader a few of the testimonies that were borne to the Waldenses, by our first Protestant reformers and earlier historians, who, as most of them lived about three hundred years nearer to their times than we do, may reasonably be supposed so much better qualified for appreciating their true character.

In the year 1530, **ECOLAMPADIUS**, one of the reformers, then resident at Basle, in Switzerland, was visited by George Morell, one of the pastors among the Waldenses, by whom, on his return to Provence, he addressed a letter "to his well-beloved brethren in Christ, called Waldenses," and it is as follows:

"We have learned with great satisfaction, by your faithful pastor, George Morell, the nature of your faith and religious profession, and in what terms you declare it. Therefore, we thank our most merciful Father, who hath called you to so great light in this age, amidst the dark clouds of ignorance which have spread themselves over the world, and notwithstanding the extravagant power of Antichrist. Wherefore we acknowledge that Christ is in you: for which cause we love you as brethren; and would to God we were able to make you sensible in effect of that which we shall be ready to do for you, although it were to be done with the utmost difficulty. Finally, we desire that what we write may not be regarded as though through pride we arrogated to ourselves any superiority over you, but consider it as proceeding from that brotherly love and charity which we bear towards you. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath imparted to you an excellent knowledge of his truth, beyond that of many other people, and hath blessed you with spiritual blessings. So that if you persevere in his grace, he hath much greater treasures wherewith to enrich you, and make you perfect, according to your advancement in the measure of the inheritance of Christ."

**LUTHER**, in the year 1588, published the *Confessions of the Waldenses*, to which he wrote a preface. In that preface he candidly acknowledges that, in the days of his popery he had hated the Waldenses, as persons who were consigned over to perdition. But having understood from their confessions and writings the piety of their faith, he perceived that those good men had been greatly wronged whom the Pope had condemned as heretics; for that, on the contrary, they were rather entitled to the praise due to holy martyrs. He adds, that among them he had found one thing worthy of admiration, a thing unheard of in the Popish church, that, laying aside the doctrines of men, they meditated in the law of God, day and night; and that they were expert, and even well versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures; whereas, in the papacy, those who are called masters wholly neglected the Scriptures, and some of them had not so much as seen the Bible at any time. Moreover, having read the Waldensian Confessions, he said he returned thanks to God for the great light which it had pleased him to bestow upon that people; rejoicing that all cause of suspicion being removed which had existed between them and the reformed, they were now brought together into one sheepfold under the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls. [Morland's *History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 58; Perrin's *Vaudois*, chapter 6.]

**THEODORE BEZA**, the contemporary and colleague of Calvin, in his "Treatise of the famous pillars of learning and religion," says; "As for the Waldenses, I may be permitted to call them the very seed of the primitive and purer Christian Church, since they are those that have been upheld, as is abundantly manifest, by the wonderful providence of God, so that neither those endless storms and tempests by



which the whole Christian world has been shaken for so many succeeding ages, and the western parts at length so miserably oppressed by the bishop of Rome, falsely so called; nor those horrible persecutions which have been expressly raised against them, were ever able so far to prevail as to make them bend, or yield a voluntary subjection to the Roman tyranny and idolatry. [Preface to Morland's *History*, p 7.]

**On another occasion the same writer remarks that "The Waldenses, time out of mind, have opposed the abuses of the Church of Rome, and have been persecuted after such a manner, not by the sword of the word of God, but by every species of cruelty, added to a million of calumnies and false accusations, that they have been compelled to disperse themselves wherever they could, wandering through the deserts like wild beasts.** The Lord, nevertheless, has so preserved the residue of them, that, notwithstanding the rage of the whole world, they still inhabit three countries at a great distance from each other, viz. Calabria, Bohemia, and Piedmont, and the countries adjoining, where they dispersed themselves from the quarters of Provence about two hundred and seventy years ago. And **as to their religion, they never adhered to papal superstitions; for which reason they have been continually harassed by the bishops and inquisitors** abusing the arm of secular justice, so that their continuance to the present time is evidently miraculous" [*History of the Reformed Churches in France*, tom. 1, book 1, page 35, in Perrin, book 1, chapter 6].

**BULLINGER**, in the preface to his *Sermons on the Book of the Revelation*, (1530) writes thus concerning the Waldenses. "What shall we say, that for four hundred years and more, in France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Bohemia, and other countries throughout the world, the Waldenses have sustained their profession of the gospel of Christ; and in several of their writings, as well as by continual preaching, they have accused the pope as the real Antichrist foretold by the apostle John, and whom therefore we ought to avoid. These people have undergone divers and cruel torments, yet have they constantly and openly given testimony to their faith by glorious martyrdoms, and still do so even to this day. Although it has often been attempted by the most powerful kings and princes, instigated by the pope, it hath been found impossible to extirpate them, for God hath frustrated their efforts" [Preface to his *Sermons*, quoted by Perrin chapter 6].

**MONSIEUR DE VIGNAUX**, who was forty years pastor of one of the Churches of the Waldenses, in the valleys of Piedmont, and died at the age of eighty, wrote a Treatise concerning their life, manners, and religion, in which he says; "We live in peace and harmony one with another, have intercourse and dealings chiefly among ourselves, having never mingled ourselves with the members of the church of Rome by marrying our sons to their daughters, nor our daughters to their sons. Yet they are so pleased with our manners and customs, that Catholics, both lords and others, would rather have men and maid servants from among us, than from those of their own religion; and they actually come from distant parts to seek nurses among us for their little children, finding, as they say, more fidelity among our people than their own." He then gives a summary of their doctrinal principles, for the sake of which they have been persecuted; such as **"that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to our salvation, and that we are called to believe only what they teach, without any regard to the authority of man--that nothing else ought to be received by us except what God hath commanded--that there is only one mediator between God and man, and consequently that it is wrong to invoke the saints. That baptism and the Lord's supper are the only standing ordinances in the church of Christ--that all masses are**

damnable, and ought to be abolished -- that **all human traditions are to be rejected**. That the saying and recital of the office, fasts confined to particular days, superfluous holy-days, differences of meats, so many degrees and orders of priests, monks, and nuns, so many benedictions and consecrations of creatures, vows, pilgrimages, and the whole vast and confused mass of ceremonies, formerly invented, ought to be abolished. They **deny the supremacy of the pope**, and more especially the power that he has usurped over the civil government, and admit of no other degrees than bishops and deacons. They contend that **the See of Rome is the true Babylon**--the marriage of the clergy lawful, and that the true church of Christ consists of those who hear the word of God and believe it" [Perrin's *History*, book 1, chapter 6].

**JOHN CHASSAGNON**, who wrote a *History of the Albigenses*, says, "It is recorded of the Waldenses, that **they rejected all the traditions and ordinances of the church of Rome as being superstitious and unprofitable**, and that they made light of the whole body of the clergy and prelates. On which account, having been excommunicated and expelled their country, they dispersed themselves in different places, viz. into Dauphiny, Provence, Languedoc, Piedmont, Calabria, Bohemia, England, and elsewhere. Some say, that a part of the Waldenses retired into Lombardy (in Italy) where they multiplied to such an extent that their doctrine spread itself throughout Italy, and reached even into Sicily. Nevertheless, in all their dispersions they maintained among themselves some union and fraternity, during the space of four hundred years, living in great simplicity and the fear of God" [Perrin's *History*, book 1, chapter 6].

To these numerous testimonies, I shall now add that of our great poet **MILTON**, who seems to have diligently studied the character of the Waldenses, and to have well understood their principles and the constitution of their churches. Of this the reader will find abundant evidence hereafter in the numerous letters which he wrote in their behalf to the Protestant princes of Europe, pleading their cause against their popish persecutors. What I have at present in view is, the account given by him of the constitution of their churches, and the simplicity of their worship. He wrote a Tract, entitled, "Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church," addressed to the Parliament of England; in which he shows the pernicious effects arising from the endowing of churches with tithes; refutes, in the most convincing manner, the various pleas which were urged by Episcopalians in favor of that practice as founded on the Jewish law; and frequently adduces the happy poverty and purity of the Waldenses, as forming a striking contrast to the corruptions that abound in national churches. "For the first three hundred years and upwards," says he, "in all the ecclesiastical story, I find no such doctrine or example, [as that of supporting the pastors of Christian churches by the imposition of tithes] though error by that time had brought back again priests, altars, and oblations; and in many other points of religion had miserably Judaized the church."--"The first Christian emperors, who did all things as bishops advised them, supplied what was wanting to the clergy, not out of tithes, which were never mentioned, but out of their own imperial revenues; as is manifest in Eusebius, Theodoret, and Sozomen, from [the times of] Constantine to Arcadius. Hence, those most ancient reformed churches of the Waldenses, if they rather continued not pure since the apostles' days, denied that tithes were to be given, or that they were ever given in the primitive church, as appears by an ancient Tractate inserted in the Bohemian history. The [pastors of the] poor Waldenses, the ancient Stock of our reformation, without the help (of tithes) bred up themselves in trades, and especially in physic and surgery, as well as in the

study of scripture, which is the only true theology, that they might be no burden to the church; and after the example of Christ might cure both soul and body, through industry adding that to their ministry which he joined to his by the gift of the Spirit. So Peter Gilles relates, in his history of the Waldenses of Piedmont. But our ministers scorn to use a trade, and count it the reproach of this age that tradesmen preach the gospel. It were to be wished they were all tradesmen; they would not then for want of another trade make a trade of their preaching: and yet they clamor that tradesmen preach, though they preach while themselves are the worst tradesmen of all."--"Seeing the Christian church is not national, but consists of many particular congregations, not determined by any outward judge in matters of conscience; those pretended church revenues, as they have ever been, so they are likely to continue, matters of endless dissension between the church and the magistrate, and the churches among themselves; there will, therefore, be found no better remedy for these evils, otherwise incurable, than (after the example of) the most incorrupt counsel of those Waldenses, our first reformers, to remove them as a pest -- an apple of discord in the church; for what else can the effect of riches be, and the snare of money in religion? and to convert them to more profitable uses; considering that the church of Christ was founded in poverty rather than in revenues, stood purest, and prospered best without them, received them unlawfully from those who both erroneously and unjustly, sometimes impiously, given them, and so was justly ensnared and corrupted by them."--"The Waldenses, our first reformers, both from the Scriptures and primitive example, maintained those among them who bore the office of ministers by alms alone, Take their very words, 'Our food and clothing is sufficiently administered and given to us by way of gratuity and alms, by the good people whom we teach.' As for church endowments and possessions, I meet with none considerable before Constantine, but the houses and gardens where they met, and their places of burial: and I persuade myself, that from thence the ancient Waldenses, whom I deservedly cite so often, held that, 'to endow churches is an evil thing,' and that the church then fell off and became the whore sitting on that beast mentioned in the book of the Revelation when, under pope Sylvester, she received those temporal donations. So the forecited Tractate of their doctrine testifies."

Thus far Milton; on which it may be observed, that to such as have studied the annals of the Christian church, and are in any tolerable degree aware how much the avarice, pride, and ambition of the clergy, have in all ages contributed to promote the corruptions that have prevailed in it, both in doctrine, discipline, and worship; the view that he gives us of the humble and self-denied deportment of the Waldensian pastors, must be considered as one of the strongest evidences that can be afforded of the purity of the communion of their churches, and of their close adherence to the pattern left them for imitation in the approved examples of the New Testament. But Milton was not singular in the commendation that he has given to the confessors of Piedmont; for thus writes the candid **JORTIN**, in perfect consistency with our great poet. **"The Waldenses taught that the Roman church departed from its former sanctity and purity in the time of Constantine the Great; they therefore refused to submit to the usurped powers of its pontiff.** They said that the prelates and doctors ought to imitate the poverty of the apostles, and earn their bread by the labor of their hands. They contended that the office of teaching, confirming, and admonishing the brethren, belonged in some measure to all Christians, etc. Their discipline was extremely strict and austere; for they interpreted Christ's discourse on the Mount according to the literal sense of the words, and they condemned war, law-suits, the acquisition of riches, capital punishments, oaths, and [even] self-defense." [D.W. Cloud: At least some of the Waldenses did defend themselves against their enemies.] Again, the same writer remarks, that

"The honest Waldenses very plainly discerned that the powers usurped by the popes and ecclesiastics were tyrannical and antichristian; and consequently that the decretals which established some of those notions must have been impudent forgeries. Why could not the popes discern the same? Because profaneness, pride, ambition, and avarice, hardened their hearts, and blinded their eyes; because they would neither examine, nor let other people examine" [*Remarks on Ecclesiastes Hist.* volume 3, p. 303]. But not to enlarge further on this particular, I shall close this section with a few general remarks.

An impartial review of the doctrinal sentiments maintained by the Waldenses; the discipline, order, and worship of their churches, as well as their general deportment and manner of life, not to mention their determined and uniform opposition to the church of Rome, affords abundant evidence of the similarity of their views and practices to those held by Luther, Calvin, and the other illustrious characters, whose labors, in the sixteenth century, contributed so eminently to effect the glorious Reformation. Most of the catholic writers, who lived about the time of the Reformation, and the age which succeeded it, clearly saw this coincidence between the principles of the Waldenses, and those of the reformers, and remarked it in their works. The following are instances of this.

Cardinal Hosius, a learned and zealous champion for the papacy, who presided at the council of Trent, lived during the Lutheran reformation, and wrote a history of the heresies of his own times, in which he says, "the leprosy of the Waldenses spread its infection throughout all Bohemia--and following the doctrine of Waldo, the greatest part of that kingdom separated itself from the church of Rome."

Lindanus, a catholic bishop of the see of Ghent, who wrote in defense of the tenets of the church of Rome, about 1550, terms Calvin "the inheritor of the doctrine of the Waldenses."

Mezeray, the celebrated historiographer of France, in his *Abridgement of Chronology*, speaking of the Waldenses, says, "They held nearly the same opinions as those who are now called Calvinists."

Gualtier, a Jesuitical monk, in his chronographical tables, drew up a catalogue consisting of seven and twenty particulars, in which he shows that the principles of the Waldenses, and those of the Calvinists coincided with each other.

Thomas Walden, who wrote against Wickliff, says, that the doctrine of Peter Waldo was conveyed from France into England--and that among others Wickliff received it. In this opinion he is joined by Alphonsus de Castro, who says that Wickliff only brought to light again the errors of the Waldenses. Cardinal Bellarmine, also, is pleased to say that "Wickliff could add nothing to the heresy of the Waldenses."

Ecchius reproached Luther, that he only renewed the heresies of the Waldenses and Albigenses, of Wickliff and of Huss, which had long ago been condemned. With him may also be classed Claude Rubis, who wrote the History of the city of Lyons, in which, adverting to the principles of Luther, he says, "the heresies that have been current in our time are founded upon those of the Waldenses," and he calls them "the relics of Waldo."

Aeneas Sylvius (afterwards Pope Pius II) declares the doctrine taught by Calvin to be the same as that of the Waldenses. In this opinion he was followed by John de Cardonne, who, in his life of the Monk of the valleys of Sernay, thus quaintly expresses himself, "What the sect of Geneva doth admit, The Albigenses did commit" [Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois*, book 1, chapter 8, where the references to these authors are given].

To these impartial testimonies, which are more than sufficient to settle the question of family likeness, I shall only add that of the learned Limborch, professor of divinity in the university of Amsterdam, and that of Dr. Mosheim, the ecclesiastical historian. The former, comparing them with the Christians of his own time, says, "To speak candidly what I think, of all the modern sects of Christians, the Dutch Baptists most resemble both the Albigenses and Waldenses" [Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, Volume 1, chapter 8]. The latter, notwithstanding the flimsy, confused, and, in many instances, the erroneous account which he has given of the Waldenses, yet has expressly owned, that "before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed, in almost all the countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists" [Mosheim's *Ecclesiastes History*, cent. 16, sect. 3, part 2, chapter 3].

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 5**

### **SOME ACCOUNT OF THE RISE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INQUISITION, WITH REFLECTIONS ON ITS GENERAL SPIRIT AND OPERATION**

The preceding sections will have enabled the reader to form a tolerably correct judgment concerning the religious principles and general character of that denomination of Christians called Catharists, Paterines, Albigenses, or Waldenses; and I should now proceed to a more detailed account of their history, subsequent to the times of Peter Waldo, and especially of the dreadful persecutions and complicated sufferings which came upon them in consequence of their adherence "to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus;" but it will be proper, in this place, to take a glance at the origin, the establishment, and the operation of that monstrous system of cruelty and oppression, gently called by the Catholics "the holy office," though better known among Protestants by the name of the Inquisition.

[As I shall have occasion, in the subsequent pages of this work to make frequent references to Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, it is proper the reader should be apprised of the degree of credit which is due to that author's statements. He was a native of Amsterdam, born 1633, a person of great learning and talents, which raised him to the rank of professor of divinity in that city. When his *History of the Inquisition* first came over to England, it was received with the highest approbation by many of the principal nobility and clergy. In particular Mr. Locke, that incomparable judge of men and books, bestowed the highest eulogiums upon it,--commended it for its

method and perspicuity, and the authorities by which it is so abundantly confirmed,--and pronounced it to be a work of its kind absolutely perfect. In a letter to Limborch himself, he tells him, that he had so fully exposed their secret acts of wickedness and cruelty, that if the Papists had any remains of humanity in them they must be ashamed of their horrid tribunals, in which everything that was just and righteous was so monstrously perverted; and that it was proper it should be translated into the vulgar language of every nation, that the meanest people might understand the antichristian practices of that execrable court. The Papists became so alarmed at its publication, that the cardinals, inquisitors general at Rome, condemned it by an edict, and forbade the reading of it, under the severest penalties.]

It was not until about the year 1200, the papal chair being then filled by **INNOCENT III** that the terms "Inquisition into heresy," and "Inquisitor," were much, if at all, heard of. The bishops, and their vicars, being, in the pope's apprehension, neither so fit nor so diligent in the discharge of their duty respecting the extirpation of heresy as he thought necessary, two new orders of regulars were at this time instituted, viz. those of St. Dominic and St. Francis, both zealously devoted to the church, and consisting of persons with whom the advancement of Christianity, and the exaltation of the pontifical power, were always synonymous terms. To St. Dominic, indeed, the honor of first suggesting the erection of this extraordinary court is commonly ascribed. It was not, however, at first, on the same footing on which it afterwards settled, and on which it has since continued. The first inquisitors were vested with a double capacity, not very happily conjoined in the same persons; one was that of preachers, to convince the heretics by argument; the other that of persecutors, to instigate magistrates to employ every possible method of extirpating the refractory--that is, all who were so unreasonable as not to be convinced by the profound reasoning of those merciless fanatics and wretched sophisters.

**DOMINIC** descended from an illustrious Spanish family of the name of Guzman, was the son of Felix and Joanna, and born at the village of Cabaroga, in the year 1170, in the diocese of Osma. His mother during her pregnancy, is said to have dreamed that she was with child of a pup, carrying in its mouth a lighted torch; that after its birth, it put the world in an uproar by its fierce barkings, and at length set it on fire by the torch which it carried in its mouth. His followers have interpreted this dream, of his doctrine, by which he enlightened the world; while others, if dreams presage any thing, think that the torch was an emblem of that fire and faggot by which an infinite multitude of persons were burnt to ashes. [Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, Volume 1. chapter 10.] He was educated for the priesthood, and grew up the most fiery and the most sanguinary of mortals. Before his time every bishop was a sort of inquisitor in his own diocese; but Dominic contrived to incorporate a body of men, independent of every human being except the pope, for the express purpose of ensnaring and destroying Christians. He was well aware, that however loudly the priests declaimed against heresy, the lords of the soil would not suffer them to

butcher their tenants under any such vain pretenses. In Biscay, the priesthood was at a very low ebb, in the eleventh century, and the clergy complained to the king of Navarre that the nobility and gentry treated them very little better than their slaves, employing them chiefly only to breed up and feed their dogs. Nearly a century after that time, in a neighboring state, when the renowned St. Bernard began, in a sermon to a crowded auditory, to inveigh against heresy, the nobility and gentry all rose up and left the church, and the people followed them. The preacher came down and proceeded to the market place, where he attempted to harangue on the same subject; but the populace, wiser than the preacher, refused to hear him, and raised such a clamor as drowned his voice, and compelled him to desist. Only one expedient remained,--Bernard recollected that Jesus had ordered his apostles, in certain cases, to shake off the dust of their feet, and as though he were an apostle and had received the same command, he affected to imitate the example. He left the city, shook his feet, and cursed the inhabitants by exclaiming, "May the Almighty punish this city with a drought." Thus far went the rage of Catholicism at the beginning of the twelfth century, and here its proud waves were stayed; but at the commencement of the thirteenth, **about the year 1215, Dominic broke down the dam, and covered Toulouse with a tide of despotism stained with human blood.** Posterity will scarcely believe that this enemy of mankind, after forming a race like himself, first called preaching, and then Dominican friars, died in his bed, was canonized for a saint, worshipped as a divinity, and proposed as a model of piety and virtue to succeeding generations. [Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 321.] Never says Dr. Geddes, was there such a rabble in the world as a Spanish saint-roll. The first class of them are ideal beings, or pagans, or enthusiasts; but the last are saints with a vengeance, for all their steps to Paradise are marked with human blood.

The inquisitors, at first had no tribunals; they merely inquired after heretics, their number, strength, and riches. When they had detected them, they informed the bishops, who at that time, had the sole power of judging in ecclesiastical affairs, urging them to anathematize, banish, or otherwise chastise such heretical persons as they brought before them. It is true, says bishop Burnet, adverting to these times, **the church pretended that she would shed no blood; but all this was insufferable juggling. For the churchmen declared who were heretics, and the secular arm was required to be always in readiness to execute their sentence.** This was not only claimed by the bishops, but it was made a part of their oath at their consecration, "that they should oppose and persecute heretics to the utmost of their power" [*Miscellaneous Tracts*, volume 1]. Nor were they contented to proceed by the common rules of justice, upon accusations and witnesses; but all forms were superseded, and by virtue of their pastoral authority, as if that had been given them to worry their sheep and not to feed them, they objected articles to their prisoners upon suspicion, requiring them to purge themselves of them by oath. And because bishops were not perhaps all equally zealous and cruel, that bloody man Dominic, took this work to task, and his order has ever since furnished the world with a set of



inquisitors, compared to whom all that had ever dealt in tortures, in any former times, were mere bunglers. [Bishop Burnet's *Remarks concerning Persecution*, prefixed to his translation of Lanctantius' *Relation of the Deaths of the Primitive Persecutors*. Aunst. 1687. p. 34, etc.]

**Sometimes they excited princes to arm their subjects against them, and at other times they inflamed the rabble, whom they themselves headed, to take up arms and unite in extirpating them.** Such as they could prevail upon to devote themselves to this service, **obtained the title of crusaders**, and were distinguished by a cross of cloth affixed to their garments. This badge operated like a charm upon the deluded populace, who, if they were inflamed before, now became infuriate, and, as one happily expresses it, were raised to a super-celestial sort of virtue, which defies all the restraints of reason and humanity. Things remained pretty much in this state till about the year 1250; that is, for half a century.

During this period the efforts of the inquisitors were greatly assisted by the emperor of the Romans, **FREDERICK II who in the year 1224, promulgated, from Padua, four edicts against heretics**, of the most ferocious and sanguinary description, addressed to his beloved princes, the venerable archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church; to the dukes, marquises, earls, barons, governors, judges, ministers, officials, and all other his faithful subjects throughout the empire. In these edicts he takes the inquisitors under his protection, imposes on obstinate heretics the punishment of being burnt to death, and of perpetual imprisonment on the penitent, committing the cognizance of the crime to the ecclesiastical, and the condemnation of the criminals, as well as the infliction of the punishment, to the secular judges. As **the object of all these bloody edicts was chiefly to destroy the Waldenses or Albigenses**, it may not be foreign to our purpose to give a specimen of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole of them.

"The care of the imperial government," says his Majesty, "committed to us from heaven, and over which we preside, demands the material sword, which is given to us separately from the priesthood, against the enemies of the faith, and for the extirpation of heretical pravity, that we should pursue with judgment and justice those vipers and perfidious children who insult the Lord and his church, as though they would tear out the very bowels of their mother. We shall not suffer these wretches to live who infect the world by their seducing doctrines, and who, being themselves corrupted, more grievously taint the flock of the faithful." He then proceeds to pronounce the most dreadful sentence against all persons convicted of heresy, against all who may be employed as advocates for them, and against all who may be detected in receiving and abetting them, condemning their persons, disinheriting their children, and confiscating their property.

The second edict, though not less sanguinary, was more definite in its object, since it

professes to have directly in view the destruction of the sect of the Paterines, of whom, it will be recollected, a particular account has been given in a former section. The reader shall have a specimen.

"The heretics are endeavoring to rend the seamless coat of our God, and raging with deceitful words, strive to divide the unity of the invisible faith itself, and to separate the sheep from the care of St. Peter, to whom they were committed by the Good Shepherd, to be fed. These are the ravenous wolves within, who put on the meekness of the sheep, that they may the better enter into the Lord's sheepfold. These are the worst angels--the sons of naughtiness, of the father of wickedness--appointed to deceive simple souls. These are adders who deceive the doves--serpents which crawl in private, and under the sweetness of honey, vomit poison; so that whilst they pretend to administer the food of life, they sting with their tail, and mingle the most bitter poison into the cup of death.--They call themselves PATERINES, after the example of the martyrs.\* These miserable Paterines, who do not believe the eternal Trinity, by their complicated wickedness offend against three, viz. God, their neighbor, and themselves. Against God, because they do not acknowledge the Son and the true faith--they deceive their neighbors, whilst under the pretense of spiritual food, they minister the delights of heretical pravity--but their cruelty to themselves is yet more savage, since, besides the loss of their immortal souls, they expose their bodies to a cruel death, being prodigal of their lives and fearless of destruction, which by acknowledging the true faith they might escape, and, which is horrible to express, their survivors are not terrified by their example. Against such enemies to God and man we cannot contain our indignation, nor refuse to punish them with the sword of just vengeance, but shall pursue them with so much the greater vigor, as they appear to spread wider the crimes of their superstition, to the most evident injury of the Christian faith, and of the church of Rome, which is adjudged to be the head of all other churches."

[\* "Paterines, after the example of the martyrs." Notwithstanding the obscurity which rests upon the etymology of this name, does it not appear evident from this Imperial Edict, that it was then understood to have been conferred on these people on account of the sufferings to which they were exposed--and if so, may it not be derived from the Latin verb *Pati*, "to suffer?"]

The edict then proceeds to denounce every one convicted of belonging to the sect of the Paterines, as guilty of the crime of high treason--to be punished with the loss of life and of goods, and their memory rendered infamous. It enjoins that strict inquiry be made by the officials, after all such as commit those crimes, and wherever the smallest suspicion exists, that such be examined by the ecclesiastics and prelates,

and if found to err in one point from the Catholic faith, they are, in case of obstinacy, by that edict condemned to suffer death,--to be committed to the punishment of the flames, and to be burned alive in public view--forbidding any, on pain of incurring the imperial indignation, to intercede for such persons.

The third law is as follows:

"We condemn the receivers, accomplices, and abettors of the Paterines, to forfeiture of their goods, and perpetual banishment, who by their care to save others, have no fear or regard for themselves. **Let not their children be in any wise admitted to honors, but always accounted infamous**, nor let them be allowed as witnesses in any causes in which infamous persons are refused. **But if the children of those who favor the Paterines shall discover any one of them, so that he shall be convicted, let them, as the reward of their acknowledgment of the faith, be entirely restored by our imperial favor, to their forfeited honor and estate.**"

In the fourth edict his Imperial Majesty is pleased thus to proceed, "We condemn to perpetual infamy, withdraw our protection from, and put under our ban, [for the meaning of this, the reader may revert to volume 1, chapter 4] the Puritans, Paterines, Leonists, Arnoldists, Passignes, Josephines, Albigenes, Waldenses, etc. and all other heretics of both sexes, and of whatsoever name; and ordain that **their goods may be so confiscated as that their children may never inherit them**, since it is much more heinous to offend the eternal than the temporal majesty." It then proceeds to condemn all suspected persons, as heretics, if they do not purge themselves within a year--**commands the officials to exterminate heretics from all places subject to them**--orders that the lands of the barons shall be seized by the Catholics, if they do not purge them from heretics, within a year after proper admonition, and **ordains various punishments against all the favorers of heretics**--thus closing the dreadful catalogue: "Furthermore, we put under our ban those who believe, receive, defend, and favor heretics; ordaining that if any person shall refuse to give satisfaction within a year after his excommunication, he shall be, *ipso jure*, infamous, and not admitted to any kind of public offices--let him be intestable, and let him not have the power of making a will, nor of receiving any thing by succession or inheritance. Moreover, let no one answer for him in any affair, but let him be obliged to answer others. If he should be a judge, let his sentence be of no affect, nor any causes be heard before him. If an advocate, let him never be admitted to plead in any one's defense. If a notary, let no instruments made by him be valid. We add, that an heretic may be convicted by an heretic, and that the houses of the Paterines their abettors and favorers, either where they have taught, or where they have laid hands on others, shall be destroyed, never to be rebuilt." --Dated at Padua, February 22, 1224. [The reader will find these Edicts entire in the first volume of

Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, chapter 12.]

Any thing more infamous than these edicts, in the way of spiritual tyranny, it would be difficult to imagine; and although, by reason of the circumstances of the times, and the differences which soon arose between the pope and the emperor, they had not all that effect which might have been expected, it is, nevertheless, certain that the inquisition was greatly promoted by them. **They were approved and confirmed by the pope, and inserted in his bulls, and in process of time, the persecuting spirit which pervades them, came gradually to be incorporated into the laws of almost every country in Europe.**

After the death of Frederick, which happened about the middle of the century, **POPE INNOCENT IV** remaining sole arbiter of the affairs of Lombardy and other parts of Italy, set himself diligently to extirpate heresy, which of late had exceedingly increased; and considering the labor which had been employed in his service by the Franciscan and Dominican friars, whose zeal, unrestrained by either respect of persons or the fear of dangers--by any regard to justice or the feelings of humanity, had recommended them highly to the pontiff, he cheerfully availed himself of their ardor to second his efforts. Preaching was found of little avail, and even the enlisting of crusaders and inflicting military execution was suspended for the sake of erecting in different countries standing tribunals armed with tremendous authority, but charged solely with the purgation of heretical pravity. [The phrase "heretical pravity," will sound rather uncouth to modern ears that have not been accustomed to the jargon of the catholic writers, but the reader should be told that it is the usual slang of those writers for denoting the wickedness of thinking differently from the church of Rome.]

To the establishment of these novel tribunals there were, however, two objections started. The first that it was an encroachment on the authority of the ordinary bishop of the place, and the second that it was unprecedented to exclude the civil magistrate from the trial and punishment of heretics, on whom it had hitherto devolved. To remove the first of these difficulties, an expedient was soon devised--the pope enacted that the tribunal should consist of the inquisitor, with the bishop of the place also, but so managing the affair, at the same time, that the inquisitor was not only to be the principal, but, in reality, everything, and leaving the bishop little more than the name of a judge. To remedy the second inconvenience, and to give at least the appearance of authority to the secular powers, they were allowed to appoint the subordinate officers to the inquisition, yet still subject to the approbation of the inquisitors; they were also allowed to send with the inquisitor, when he should go into the country, one of their assessors, whom the inquisitors should choose. Of all the property belonging to heretics which they should be enabled to confiscate, a third part was to go to the community, in return for which, the community was to defray the whole expense of keeping the prisons, and supporting the prisoners. The

infliction of the legal punishment was also vested in the magistrate, after trial and condemnation by the inquisitors; but that was a matter so much of course, and which he well knew he could not avoid executing, without incurring the vengeance of the church, that, in fact, it only converted him into a spiritual judge's executioner: and thus, to use the language of Dr. Jortin, "the priest was the judge, and the king was the hangman" [*Remarks*, volume 3, p. 303].

**Such was the footing on which "the holy office" was placed in the year 1251, in the ecclesiastical states of Italy, which were under the pope's immediate inspection. It was afterwards extended to more distant provinces, and every where entrusted to the management of Dominican friars.** Thirty-one rules or articles, defining their jurisdiction and powers, and regulating the procedure of this spiritual court of judicature, were devised; and all rulers and magistrates were commanded, by a papal bull, issued for the purpose, to give, under pain of excommunication, the most punctual obedience, and every possible assistance to this holy court. It should, however, be remarked, that the attempts which were made to introduce the inquisition, did not prove equally successful in all Roman catholic states, nor even in the greater part of them. It was never in the power of the pope to obtain the establishment of this tribunal in many of the most populous countries that were subject to the See of Rome. In France it was early introduced, but soon afterwards expelled, in such a manner, as effectually to preclude a renewal of the attempt. The difficulties arose partly from the conduct of the inquisitors--their inordinate severity, their unbounded extortion and avarice, and the propensity they showed, on every occasion, to extend beyond measure, their own authority; insomuch that they were making rapid strides to engross, under one pretext or another, all the criminal jurisdiction of the magistrate; for under the head of heresy, they insisted, were included, infidelity, blasphemy, perjury, sorcery, poisoning, bigamy, usury! Another reason was, that the tribunal was found to be so expensive, that the community refused to sustain the burden of it. Nor has it been alike severe in every place into which it has been introduced. In Spain and Portugal this scourge and disgrace to humanity has for centuries glared, monster like, with its most frightful aspect--in Rome it has been much more tolerable. Papal avarice has served to counterbalance papal tyranny.

The wealth of modern Rome has arisen very much from the constant resort of strangers from all countries and of all denominations, and chiefly those of the higher ranks. Nothing could have more effectually checked that resort, and of course the influx of riches into that capital, than such a horrid tribunal as that which existed at Lisbon and Madrid, and which diffused a terror that was felt to the utmost confines of those unhappy kingdoms.

Exclusive of the cruel punishments inflicted by the holy office, says a late writer, it may be truly affirmed, that the inquisition is a school of vice. There the artful judge,

grown old in habits of subtlety, along with the sly secretary, practices his cunning in interrogating a prisoner to fix a charge of heresy. Now he fawns, and then he frowns; now soothes, and then looks dark and angry; sometimes affects to pity and to pray, at other times insults and bullies, and talks of racks and dungeons, flames, and the damnation of hell. One while he lays his hand upon his heart, and sheds tears, and promises and protests he desires not the death of a sinner, but would rather that he would turn and live; and all that he can do he will do for the discharge, aye, for the preferment of his imprisoned brother. Another while he discovers himself deaf as a rock, false as the wind, and cruel as the poison of asps. [Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 277]

In no country has the operation of this dreadful court of spiritual despotism been more strikingly exemplified than in Spain. The subject has been placed in the most instructive point of view by two accurate and elegant modern historians, [Watson's *History of Philip II* king of Spain, and in Robertson's *History of Charles V.*] and their reflections upon it are so just and natural, that as it cannot be unacceptable to the reader, I shall give the substance of what they have said.

The court of inquisition, which although it was not the parent, has been the nurse and guardian of ignorance and superstition in every kingdom into which it has been admitted, was introduced into **SPAIN** by **FERDINAND AND ISABELLA**, and was principally intended to prevent the relapse of the Jews and Moors, who had been converted, or who pretended to be converted, to the faith of the Church of Rome. Its jurisdiction, however, was not confined to the Jews and Moors, but extended to all those who in their practice or opinions differed from the established church. In the united kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, there were eighteen different inquisitorial courts, having each of them its counselors, termed apostolical inquisitors; its secretaries, sergeants, and other officers; and besides these there were twenty thousand familiars dispersed throughout the kingdom, who acted as spies and informers, and were employed to apprehend all suspected persons, and commit them for trial, to the prisons which belonged to the inquisition. **By these familiars, persons were seized on bare suspicion, and in contradiction to the established rules of equity, they were put to the torture, tried and condemned by the inquisitors, without being confronted, either with their accusers, or with the witnesses on whose evidence they were condemned.** The punishments inflicted were more or less dreadful, according to the caprice and humor of the judges. The unhappy victims were either strangled or committed to the flames, or loaded with chains, and shut up in dungeons during life -- their effects confiscated, and their families stigmatized with infamy.

**This institution was, no doubt, well calculated to produce an uniformity of religious profession, but it had a tendency also to destroy the sweets of social life; to banish all freedom of thought and speech; to disturb men's minds with**

**the most disquieting apprehensions, and to produce the most intolerable slavery, by reducing persons of all ranks in life to a state of abject dependence upon priests;** whose integrity, were it even greater than that of other men, as in every false profession of religion it is less, must have been corrupted by the uncontrolled authority which they were allowed to exercise. By this tribunal a visible change was wrought in the temper of the people, and reserve, distrust, and jealousy became the distinguishing characteristics of a Spaniard. It confirmed and perpetuated the reign of ignorance and superstition; inflamed the rage of religious bigotry, and by the cruel spectacles to which, in the execution of its decrees, it familiarized the people, it nourished in them that ferocious spirit, which in the Netherlands and America they manifested by deeds that have fixed an indelible reproach upon the Spanish name. Authors of undoubted credit affirm, and without the least exaggeration, that millions of persons have been ruined by this horrible court. Moors were banished, a million at a time. Six or eight hundred thousand Jews were driven away at once, and their immense riches seized by their accusers, and distributed among their persecutors, while thousands dissembled, and professed themselves Christians only to be harassed in future. Heretics of all ranks and of various denominations were imprisoned and burnt, or fled into other countries. The gloom of despotism overshadowed all Spain. The people at first reasoned, and rebelled, and murdered the inquisitors--the aged murmured and died-- the next generation fluttered and complained, but their successors were completely tamed by education; and the Spaniards are now trained up by the priests to shudder at the thought of thinking for themselves. That honor to his country and of human nature, the late Mr. Howard, says, when he saw the inquisition at Valladolid, "I could not but observe, that even the sight of it struck terror into the common people as they passed." "It is styled," he adds, by a monstrous abuse of words, "the holy apostolical court of inquisition."

A simple narrative of the proceedings of the inquisition has shocked the world, and the cruelty of it has become proverbial. Nothing ever displayed so fully to the eyes of mankind the spirit and temper of the papal religion. "Christians," says Tertullian, "were often called, not *Christiani*, but *Chrestiani*, from the gentleness of their manners, and the sweetness of their tempers. Jesus himself was the essence of mildness. His apostles were gentle, even as a nurse that cherisheth her children. But what an awful contrast is exhibited in this horrid court of papal inquisition." Let us hear the description which Voltaire, a very competent witness, gives of it. "Their form of proceeding," says he, "is an infallible way to destroy whomsoever the inquisitors wish. The prisoners are not confronted with the accuser or informer. Nor is there any informer or witness who is not listened to. A public convict, a notorious malefactor, an infamous person, a common prostitute, a child, are in the holy office, though no where else, credible accusers and witnesses. Even the son may depose against his father, the wife against her husband." The wretched prisoner is no more made acquainted with his crime than with his accusers. His being told the one might

possibly lead him to guess the other. To avoid this, he is compelled, by tedious confinement in a noisome dungeon, where he never sees a face but the jailer's, and is not permitted the use of either books or pen and ink--or should confinement alone not be sufficient, he is compelled, by the most excruciating torture, to inform against himself, to discover and confess the crime laid to his charge, of which he is often ignorant. **"This procedure," says our historian, "unheard of till the institution of this court, makes the whole kingdom tremble. Suspicion reigns in every breast. Friendship and quietness are at an end. The brother dreads his brother, the father his son.** Hence taciturnity is become the characteristic of a nation, endued with all the vivacity natural to the inhabitants of a warm and fruitful climate. To this tribunal we must likewise impute that profound ignorance of sound philosophy in which Spain lies buried, whilst Germany, England, France, and even Italy, have discovered so many truths, and enlarged the sphere of our knowledge. Never is human nature so debased, as where ignorance is armed with power" [Voltaire's *Univ. Hist.* volume 2, chapter 118].

But these melancholy effects of the Inquisition are a trifle when compared with those public sacrifices, called **AUTO DE FE**, or **Acts of Faith**, and to the shocking barbarities that precede them. **A priest in a white surplice, or a monk who has vowed meekness and humility, causes his fellow creatures to be put to the torture in a dismal dungeon. A stage is erected in the public market place, where the condemned prisoners are conducted to the stake, attended with a train of monks and religious confraternities.** They sing psalms, say mass, and butcher mankind. Were a native of Asia to come to Madrid upon a day of an execution of this sort, it would be impossible for him to tell whether it were a rejoicing, a religious feast, a sacrifice, or a massacre; and yet it is all this together! The kings, whose presence alone in other cases is the harbinger of mercy, assist at this spectacle uncovered, seated lower than the inquisitors, and are spectators of their subjects expiring in the flames. The Spaniards reproached Montezuma with immolating his captives to his gods; what would he have said, had he beheld an "Auto de Fe?"

It is but doing justice, however, to many Roman catholic states, and to thousands of individuals belonging to that church, to say, that they abhor this infernal tribunal, almost as much as protestants themselves do. This is sufficiently evinced by the tumults which were excited in several parts of Italy, Milan, and Naples in particular, and afterwards in France, as well as in other Catholic countries, by the attempts that were made to introduce it at first, and by its actual expulsion from some places, where, to all appearance, it was firmly established. It is, indeed, matter of regret that any among the members of that church should have their minds so enslaved by prejudice, as to imagine, for a moment, that a despotism which required for its support such diabolical engines, could possibly be of heavenly origin. There is something in the very constitution of this tribunal so monstrously unjust, so



exorbitantly cruel, that it must ever excite one's astonishment, that the people of any country should have permitted its existence among them. How they could have the inconsistency to acknowledge a power to be from God, which has found it necessary to recur to expedients so manifestly from hell, so subversive of every principle of sound morality and religion, can be regarded only as one of those contradictions, for which human characters, both in individuals and nations, are often so remarkable. The wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. But the policy of Rome, as displayed in the inquisition, is so strikingly characterized by that wisdom which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, that the person who needs to be convinced of it, seems to be altogether beyond the power of argument. Never were two systems more diametrically opposed in their spirit, their maxims, and effects, than primitive Christianity, and the religion of modern Rome; nor do heaven and hell, Christ and Belial, exhibit to our view a more glaring contrast. [See Father Paul Sarpi's *History of the Council of Trent*; and Dr. G. Campbell's *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

## **By William Jones**

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### **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 6**

#### **HISTORY OF THE PERSECUTION OF THE ALBIGENSES IN FRANCE, DURING THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY**

The flight of Peter Waldo from Lyons, and the consequent dispersion of his flock throughout the south of France, took place in the year 1163. As nothing lay nearer the hearts of the popes, than an anxious desire to crush in its infancy every doctrine that opposed their exorbitant power, they were seldom remiss in adopting such measures as appeared to them best calculated for promoting that favorite object. Accordingly we find that in the same year (1163) a synod was convened at Tours, a city of France, at which all the bishops and priests in the country of Toulouse, were strictly enjoined "to take care, and to forbid, under pain of excommunication, every person from presuming to give reception, or the least assistance to the followers of this heresy; to have no dealings with them in buying and selling, that thus being deprived of the common necessities of life, they might be compelled to repent of the evil of their way." And, further, that "whosoever should dare to contravene this order, should be excommunicated as a partner with them in their guilt." And, lastly, that "as many of them as could be found, should be imprisoned by the Catholic princes, and punished with the forfeiture of all their substance. [Baronius's *Annals*, sect. 18. n. 4. quoted in Limborch, chapter 9.]

It is very natural to suppose that these cruel precautionary proceedings, if followed up with much rigor, must drive the friends of Waldo to seek an asylum in more hospitable climes; and of course, many of them took refuge in the valleys of Piedmont, while others proceeded to Bohemia, and not a few migrated into Spain. Hence, in the year 1194, in consequence of some of the Waldenses coming into the province of Arragon, king Ildefonsus issued a severe and bloody edict, by which "he banished them from his kingdom and all his dominions, as enemies of the cross of Christ, profaners of the Christian religion, and

public enemies to himself and kingdom" [Bzovius. A. 1199. sect. 38. in Limborch, chapter 9].

Yet, notwithstanding these inhuman proceedings, both in France and Spain," so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, "that **in the year 1200, both the city of Toulouse, and eighteen other principal towns in Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphine, were filled with Waldenses and Albigenses.** This, no doubt, was owing, under God, to the protection that was afforded them by the Counts of Toulouse and Foix, the Viscount of Beziers, and several other of the French nobility. It can excite no surprise, therefore, that their numbers and growing influence should spread universal alarm at Rome, and that the most spirited exertions should be determined on for subduing them.

The first measures resorted to were the issuing of papal canons and sentences of excommunication. Not only was the whole sect anathematized, but also every one who should receive them into their houses, and protect them, or hold any intercourse with them. The archbishops and bishops of Guienne and other provinces of France, as well as the clergy throughout their different dioceses, were enjoined to banish the Waldenses, Puritans, and Paterines from their territories; to mark them, and take care that they should neither enjoy Christian privileges while living, nor burial when dead. Kings, princes, and magistrates, were called upon to support and assist the Catholic clergy with the power of the sword; to confiscate the property, and raze to the foundation the houses of these heretics, and of all that countenanced them. [Rankin's *Hist. of France*, volume 3, and Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, chapter 9.]

To give efficacy to these measures, pope Innocent III sent two of his legates into France, viz. the famous **REINERIUS**, (whom we have already had frequent occasion to mention) and **GUIDO**, the founder of the order of Hospitallers, to stimulate the clergy to greater diligence, to watch the conduct of the nobles, and on the detection of any of the heretics, to demand the most summary proceedings against them--enjoining his legates to transmit him by messenger or letter, the fullest information they could procure; that thus, being more particularly informed, he might the better know how to proceed against them.

Our learned countryman, Archbishop Usher, to whom we are under great obligations for the pains he took to explore the affairs of this dark period, and to illustrate the history of the Waldensian churches, gives us a very amusing account of the strain of preaching which prevailed throughout those Catholic countries at that period. The preachers had one favorite text, viz. Psalm 94:16. "Who will rise up for me against the evil doers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?" and it is probable that the sermon was as uniform as the text; for we are told they generally concluded thus: "You see, most dear brethren, how great the wickedness of the heretics is, and how much mischief they do in the world. You see also, how tenderly, and by how many pious methods the church labors to reclaim them. But with them they all prove ineffectual, and they fly to the secular power for their defense. Therefore our holy mother, the church, though with reluctance and grief, calls together against them the Christian army. If then you have any zeal for the faith; if you are touched with any concern for the honor of God; if you would reap the benefit of this great indulgence, come and receive the sign of the cross, and join yourselves to the army of the crucified Savior." As the country of Toulouse was the principal place of rendezvous for the Albigenses, and as they abounded there in immense numbers, the pope evinced the utmost solicitude to prevail upon Count Raymond to expel them from his dominions. But all his

entreaties to induce the latter, either to banish so large a number of his peaceable subjects, or even to persecute them, proving fruitless, he ordered him to be excommunicated as a favorer of heretics. He sent his legate with letters to many of the prelates, commanding them to make inquisition against the heretical Albigenses in France, to destroy them and convert their protectors. He also wrote to Philip, king of France, reminding him that it was his duty to take arms against those heretics, and to use all his power to suppress them, that by thus laboring to stem the progress of heresy, he might purge himself from all suspicion of being tainted therewith in his own person. **Twelve abbots of the Cistercian order, accompanied by the pope's legate, went preaching the cross against the Albigenses, and promising, by the authority of his holiness, a plenary remission of their sins, to all who took on them the crusade.** The famous, or, more properly speaking, the infamous **DOMINIC**, the founder of the Inquisition, joined himself to this association, and, while engaged on this murderous expedition, he is said to have digested the plan of that iniquitous court.

The efforts of Reinerius and his associates, not answering the sanguine expectations of the pope, and the scheme of Dominic for establishing the Inquisition being communicated to him, the latter, in the year 1216, transmitted his letters patent, creating Dominic inquisitor general, which was confirmed by the council of Lateran in the same year. Having received these letters, and being thus armed with authority, Dominic, on a certain day, in the midst of a large concourse of people in the church of St. Prullian, announced, in one of his sermons, that "he was raised by the pope to a new office; adding, that he was resolved to defend, with his utmost rigor, the doctrines of the faith; and that if the spiritual and ecclesiastical arms were not sufficient for this end, it was his fixed determination to call in the aid of the civil magistrate, to excite and compel the Catholic princes to take arms against heretics, that the very memory of them might be entirely destroyed."

A nobleman in the vicinity of Narbonne, having about this time been converted to the Catholic faith, the inquisitors obtained possession of his house or castle, where they fixed their court, and commenced the operations of that iniquitous system. On the one hand, they offered to their converts the remission of all their sins, plenary indulgences, and various other privileges; and on the other, the obstinate were branded, imprisoned, and tortured. Multitudes were allured by these deceitful pretexts to enroll themselves under the banners of St. Dominic, vainly imagining, that they could thus make compensation for their crimes. Dominic framed a code of regulations for the preservation and proper government of this crusading fraternity. One was, that such as entered upon this warfare should take an oath, that they would endeavor with all their might to recover, defend, and protect the rights of the church, against all who should presume to usurp them; and that they would expose themselves and their estates in defense of the ecclesiastical immunities, by taking up arms as often as they should be called upon to do it, by the prelate of the war,--an honor at that time vested in Dominic himself, and subsequently in the masters general of the Dominican order. If any of them were married, an oath was required from their wives, that they would not persuade their husbands to forsake the war for the support of the ecclesiastical privileges, promising them eternal life as the reward of so pious a service. To distinguish them from laics, a peculiar dress was devised for both the men and their wives, consisting of white and black colors, but of different formation. No one was to be admitted to this sacred warfare, without a previous rigorous examination of his life, manners, and faith--whether he had paid his debts, forgiven his enemies, and made his will, that he might be the more ready for the battle, and also whether he had obtained leave

from his will before a notary and proper witnesses. The wives of those that were slain in the expedition promised that they would never marry again. All this, no doubt, was highly ridiculous; but it imposed an air of sacredness upon the thing which took with the vulgar, and rendered the crusade so popular, that numbers entered into it with avidity, hoping by the slaughter of heretics, and the plunder of their goods, to ensure their admission into heaven. [Limborch's *Inquisition*, chapter 11.]

With all this, however, the cause proceeded but slowly. The pope was dissatisfied. The measures of Dominic and his adherents seemed to him but as the sprinkling of water, which only aggravated and extended the flame of heresy. He, therefore, denounced open and more violent war; invited the catholic princes and nobles to take up arms, and commissioned his ministers to preach the same indulgences, and to offer terms of every kind, as advantageous as those that were granted when levies were made for crusading to Asia. [See volume 1, chapter 4, sect. 4.]

The court of Rome, however, with a view to preserve at least the semblance of decency, thought it expedient, before proceeding to compulsory measures with the Albigenses, to try to reclaim them to the church by the more gentle and reasonable methods of persuasion, and the latter formed the resolution of defending their own principles. They consequently gave the bishops to understand that some of their pastors were ready to discuss the subject with them in open conference, provided the thing could be conducted with propriety. They explained their notions of propriety by proposing that there should be moderators on each side, vested with authority to prevent tumult and preserve order and regularity -- that the conference should be held in some place to which all parties concerned might, have free and safe access; and lastly, that a particular subject should be agreed upon between the disputants, which should be steadily prosecuted until it was fully discussed and determined, and that the party which could not maintain it by an appeal to the Scriptures, the only standard of faith to Christians, should own themselves vanquished. The proposal was so reasonable that it could not with decency be rejected; it was therefore accepted by the bishops and monks. The place of conference agreed upon was Montreal, near Carcassone, in the year 1206. The umpires on the Catholic side were the bishops of Villeneuve and Auxere -- and on that of the Albigenses, R. de Bot, and Anthony Riviere. On the part of the latter, several pastors were appointed to manage the debate, of whom Arnold Hot was the principal. He arrived first at the appointed place. A bishop of the name of Eusus met him on behalf of the papacy, accompanied by the renowned Dominic, two of the pope's legates, and several other of the catholic clergy. The points which Arnold undertook to prove were, that the mass and transubstantiation are idolatrous and unscriptural--that the church of Rome is not the spouse of Christ--and that its polity is of a pernicious and wicked tendency. Arnold drew up certain propositions upon these points, which he transmitted to the bishop, who required fifteen days to answer them, which was granted. On the appointed day, the bishop appeared, and produced a large manuscript, which was read in the public assembly. Arnold requested that he might be permitted to reply by word of mouth, only entreating their patience if he took a considerable time in answering so prolix a writing, and fair promises were made him of a patient hearing. He then discoursed for the space of four days upon the subject, with such fluency and readiness, such order, perspicuity, and forcible reasoning, that a strong impression was produced on the audience. Arnold, at length, called upon his opponents to defend themselves. What they said on the occasion we are not informed, but the cause of the abrupt termination of the conference is a fact allowed on all hands, and may possibly suggest what was the real state of the controversy. For,

while the pope's legates were disputing with Arnold, the umpire of the papal party, the bishop of Villeneuve, declared that nothing could be determined, because the army of the crusaders was at hand. [Perrin's *History of the Albigenses*, book 3, chapter 2.] What he asserted, alas, was but too true; the papal armies advanced, and, by fire and faggot instantly decided all the points of controversy; and if we may place any reliance upon writers of unimpeachable veracity, **"the armies employed by pope Innocent III destroyed above two hundred thousand of them in the short space of a few months"** [Dr. Grosvenor's Sermon against Popery, at Salter's Hall, 1735]. Arnold and his brethren, indeed, might have been fully assured that it never was the intention of the pope to submit to any decision of the controversy by argument, which might happen to be unfavorable to his party. The acquiescence of his holiness in the proposal to discuss the differences between the parties in a public disputation, was in all probability, a mere maneuver, intended only to amuse the Albigenses and gain time, till the armies that were preparing with a view to destroy them might be in readiness. Platina, one of their own writers, in his *Life of Innocent XIII* seems to insinuate as much, when he tells us, that "there was need, not only of disputations, but of arms also; to such a pitch was the heresy grown." The bull which the pope had already issued, in consequence of the death of Peter de Chatineau, had also made that sufficiently apparent. He had dispatched preachers throughout all Europe, to collect an army which should revenge the blood of that man, promising paradise, and the remission of all their sins, to those who should bear arms forty days in that holy warfare; and, after telling them that "they were not to keep faith with those who do not keep faith with God," he thus proceeds, "We exhort you, that you would endeavor to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and do this with more rigor than you would towards the Saracens themselves; persecute them with a strong hand; deprive them of their lands and possessions; banish them and put Roman Catholics in their room" [Clarke's *Martyrology*, chapter 24].

**RAYMOND**, the sixth count of Toulouse, in whose territories the Albigenses chiefly abounded, still humanely extended to them his protection and patronage. Pope Innocent, by a bull, had excommunicated him as a favorer of heretics -- he was prohibited the communion of holy things and of the faithful--all his subjects were absolved from their oath of allegiance, and power was dispensed to any catholic man not only to act against his person, but to seize his dominions, and dispossess him of them, under the pretext that by the prudence of the one, they might be effectually purged from heresy, as they had been grievously defiled by the wickedness of the other. Yet he does not appear to have been in the least diverted from his purpose by these horrid proceedings. His character is variously represented by the friends and enemies of his party. The former describe him, not only as generous and brave, but as pious and virtuous; while the latter revile him as a hypocrite. The true account of him seems to be, that whether he had adopted the sentiments of the Albigenses or not, he humanely sympathized with them--that he understood the spirit of true religion to be a spirit of tolerance; that he studied to promote the real interests of his country; and with these views, at least, that he was desirous to protect all such as were useful members of society, whatever might be their peculiar religious tenets. Under such patronage their numbers rapidly increased, but it proportionally inflamed the indignation of the fierce and bloody inquisitors. [Rankin's *History of France*, volume 3.]

While affairs remained in this critical posture, it unfortunately happened that Peter de Chatineau, one of the inquisitors, was assassinated, and Count Raymond was suspected of being, at least, privy to the murder. The catholics loudly inveighed against the crime as of the deepest dye. The Count protested his

innocence, affirming that he was in no respect guilty of the death of that friar--that he had been killed at St. Giles's by a certain gentleman whom Peter had pursued, and who immediately afterwards retired to his friends at Beaucaire--that he had done every thing in his power to apprehend the manslayer; and in fine, that even were it true that he had been in any respect accessory to the murder, the ordinary course of justice ought to be pursued, and not to revenge it upon his subjects who were innocent. To all this the catholic party were deaf; Raymond was loaded with infamy, and with the highest censures of the church; and, in a little time, **an expedition of more than one hundred thousand cross-bearers (crusaders) was actually equipped against him.** Raymond was justly alarmed--he offered to submit, promised obedience, and as a proof of his sincerity, delivered up into the hands of the pope seven fortified places in Provence. But that was not a sufficient sacrifice to ecclesiastical pride and malignity. He was required to present himself before the gates of the church of St. Agde, in the town of that name. Upwards of twenty bishops and archbishops were present, convened for the purpose of receiving his submission. He was required to swear upon the holy solemnities of the eucharist and the relics of the saints, which were exposed with great reverence before the gates of the church, and held by several prelates, that he would obey the commands of the holy Roman church. When he had thus bound himself by an oath, the legate ordered one of the sacred vestments to be thrown over his neck, and, drawing him by means of it, he was brought into the church, where after scourging him with a whip, he was absolved. It is added, "that he was so grievously torn by the stripes in scourging, that he was unable to go out by the way in which he had entered the church, but was forced to pass quite naked as he was, through the lower gate. He was also compelled to undergo the same degrading process at the sepulcher of St. Peter the martyr, at New Castres" [Limborch's *Inquisition*, chapter 11].

**The immense array of crusaders, however, being now in motion, it was not to be reduced to a state of inactivity because the Earl of Toulouse had effected his reconciliation with the see of Rome. On the contrary, they everywhere attacked the Albigenses, took possession of the cities in which they were known to be, filled the streets with slaughter and blood, and committed to the flames numbers whom they had taken prisoners.** Raymond had a nephew of the name of Roger, who was more bold and determined than his uncle. He was at the head of seven fiefs, or baronies, dependent, however, upon the Earl of Toulouse, and he evinced no disposition to yield all implicit obedience to the orders of Rome, nor abandon the people who had put themselves under his protection. Among the humiliating stipulations imposed upon the Earl of Toulouse, the one most repugnant to his feelings was, that he himself should lead the crusading army against Beziers, the capital of his own nephew's dominions; which was in effect now to make him the instrument of the destruction of the Albigenses, as he had hitherto been their protector, and indeed the destruction of his nephew also. This has ever been the detestable policy of the court of Rome, never to be satisfied with reasonable offers of submission, without degrading the wretched suppliant, even in his own eyes. The Earl continued with the army a few days and then took his leave of the legate, choosing rather to take a journey to Rome, in order to humble himself before the pope, a privilege which could not be denied him, than continue with it to be a spectator of the murder of thousands of peaceable and virtuous men, and the ruin of his own nephew.

When the army advanced towards the neighborhood of **Beziers**, the fate of the city was easily foreseen, and the nephew of Raymond, fully sensible that it could not be defended against an hundred thousand men, went out of the city, threw himself at the feet of the pope's legate, and supplicated his mercy in

favor of his capital, beseeching him not to involve the innocent with the guilty, which must be the case if Beziers were taken by storm--that there were many Roman Catholics in the city, who would be involved in one indiscriminate scene of ruin contrary to the intentions of the pope, whose object was understood to be, solely the punishment of the Albigenses. Numerous other topics of entreaty were urged by the young prince; but the answer of the legate to all he could plead was, that "all his apologies and excuses would avail him nothing, and that he must do the best he could for himself." Thus foiled in his object, the Earl of Beziers returned into the city, convened the inhabitants, to whom he explained the ill success that had attended his mission; and particularly, that the only condition upon which pardon would be granted by the pope's legate was, that the Albigenses should abjure their religion, and promise to live according to the laws of the Roman church.

The catholic inhabitants of Beziers now interposed, using every entreaty with the Albigenses to comply with that stipulation, and not be the occasion of their death, since the legate was resolved to pardon none, unless they all consented to live in subjection to one rule of faith. The Albigenses replied, that they never could consent to purchase a prolongation of this perishing life at the price of renouncing their faith--that they were fully persuaded God could, if he pleased, protect and defend them:--but they were as fully persuaded, that if it were his good pleasure to be glorified by the confession of their faith, it would be an high honor conferred upon them to sacrifice their lives for righteousness' sake--that they much preferred displeasing the pope, who could only destroy their bodies, to incurring the displeasure of God, who is able to destroy both soul and body together--that they hoped never to be ashamed of, nor forsake a faith by which they had been taught the knowledge of Christ and his righteousness, and, at the hazard of eternal death, barter it for a religion which annihilated the merits of the Savior, and rendered his righteousness of none effect. They, therefore, left it to the Catholics and the Earl of Beziers to make the best terms they could for themselves, but entreated that they would not promise anything on their behalf inconsistent with their duty as Christians.

Finding the Albigenses inflexible, the Catholic party next sent their own bishop to the legate, to entreat him not to comprehend in the punishment of the Albigenses, those that had always been constant and uniform in their adherence to the church of Rome. In this interview the bishop explained to him that he was their prelate; that he knew them well; and that as to the Albigenses, he did not think them so irrecoverable as to be past all hopes of repentance -- that, on the contrary, he trusted a becoming mildness on the part of the church, which does not delight in blood, might yet reclaim them.

The sanguinary ecclesiastic, however, was wholly deaf to the voice of humanity. Transported with rage, he gave vent to the most terrible threatening; and swore that unless all who were in the city acknowledged their guilt, and submitted to the church of Rome, they should every individual be put to the sword, without regard to religious profession, age, or sex--giving instant orders for the city to be summoned to surrender at discretion. Under these circumstances resistance was vain; the assailants were immediately in possession of it, and **its inhabitants, to the number of three and twenty thousand, were indiscriminately massacred, and the city itself destroyed by fire.** Caesarius informs us, that when the crusaders were about to enter the city, knowing that there were many Catholics mixed with the heretics, and hesitating how they should act in regard to the former, application was made to Arnold, the Abbe of Cisteaux, for advice, who instantly replied, "**Kill them all--the Lord knoweth them that are**



**his"** [Perrin's *History of the Albigenses*, book 3, chapter 4, Bzovius, A. 1209, sect. 1, and Ranaldus, A. 1209, sect. 22, in Limborch's *History of the Inquisition*, volume 1, chapter 11].

The Earl of Beziers, foreseeing the ruin which threatened his capital, made his escape, and withdrew to the neighboring city of **Carcassone**. This place was much more strongly fortified, both by nature and art, than Beziers, and consequently more defensible. The city, or upper town, stands upon a hill, surrounded by a double wall; the lower town or borough is in the plain, about two miles distant from the city. Numbers of the Albigenses resided there, and many more fled to it for security. The young Earl, who had now been fully instructed, by the horrible proceedings at Beziers, into the motives and determination of the Catholics, resolved, as far as was practicable, to defend Carcassone. He, therefore, convened his subjects, reminded them of the treatment which the inhabitants of Beziers had received, and that they had to do with the same enemies, who had indeed changed the place of siege, but not the cruelty of their disposition, nor their wish to destroy them if they could effect it. He therefore gave it as his opinion, that it was preferable to die in defense of their city and privileges, rather than fall into the hands of such cruel and relentless enemies. That for his own part, he professed the Roman Catholic religion, but he was fully aware that the present was not a war of religion, but a system of robbery, contrived for the purpose of getting possession of the dominions of his uncle, the Earl of Raymond, and all that were related to him. He therefore urged the inhabitants to defend themselves like men, and to recollect that both their lives and the free exercise of their religion were at stake, pledging himself that he would never forsake them in so honorable a cause as that of defending themselves against their common enemies, who, under the mask of dissembled piety, were, in effect, nothing better than thieves and robbers. This manly address infused courage into the hearts of his subjects--they pledged themselves to defend their sovereign and the city of Carcassone with whatever concerned them.

**In the meantime the army of the crusaders had been augmented by the arrival of fresh levies from every part of France, as well as from Italy and Germany, to upwards of three hundred thousand men**, (some writers make them five hundred thousand) and had advanced to the walls of the town, where they rushed furiously upon the first rampire, filling the ditch with fascines, and making themselves sure of an easy conquest of the place. But they met with so valiant a repulse, that the ground was covered with the dead bodies of the pilgrims (as they called themselves) round about the city. The following day the legate ordered the scaling ladders to be applied, and a general assault to be made on the town, but the inhabitants made a resolute defense. They were, however, at length overpowered with numbers, and beat back from the walls, when the enemy entered and gave the inhabitants of the Borough much the same treatment they had lately done to those of Beziers, **putting them all to the sword**.

The city, or upper town, however, was yet secure, but the besieging army lost no time in proceeding to its reduction. The legate commanded them to play all their engines of war upon it, and to take it by assault. But he had the mortification to see his soldiers of the cross fall by thousands-- the ground covered, and the ditches filled, with the dead bodies of his pilgrims. This immense army, in a little time, began to experience the want of forage, which the soldiers were driven to the necessity of seeking about the fields--add to which, that the term of forty days, for which they had originally enlisted, and in which time they were to purchase the bliss of paradise, was now accomplished; contenting themselves therefore with that great object, they refused to enter upon any further conquest, and withdrew by

thousands from the legate's standard. The latter, alarmed at the reduction of his army, and not finding the conquest of the city so practicable as he at first apprehended, had recourse next to stratagem for effecting his purpose. Amongst those who had joined his army with fresh auxiliaries under the walls of Carcassone, was the King of Arragon, in Spain. A plot was formed between this monarch and the legate to try the effect of a negotiation with the Earl of Beziers, and the former was deputed to solicit an interview and manage the whole affair.

An interview accordingly took place, at which the King of Arragon expressed his wish to know what could induce the Earl to shut himself up in the city of Carcassone against so vast an army of the pilgrims. The latter replied, It was the justice of his cause--that he was fully persuaded the pope, under the pretext of religion, had formed the design of ruining both his uncle, the Earl of Raymond, and himself--of this he had had the most convincing proof when he undertook to intercede for his subjects, the inhabitants of Beziers. The popes legate had refused to spare such of them as were Catholics, and had even butchered the priests themselves, though clothed in their sacerdotal vestments, and though they had ranged themselves under the banner of the cross. That that horrible instance of cruelty and wickedness, added to their proceedings in the borough of Carcassone, where his unoffending subjects had been exposed to fire and sword without regard to age or sex, had taught him the folly of looking for any mercy at the hands of the legate or his army of pilgrims; that consequently he preferred to die in his own defense rather than be exposed to the mercy of so relentless and inexorable an enemy. He acknowledged to the King, that many of his subjects in the city of Carcassone professed a faith very different from that of the church of Rome, but they were persons who never did wrong or injury to anyone, and that in requital of their good services to himself, he was resolved never to desert them. He also expressed his hope that God, who is the protector and defender of the innocent, would support them against that misinformed multitude, who, under the mistaken notion of meriting heaven, had left their own houses to plunder, burn, and destroy the houses of other men, and to murder without reason, mercy, or discretion.

The King of Arragon retired from this parley, and, in an assembly, consisting of the legate, the lords and prelates, reported the particulars of what had passed between himself and the Earl of Beziers. He declared that he had found his good ally, the Earl of Beziers, extremely scandalized at their inhuman proceedings against his subjects both of Beziers and Carcassone; and that he was now fully persuaded, seeing that they had not spared the Roman Catholics, nor even the priests themselves, that it was not a religious war, as was pretended, but a system of plunder under the pretext of religion: that the Earl hoped God would be so favorable to him as to make his innocence and the justice of his cause, which was purely that of self-defense, sufficiently apparent: that it was in vain to expect them to surrender at discretion, since they had found by experience they had nothing to expect at their hands but an indiscriminate slaughter. He then apprised the pope's legate, that it had always proved bad policy to drive an enemy to despair; wherefore if he would condescend to propose any terms of compromise that were tolerable to the Earl of Beziers and his subjects, mildness would be found a much more effectual means of reducing the Albigenses, than extreme severity; and that it should not be overlooked that the Earl of Beziers was still a young man, possessing much of the confidence of his subjects; and, consequently, had it in his power to render essential services in reducing them to the communion of the church of Rome, to which he was himself attached.

When the King of Arragon had delivered this address, he was requested by the legate to withdraw a little while, on which a consultation took place; and being again called in, he was commissioned to return to the Earl and propose to him, that, at his intercession, the legate had consented to receive him into mercy, upon the following terms: He should be permitted to come out of the city, and to bring with him eleven others, with their bag and baggage. But with regard to the rest of the inhabitants, they should not leave the city except at his discretion, of which they ought to entertain the most favorable opinion, because he was the pope's legate. That all the inhabitants both men, women, maidens, and children, should come forth without so much as their shirts or shifts on, or the smallest covering to hide their nakedness; and that finally, the Earl of Beziers should be kept in strict custody and confinement, and that all his possessions should remain in the hands of such a successor as should be chosen for the preservation of the country.

The Spanish monarch was fully persuaded, that propositions so degrading as these, it were needless to offer to the Earl of Beziers; he, nevertheless, complied with the legate's request, and submitted them to the Earl, who gave an immediate reply that he would never quit the city upon conditions so dishonorable and unjust, and that he was resolved to defend both himself and his subjects by every means that God had put within his power.

Finding himself thus foiled in his attempt to move the Earl of Beziers, the legate soon had recourse to a less honorable, and much more deeply laid plot. He insinuated himself into the graces of one of the officers of his army, telling him that it lay in his power to render to the church a signal instance of kindness, and that if he would undertake it, besides the rewards which he should receive in heaven, he should be amply recompensed on earth. The object was to get access to the Earl of Beziers, professing himself to be his kinsman and friend, assuring him that he had something to communicate of the last importance to his interests; and having thus far succeeded, he was to prevail upon him to accompany him to the legate, for the purpose of negotiating a peace, under a pledge that he should be safely conducted back again to the city. The officer played his part so dexterously, that the Earl imprudently consented to accompany him. At their interview, the latter submitted to the legate the propriety of exercising a little more lenity and moderation towards his subjects, as a procedure that might have the happiest tendency in reclaiming the Albigenses into the pale of the church of Rome; he also stated to him that the conditions which had been formerly proposed to him were dishonorable and shameful, and highly indecorous in those whose eyes ought to be as chaste as their thoughts: that his people would rather choose to die than submit to such disgraceful treatment. The legate replied that the inhabitants of Carcassone might exercise their own pleasure; but that it was now unnecessary for the Earl to trouble himself any further about them, as he was himself a prisoner until Carcassone was taken, and his subjects had better learnt their duty!

The Earl was not a little astonished at this information; he protested that he was betrayed, and that faith was violated: for that the gentleman, by whose entreaties he had been prevailed upon to meet the legate, had pledged himself by oaths and execrations to conduct him back in safety to Carcassone. But appeals, remonstrances, or entreaties, were of no avail: he was committed to the custody of the Duke of Burgundy, "and, having been thrown into prison, died soon after, not without exciting strong suspicions

of being poisoned."

No sooner had the inhabitants of Carcassone received the intelligence of the Earl's confinement, than they burst into tears, and were seized with such terror, that they thought of nothing but how to escape the danger they were then placed in; but blockaded as they were on all sides, and the trenches filled with men, all human probability of escape vanished from their eyes. A report, however, was circulated, that there was a vault or subterraneous passage somewhere in the city, which led to the castle of Caberet, a distance of about three leagues from Carcassone, and that if the mouth or entry thereof could be found, Providence had provided for them a way of escape. All the inhabitants of the city, except those who kept watch upon the rampires, immediately commenced the search, and success rewarded their labor. The entrance of the cavern was found, and at the beginning of the night they all began their journey through it, carrying with them only as much food as was deemed necessary to serve them for a few days. "It was a dismal and sorrowful sight," says their historian, "to witness their removal and departure, accompanied with sighs, tears, and lamentations, at the thoughts of quitting their habitations and all their worldly possessions, and betaking themselves to the uncertain event of saving themselves by flight: parents leading their children, and the more robust supporting decrepit old persons; and especially to hear the affecting lamentations of the women." They, however, arrived the following day at the castle, from whence they dispersed themselves through different parts of the country, some proceeding to Arragon, some to Catalonia, others to Toulouse and the cities belonging to their party, wherever God in his providence opened a door for their admission.

The awful silence which reigned in the solitary city excited no little surprise on the following day among the pilgrims. At first they suspected a stratagem to draw them into an ambushade; but on mounting the walls and entering the town, they cried out, "the Albigenses are fled!" The legate issued a proclamation, that no person should seize or carry off any of the plunder--that it should all be carried to the great church of Carcassone, whence it was disposed of for the benefit of the pilgrims, and the proceeds distributed among them in rewards according to their deserts. [Perrin's *History of the Albigenses*, book 3, chapter 5.]

The crusade against the Albigenses had hitherto been conducted by an ecclesiastic, the **Abbe de Cisteaux**; but having been prolonged beyond the period at first calculated upon, and the entire reduction of the heretics being found not quite so easy a task as was first expected, the supreme command was now vested in the hands of **Simon, Earl of Montfort**, a person of some military talents, but of a fierce and ungovernable temper. He was appointed governor of the whole country, both of what had been already conquered, and what should be conquered in future. This nobleman, under the mask of piety and zeal for religion, gratified a relentless and covetous disposition. He plundered, assassinated, and committed to the flames the poor Albigenses, without regard to character, sex, or age. Dazzled by his success, he set no bounds to his rapacious cruelty; and, encouraged by the papal legate, he insolently proposed that the Earl of Toulouse should absolutely surrender to him all his castles and territories as conquered by the catholic army. Raymond refused, and appealed to Philip, king of France, his lord paramount. The haughty Count, however, began to execute his threats, and laid siege to the **castle of Minerba**, (or Minerva) a place strongly fortified by nature, in the territory of Narbonne, on the confines of Spain. "This place (said he) is of all others the most execrable, because no mass has been sung in it

for thirty years" -- a remark which gives us a striking idea of the number of the Waldenses; the very worship of popery, it seems, was expelled from the place. On the surrender of the castle, which was defended by **Raymond, Earl of Termes**, and compelled to capitulate for want of water, they exerted all their influence to induce him to recant his religion and turn Catholic; but finding him inflexible, they shut him up in a close prison, where he soon after died. **They then seized his wife, sister, and virgin daughter, with other females of distinguished rank, all of whom they labored to convert, both by flattery and frowns, by fair speeches and cruel threats; but finding that nothing could prevail upon them to recant, they made a large fire, into which they were all thrown and consumed to ashes.**

After the castle had been taken, the Earl of Montfort caused the Abbe de Vaux, a friar, to preach to the inhabitants, exhorting them to acknowledge the pope and church of Rome: but they interrupted him, exclaiming, "we will not renounce our religion; you labor to no purpose, for neither life nor death shall induce us to abandon our profession." On this **the Earl and the legate commanded a hundred and eighty men and women to be committed to the flames!** These went, it is said, with cheerfulness, blessing God that he was pleased to confer on them the honor of dying for his sake; at the same time warning the Earl of Montfort that he would one day pay dear for his cruelties towards them. All who witnessed their courage and constancy were astonished. [Clarke's *Martyrology*, p. 110; Perrin's *History of the Albigense*, p. 2, book 3, chapter 7.]

But I must not attempt to prosecute, in minute detail, the history of this religious crusade, which was carried on against the Albigenses, during almost the whole of the first thirty years of this century, and with varied success; for besides that it could administer to the reader little of either profitable instruction or edification, it would carry me far beyond the limits prescribed by my publication. The reader who has never had an opportunity of exploring the history of this period, can scarcely conceive the scenes of baseness, perfidy, barbarity, indecency, and hypocrisy, over which Pope Innocent III and his immediate successors presided. The bare reflection of three hundred thousand men, actuated by the motives of avarice and superstition, filling the country of the Albigenses with carnage and confusion, during a period of twenty years, is, in itself, sufficient to harrow up the soul; but to go into any thing like a circumstantial detail of all the multifarious atrocities which belong to it, would only be to impose upon the reader an obligation to throw aside the book, from a regard to his own feelings. I must content myself with an outline.

Having got possession of the castle of Minerva, Earl Montfort next laid siege to that of **Preissan**, or, as it is often called, Termes, in the district of Narbonne, a place which seemed invincible to human force; but the garrison being reduced to great distress for want of water, abandoned the place by night, and made good their retreat undiscovered by the enemy. The castle of **La Vaur** was next besieged, and after a siege of six months taken by assault, when all its brave defenders were put to the sword, except eighty gentlemen, whom the Earl caused to be ignominiously hanged, and Lord Almeric on a gibbet higher than the rest. The lady of Lavaur was cast alive into a pit, and there stoned to death. And with respect to the other inhabitants, it was put to their option whether they would conform to the church of Rome, or perish by the flames. They almost without exception chose the latter, and **about four hundred persons thus precipitated themselves into the flames, joyfully yielding up their spirits into the hand of God.**

[Clarke's *Martyrology*, p. 111. 402.]

The Count de Foix, who had been peculiarly interested in the defense of Preissan, was very favorably disposed towards the Albigenses, and consequently much disconcerted at the loss of the place. The Earl of Toulouse, also, began to be much alarmed at the successes of Montfort, and, apprehensive for his own safety and that of his subjects, roused many of the neighboring barons, and collected a considerable force, which he brought to the assistance of the Count de Foix. Their united exertions suddenly changed the aspect of affairs. Montfort was stripped of almost all his conquests, and a complete revolution was nearly effected; but in a general engagement, which took place in the valley of Theniere, they were defeated, and the courage of the party began again to droop.

Success raised the pride and demands of the inquisitors. Conditions were now prescribed, to which no man of spirit could agree -- "That Earl Raymond should lay down his arms, without retaining one soldier or auxiliary; that he should not only submit absolutely and for ever to the church, but that he should repair and refund whatever losses the church might have sustained by the war--that in all his territories, no one should ever eat more than two kinds of flesh--that he should expel all heretics, and their allies and abettors from his dominions--that within a year and a day he should deliver up to the Count de Montfort, every person whom he should name or require, to be punished or disposed of as the Count might think fit--that his subjects should never wear any jewels, nor fine clothes, nor caps, nor bonnets, of any other color than black--that all his fortifications should be demolished; that no relative, or friend of his, should reside in any city, but in the country only--that no new tax should be levied by him, but that every head of a family in his territories should annually pay four deniers to the pope's legate--that the tiends should be paid over all his lands--that the papal legate should never be required to pay any toll, or other impost, while traveling through the country under his jurisdiction--that Raymond should associate himself with the knights of St. John, and go into voluntary exile as a crusader to the Holy Land, never to return without leave, and finally, that he should not have his lands restored until he had complied with all these demands."

**In the year 1215, pope Innocent III convened the famous COUNCIL OF LATERAN, at which Dominic was present,** and many decrees against heretics were enacted. To this council both the Earl of Toulouse and his son Raymond had recourse, and urged their plea against Montfort, who had usurped their dominions. The council, however, decreed, Earl Raymond to be for ever excluded from his dominions, which he had governed in, and ordered him to remain in some convenient place out of his dominions, with a view to his giving suitable proofs of his repentance. Four hundred marks of silver were, nevertheless, assigned him annually out of his revenues, as long as he behaved himself with an humble obedience; but his possessions were adjudged to Montfort. Upon this decree, the Earl went into Spain, and his son into Provence, where they raised auxiliary forces, and were not only enabled to continue the war against Montfort, but actually recovered some part of the Earl's dominions, and even his capital, the city of Toulouse. Whilst Montfort was endeavoring to retake it, he was struck on the head by a stone which instantly killed him, in the year 1218, and the city was delivered from the siege.

In the course of the war the castle of Minerva having surrendered to the Catholic army, the Abbe de Cisteau, who, ever since the election of Montfort to its command, had continued the chief councilor of

the crusaders, hesitated for some time, how he should dispose of the garrison and inhabitants. "He sincerely desired the death of the enemies of Jesus Christ," says the author of the history of the Albigenses, "but being a priest and a monk, he could not agree to the slaughter of the citizens, if they would be converted. Robert Mauvoisin, a zealot in the army, dissatisfied with this appearance of humanity and condescension, insisted that they had come there, not to favor heretics, but to exterminate them. In this dilemma, the blood-thirsty monk was relieved from his embarrassment, by the higher tone, not the fiercer spirit, of a third person, who exclaimed, 'Fear not, probably not one of them will accept of the alternative!' The event proved the correctness of his judgment; for, the piles being kindled, they mostly precipitated themselves into the flames. [*Hist. Albigenses*, cap. 37, in Rankin's *France*, volume 3. p. 214.] Earl Raymond did not long enjoy the possession of his dominions, which he had reconquered, for he died in the year 1221, and was succeeded by his son, the young Raymond, who soon after banished the inquisition from the country of Toulouse. Pope Innocent III also died about the same time, and was succeeded by **HONORIUS III** who was no sooner elevated to power than he issued his denunciations against all heretics, and violators of the ecclesiastical immunity, in the following rescript, which was sent into France. "We excommunicate all heretics of both sexes, and of whatsoever sect, with their favorers, receivers, and defenders; and, moreover, all those who cause any edicts or customs, contrary to the liberty of the church, to be observed, unless they remove them from their public records in two months after the publication of this sentence. Also we excommunicate the makers and the writers of those statutes, and moreover, all governors, consuls, rulers, and counselors of places where such statutes and customs shall be published and kept, all those who shall presume to pass judgment, or to publish such judgments, as shall be made according to them."

The conduct of the young Raymond had rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the new pontiff, who took care to inform him, that unless he returned to his duty, he should be stripped of his dominions, as his father had been; and by letters, bearing date the 8th of November, 1221, he confirmed the sentence of the legate, by which he deprived him of all his right in every country that had ever been subject to his father; and that this sentence might want nothing of its full force, he commanded the Dominicans to proclaim a holy war against heretics, to be called the penance war. At the sound of this horrid trumpet, multitudes rushed to the standard, enrolling themselves in this holy society, as they presumptuously imagined it to be, wearing a black cloak over a white garment, and receiving the sacrament of the eucharist for the defense of the catholic faith.

The more effectually to subdue the Earl of Toulouse, the pope transmitted his letters to Louis, king of France, exhorting him to take arms against the Albigenses, in the following extraordinary words. "'It is the command of God, who says, If thou shalt hear say in any one of thy cities which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying, let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known, thou shalt smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword. Although you are under many obligations already to God, for the great benefits hitherto received from him, from him comes every good and perfect gift, yet you ought to reckon yourself more especially obliged courageously to exert yourself for him against the subverters of the faith, by whom he is blasphemed, and manfully to defend the catholic purity, which many in those parts, adhering to the doctrines of devils, are known to have cast off."

This profound logic was too irresistible to be withstood by **Louis, who began to collect an army of crusaders, at the head of which he placed himself**, and sat down before the city of **Avignon**.

Raymond, at that time, held several cautionary lands of the King of England; and the pope, suspecting that he might possibly apply for assistance to our English monarch to enable him to defend them, wrote to caution him not to take up arms against the French king, in these words, "Make no war, either by yourself, or your brother, or any other person, on the said king, so long as he is engaged in the affair of the faith and service of Jesus Christ, lest by your obstructing the matter, which God forbid you should do, the king with his prelates and barons of France, should be forced to turn their arms from the extirpation of heretics to their own defense. As for us, since we could not excuse such a conduct, an instance of great indevotion, we could not impart to you our paternal favor, which, under other circumstances, at all proper seasons, should never be wanting to you. And as we are not only ready to do you justice, but even to show you favor, as far as God enables us, we have taken care, that whatever becomes of heretics and their lands, your rights and those of other catholics shall be safe."

The city of Avignon was defended by Earl Raymond with great bravery, and multitudes of the French army fell during the siege. For, besides those that were killed in the ordinary mode of warfare, the army was afflicted with a dysentery and other diseases, which carried off numbers, and among the rest the French monarch. The pope's legate, for some time, concealed the death of the king, lest the army should break up with disgrace from the siege of a single city, without being able to take it. Finding, however, that it was not to be conquered by force, the legate had recourse to fraud; and even these measures for some time failed him. He then desired that he might be admitted into the city, in company with his prelates, under the pretense that he would examine into the faith of the inhabitants, and affirming with an oath, that he put off the siege of the city for no other cause than the welfare of their souls. He added, that the cry of their infidelity had ascended to the pope; and that he wished to inquire whether they had done altogether according to the cry that had come up before him.

The too credulous citizens, not suspecting the fraud, and especially relying upon the sacredness of his oath, opened their gates, on which the soldiers of the French army, as had been previously determined, rushed violently into the city, seized the citizens, bound them in chains, plundered their houses, killed numbers of the inhabitants, and having thus, by treachery, got possession, they brake down the towers, and destroyed the walls of that noble city. Such is the narrative handed down to us of these sanguinary proceedings by the monk of St. Albans, Matthew Paris. Avignon being thus taken, the crusaders next bent all their forces against **Toulouse**. This city, which was most gallantly defended, maintained a long siege, but it was at length taken, in 1221, and young Raymond compelled to submit to terms even more severe than those which were proposed to his father in the council of Arles. **From this period the Albigenses declined greatly in France. For, being no longer permitted to find an asylum under any of the reigning princes, such of them as escaped the edge of the sword, and the vengeance of their adversaries, fled for refuge into the valleys of Piedmont and other places**, dispersing themselves in every direction, as will be shown in the ensuing section, wherever they could enjoy quietness and the liberty of worshipping God agreeably to the exercise of a good conscience.

As to the ordinary manner of proceeding with such as fell into their hands captives of war, a single extract from Limborch's history may suffice to show. "A person of the name Robert," says he, quoting



the *Annals* of Bzovins, and of Raynaldus, 1207, etc. "who had been of the sect of the Albigenses, but afterwards joined the Dominicans, supported by the authority of the princes and magistrates, burnt all who persisted in their heresy. Within two months he caused fifty persons, without distinction of sex, either to be burnt or buried alive, whence he was called 'the manner of the Heretics.' In 1211 they took the city of Alby, and there put numbers to death. They took La Vaur by storm, and burnt in it multitudes of the Albigenses. They hanged Almeric, the governor of that city, who was of a very noble family; and beheaded eighty of the inferior rank, not sparing the females. They threw the sister of Almeric, who was the principal lady of the sect of the Albigenses, into a well, and covered her with stones. Afterwards they conquered Carcum, and put sixty men to death. They seized on Pulchra Vallis, a large city near Toulouse, committed four hundred Albigenses to the flames, and hanged fifty more." Thuanus, that impartial Catholic writer, in the History of his own Times, book 6, confirms this dreadful statement in its general results, and further adds, "that **after the capture of La Vaur, the towns of Les Cures, Rabastains, Gaillac, St. Marcel, St. Anthonin, Causac, and Moisac, were stormed, and a great massacre made of the townsmen by the conquerors.** The castle, of Perre in the Agenois having after a long siege capitulated, seventy of the soldiers were hanged, and the others who adhered to their errors were burnt alive. Nor was Paris itself exempt from this contagion; for fourteen persons, most of whom were priests (teachers among the Albigenses) being convicted of this error, expired in the flames. In England they were handled with more mildness, if loss of life be the measure of punishment, but with more ignominy; the convicted persons being branded with a hot iron on their shoulders, or even on their foreheads."

But, independent of those that fell by the edge of the sword, or were committed to the flames by the soldiers and magistrates, **the inquisition was constantly at work, from the year 1206 to 1228, and produced the most dreadful havoc among the disciples of Christ.** Of the effects occasioned by this infernal engine of cruelty and oppression, we may have some notion from this circumstance,--that in the last-mentioned year the archbishops of Aix, Arles, and Narbonne, found it necessary to intercede with the monks of the Inquisition, to defer a little their work of imprisonment, until the pope could be apprised of the immense numbers apprehended--numbers so great, that it was impossible to defray the charge of their subsistence, or even to provide stone and mortar to build prisons for them. Their own language, indeed, is so remarkable, that it deserves to be laid before the reader, and here it is.

"It has come to our knowledge," say they, "that you have apprehended so many of the Waldenses, that it is not only impossible to defray the charges of their subsistence, but also to provide stone and mortar to build prisons for them. We, therefore, advise you to defer for a while augmenting their number, until the pope be apprised of the great multitudes that have been apprehended, and until he notify what he pleases to have done in this case. Nor is there any reason you should take offense hereat; for as to those who are altogether impenitent and incorrigible, or concerning whom you may doubt of their relapse or escape, or that, being at large again, they would infect others, you may condemn such without delay" [Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois*, book 2, chapter 2].

Such is the representation given us by writers of unimpeachable veracity, of the merciless treatment which the Albigenses received from the Catholics at this period, purely on account of their religious profession. ["**In the council of Toulouse, held in the year 1229, a most severe and sanguinary**

inquisition was established against heretics. One of its canons is, **'it shall not be permitted to laymen to have the books of the Old and New Testament;** only they who out of devotion desire it, may have a Psalter, a Breviary, and the hours of the Virgin. But we **absolutely forbid them to have the above mentioned books translated into the vulgar tongue.**' This is the first time, says the Abbe Fleury, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, that I have met with this prohibition: but it may be favorably explained by observing that the minds of men being then much irritated, there was no other method of putting a stop to contentions, than by taking away from them the Holy Scriptures, of which the heretics made a bad use." A poor excuse indeed! says Dr. Jortin. *Remarks*, volume 3, p. 311.]

Before I dismiss the subject, it may be proper to notice a difficulty which will strike the minds of reflecting readers. It has been intimated both by the friends and enemies of the Waldenses, that they had religious scruples against bearing arms, and even shedding the blood of animals unnecessarily. The question, therefore, naturally presents itself, "Were they at last driven to the necessity of taking up the sword in defense of their religion and lives?" Upon the lawfulness or unlawfulness of doing so, when pressed by dire necessity, I shall offer no opinion in this place. My business is to state facts as I find them; and that the reader may not suspect me of a wish to misrepresent their principles and conduct in the instance referred to, I shall quote the words of Mr. Robinson, who had much better means of information than have fallen to my lot.

"The difficulty here is," says he, "how such people as bore no arms, and shed no blood, could be said to bring large armies into the field to defend their rights. The proper answer is--the pious were named from the provinces, the provinces and princes from the pious; for one common principle, that all mankind had a right to be free, brought together Goths and professors of the gospel. Both loved liberty--the latter paid for it by taxes, the knits of their industry, and the former fought for it, and, by defending one, preserved both parties. The church of Rome having adopted clerical dominion as an article of orthodox belief, it followed of course, that resistance to that, was heresy both political and religious. Too many historians take up the affair in the gross, lay it down as they took it up, and gravely say, the Lord, by a course of miracles, assisted his dear servants the Catholics to drown, stab, and burn, forty thousand heretics--because they (the catholics) were afraid of their lives, in a society of people who had such an aversion to the taking away [even] of animal life, that they never killed a bird, from a sparrow to an eagle; or a quadruped, from a weasel to an elephant; and who perpetually exclaimed against penal laws, and thought it wrong to take away the life of man." [Mr. Robinson has here given the very words of the Inquisitor Reinerius, who, describing the Waldneses, says, "Ita, est communis opinio Catharorum, quod graviter peccaret, quicumque occiderit avem aliquam a minima usque ad maximam; et quadrupedia, a mustela usque ad elephantem." That is, "It is also a common opinion among the Puritans (Cathari) that man sins grievously who kills any bird, from the least to the greatest--or a quadruped, from a weasel to an elephant." *Contra Waldneses*, cap. 6.]

A proper attention to this matter, may help us to solve several things in the writings of the catholics themselves, which must otherwise prove extremely perplexing. Thus for instance, several of their own writers describe the battle which proved so fatal to the cause of the Albigenses. "In the year 1213, the Christian army of eight hundred horse and one thousand foot, near Toulouse, being divided into three corps, in honor of the Holy Trinity, the first under the command of Simon, count of Montfort, the second

commanded by the Lord Bishop of Toulouse, and the third by the Lord Bishop of Cominge, attacked the army of the heretics, consisting of an hundred thousand fighting men, and defeated them. The Catholics lost about a hundred men, but of the Albigenses, two and thirty thousand were either killed or drowned in the river Garonne." [Voltaire's remark upon this curious piece of Catholic history, may be thought by some not altogether impertinent, "Is it likely," he asks, "that only eighteen hundred men would attack an army of an hundred thousand in the open field, and divide themselves into three bodies? 'It is a miracle,' some writers will say, but military people, upon reading such a story, will tell them it is nonsense and absurdity." *General History*, volume 1, chapter 1.]

This they call the battle of Murat,\* and they add, that after this victory many of the surviving heretics fled into the valleys of Piedmont, where their descendants resided, till two hundred years after, when Huss revived the same heresy in Bohemia, and Luther in Germany, about a hundred years after him. The explanation of all this miracle is, that the cities and towns that were attacked by the crusaders were peopled with mechanics, manufacturers, and husbandmen of the kind described by the inquisitors--an industrious and virtuous people, who took no oaths, objected to wars of every kind, and refused to shed the blood of a fellow-creature, even in defense of their own lives. Such appears plainly to have been the case with the Albigenses. The Count of Toulouse, and the barons and vassals that constituted his army, no doubt acted upon different maxims; for, had they followed out the principles of these Albigenses, they would have dissolved the whole feudal system; but they approved of the conduct of these people in dissenting from the communion of the church of Rome, admired the simplicity of their doctrine and worship, and, to the utmost of their power, protected them from the rage of their bigoted and sanguinary persecutors. [See Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, chapter 10, and Dr. Allix's *Remarks on the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of the Albigenses*, chapter 21.]

[\* A singular disclosure was made after this battle, and as the circumstance tends to throw a ray of light upon the secret history of these times it deserves to be recorded. When the battle of Murat was over, there was found among the slain belonging to the Albigenses a knight in black armor. On examining, behold it was discovered to be Peter, king of Arragon--that very monarch, who had formerly been engaged in negotiating between the pope's legate and the earl of Beziers (see p. 127). There also lay one of his sons and many of the Arragonian gentlemen and vassals, who, while ostensibly supporting the Roman church had in disguise, been fighting in defense of the Albigenses!]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 7**

### **SOME ACCOUNT OF THE STATE OF THE WALDENSES, FROM THE PERIOD OF THE SUPPRESSION OF THEIR CHURCHES IN FRANCE, TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY, A.D. 1230--1350.**

While the demon of persecution was raging with resistless fury against the Albigenses in the southern provinces of France, the inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont appeared to have enjoyed a large portion of external peace: -- their churches had rest, and walking in the fear of the Lord and the comforts of the Holy Spirit, were edified and multiplied. The kind providence of God appeared in blessing them with a succession of mild and tolerant princes, in the Dukes of Savoy,\* who, continually receiving the most favorable reports of them, as a people simple in their manners, free from deceit and malice, upright in their dealings, loyal to their governors, and ever ready to yield them a cheerful obedience in every thing but the concerns of religion, turned a deaf ear to the repeated solicitations of priests and monks, and, from the beginning of the thirteenth century until the year 1487, a period of nearly three hundred years, peremptorily refused to disturb or molest them. [Mr. Robinson, referring to this subject, has the following pertinent remark. "It is a curious phenomenon in politics, that the family which allowed its subjects religious liberty, when all other princes oppressed conscience, should, in a country enthusiastically fond of liberty, become in the end, the most absolute monarchs in the Christian world. Such is the king of Sardinia, who is also duke of Savoy, and to whose eldest son, the heir apparent, the title of the Prince of Piedmont is hereditary." *Eccles. Researches*, p. 459.]

**An effort was made to introduce the Inquisition into Piedmont, but the proceedings in France had sufficiently opened the eyes of the inhabitants to the spirit and principles of that infernal court, and they wisely resisted its establishment among them.** An inquisitor of the name of **Peter of**

**Verona**, had been deputed by the pope to carry the project into effect; but we are told by Ludovicus a Paramo, a Spanish writer of those times, that "the people made a martyr of him either at Turin or Susa." [Limborch, on the authority of Pegna in Eymeric, says, "as he was going from Como to Milan, A. D. 1252, to extirpate heresy, a certain believer of heretics attacked him in his journey, and despatched him with many wounds. He was cannonized and worshipped as a martyr."] **At Milan, also, the united power of pope Pius IV and Philip II of Spain, was found insufficient to introduce the Inquisition;** the mob rose at the bare proposal of it and flew to arms, exclaiming that it was a system of tyranny, and not of religion. Even the senate protested against it as inimical to trade, repugnant to the free constitution of the cities of Italy, and incompatible with the Milanese forms of law, on which grounds they opposed its introduction. **Naples and Venice also successfully resisted the inquisitorial scheme;** and, as the populace in almost every part of Italy formed insurrections against the inquisitors, evincing the most determined spirit of hostility against them, the states prudently availed themselves of this temper of mind, and pretended they were afraid of exasperating the people should they introduce the independent power of the holy office.

The scenes of slaughter and devastation which had been carried on against the Albigenses, in the southern provinces of France, **for more than twenty years during the former part of the thirteenth century, in which time it has been computed that a million of persons bearing that name were put to death** [Mede on the *Apocalypse*, p. 503, and Newton on the *Prophecies*, volume 2, p. 257. 8th ed. 1789; Clark in his *Martyrology* doubles the number], had occasioned many of them to cross the Pyrenees and seek a shelter from the storm in the Spanish provinces of Arragon and Catalonia. Matthew Paris, in his History of the reign of Henry III notices this circumstance, and informs us that in year 1214, during the pontificate of Alexander IV there were great numbers of the Waldenses in these provinces, of which the pope bitterly complained in one of his bulls, saying, that they had permitted them to gain such a footing, and given them such time to increase and multiply, that the evil called loudly for a remedy. He further adds, that they had several churches duly set in order with their bishops and deacons, in which they publicly and boldly preached their doctrine. Thither the vigilance of the inquisitors traced their steps, and accordingly in the year 1232, the Inquisition was brought into Arragon. A further indulgent, indeed, to this was, that the bishop of Huesca, a considerable city of Arragon, was reported to err in matters of faith, and in all probability had so much humanity in his composition, as led him to connive at the residence of heretics in his diocese. The office of making inquisition against them, was committed by pope Gregory IX to a friar of the order of Predicants, named Peter Caderite; and James, the King of Arragon, was magisterially enjoined not to permit him, or any of his assistants, to be molested in the discharge of the duties of the Inquisition. A commission was at the same time given to the archbishop of Tarragona, the metropolitan city of Catalonia, and his suffrages, to constitute a court of inquisition there also, against heretical pravity. The following is a copy of the bull which was issued for that purpose.

"Since the evening of the world is now declining, we admonish and beseech your brotherhood, and strictly command you by our written and apostolic words, as you regard the Divine judgment, that with diligent care you make inquiry against heretics, and render them infamous, by the assistance of the friars Predicants, and others whom you shall judge fit for this business; and that you proceed against all who are culpable and infamous, according to our statutes lately published against heretics, unless they will

from the heart absolutely obey the commands of the church--which statutes we send you enclosed in our bull; and that ye also proceed against the receivers, abettors, and favorers of heretics, according to the same statutes. But if any will wholly abjure the heretical plague, and return to the ecclesiastical unity, grant them the benefit of absolution, according to the forms of the church, and enjoin them the usual penance" [Bzovius, A. 1233. sect. 8,9].

Soon after the establishment of the Inquisition in Arragon, **a synod was convened at TARRAGONA, when many severe decrees were passed against heretics**, and the holy office was erected there also; and, for the space of a century and a half, measures of the greatest rigor were incessantly carried on against the Waldenses in that quarter, before their entire extinction could be effected. The Catholic writers themselves avow these facts, and acknowledge that they owed their ultimate success, in subduing the heretics in that quarter, to the superior talents and exertions of **NICHOLAS EYMERIC**, a Predicant monk, and author of the directory of the inquisitors, who was created inquisitor-general, about the year 1358, and died January 4th, 1392, having kept up the office of the Inquisition against heretics forty-four years in succession.

The flight of Waldo from the south of France into Germany, and the success that attended him in preaching the gospel in the different cities which are situated on the banks of the Rhine, have been already noticed. We are informed that **about the year 1213, Germany and Alsace were full of the Waldenses**. [Constans on the Revelation, in Perrin, book 2, chapter 9.] Two considerations may enable us to account for this. One is, the destructive war that was waged against the Albigenses in France, supported by the terror of the Inquisition, which would necessarily drive the disciples of Christ to seek security in other countries. The other is, that **a violent quarrel arose about this time between the pope and Frederic II, Emperor of Germany**. This latter prince, on his first accession to the throne, had gone eagerly into all the measures of the court of Rome, and issued the most horrid and sanguinary edicts against the Waldenses, as hath been shown in a former section. [See chapter 5, section 5.] But he had now, by some means, incurred the displeasure of Gregory IX who, at the moment that Frederick was prosecuting a war against the Saracens in the east, excited the emperor's own son Henry, who had been elected king of the Romans, to rebel against his father, in consequence of which, the cities of Lombardy had revolted. The rebellion was, however, suppressed, the prince was confined, and Frederic triumphed--but his troubles were not ended. The pope excommunicated him, and, to sow division between him and the princes of the empire, he (A.D. 1237) transmitted a bull into Germany, in which were the following words, referring to the emperor. "A beast of blasphemy, abounding with names, is risen from the sea, with the feet of a bear, the face of a lion, and members of other different animals: which, like the proud, hath opened its mouth in blasphemy against the holy name; not even fearing to throw the arrows of calumny against the tabernacle of God, and the saints that dwell in heaven. This beast, desirous of breaking every thing in pieces with his iron teeth and nails, and of trampling all things under his feet, hath already prepared private battering rams against the wall of the Catholic faith; and now raises open machines, in erecting soul-destroying schools of Ishmaelites; rising, according to report, in opposition to Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, the table of whose covenant he attempts to abolish with the pen of wicked heresy. Be not, therefore, surprised at the malice of this blasphemous beast, if we, who are the servants of the Almighty, should be exposed to the arrows of his destruction. This King of plagues was

even heard to say, that the whole world has been deceived by three imposters, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed; but he makes Jesus far inferior to the other two. 'They,' says he, 'supported their glory to the last, whereas Christ was ignominiously crucified.' Frederick, on the other hand, drew up an apology to the princes of Germany, in which he terms Gregory, The Great Dragon and Antichrist, of whom it is written, "and all other red horse arose from the sea, and he that sat upon him took peace from the earth" [Russell's *Modern Europe*, volume 1, letter 52].

**In the year 1245 POPE INNOCENT IV convened the famous council of Lyons**, concerning which the following inscription is preserved in the Vatican library at Rome. "The thirteenth general council, and the first of Lyons: Frederic II is there declared an enemy to the church, and deprived of the imperial diadem." To this council Frederic did not fail to send ambassadors to defend his cause, well knowing that he was there to be publicly accused. The pope, who had set himself up as judge at the head of the council, acted also the part of his own advocate; and after strenuously insisting on his right to the temporalities of Naples and Sicily, and to the patrimony of the Countess Matilda, he charged Frederic with having made a peace with the Mahometans--with having had Mahometan concubines--with not believing in Christ--and, in a word, with being a heretic. [Mons. Voltaire drily asks, "How could the emperor be a heretic and an infidel at the same time?" A very pertinent question certainly.] The emperor's orators harangued in his defense with great spirit and resolution, and in their turn accused the pope of having been guilty of usury and rapine. **Ambassadors from England were also sent to attend at this council, and represent the grievances which their countrymen were groaning under from the enormous exactions of the court of Rome.** They complained as loudly of the pope as the pope had done of the emperor. "You draw," said they, "by means of your Italian emissaries, above sixty thousand marks yearly out of the kingdom of England; you have lately sent us a legate, who has given away all the church livings to Italians. He raises excessive taxes upon all the religious houses, and excommunicates every body that complains of his extortions. Let these grievances, therefore, be instantly redressed, for we will no longer endure them." The pope blushed, and made no answer, but proceeded to pronounce sentence against the emperor, by which he deprived him of his crown. While the pontiff was pronouncing the sentence, the fathers of the church held in their hands the lighted wax candles, which were immediately extinguished on the sentence being pronounced. As one party signed the decision, the other went out, giving vent to their groans.

The emperor was himself at Turin during these transactions, and, according to report, was greatly agitated on hearing of them. He, however, called for his strong box, which was brought him, and taking out of it the imperial crown, he added "This the pope and his council have not been able to take from me, and before they strip me of it much blood shall be spilt." He then proceeded to write to all the princes of Europe, urging them to support him against the pope. "I am not the first," says he, in his letters, "whom the clergy have treated so unworthily, and I shall not be the last. But you are the cause of it, by obeying these hypocrites, whose ambition, you are sensible, is carried beyond all bounds. How many infamous actions, shocking to modesty, might you not, if you were disposed to it, discover in the court of Rome? While they are abandoned to the vices of the age, and intoxicated with its pleasures, the greatness of their riches stifles in their minds all sense of religion. It is, therefore, a work of charity to deprive them of these pernicious treasures which are their ruin, and it is your duty to assist me in so doing."

These extracts sufficiently show the state of deadly hatred that existed between the pope and emperor, and it produced a flame that raged, with more or less violence, throughout the empire, until the death of the latter in the year 1250. "It was dreadful," says a late writer, "to see the misery to which many thousands were reduced in Germany, by a new and illegal election of another emperor, and by the violences committed in the revolted cities of Italy; in all which the pope was the only one insensible to the operations of Divine justice. In the midst of this confusion, (1254) the Almighty summoned him before his tribunal" [Walch's *History of the Popes*]. One beneficial result of this long-pending quarrel was, that it retarded the establishment of the inquisition in different parts of the German empire, and consequently gave the Waldenses an opportunity of propagating their sentiments more extensively. The clergy, no doubt, were generally upon the alert in quest of heretics, and wherever they were discovered, means of one kind or other were not wanting to persecute them, and render their dispersion necessary to avoid its fury. But these things always turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, "because many learned preachers were thereby dispersed abroad to make known the purity of their religion to the world" [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 2].

But after the death of Frederic, the establishment of the Inquisition met with less obstruction. The affairs of Germany had been left by him in great disorder. Italy was without a prince, and the Milanese under the control of the pope. "The latter," says Limborch, "now determined to extirpate all heresy, which had greatly increased during the preceding war" [Limborch's *Inquisition*, chapter 15. 404].

**About the year 130, the Waldenses were grievously harassed and oppressed, in several parts of Germany, by an inquisitor of the name of ECHARD, a Jacobin monk.** The circumstance is related by Vignier, in his *Historical Library*, part the third, where he also records an anecdote of this Echard that is worth mentioning. After inflicting cruelties with great severity, and for a length of time, upon the Waldenses, he was at length induced to investigate the causes and reasons of their separation from the church of Rome. The force of truth ultimately prevailed over all his prejudices--his own conscience attested that many of the errors and corruptions, which they charged on that apostate church, really existed; and, **finding himself unable to disprove the articles of their faith by the word of God, he confessed that truth had overcome him, gave glory to God, and entered into the communion of the Waldensian churches,** which he had long been engaged in punishing and persecuting even to death. The news of his conversion was soon spread abroad, and reached the ears of the other inquisitors, whose indignation was roused by his apostasy. Emissaries were dispatched in pursuit of him, and **he was at length apprehended and conveyed to Heidelberg, where he was committed to the flames.** His dying testimony was a noble attestation to the principles and conduct of the Waldenses; for he went to the stake charging it upon the church of Rome as a monstrous and iniquitous procedure, to put to death so many innocent persons, for no other crime but their steadfast adherence to the cause of Christ, in opposition to the delusions of Antichrist. [Vignier's *Bibliotheca Historialis*, part 3. Anno 1330, in Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 2.]

**The Waldenses, however, continued to increase throughout Germany, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.** Four hundred and forty-three were apprehended by the inquisitors in Saxony and Porecrania, in the year 1391, who confessed that their teachers came from Bohemia, and that they and



their ancestors before them had been instructed in the principles they then held. In 1457, a great number of the Waldenses were discovered by the inquisitors in the diocese of Eistein in Germany, who **were put to death**, and who confessed that they had among them twelve barbes, or pastors, who labored in the work of the ministry. In short, Trithemius relates it as an acknowledged fact, that **in those days the Waldenses were so numerous, that in traveling from Cologne to Milan, the whole extent of Germany, they could lodge every night with persons of their own profession**, and that it was a custom among them to affix certain private marks to their signs and gates, whereby they made themselves known to one another. [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 11.]

In the year 1210, twenty-four persons of the sect of the Waldenses were seized in the city of **PARIS**, some of whom were imprisoned, and others committed to the flames. **In the year 1334, the monks of the inquisition, who were deputed to search after the Waldenses, apprehended one hundred and fourteen of them at Paris, who were burnt alive**, sustaining their torture with admirable fortitude. It is also related by the author of a work entitled "The Sea of Histories," that **in the year 1378, the persecution against the Waldenses continuing, a vast number of them were burnt** in the place de Grave, in Paris. [Perrin, book 2, chapter 15.] These sanguinary proceedings, however, it would seem, were far from eradicating the heresy. For, two years after this, viz. in 1380, we find Francis Borelli, an inquisitorial monk, armed with a bull of pope Clement VII undertaking the persecution of the Waldenses in the same quarter. **In the space of thirteen years, he delivered into the hands of the civil magistrates of Grenoble a hundred and fifty persons to be burned as heretics**. And in the valley of Fraissiniere, he apprehended **eighty more**, who were also committed to the flames [Milner's *Church History*, volume 3, p. 496].

[There is a passage in the writings of that eminent Catholic Historian, Thuanus, relating to the subject we are now upon, which deserves the reader's attention, as throwing considerable light upon the history of this dark period, and certainly no writer was more competent to give us information. **"Against the Waldenses,"** says he, **"when exquisite punishments availed little, and the evil was exasperated by the remedy which had been unseasonably applied, and their number increased daily, complete armies, were at length raised, and a war of no less weight than what our people had before waged against the Saracens, was determined against them.** The result was that they were rather slain, put to flight, spoiled every where of their goods and possessions and dispersed abroad, than convinced of their error and brought to repentance. So that they who at first defended themselves by arms, fled into Provence, and the neighboring Alps of the French territory, and found a shelter for their life and doctrine in those places. Part of them withdrew into Calabria, and continued there a long while, even to the pontificate of Pius IV. Many passed into Germany, and fixed their abode among the Bohemians, and in Poland and Livonia. Others, turning to the West, obtained refuge in Britain." *Thuani Praefatio ad Henricum* 4, p. 7.]

About the year 1370, a colony of the Waldensian youths of Dauphine sought a new settlement in **CALABRIA**, probably hoping there to enjoy, with less molestation, their religious privileges. Finding the soil fertile, and the region thinly peopled, they applied to the proprietors of the lands, and stipulated for a settlement among them. The lords of the country cheerfully granted their request, gave them the kindest reception, agreed with them on equitable terms, and let out to them parcels of land for

cultivation. By their superior industry, the new colonists speedily fertilized and enriched their respective districts; and by their probity, peaceable manners, and punctuality in the payment of their rents, they ingratiated themselves with their landlords and neighbors in general. The priests alone were dissatisfied. They found they did not act like others in religious matters; they contributed nothing to the support of the church by masses for the dead, or other popish innovations, and they were offended. In particular, they were chagrined at finding that certain foreign schoolmasters, who educated the children of these strangers, were highly respected and preferred to themselves--and that they received nothing from them except tithes, which were paid according to contract with their landlords. Concluding, therefore, that they must be heretics, they signified their intention to complain of them to the pope. The gentry, however, resisted that. "They are just and honest," said they, "and have enriched all the country. Even ye priests have received important advantages from their industry. The tithes alone, which ye now receive, are so much greater than those which were formerly produced from these countries, that you are more than compensated for any losses you may sustain on other accounts. Perhaps the country from whence they came is not so devoted to the ceremonies of the Roman church; but as these people fear God, are generous to the poor, just and beneficent to all men, it is illiberal on your parts to force their consciences. Are they not a temperate, sober, discreet people, and peculiarly decent in their speech? Does any person ever hear them utter a blasphemous expression?"

This prudent counsel was not without its use. The priests, indeed, who felt, or imagined their interests were undermined by these new settlers, murmured, and gave vent to their mortification in private. But the lords of the country had sufficient discernment to estimate the value of their new tenants; and they protected them from the indignation of the clergy. **The consequence was, that the Calabrian Waldenses enjoyed security, and the benefits of toleration, until the year 1560**, when they formed an union with the church of Geneva, of which Calvin was then pastor. Their history previous to that union is dreadful, on account of the scenes of papal persecution that ensued; but it belongs to a subsequent period, and we must not here enter upon it.

During the period of which we are now treating, **THE NETHERLANDS (FLANDERS) exhibited many shocking scenes of slaughter of the Waldenses**. It seems probable that when persecuted in France they retreated into that country, where also the intolerant zeal of inquisitors followed, and made dreadful havoc of them. Here they obtained a new appellation, viz. **Turilupins**, that is, the wolves of Turin. The explanation which their own friends give us of this term is, that being banished from the society of men, and driven to dwell with the beasts of the forest, they, in reference to the place whence they originated, designated them Turlupins, or Turilupins. Our historian, Matthew Paris, informs us, in his *Life of Henry III* that one **Robert Bougre**, who had lived among the Waldenses, and professed their faith, apostatized from them, became a Dominican, and was appointed by the pope inquisitor general. This man, knowing their usual places of concealment, apprehended more than fifty of them, in the year 1236, and **caused 161 them all to be burned or buried alive**. But of the extremes to which this miscreant carried his cruelties, a tolerable notion may be formed from the singular occurrence, that even the court of Rome complained of his abusing the power with which he had been entrusted. He was accused of perverting the authority of his office, of punishing the innocent with the guilty, and of committing various atrocities, in consequence of which he was deprived of his office of inquisitor, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. [Matthew Paris-*Life of Henry III*, Perrin's *Hist.* book 2, chapter

13.]

We are told by Le Sieur de la Popeliniere, who wrote a *History of France*, that **the religion of the Waldenses spread itself throughout all the countries of Europe, even into Poland and Lithuania**; and that ever since the year 1100, they had been propagating their doctrine, which differed but little from that of the modern Protestants. He adds that, notwithstanding the vigorous efforts that have been resorted to, by different princes and powers to suppress their doctrine, they had, even to his times, boldly and courageously maintained it. Vignier, before quoted, mentions, that when the Waldenses were driven from Picardy, through the violence of persecution, several of them retired into Poland. Hence we find, that in the year 1330, the Inquisition followed them there, and that **numbers of them were put to death**. Matthias Illyrius, in his "Catalogue of the Witnesses of the Truth," says, he had lying before him the forms of the Inquisition made use of on that occasion. [Perrin's *Hist.* book 2, chapter 14, and Limborch, chapter 16.]

From these same writers, to whom may also be added the inquisitor Reinerius Saccho, we learn, that **the persecutions which took place in the south of France, during the former part of the thirteenth century, drove the Waldenses also into various other countries**. "In 1229 they had spread themselves in great numbers throughout all Italy. They had ten schools in Valcamonica alone, which were supported by pecuniary contributions in all their societies, and which contributions were transmitted into Lombardy." Reinerius adds, that about the year 1250, the Waldenses had churches in Albania, Lombardy, Milan, in Romagna, Vincenza, Florence, and Val Spoletine; and, in the year 1280, there were a considerable number of Waldenses in Sicily. In all these places the sanguinary edicts of the Emperor Frederic II were continually suspended, like the sword of Damocles, over their heads. To these, also, were now added the rage of inquisitors and of papal constitutions, through which they were continually exposed to sufferings and misery. In **SICILY** in particular, the imperial fury raged against them--they were ordered to be treated with the greatest severity, that they might be banished, not only from the country, but from the earth. And **throughout Italy, both Gregory IX and Honorius IV harassed and oppressed them with the most unrelenting barbarity**, by means of the Inquisition--the living were, without mercy, committed to the hands of the executioner, their houses razed to the ground, their goods confiscated, and even the slumbering remains of the dead were dragged from their graves, and their bones committed to the flames. [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 16.]

We are further informed by Reinerius Saccho, that in his time, the Waldenses had their churches at Constantinople and Philadelphia, in Sclavonia, Bulgaria, and Diagonitia. Yignier reports, that after the persecution of Picardy, they dispersed themselves into Livonia and Sarmatin. And, it is added by Matthew Paris, that they had spread themselves as far as Croatia and Dalmatia, where their profession prevailed to that degree, that they had won over several (Catholic) bishops to their party.

It is pleasing to find, that while the Waldenses were thus carrying the light of the gospel of Christ throughout the whole continent of Europe, a gleam of its celestial brightness burst upon our own country, and, in some small degree, served to irradiate the gloom in which it was enveloped. In a former section, we have noticed the emigration of thirty of the Waldenses into England, who were cruelly persecuted and destroyed at Oxford in the year 1166. John Bale, in his *Chronicle of London*, mentions a

**person who was burnt at London, in 1210, whose only crime was, that he was tainted with the faith of the Waldenses.** But the wars that were carried on against the Albigenses in the south of France about this time, contributed very much to the propagation of the principles of the Waldenses in this country, as indeed, appears from the testimony of Thuanus, lately adduced. For, independent of the contiguity of the two countries, there were circumstances of a political nature that tended very much to keep up the intercourse between them. Guienne was at that time in the possession of the English--to which may be added, that Raymond, Earl of Toulouse, the great patron and protector of the Albigenses, was brother-in-law to the King of England; in consequence of which alliance, our countrymen were frequently employed in assisting the subjects of Raymond in their wars. **That the doctrines of the Waldenses had begun to spread themselves here [England] about the close of the thirteenth century,** is sufficiently obvious from a fact noticed by Archbishop Usher, viz. that in the reign of Henry III "the orders of the Friars Minorites came into England to suppress the Waldensian heresy."

The most remarkable character that appears in the annals of the English ecclesiastical history during this period, was **ROBERT GREATHEAD**,\* bishop of Lincoln. He was born about the year 1175, at Stradbroke, in the county of Suffolk, and appears to have been a person of obscure parentage. His studies, however, were prosecuted at the University of Oxford, where he acquired an intimate acquaintance with the Greek and Hebrew languages; after which he went to Paris, at that time the first seminary in Europe, where he became a perfect master of the French language. Returning to his native country, he was, in the year 1235, elected, by the dean and chapter, bishop of Lincoln, and King Henry III, ratified the choice. He seems to have possessed, even from his youth, much seriousness of mind; and though at that period of life, immersed in the darkness and superstitions of the age, he was no sooner inducted to his office than he began to reform abuses. He convened the clergy of his diocese at stated times, to whom he preached, and urged them to the duties which devolved upon them from their office. But as the latter had no ear to give to these things, the bishop soon began to be involved in litigations with the monks and other popish agents. In the year 1247, two persons of the Franciscan order were sent into England to extort money for the pope [**INNOCENT IV**]. They applied to the prelates and abbots, but, as it would seem, not with all the success that was wished. Greathead was amazed at the pomp and insolence of these friars, who demanded six thousand marks as the contribution of the diocese of Lincoln, at the same time giving him to understand that they were vested with the pope's bull. "Friars," said he, "with all reverence to his holiness be it spoken, the demand is as dishonorable as it is impracticable. The whole body of the clergy and people are concerned in it equally with myself. To give a definite answer, in an instant, to such a demand, before the sense of the kingdom is taken upon it, would on my part be rash and absurd."

[\* So his name is written by Bishop Newton, Proph. volume 2; Bishop Hurd calls him Grostete, *Introd. to Proph.* volume 2; Milner and others call him Grosseteste. The reason of this variation probably is, that he was either of French extraction, or assumed this latter name after his residence in France; for the name of Greathead in English, and Grosseteste in French, are synonymous]

Circumstances of this kind, in process of time, began to open the eyes of the bishop to the domineering influence of the court of Rome. Another thing which struck his mind forcibly was, that in going through his diocese, he found the pope had, by means of his letters, introduced into all the churches, where

opulent benefices were to be enjoyed, a set of lazy Italians, who neither understood the language of the country, nor possessed either ability or inclination to instruct the people. These enormities became the objects of his detestation. When the papal bulls, intended to introduce some new evil, were put into his hands, he would indignantly cast them from him, and absolutely refuse compliance with them, saying, that he should prove himself the friend of Satan, were he to commit the care of souls to foreigners. Pope Innocent, however, persevering in the same line of conduct, magisterially ordered him to admit an Italian, totally ignorant of the English language, to a very rich benefice in the diocese of Lincoln; and the bishop refusing to comply, the former suspended him from his functions. But Greathead treated the papal mandate with contempt, and continued to discharge his episcopal duties. In the year 1253, the pope was desirous of preferring his own nephew, an Italian youth, to a rich benefice in the cathedral of Lincoln; and, for this purpose, he, by letter, enjoined the bishop to give him the first canonry that should be vacant. This was to be done by provision, for that was the term employed by the pontiff when he undertook to provide beforehand a successor to a benefice; and on this occasion he seems to have been determined to intimidate the bishop into compliance. He declared that any other disposal of the canonry should be null and void, and that he would excommunicate every one that should dare to disobey his injunction. But Greathead, resolving not to comply, wrote a letter on this occasion, which reflects the highest honor on his memory. "Next to the sin of antichrist," says he, "which shall be in the latter times, nothing can be more contrary to the doctrine of Christ, than to destroy men's souls, by defrauding them of the benefit of the pastoral office. Those who minister to their own carnal lusts, by means of the milk and wool of the sheep of Christ, and do not strive to promote the salvation of the flock, in the pastoral office, are guilty of destroying the souls of men. Two atrocious evils are in this way committed--they sin against God himself, who is essentially good, and also against the image of God in man, which, by the reception of his grace, becomes partaker of the divine nature. For the holy apostolic see to be accessory to such wickedness, would be a monstrous abuse of power, and argue an entire separation from the glorious kingdom of Christ, and a participation with the two powers of darkness, [meaning probably the devil and Antichrist]. No man can obey such mandates with a good conscience, even though they were seconded by the high order of angels themselves; on the contrary, every faithful Christian ought to oppose them with all his might."

When this epistle reached the hands of the pope, it roused his indignation to the highest pitch. "Who," said he, "is this old dotard, that dares to judge my actions." By Peter and Paul, if I were not restrained by my generosity, I would make him an example and a spectacle to all mankind. Is not the King of England my vassal and my slave? And if I gave the word, would he not throw him into prison and lead him with disgrace?" The cardinals, however, who saw the danger into which the pontiff was about to plunge himself by his rashness, strove to moderate his resentment. One Giles, a Spanish cardinal, in particular, thus addressed him. "It is not expedient for you to proceed against the bishop in that violent manner; for, what he says is certainly true, nor can we with decency condemn him. He is a holy man--much more so than we ourselves are--a man of admirable genius, and of the most exemplary morals--no prelate in Christendom is thought to excel him. It is probable, that by this time the truths expressed in his letter are known to many, and they will excite many against us. The clergy, both in France and England, know the character of the man, nor is it possible to fix any stigma upon him. He is understood to be a great philosopher, an accomplished scholar in Latin and Greek literature, zealous in the administration of justice, a theological lecturer in the schools, a popular preacher, a friend to chastity, and the enemy of

simony." In these sentiments Giles was seconded by others, and the whole conclave of cardinals advised the pope to wink at these transactions, lest a tumult should arise in the church; for, said they, "it is an evident truth that a revolt from the church of Rome, will one day take place in Christendom."

But the rage of Innocent IV was not to be allayed; he excommunicated the bishop of Lincoln, and appointed Albert, one of his nuncios, to succeed him. Greathead, supported by a conviction of the rectitude of his conduct, referred his appeal to the tribunal of Christ, and paid no regard to the decree; and what the cardinals foresaw, was realized in the event--the pope's mandate was universally neglected, and the bishop remained in quiet possession of his dignity.

But this venerable prelate was now fast advancing towards the end of his labors, and in the year 1258, he died (Oct. 9th) at his palace at Buckden. When the pope heard of his death, he exultantly exclaimed, "I rejoice, and let every true son of the church of Rome rejoice with me, that my great enemy is removed." He ordered a letter to be written to the King of England, requiring him to cause the bishop's body to be taken up, cast out of the church, and burned. The cardinals, however, resisted his project; and the letter, though written, was never sent, owing, probably, to the declining state of the pontiff's health, for he died in the following year. Matthew Paris, the monk of St. Alban's, though superstitiously attached to the See of Rome, and not a little prejudiced against the Bishop of Lincoln, on account of the severity with which he treated the monastic orders, has furnished a character of Greathead so honorable, that it deserves to be recorded.

"The holy bishop Robert," says he, "departed this world, which he never loved, and which was always to him as a place of banishment. He was the open reprover of my lord the pope, and of the king, as well as of the prelates. He was the corrector of monks, the director of priests, the instructor of the clergy, the patron of scholars, a preacher to the laity, the punisher of incontinence, the diligent investigator of various writings, and the scourge of lazy and selfish Romanists, whom he heartily despised. In regard to temporal concerns, he was liberal, copious, polite, cheerful, and affable -- in spiritual things he was devout, humble, and contrite. In the execution of his episcopal office he was diligent, venerable, indefatigable" [Matthew Paris, p.876. See also Pegge's *Life of Greathead*].

Greathead's doctrinal sentiments, considering the darkness of the age in which his lot was cast, appear to have been remarkable for their purity and simplicity. The following is his view of the important article of Divine Grace.

"Grace," says he, "is that good pleasure of God whereby he is pleased to bestow upon us what we have not deserved, and the gift is for our advantage and not his. Hence it is very clear, that all the good we possess, whether it be natural, or freely conferred afterwards, proceeds from the grace of God; because there is no good thing, the existence of which he does not will; and for God to will anything is to do it; therefore there can be no good of which he is not the author. He turns the human will from evil, and converts it to good, causing it to persevere in the same."

Several of his manuscript sermons, it seems, are still extant in the cathedral church of York. One of them

is founded upon Luke 6:20. "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven." In discussing the subject, he undertakes to describe the poverty recommended in the text; which, by comparing the words with the parallel place in Matthew 5:8, he finds to be poverty of spirit. This poverty, he tells us, is wrought in the heart of the elect, by the Holy Spirit -- its foundation is laid in real humility; which disposes a man to feel that he has nothing but what he has received from above. But that is not all -- for, as he observes, humility in this view belonged to Adam before he fell -- the humility of a sinner hath a still deeper root. The humble man not only sees that he has nothing in himself, but he is stripped of all desire to possess in himself the springs of self-exaltation. Self-condemned and corrupt before God, he despairs of help from his own powers, and finds all he wants in Him, who is the true life, wisdom, and health, and indeed his all in all, even the incarnate Son of God, who condescended to come into our vale of sin and misery, that he might raise us from their depths. By leaning on him alone, every real Christian rises into true life and peace and joy. He lives in his life -- sees light in his light--is invigorated with his warmth -- grows in his strength -- and leaning upon the Beloved, his soul ascends upwards. The lower he sinks in humility, the higher he rises towards God. He is sensible that he not only is nothing in himself, but that he also has lost what he had gratuitously received, has precipitated himself into misery, and so subjected himself to the slavery of the devil; and lastly, that he has no internal resources for recovery. Thus he is induced to place his whole dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ, to abhor himself, and always to prefer others as better than himself. This leads him "to take the lowest seat" as his own proper place. He then calls upon the man who professes to be the subject of humility, earnestly to examine himself, how far he demonstrates in his temper and conduct, this fruit of the Spirit; and even should he find some evidences of it in his soul, to beware that he be not inflated with the discovery, because he ought to know that it is only of God that he is what he is -- and that he ought no more to boast of himself, than the refulgent colors of the prism should glory in that splendor which they derive wholly from the solar rays. He observes that the temptations to self-complacency are the effect of Satanic injections -- and that it behooves him who would not be deceiving himself to see whether he has the genuine marks of humility in his practice -- whether, for instance, he can bear to be rebuked by an inferior --whether he is not rendered insolent by honors -- whether he is not inflated by praise -- whether among equals he is the first to labor, and the last to exalt himself -- whether he can recompense blessings for curses and good for evil. By such methods of self-examination he is to check the ebullitions of vain glory, with which the tempter is apt to inspire those who seem to have made some proficiency in the divine life. If that proficiency be real, let them take care never to conceive of it as something separate from Christ. He alone, dwelling in them by his Spirit, produces all that is good, and to Him alone the praise belongs.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

First Edition 1812  
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## **CHAPTER FIVE -- SECTION 8**

### **A VIEW OF THE STATE OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND AND BOHEMIA DURING THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES, WITH SKETCHES OF THE HISTORY OF WICKLIFF, THE LOLLARDS, JOHN HUSS, AND JEROME OF PRAGUE; INCLUDING A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF THE "UNITAS FRATRUM," OR UNITED BOHEMIAN BRETHREN, TILL THE TIMES OF LUTHER.**

An attentive reader of the preceding pages will have observed that when the governments of France and Spain lent their aid to second the views of the court of Rome, in expelling the Waldenses and Albigenses from their respective countries, the persecuted followers of Jesus Christ found an asylum in Bohemia, where their principles took deep root, and their numbers multiplied exceedingly. [See page 13, 37, and 38 of this volume and the note from Thuanus, page 158.] As it is intended in this section to notice a little more particularly the progress of these principles, both in that kingdom and in our own country, at this interesting period, I must trespass upon the reader's patience by laying before him a short extract from the impartial Thuanus, which, while it serves to refresh his memory by a recapitulation of what has already been related, will also furnish an introduction to what is to follow.

"PETER WALDO, a rich citizen of Lyons, about the year of Christ 1170, gave name to the Vaudois or Waldenses. This man (as has been recorded by Guy de Perpignan, bishop of Elna, who exercised the office of inquisitor against the Waldenses) leaving his house and estate, had entirely devoted himself to the profession of the gospel, and had procured the writings of the prophets and apostles to be translated into the language of the country, together with several testimonies from the primitive fathers; all which



having well fixed in his mind, and trusting to his natural parts, he took up the office of preaching, and interpreted the gospel to the common people in the streets. And when in a short time, he had got about him a good number of followers, he sent them out into all parts, as disciples, to propagate the gospel. They, as being generally unlearned, having easily fallen into various errors, were cited by the archbishop of Lyons; and though they were, as he reports, convicted, yet they fortified themselves with mere obstinacy, saying, that in religious affairs, God, and not man, was to be obeyed. Being for this cut off from the church, and appealing to the pope, they were, in the council immediately preceding that of Lateran, condemned as altogether pertinacious and schismatical: from whence, becoming hated and execrated by all men, they wandered about without a home, and **spread themselves up and down in Languedoc, Lombardy, and especially amongst the Alps, where they lay concealed and secure for many years.** They were charged with these tenets--that the church of Rome, because it renounced the true faith of Christ was the whore of Babylon, and that barren tree which Christ himself cursed, and commanded to be plucked up--that consequently no obedience was to be paid to the pope, or to the bishops, who maintain her errors--that a monastic life was the sink and dungeon of the church; the vows of which were vain, and served only to promote the vile love of boys--that the orders of the priesthood were marks of the great beast mentioned in the Revelation--that the fire of purgatory, the solemn mass, the consecration-days of churches, the worship of saints, and propitiations for the dead, were the devices of Satan. Besides these principal and authentic heads of their doctrine, others were pretended, relating to marriage, the resurrection, the state of the soul after death, and to meats. Peter Waldo, therefore, their leader, quitting his country, came into the Netherlands, and having gained many followers in that province, which is now called Picardy, he removed from thence into Germany; and after a long abode amongst the Vandal cities, settled at last in Bohemia, where, even at this day, the professors of that doctrine are from thence called Picards. Waldo had a companion named Arnold, who by a different rout fell into Languedoc, and fixed himself at Alby, formerly called Alba of the Helvians, from whence came the Albigenses, who in a little time spread themselves amongst the people of Toulouse, Rovergue, Le Quercy, and Agen. Arnold was succeeded by Esperon and Joseph, and from these Gregory IX denominated them **Arnoldists, Esperonites, and Josephists**, and also **Gazars**, as all heretics at this day are called throughout Germany and the northern countries; which name is supposed to be taken from the emperor Leo III named Gazar, whom the Roman pontiffs accused beyond all other men of sacrilege and erroneous principles; though in other books they are styled the Pure, (**Puritans**) which name is also given to such as pretend to a purer doctrine in England. The same people are also called Leonines, from that Leo, who is nevertheless represented as a just and prudent prince, by Zonaras himself, who yet charges him with heretical pravity. He, at the persuasion of Theodotus a monk, had removed out of the churches all pictures and statues, which he considered as the fuel of impiety, and as traps to catch the ignorant multitude, by which God was offended; for which reason he was called the enemy of images. Though others imagine them to be rather called **Leonines** from one Leo, a Frenchman, of that sect, because Leo the emperor was too far distant from those times and places. Thus, however, they were nicknamed, either from their authors or favorers. From the place they were also styled **Poor Men of Lyons, Albigenses**, and in different quarters, for different causes, **Tramontanes, Paterines, Lollards, Turlupins**, and lastly **Chaignards**. As they carried divers faces, though their tails were tied together, (as pope Gregory IX expresses it, because they inveighed too vehemently against the wealth, pride, and vices of the popes, and alienated the people by degrees from their obedience to them) Innocent III used at first the spiritual sword against them, sending to the Albigenses twelve abbots of the Cistercian order,

and after them Diego, bishop of Oxford, who carried with him that Dominic who afterwards founded the Dominican order. But when he found little success that way, laying aside the spiritual sword he drew the iron one, and made Leopold the sixth, Duke of Austria, for Germany, and Simon of Montfort, for France, commanders in the holy war, to whom many others joined themselves. Though from that time they were persecuted from place to place, yet at intervals there appeared some who frequently revived their doctrine; as John Wickliff, in England, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, in Bohemia. And in our age, since the general reception of Luther's doctrine, their scattered remains began to re-unite, and with the increase of Luther's name to gather strength and authority, especially in the regions of the Alps and the adjacent provinces" [Thuanus's History of his own Times, book 6]. Thus far Thuanus: we now proceed.

The usurpations of the court of Rome had reached their highest pitch about the thirteenth or fourteenth century. That astonishing system of spiritual tyranny had drawn within its vortex almost the whole government of England. The pope's haughty legate, spurning at all law and equity, made even the ministers of justice to tremble at his tribunal; parliaments were overawed, and sovereigns obliged to temporize, while the lawless ecclesiastic, entrenched behind the authority of councils and decrees, set at naught the civil power, and opened an asylum to any, even the most profligate, disturbers of society. In the mean time, **the taxes collected under various pretexts, by the agents of the See of Rome, amounted to five times as much as the taxes paid to the king!** The insatiable avarice and insupportable tyranny of the court of Rome, had given such universal disgust, that a bold attack made about this time on the authority of that court, and the doctrines of that church, was, at first, more successful than could have been expected, in that dark and superstitious age. This attack was made by the famous **JOHN WICKLIFF**, who was one of the best and most learned men of the age in which he flourished. His reputation for learning, piety, and virtue, was so great, that Archbishop Islep appointed him the first warden of Canterbury college, Oxford, in 1365. His lectures in divinity which he read in that university, were much admired, though in these lectures he treated the clergy, and particularly the mendicant friars, with no little freedom and severity. A discourse which he published against the pope's demand of homage and tribute from Edward III for the kingdom of England, recommended him so much to that prince, that the latter bestowed upon him several benefices, and employed him in several embassies. In one of these embassies to the court of Rome, in 1374, he discovered so many of the corruptions of that court, and of the errors of that church, that he became more bold and more severe in his censures of those errors and corruptions. **He even proceeded so far as to call the pope antichrist, to deny his supremacy**, and to expose his intolerable tyranny and extortions in the strongest colors. This, as might naturally have been expected, drew upon him the indignation of his holiness, and involved him in various troubles. **POPE GREGORY XI** published several thundering bulls against him, in 1377, commanding him to be seized, imprisoned, and brought to trial for his damnable heresies. The affection of the people, and the favor of the court, protected him from imprisonment; but he found it necessary to appear before Simon Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury, and William Courthey, bishop of London, who had been appointed his judges by the pope. At this appearance he had the honor to be accompanied by two of the greatest men in the kingdom, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and Lord Henry Percy, marshal of England. These two lords demanded a chair for Wickliff; which being denied by the bishop of London, some very angry words passed between that prelate and the Duke of Lancaster; which excited so violent a tumult in the court, that it broke up in great confusion, without doing any

business. Wickliff made a second appearance before the papal commissioners at Lambeth, where he was attended by so great a body of the citizens of London, that his judges were deterred from pronouncing any sentence against him; and their commission soon after terminated by the death of the pope, March 27, 1378.

It is very difficult to discover, with certainty and precision, what were the real sentiments, in some particulars, of this illustrious champion of truth and liberty, against the errors and tyranny of the church of Rome; because he seems, in some things, to have changed his mind; and because certain tenets were imputed to him by his adversaries which he did not hold. It very plainly appears from his writings, that the doctrines which he taught were very nearly the same with those which were propagated by our more successful reformers in the sixteenth century.

The prosecution against Wickliff was suspended for some time, by **the schism in the papacy** which succeeded the death of Gregory XI and by the insurrection of the Commons in England, which threw all things into confusion. In this tumult, archbishop Sudbury, one of his most zealous adversaries, was beheaded by the insurgents on Tower-hill, June 14, 1381. William Courtney, bishop of London, was promoted to the primacy by a bull of pope Urban VI (who had been acknowledged in England to be the lawful pope,) dated the 8th of September in the same year. As soon as the insurrection of the Commons was quelled, and the public tranquillity restored, the new primate applied with great zeal to the suppression of the heretical opinions, as he esteemed them, which were propagated by Wickliff and his followers. With this view, he assembled a council of the bishops of his province, and many doctors of divinity, and of the civil and canon law, in the priory of the preaching friars, London, May 17, 1382.

Before this council he submitted twenty-four opinions, extracted from the writings of Wickliff, for their examination; and the council unanimously declared ten of these opinions heretical, and fourteen of them erroneous. Several suspected persons were then brought before the council, particularly Nicholas Hereford and Philip Rapyngdon, doctors in divinity, and John Ayshton, A.M. and commanded to declare their sentiments of these opinions. Their declarations appearing to the council evasive and unsatisfactory, they were pronounced to be convicted of heresy. The ancient historian Henry Knyghton relates, that Wickliff was brought before this council, and that he made a kind of recantation of his heretical opinions. But as nothing of this appears in the record, it is probably a mistake, if not a calumny. On the day after the conclusion of this council, there was a solemn procession in London; after which Dr. Kinyghan, a Carmelite friar, preached to the people, and published the doctrines which had been condemned; declaring, that all persons who taught, favored, or believed any of these doctrines, were excommunicated heretics. To give the greater weight to the decrees of this council, **the clergy prevailed upon the king to publish a proclamation, July 12, authorizing and commanding the bishops to seize and imprison all persons who were suspected of holding any of the doctrines which had been condemned.**

The doctrines of Wickliff had for some years made a mighty noise in the university of Oxford, where they were first published, and where they had many violent opposers, and many zealous advocates. Dr. Berton, who was chancellor of the University in 1381, and Dr. Stokes, were at the head of the former, and Dr. Hereford and Dr. Rapyngdon at the head of the latter. The Archbishop of Canterbury sent the

decrees of his late council to Oxford, commanding Dr. Stokes to publish them at St. Frideswyde's church, on Corpus-Christi day; and Dr. Rigge, the chancellor of the University, to assist and protect him in performing that office. Dr. Philip Rapyngdon had been appointed to preach at that church on that day, and he declaimed with great vehemence against the corruptions of the church, and in defense of the doctrines of Wickliff; and his sermon was heard with approbation. But when Dr. Stokes attempted to publish the decrees of the council of London, he was interrupted with clamors and reproaches, which obliged him to desist, without having received any countenance or protection from the chancellor or proctors, who were secret favorers of the new opinions. For this negligence they were summoned to appear before Archbishop Courtney, who treated them very roughly, and by threats prevailed upon them to return to Oxford, and to publish the decrees of the council of London, both in Latin and English, first in St. Mary's church, and afterwards in the schools.

While the doctrines of Wickliff were propagated and opposed with so much zeal, at Oxford and other places, he, being in a declining state of health, resided, during the two last years of his life, at his living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, employed in finishing his translation of the Bible, and other works. Being seized with a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of his speech, December 28, 1384, he expired on the last day of that year.\* **As the clergy had hated and persecuted him with great violence during his life, they exulted with indecent joy at his disease and death**, ascribing them to the immediate vengeance of Heaven for his heresy. "On the day of St. Thomas the Martyr, Archbishop of Canterbury, says Walsingham, a contemporary historian, that limb of the devil, enemy of the church, deceiver of the people, idol of heretics, mirror of hypocrites, author of schisms, sower of hatred, and inventor of lies, John Wickliff, was, by the immediate judgment of God, suddenly struck with a palsy, which seized all the members of his body, when he was ready, as they say, to vomit forth his blasphemies against the blessed St. Thomas, in a sermon which he had prepared to preach that day." But these reproaches do honor to his memory, as they were brought upon him by his vigorous efforts to deliver his countrymen from the errors, superstitions, and extortions of the Church of Rome.

[\* It appears that before the death of Wickliff, his principles had extended into Bohemia, and that John Huss had begun to sow the seeds of reform in that country also. The following letter, written by our great English reformer, in the last year of his life, is too valuable to be omitted. LETTER FROM WICKLIFF TO HUSS -- "Health and Salvation; and if anything can be devised or expressed more loving and dear in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Dear brethren in the Lord, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but all those who know the truth; I say that the truth, which dwelleth in us by the grace of God, shall be with us for ever. I rejoiced greatly at the brethren, coming to us from you, bearing testimony of you in the truth, and that ye walk in truth. I have heard how antichrist troubleth you, causing many and various tribulations to the faithful in Christ. And no wonder that such things should be done among you, since the law of Christ suffereth oppression from its adversaries over all the world; and from that red dragon with many heads, which John speaks of in the Revelation, that cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that she might be carried away of it. But the Lord, who is faithful, will certainly rescue his dearly beloved spouse. Let us be strengthened and comforted in the Lord our God, and in his infinite goodness, and be firmly persuaded that he will not permit his beloved to fail of his proposed reward for them, if we only love him (as we ought) with our whole heart. For adversity shall not prevail over us, if iniquity do not prevail. Therefore let no affliction, pressure, or

torment, for the sake of Christ, cast us down, or cause us to despair; since we know, that whomsoever the Lord accounteth as sons, he chasteneth. For the Father of Mercy exerciseth us in adversity in this present life, that he may afterwards spare us; as that gold which a skillful workman chooseth is tried in the fire by him, that afterwards he may put it into his pure, eternal, treasure. We know that this present life is but short and transitory: but that life which we expect, and which is to come, is happy and eternal. Let us labor, while we have time, that we may be found worthy to enter into that rest. Let me entreat you to consider, that we see nothing else in this life, but grief, anguish, and sorrow; and what ought to trouble the faithful most of all, a contempt and trampling down of the divine laws. Let us endeavor, as much as lies in our power, to lay hold of those good things, which shall always endure and be eternal; denying our transient and frail senses. Let us look back upon and consider the behavior of our ancestors in former ages. Let us call to mind the saints of both the Old and New Testament; how they bore tossings, tempests, and adversities, in this sea of trouble, -- imprisonments, and bonds. They were stoned; they were sawn asunder; they were slain by the sword. They wandered about in sheep and in goat skins, and other such like things; as the Epistle to the Hebrews recounteth at large; all walking in, and following the footsteps of Christ, in that narrow path, who said, 'Where I am, there shall my servant be also.' Since we have such a cloud of witnesses of the saints in former times placed before us, let us lay aside every offense and weight, yea, sin, which besets us, and run with patience the race that is set before us; looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who cheerfully endured the cross, despising all contempt and shame. Let us consider how he bore such contradiction against himself from sinners, and let us not be weary with desponding minds: but let us beg assistance from the Lord, with all our heart, and fight manfully against his adversary, antichrist. Let us love his laws with all our heart, and be not fraudulent and deceitful laborers; but act boldly in all things, as far as the Lord permits us; and let us be valiant in the cause of God, and in hope of an eternal reward. Do thou, therefore, O Huss! a brother greatly beloved in Christ, unknown to me indeed in person, but not in faith and love; (for, what part of the world can tear asunder, and separate those whom the love of Christ unites?) be comforted and strengthened in the grace which is given thee. As a good soldier of Jesus Christ, war in word and in deed; and recall into the way of truth as many as thou art able: because neither by erroneous and deceitful decrees, nor by the false opinions and doctrines of antichrist, is the truth of the Gospel to be kept in silence and in secret. Rather comfort and strengthen the members of Christ, by weakening the wiles and deceit of Satan: because antichrist shall come to an end in a short time; it is the will of the Lord! It is a great joy to me, that not only in your kingdom, but elsewhere, God hath so strengthened the hearts of some, that they suffer with pleasure, imprisonments, banishments, and even death itself, for the word of God. I have nothing more to write, beloved brethren, only that I willingly confess I would strengthen you and all the lovers of Christ's laws, in the law of the love of God. Therefore I salute them from the bowels of my heart; particularly your companion [probably Jerome of Prague]; entreating that you would pray for me and the whole church. And the God of peace, who raised from the dead that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ, fit you for every good work; that ye may do what is acceptable to him, through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."]

Though the joy of the clergy at the death of Wickliff was very great, it was not of long duration. They soon found, that his doctrines had not died with him, but were propagated with great zeal, and no little success, by his followers, who were commonly called **LOLLARDS**.\*\* Many of those who were

preachers traveled up and down the country on foot, in a very plain dress, declaiming with great vehemence against the corruptions of the church, and the vices of the clergy. These preachers were not only admired and followed by the common people, but were favored and protected by several persons of high rank and great power, particularly by the Duke of Lancaster, the lords Percy, Latimer, Clifford, Hilton, and others. By the zeal, activity, and eloquence of the preachers, under the protection of these great men, the new doctrines, as they were called, gained ground so fast, that, as a contemporary historian of the best credit affirms, "more than one half of the people of England, in a few years, became Lollards." The same historian, who was a clergyman, and a most inveterate enemy to the Lollards, acknowledges, that as Wickliff excelled all the learned men of his age in disputation, so some of his followers, in a very little time, became very eloquent preachers and very powerful disputants; which he ascribes to the assistance of the devil, who, he says, took possession of them as soon as they became Lollards.

[\*\* Even to the present day, the derivation of the term LOLLARD remains a point of doubt and uncertainty. Clark in his *Martyrology*, p. 111, says, "About this time, A.D. 1210, the English, who now possessed Guienne which bordered upon the Earldom of Toulouse, began to help the Albigenses, being stirred up thereto by **Raynard Lollard**, a godly and learned man, who by his powerful preaching converted many to the truth, and defended the faith of the Albigenses." He further adds, that "John le Meyer much commends this Lollard, who foretold many things by divine revelation, which, saith he, came to pass in my time, and therefore he putteth him into the rank of holy prophets. And as for his learning, it is evident by his *Comment upon the Revelation*, where he setteth forth many things that are spoken of the Roman antichrist. This worthy man was afterwards apprehended in Germany, and being delivered to the secular power, was burnt at Cologne." A few pages afterwards we find the following short paragraph in the same volume. "*Anno Christi* 1322, Lollard *Walterus*, from whom our English professors were called Lollards, was taken at Cologne, where he had privately preached, and through God's blessing, drawn many from ignorance and error to embrace the truth, and persisting constantly in his opinions, he was condemned and burnt alive," p. 124. The discrepancies in these two accounts are so many and palpable, that they are not easily reconciled. I find no evidence that there were two persons of the name of Lollard, at the distance of more than a century from each other, both preachers of the Gospel, and burnt at Cologne for heresy. It is observable too, that even the latter account fixes the martyrdom of Lollard two years before the birth of Wickliff, who, therefore, though he may have read some of his writings, could not possibly have seen him nor been instructed by him.]

The clergy, alarmed and enraged at this rapid progress of the new opinions, attempted to put a stop to it by violence and persecution, which have been often employed by power against truth. They procured, or at least promulgated, a statute, which still appears in our statute-book, (though the Commons, it is said, never gave their assent to it,) empowering and commanding all sheriffs to seize and imprison all preachers of heresy. **They also prevailed upon the king, in 1387, to grant a commission to certain persons to seize all the books and writings of John Wickliff, Nicholas Hereford, John Ayshton, and other heretical writers, and to imprison all who transcribed, sold, bought, or concealed such books.** By these methods the clergy hoped to interrupt the preaching and writing of the reforming teachers, by which they chiefly propagated their opinions. But the contemporary historian Knyghton observes, with regret, "that these laws and edicts were but slowly and faintly executed, because the time

of correction was not yet come."

Though the violent factions amongst the nobility, and the general animosity of the laity against the clergy, on account of their excessive power and riches, prevented for a time a rigorous execution of the penal statutes against heretics; several persons were apprehended and tried upon these statutes. Some of them, as particularly Hereford, Ayshton, and Rapyngdon, who had been the most zealous propagators of Wickliff's doctrines, were, by threats and promises, prevailed upon to make a kind of recantation, and to desist from preaching these doctrines. Others escaped with slight censures, by giving artful, evasive explanations of their tenets. In general it may be observed, that the followers of Wickliff were not very ambitious of the crown of martyrdom; and none of them were capitally punished in the reign of Richard II.

In spite of all the laws that had been made in England against the tyrannical usurpations of the court of Rome, they still continued, or rather increased. When a clerk had obtained a sentence in favor of his presentation to a church in the king's court, and the bishop of the diocese had inducted him in consequence of that sentence, it was usual for the pope, on the complaint of the losing party, to excommunicate the bishop. When an English bishop had by any means offended his holiness, he sometimes punished him, by translating him to a foreign see, without his own consent, or that of the king. Upon a complaint of these papal usurpations by the Commons, in a parliament at Winchester, in 1392, a very severe law was made for the punishment of those who solicited, or brought into the kingdom, any papal bulls of excommunication, translation, or other thing against the rights and dignity of the crown. These contests between the king and parliament of England and the court of Rome, encouraged **the Lollards to make a bold and direct attack on the established church. Accordingly, they presented to a parliament, which was held by the Duke of York, the king being in Ireland, at Westminster, in 1394, a remonstrance containing twelve articles of complaint against the church and clergy;** praying for redress and reformation. In this remonstrance, they complain chiefly of the exorbitant power, excessive wealth, and profligate lives of the clergy, which last they ascribe chiefly to their vows of celibacy;--of transubstantiation and the superstitious practices which the belief of it produced;--of prayers for the dead;--of the worship of images;--of pilgrimages;--of auricular confession, and its consequences;--and of several other particulars in which the present Protestant churches differ from the church of Rome. What reception this remonstrance met with from the parliament, we are not informed. About the same time the Lollards published several satirical papers, painting the deceitful arts, abominable vices, and absurd opinions of the clergy in very strong colors; which excited both the contempt and hatred of the people against them. Some of these papers, written with much asperity, and no little wit, were pasted up on the most public places in London and Westminster.

The clergy were so much alarmed at these bold attacks, that they dispatched the archbishop of York, the bishop of London, and several other commissioners, to the king then in Ireland, to entreat him to return immediately into England, to protect the church, which was in danger of destruction. "As soon," says a contemporary historian, "as the king heard the representation of the commissioners, being inspired with the Divine Spirit, he hastened into England, thinking it more necessary to defend the church than to conquer kingdoms." On his arrival, he called before him the lords Clifford, Latimer, Montague, and other great men who favored the Lollards, and threatened them with immediate death, if they gave any

further encouragement to heretical preachers. Intimidated by these threats, they complied with the king's desire, and withdrew their protection. Several of the Lollard preachers, discouraged by this defection of their patrons, soon after recanted their opinions, and returned into the bosom of the church. Thomas Arundel, archbishop of York, who was a most violent enemy to the Lollards, obliged those in his province who recanted, to take the following curious oath, which is given in the original language and spelling:

"I -----, before you, worshipful fader and lord archbishop of Yhork, and your clergy, with my free will and full avysed, swere to God and all his seyntes, upon this holy gospel, that fro this day forthword, I shall worship images, with praying and offering unto them, in the worship of the saints, that they may be made after; and also, I shall never more despise pylgremage, ne states of holy chyrche, in no degre. And also I shall be buxum to the laws of holy chyrche, and to yhowe as to myn archbishop, and myn other ordinaries and curates, and keep the laws up my power and meyntein them. And also, I shall never more meyntein, ne techen, ne defenden, errors, conclusions, ne techeng of the Lollards, ne swych conclusions and techengs that men clopeth Lollards doctrine; ne shall her books, ne swych books, ne hem or ony suspect or diffamed of Lollardary, receyve or company with aft, willingly, or defend in tho matters: and if I know any swych, I shall, with all the hast that I may, do yhowe, or els your nex officers, to wyten, and of ther bokes, etc." [Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, volume 1, p. 598-9; Wood's *History of Oxon*, 190-192; Lewis's *Life of Wickliff*, Anglia Sacra, tom. 2, p. 121 Walsingham, page 201-205. *Biographia Britannica*, Art. Wickliff Spelman's Council. tom. 2, p. 629-636; Henry's *Great Britain*, volume 7, 8vo. book 4, chapter 2, sect. 2].

The kingdom of **BOHEMIA**, is, in point of territorial surface, the most elevated ground, the most mountainous, and by nature the strongest in Germany. Its inhabitants too have ever been distinguished by the loftiness of their spirit, and the rigor and success of their struggles for civil and religious liberty. The country is almost surrounded by the mountains of the famous Hyrcanian forest, whose sides, broken into many sloping ridges, intersect this lofty and spacious amphitheater, and form a landscape bold, various, and of great beauty. The metropolis of the country is Prague, a city of great extent, stretching along the banks, and on either side of the river Mulda, adorned with many sumptuous edifices, and particularly two strong castles, one of which was the residence of the ancient Bohemian kings. The ancient inhabitants are represented by contemporary historians, as a people of a ruddy complexion, and of enormous stature and muscular strength; in their dispositions intrepid, fierce, proud, quick in resenting injuries, of a haughty deportment, lovers of a rude magnificence and pomp, and naturally addicted to revels and intemperance. The native language of Bohemia is the Sclavonic, which also appears to have been the mother tongue of the Tartars, and their offspring the Turks, and of all the nations inhabiting those regions which extend from the northern parts of Russia to Turkey in Europe. [Namely, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Transylvania, Sclavona, Croatia, Istria, Wallachia, etc., etc. See Dr. Watson's *History of Philip III*, King of Spain, book 6.]

**The authority of the church of Rome was never so great and general as entirely to banish from the nations of Europe a spirit of inquiry, or the love of knowledge. During the thickest darkness of the middle ages, a star appeared here and there in the firmament, which reflected the light of ancient**



times, and formed a presage, that although the sun of science was set, it would return to enlighten bewildered nations. We have seen that so early as the eighth century, Claude of Turin sowed the seeds of reformation in the valleys of Piedmont, whence they were gradually transplanted into other countries. In the thirteenth century, the Waldenses or Albigenses, names almost indiscriminately applied to the disciples of Claude, were multiplied throughout France to an astonishing degree; and when scattered by the persecuting power of Rome, they were driven into Bohemia, Livonia, and Poland, in the former of which places we learn that there were no less than eighty thousand of them at the commencement of the fourteenth century.

We are informed by Sleidan, that the Bohemians were divided, on the article of religion, into three classes, or sects. The first were such as acknowledged the pope of Rome to be head of the church, and vicar of Jesus Christ; the second were those that received the eucharist in both kinds, and in celebrating mass, read some things in the vulgar tongue, but in all other matters differ nothing from the church of Rome; the third were those who went by the name of **Picards** or **Beghardi**--these **called the pope of Rome and all his party antichrist**, and the whore that is described in the Revelation (chapter 17). **They admitted, says he, of nothing but the Bible, as the ground of their doctrine**; they chose their own priests and bishops, denied marriages to no man, performed no offices for the dead, and had but very few holidays and ceremonies. [Sleidan's *History of the Reformation*, book 3, p. 53.] **It is obvious, therefore, that the latter class alone were the genuine Waldenses, and that the second were a species of dissenting-conformists, differing but little from our English episcopalians.** It is proper the reader should keep this distinction clearly in view; he will otherwise fall into a mistake which is very prevalent, respecting the principles of **John Huss** and **Jerome of Prague**, who are generally supposed to have belonged to the sect of the Waldenses, though, in fact, they ranked with the second class mentioned by Sleidan, and never gave up the communion of the church of Rome. They were in Bohemia what Wickliff was in England, members of the established church, dissatisfied with its corruptions, and strenuous advocates for a reform both in its doctrine and discipline, like many of the evangelical clergy in our day, but without the virtue of dissenting from its communion, and of bearing a public and decided testimony to its antichristian spirit and constitution. The whole of the history of these Reformers, which is so circumstantially given by L'Enfant, in his history of the council of Constance, and with such demonstrable impartiality, affords unquestionable proof of the truth of this observation. [*History of the Council of Constance*, volume 1, passim.]

When or by whom the gospel was first preached in Bohemia, is a very doubtful point. That Paul preached the Gospel in Illyricum, and that Titus visited Dalmatia, are things capable of proof from Romans 15:19; 2 Timothy 4:10. And hence **the Bohemians infer, that it was preached in all the countries of Sclavonia in the first ages of Christianity.** [Crantz's *History of the Bohemian Brethren*, p. 13.] **They say that St. Jerome, a native of Illyricum, translated the Scriptures into his native tongue, and that all the nations of Sclavonian extraction use that translation to this day**, just as the Latin church use the Vulgate; and further, that their bishops and martyrs are mentioned in the early ages of the church. But whatever of truth there may be in this, it is certain that Bohemia partook of the general corruption, and was immersed in darkness and superstition, when Waldo and his friends sought an asylum in that kingdom, and in the year 1176 formed a colony at Saltz and Laun, on the river Eger. These Waldenses found the Bohemians tenacious of the rites and ceremonies of the Greek church, which

are scarcely less superstitious than those of the church of Rome; but they endeavored to convince them of their defects of the religious exercises, and introduced among them the knowledge of the Christian faith in its purity, according to the word of God. [Paul Stransky, *de Repub. Bohem.* p. 272.] **Popery was not fully established in Bohemia till the fourteenth century**, and then not by the consent of the Bohemians, but by the power and artifice of the Emperor Charles IV. Two of his chaplains endeavored to persuade his Majesty to curb the pope and reform the church, but they were both banished for their officious zeal. One of them, whose name was Janovius, and had studied at Paris, being a person of piety and erudition, was a very hearty friend to reform, and both preached and published against the antichristian hypocrisy of the times: but as he knew the world, and, by residing at court, thoroughly understood the motives and views of great men, he comforted his friends with these remarkable words just before he expired. "The fury of the enemies of truth now prevails against us, but it will not always be so: a mean people will arise without sword or power, and against them they will never be able to prevail." A saying full of wisdom, and confirmed by the experience of ages; for reformation of abuses rarely proceeds from those that are in possession of power. By the banishment of these two eminent men, the voice of reform was silenced. Ignorance, profligacy, and vice, prevailed amongst all orders of men in the national church: the Inquisition was introduced for the purpose of enforcing despotism in the civil government, and uniformity of opinion in matters of religion. **The consequence was, that multitudes withdrew themselves from the public places of worship, and followed the dictates of their own consciences by worshipping God in private houses, woods, and caves. Here they were persecuted, dragooned, drowned, and killed; and thus matters went on till the appearance of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague.** [Crantz's *History*, p. 1. sect. 4. and Robinson's *Ecclesiastes Researches*, p. 480; SYNOPSIS *Hist. Persecut. Ecclesiastes Bohem.* cap. 7.]

It was in the latter part of the life of Wickliff, that king Richard II of England married Ann, the sister of Wincelaus, king of Bohemia; and in consequence of this family alliance, a free intercourse was opened between the two kingdoms. About the same time **JOHN HUSS**, who had been a student in the University of Prague, where he had taken his degrees, became a zealous disciple of Wickliff. He was born in the village of Hussinetz, in 1378, of parents not in affluent circumstances; at the age of twenty he was raised to the dignity of professor in the University of Prague, and in 1400 appointed preacher in one of the largest churches of that city. He was a person of eminent abilities, and of still more eminent zeal; his talents were popular, his life irreproachable, and his manners the most affable and engaging. He was the idol of the populace; but in proportion as he attracted their esteem and regard, he drew upon himself the execration of the priests.

Peter Payne, principal of Edmund Hall, in the University of Oxford, a man equally distinguished for his talents and his inflexible opposition to the friars, appears to have been the instrument of first conveying into Bohemia the writings of our countryman Wickliff, of which he was a great admirer. Payne is said to have been a good disputant, and to have signalized himself in a controversy with Walden, the Carmelite, on the subjects of pilgrimage, the eucharist, images, and relicts, etc., etc. -- in consequence of which he became so obnoxious to the clergy, that he was obliged to quit the University and flee into Bohemia, where he carried with him a number of Wickliff's tracts, which were highly esteemed by Huss, Jerome, and the greater part of the University of Prague. The introduction of Wickliff's writings, however, into that University, gave great offense to the Archbishop of Prague, **who issued his orders that every**

person that was in possession of them should bring the books to him, in order that such as contained any thing heretical might be burnt! And we are accordingly told that two hundred volumes of them, finely written, and adorned with costly covers and gold borders, probably belonging to some of the nobility, were committed to the flames, by Archbishop Sbynko; a conduct which excited great disgust in the minds of the students of the University of Prague, and of Huss in particular, who took every opportunity to persuade the members of the University that the conduct of the archbishop was an infringement on the rights, liberties, and privileges of their Seminary, whose members had a right to read all sorts of books without molestation. Huss and his friends consequently appealed from the mandate of the archbishop to **Gregory XII** who was then acknowledged pope in Germany; and the latter cited the archbishop to Rome. The prelate, however, informed his holiness how deeply the writings of Wickliff had taken root in Bohemia, on which **he obtained a bull authorizing him to prevent the propagation of Wickliff's doctrine in his diocese; at the same time condemning them in the most pointed manner as heretical**, and issuing processes against four eminent doctors of the university, who had refused to deliver up the writings of Wickliff which were in their possession, and prohibiting them, notwithstanding their ecclesiastical dignities, from preaching in any congregation. Huss, and the members of the university, entered a protest against these proceedings, and on the 25th of June, 1410, appealed from the sentence of the archbishop to the court of Rome. The affair was carried before **POPE JOHN XXIII** who granted a commission to Cardinal Colonna, to cite Huss to appear personally before him at Rome, and there answer to the accusations laid against him of preaching both errors and heresies. Huss desired to be excused a personal appearance, and so greatly was he favored in Bohemia, that king Winceslaus, his queen, the nobility, and the University at large, joined in a request to the pope, that he would dispense with such an appearance; and moreover, that he would not suffer thy kingdom of Bohemia to be subject to the imputation of heresy, but permit them to preach the gospel with freedom in their places of worship; and that he would send legates to Prague to correct any presumed abuses, the expense of which should be defrayed by the Bohemians. [Dupin's *Ecclesiastes Hist. 15th century*; Lewis's *Life of Wickliff*; Rolt's *Lives of the Reformers*, p. 13.]

Three proctors were dispatched to Rome to tender Huss's apology to his holiness; but the excuses alleged were deemed insufficient, and Huss being declared contumacious, was accordingly excommunicated. This excommunication extended also to his disciples and friends; he himself was declared a promoter of heresy, and an interdict was pronounced against him! From these proceedings he appealed to a future council; and notwithstanding the decision of the court of Rome, he retired to Hussinetz, the place of his nativity, where he boldly continued to propagate his sentiments both from the pulpit and by means of his pen. The letters which he at this time wrote, are very numerous; he also drew up a Treatise defending the character and writings of Wickliff, and justifying his own conduct in reading his works.

The extraordinary state of affairs at this juncture, in reference to the chair of St. Peter, tended for awhile to screen Huss from the vengeance of his adversaries, by diverting their attention from him. In the year 1378, Pope Gregory XI died, and was succeeded by the archbishop of Barri, a Neapolitan, who assumed the name of Urban VI. This pontiff, a man of a haughty temper, began his reign in so arbitrary a manner, that he alienated from him the affections of his subjects; and his own cardinals so highly resented his behavior that they set aside his election, and chose Clement VII in his room. The consequence was, that

Urban refusing to vacate his office, **there were TWO POPES, laying an equal claim to St. Peter's chair**, each strenuously exerting himself to strengthen his party; their quarrel immediately became, in the opinion of their deluded votaries, the cause of God; each found adherents in every part of Europe, and **much human blood was spilt in the contest**. During a period of more than twenty years were these ambitious prelates roaming up and down Europe, like wolves or beasts of prey, until at length, to put a termination to this disgraceful schism, Alexander V was elected to the popedom, in hopes that by this event the other two popes would relinquish their claims. But restless ambition intervened: neither of them would give up his power, and from this time the church was governed, if such a state of anarchy may be called government, by **THREE POPES** at a time--their names now were John, Gregory, and Benedict. With a view to heal this fatal schism, and repair the disorders that had sprung up during its continuance as well as to bring about a reformation of the clergy, which was now loudly and generally called for, in the year 1414, the Emperor Sigismund convened **the council of Constance**. Hither, from all parts of Europe, princes and prelates, clergy, laity, regulars and seculars flocked together. Fox, the martyrologist, has given us a humorous catalogue of this grotesque assembly. "There were," says he, "archbishops and bishops 846; abbots and doctors 564; princes, dukes, earls, knights, and squires 16,000; prostitutes 450; barbers 600; musicians, cooks, and jesters 820."

**The council of Constance was assembled November 16, 1414, to determine the dispute between the three contending factions for the papacy**, and thither Huss was cited to appear, in order to justify his conduct and writings. The Emperor Sigismund, brother and successor of Wincellaus, encouraged Huss to obey the summons, and as an inducement to his compliance, **sent him a passport with assurance of safe conduct**, permitting him to come freely to the council, and pledging himself for his safe return. Huss consented, and in all the cities through which he passed he caused placards to be issued, stating that he was going to the council to answer all the accusations that were made against him, inviting his adversaries to meet him there.

No sooner had Huss arrived within the pope's jurisdiction, than, **regardless of the emperor's passport, he was arrested and committed close prisoner to a chamber in the palace**. This violation of common law and justice was noticed by the friends of Huss, who had, out of the respect they bore his character, accompanied him to Constance. They urged the imperial safe-conduct; but the pope replied, that he never granted any safe-conduct, nor was he bound by that of the emperor. [As the affair of the safe-conduct, on which the aggravation of the injuries done to Huss so greatly depends, is placed in different lights by Protestant and Popish writers, it may not be improper to inquire into the merits of it, and to lay before the reader the principal topics of the argument on both sides of the question. In answer to the Protestants' exclamations against so notorious a breach of faith, the Papist thus apologizes: "We allow," says Maimburgh, that "Huss obtained a safe-conduct from the emperor: but for what end did he obtain it? Why, to defend his doctrine, if his doctrine was indefensible, his pass was invalid." "It was alway," says Rosweide, a Jesuit, "supposed, in the safe-conduct that justice should have its course." "Besides," cry a number of apologizers, "the emperor plainly exceeded his powers. By the canon-law he could not grant a pass to a heretic; and by the decretals the council might annul any imperial act." "Nay, farther," say Morery, "if we examine the pass, we shall find it, at best, a promise of security only till his arrival at Constance; or, indeed, rather a more recommendation of him to the cities through which he passed: so that, in fact, it was righteously fulfilled." To all this the Protestant thus replies: "Be it granted, (which is,

in truth, granting too much) that the safe-conduct implied a liberty only of defending his doctrine; yet it was violated, we find, before that liberty was given--before that doctrine was condemned, or even examined. And though the emperor might exceed his power in granting a pass to a heretic, yet Huss was, at this time, only suspected of heresy. Nor was the imperial act annulled by the council till after the pass was violated. Huss was condemned in the fifteenth session, and the safe-conduct decreed invalid in the nineteenth. With regard to the deficiency of the safe-conduct, which is Morery's apology, it doth not appear that it was ever an apology of ancient date. Huss, it is certain, considered the safe conduct as a sufficient security for his return home; and, indeed, so much is implied in the very nature of a safe-conduct. What title would that general deserve, who should invite his enemy into his quarters by a pass, and then seize him? Reasoning, however, apart, let us call in fact: *Omni prorsus impedimento remoto, transire, stare morari et REDIRE libere permittatis sibi et suis*, are the very words of the safe-conduct." In conclusion, therefore, we cannot but judge the emperor to have been guilty of a most notorious breach of faith. The blame, however, is generally laid, and with some reason, upon the council, who directed his conscience. What true son of the church would dare to oppose his private opinion against the unanimous voice of a general council?]

**JEROME OF PRAGUE** was the intimate friend and companion of Huss; inferior to him in age, experience, and authority, but his superior in all liberal endowments. He was born at Prague and educated in that university. Having finished his studies, he traveled into many countries of Europe, where he acquired great esteem for his talents and virtues, particularly for his graceful elocution, which gave him great advantages in the public seminaries. The universities of Prague, of Paris, of Cologne, and of Heidelberg, conferred upon him the degree of master of arts: and having made the tour of the continent, he visited England, where he obtained access to the writings of Wickliff, which he copied out, and returned with them to Prague. [Dupin's *Eccles. History*, p. 121.]

As Jerome had distinguished himself by an active cooperation with Huss in all his opposition to the abominations of the times, he was cited before the council of Constance on the 17th April, 1415, at the time his friend Huss was confined in a castle near that city. Arriving shortly afterwards in Constance, or the neighborhood, he learnt how his friend had been treated, and what he himself had to expect; on which he prudently retired to Iberlingen, an imperial city, from whence he wrote to the emperor and council, requesting a safe-conduct, but not obtaining one to his satisfaction, he was preparing to return into Bohemia, when he was arrested at Hirschaw and conveyed to Constance. Every one knows the fate of these two eminent men. **They were both condemned by the council to be burnt alive, and the sentence was carried into effect.** Huss was executed on the 7th July, 1415; and Jerome on the 20th May, 1416. The former sustained his fate with the most heroic fortitude, praying for his merciless persecutors. Previous to his execution he wrote letters to his friends in Bohemia, which afford a gratifying representation of the frame of his mind. The following is an extract from one of them.

"My dear friends, Let me take this last opportunity of exhorting you to trust in nothing here, but give yourselves up entirely to the service of God. Well am I authorized to warn you not to trust in princes, nor in any of the children of men; for there is no help in them. God alone remaineth steadfast: whatever he promises he will undoubtedly perform. For myself, on his gracious promise I trust. Having labored as his faithful servant, I am not

afraid of being deserted by him. 'Where I am, says the gracious Redeemer, there shall my servant be.' May the God of heaven preserve you! This is probably the last letter I shall be enabled to write, having reason to think I shall tomorrow be called upon to answer with my life. Sigismund [the emperor] hath in all things acted deceitfully. I pray God to forgive him! You have heard in what severe terms he hath spoken of me."

If we may credit the catholic writers, Jerome at first displayed less magnanimity than his friend Huss. The dread of suffering intimidated him, and he showed a disposition to concede his opinions to his catholic interrogators, who, perceiving symptoms of this compliant temper about him, craftily availed themselves of it, and by procrastinating his trial from month to month, they hoped ultimately to recover him from his heresy. In this however, they were disappointed. His mind gradually resumed all its wonted rigor; and instead of yielding his principles to his persecutors, he avowed them in the boldest manner, and supported them with increasing confidence to the last. Poggio Bracciolini, the Florentine secretary, who attended the council, and was a spectator of all he relates, gave a pretty circumstantial account of the whole of this tragical affair, in a letter to his friend Aretin, the pope's secretary, and it is too interesting to be omitted.

#### *LETTER FROM POGGIO OF FLORENCE TO LEONARD ARETIN*

"In the midst of a short excursion into the country, I wrote to our common friend; from whom, I doubt not, you have had an account of me.

"Since my return to Constance, my attention has been wholly engaged by Jerome, the Bohemian heretic, as he is called. The eloquence and learning which this person has employed in his own defense, are so extraordinary, that I cannot forbear giving you a short account of him.

"To confess the truth, I never knew the art of speaking carried so near the model of ancient eloquence. It was, indeed, amazing to hear with what force of expression, with what fluency of language, and with what excellent reasoning, he answered his adversaries: nor was I less struck with the gracefulness of his manner, the dignity of his action, and the firmness and constancy of his whole behavior. It grieved me to think so great a man was laboring under so atrocious an accusation. Whether this accusation be a just one, God knows: for myself, I inquire not into the merits of it; resting satisfied with the decision of my superiors. But I will just give you a summary of his trial.

"After many articles had been proved against him, leave was at length given him to answer each in its order. But Jerome long refused, strenuous, contending that he had many things to say previously in his defense; and that he ought first to be heard in general, before he descended to particulars. When this was over-ruled, 'Here,' said he, standing in the midst of the assembly, 'here is justice--here is equity. Beset by my enemies, I am already pronounced a heretic; I am condemned before I am examined. Were you gods omniscient, instead of an assembly of fallible men, you could not act with more sufficiency. Error is the lot of mortals; and you, exalted as you are, are subject to it. But consider, that the higher you are exalted, of the more dangerous consequence are

your errors. As for me, I know I am a wretch below your notice; but at least consider, that an unjust action, in such an assembly, will be of dangerous example.'

"This, and much more, he spoke with great elegance of language, in the midst of a very unruly and indecent assembly: and thus far, at least, he prevailed; the council ordered, that he should first answer objections, and promised that he should then have liberty to speak. Accordingly all the articles alleged against him were publicly read, and then proved; after which he was asked, whether he had ought to object? It is incredible with what acuteness he answered; and with what amazing dexterity he warded off every stroke of his adversaries. Nothing escaped him: his whole behavior was truly great and pious. If he were, indeed, the man his defense spoke him, he was so far from meriting death, that, in my judgment, he was not in any degree culpable. In a word; he endeavored to prove, that the greater part of the charges were purely the invention of his adversaries. Among other things, being accused of hating and defaming the holy see, the pope, the cardinals, the prelates, and the whole estate of the clergy, he stretched out his hands, and said, in a most moving accent, 'On which side, reverend fathers, shall I turn me for redress? whom shall I implore? whose assistance can I expect? which of you hath not this malicious charge entirely alienated from me? which of you hath it not changed from a judge into an inveterate enemy? It was artfully alleged indeed! Though other parts of their charge were of less moment, my accusers might well imagine, that if this were fastened on me, it could not fail of drawing upon me the united indignation of my judges.'

"On the third day of this memorable trial, what had passed was recapitulated: when Jerome, having obtained leave, though with some difficulty, to speak, began his oration with a prayer to God; whose assistance he pathetically implored. He then observed, that many excellent men, in the annals of history, had been oppressed by false witnesses, and condemned by unjust judges. Beginning with profane history, he instanced the death of Socrates, the captivity of Plato, the banishment of Anaxagoras, and the unjust sufferings of many others: he then instanced the many worthies of the Old Testament, in the same circumstances -- Moses, Joshua, Daniel, and almost all the prophets; and lastly those of the New--John the Baptist, St. Stephen, and others, who were condemned as seditious, profane, or immoral men. An unjust judgment, he said, proceeding from a layic was bad; from a priest, worse; still worse from a college of priests; and from a general council, superlatively bad. These things he spoke with such force and emphasis, as kept every one's attention awake.

"On one point he dwelt largely. As the merits of the cause rested entirely upon the credit of witnesses, he took great pains to show, that very little was due to those produced against him. He had many objections to them, particularly their avowed hatred to him; the sources of which he so palpably laid open, that he made a strong impression upon the minds of his hearers, and not a little shook the credit of the witnesses. The whole council was moved, and greatly inclined to pity, if not to favor him. He added, that he came uncompelled to the council; and that neither his life nor doctrine had been such, as gave him great reason to dread an appearance before them. Difference of opinion, he said, in matters of faith, had ever arisen among learned men, and was always esteemed

productive of truth, rather than of error, where bigotry was laid aside. Such, he said, was the difference between Austin and Jerome: and though their opinions were not only different, but contradictory, yet the imputation of heresy was never fixed on either.

"Every one expected, that he would now either retract his errors, or at least apologize for them; but nothing of the kind was heard from him: he declared plainly, that he had nothing to retract. He launched out into a high encomium of Huss, calling him a holy man, and lamenting his cruel and unjust death. He had armed himself, he said, with a full resolution to follow the steps of that blessed martyr, and to suffer with constancy whatever the malice of his enemies could inflict. 'The perjured witnesses,' said he, 'who have appeared against me, have won their cause: but let them remember, they have their evidence once more to give, before a tribunal where falsehood can be no disguise.'

"It was impossible to hear this pathetic speaker without emotion. Every ear was captivated, and every heart touched. But wishes in his favor were vain; he threw himself beyond a possibility of mercy. Braving death, he even provoked the vengeance which was hanging over him. 'If that holy martyr,' said he, speaking of Huss, 'used the clergy with disrespect, his censures were not leveled at them as priests, but as wicked men. He saw with indignation those revenues, which had been designed for charitable ends, expended upon pageantry and riot.'

"Through this whole oration he showed a most amazing strength of memory. He had been confined almost a year in a dungeon: the severity of which usage he complained of, but in the language of a great and good man. In this horrid place he was deprived of books and paper. Yet, notwithstanding this, and the constant anxiety which must have hung over him, he was at no more loss for proper authorities and quotations, than if he had spent the intermediate time at leisure in his study.

"His voice was sweet, distinct, and full: his action every way the most proper, either to express indignation or to raise pity; though he made no affected application to the passions of his audience. Firm and intrepid, he stood before the council, collected in himself; and not only contemning, but seeming even desirous of death. The greatest character in ancient story could not possibly go beyond him. If there is any justice in history, this man will be admired by all posterity. I speak not of his errors: let these rest with him. What I admired was his learning, his eloquence, and amazing acuteness. God knows whether these things were not the groundwork of his ruin.

"Two days were allowed him for reflection; during which time many persons of consequence, and particularly my lord cardinal of Florence, endeavored to bring him to a better mind. But persisting obstinately in his errors, he was condemned as a heretic.

"With a cheerful countenance, and more than stoical constancy, he met his fate; fearing neither death itself, nor the horrible form in which it appeared. When he came to the place, he pulled off his upper garment, and made a short prayer at the stake; to which he was soon after bound, with wet cords and an iron chain, and enclosed as high as his



breast in faggots.

"Observing the executioner about to set fire to the wood behind his back, he cried out, 'Bring thy torch hither. Perform thy office before my face. Had I feared death, I might have avoided it.' As the wood began to blaze, he sang a hymn, which the violence of the flame scarce interrupted.

"Thus died this prodigious man. The epithet is not extravagant. I was myself an eyewitness of his whole behavior. Whatever his life may have been, his death, without doubt, is a noble lesson of philosophy.

"But it is time to finish this long epistle. You will say I have had some leisure upon my hands; and to say the truth, I have not much to do here. This will, I hope, convince you, that greatness is not wholly confined to antiquity. You will think me, perhaps, tedious; but I could have been more prolix on a subject so copious. -- Farewell, my dear Leonard."  
Constance, May 20.

The news of these barbarous executions quickly reached Bohemia, where it threw the whole kingdom into confusion, and a civil war was kindled from the ashes of the martyrs. As to Wincellaus, the king, he was seldom sober, and paid no regard to the condition of his subjects. The nobility were divided into factions; some zealous to resent the insults that had been offered to the nation by the proceedings at Constance, and to repel the forces that had been introduced into the kingdom by the authority of the pope, with a view to the suppression of heresy in Bohemia, and to, compel that fierce nation to establish uniformity in religion. Sigismund, the emperor, had many respectable qualities; but he had lent himself wholly to the papacy at the council, and in consequence of the disgust which his conduct had excited, the Bohemians revolted, and under the banners of a very intrepid leader, **JOHN ZISKA**, defended their opinions not only with arguments but with arms also. At first the populace were only a harmless inquisitive staring multitude; but as the catholic priests proceeded to publish in the churches, bulls from the pope, exhorting all kings, princes, dukes, lords, citizens, and others, to take up arms against heresy, conjuring them by the wounds of Christ to extirpate heretics, and promising the forgiveness of all sins to any person who should kill a Bohemian heretic, the people seceded in great multitudes, retired to the distance of about five miles from Prague, where they held meetings for public worship, elected their own teachers, and had the Lord's supper administered to them at three hundred tables, formed by laying boards upon casks, the number of communicants amounting to forty thousand.

Their leader, John Ziska, was of a noble family, brought up at court, and in high reputation for wisdom, courage, the love of his country, and the fear of God. Fugitives daily resorted to him from all parts, and put themselves under his protections. At one time four hundred poor men, who had lived in the mountains for the sake of enjoying religious liberty, came down to Prague, with their wives and children, and ranged themselves under the banners of Ziska. It is highly probable that these were Waldenses, the descendants of those who had settled in remote parts of the kingdom more than two hundred and fifty years before. **Freedom from the Austrian yoke, deliverance from the tyranny of Rome, and the full enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, were the objects for which Ziska**

**avowedly contended, and his army presently consisted of forty thousand men.**

Aeneas Sylvius, who afterwards ascended the pontifical chair under the title of Pius II had traveled over the whole empire; and by him we are informed that the churches and religious houses in Bohemia, were more numerous, more spacious, more elegant and sumptuous, than in any other part of Europe; and that the images in public places, and the habits of the priests, were covered with jewels and precious stones. Ziska commenced his work of reform with attacking these. He demolished the images, discharged the monks, who he said, were only fattening like swine in sties, converted cloisters into barracks, conquered several towns and garrisoned Cuthna, defeated the armies of the emperor in several battles, and gave law to the kingdom of Bohemia till the time of his death, which happened in 1424. He encamped his followers on a rocky mountain about ten miles from Prague, which he soon after fortified with a wall, and within that the people built houses. This mountain he called Tabor (after Mount Tabor in the Holy Land) and thence his followers obtained the name of **Taborites**. When Ziska found himself dying he gave orders that a drum should be made of his skin; and what is equally extraordinary, his orders were faithfully obeyed. Ziska's skin, after undergoing the necessary preparations, was converted into a drum, which was long the symbol of victory to his followers. **PROCOPIUS**, a catholic priest, converted by the writings of one of the disciples of Huss, revived the spirits of the Bohemian brethren, many of whom after the death of Ziska, had retreated to caves and mountains. Uniting the military with the sacerdotal character, this champion supported the cause of his party with great courage and bravery, but fell in a battle with the Catholics. Yet so terrible had the name of the Hussites become to the emperor Sigismund, that, despairing to reduce them by the power of his arms, he entered into a compromise, allowing them the use of the cup in the eucharist, the deprivation of which had been a principal source of complaint; together with a general amnesty, and a confirmation of their privileges. But verbal and even written promises are easily retracted, where there exists no power of enforcing their accomplishment; and a right avails nothing without a remedy. The dispersed brethren ceased to be formidable. Sigismund renewed his tyranny. His immediate successors on the imperial throne were, like himself, zealous Catholics, and the friends and followers of Huss continued to be the subjects of frequent persecutions till the times of Luther.

Crantz, in his history of the Bohemian brethren informs us, that after the death of Ziska, his followers divided themselves again, according to the diversity of their opinions and views, into **Calixtines**, **Taborites**, and **Orphans**; while, such as, with a distinguished zeal urged an entire reformation, were termed **Zealots**. In times of distress, however, they all united against their common enemy; and the latter, unable to carry the point against them, granted to their deputies, at the council of Basil, in 1433, the terms contained in the following four articles, which goes by the name of **THE BOHEMIAN COMPACTATA**, or terms of agreement.

1. That the word of God shall be freely preached by able ministers, according to the Holy Scriptures, without any human invention.
2. That the Lord's supper shall be administered unto all in both kinds, and divine worship performed in the mother-tongue.

3. That open sins shall be openly punished, according to the law of God, without respect of persons.
4. That the clergy should exercise no worldly dominion, but confine themselves to preaching the gospel. [Crantz's *History*, p. 19.]

But notwithstanding these concessions, it appears evident that matters remained in a very unsettled state among the Bohemians about the middle of the century. The leading person in ecclesiastical affairs was Rokyzan, archbishop of Prague, a man of no principle whatever. The contentions of parties ran high; and this metropolitan wearied with perpetual applications for reformation, which he found it quite impracticable to carry into effect, at length advised such as were dissatisfied with the existing order of things to retire to the lordship of Lititz, between Silesia and Moravia, about twenty miles from Prague;-- a place which had been laid waste by the ravages of war, where they might establish their own regulations respecting divine worship, choose their own ministers, and introduce their own discipline and order, according to their own conscience and judgment. Numbers adopted his suggestion, and in 1457, they formed themselves into a society bearing the name of the UNITAS FRATRUM, or **UNITED BRETHREN**, binding themselves at the same time to a rigorous church discipline, and resolving to suffer all things for conscience sake; and instead of defending themselves, as the Taborites had done, by force of arms, their only weapons were to be prayer and reasonable remonstrance against the rage of their enemies. [Crantz's *History*, part 2, p. 23.]

It is highly probable that when the archbishop offered them this indulgence, he had little expectation that they would be able to carry the project into effect; it was merely an alternative which relieved him from a momentary embarrassment, and probably that was all he was concerned about; but if so, he found himself disappointed. Three years had not elapsed ere their numbers were considerable; pious persons flocked to them, not only from different parts of Bohemia, but even from every distant quarter of the whole empire; and churches were gathered everywhere throughout Bohemia and Moravia. Many of the ancient Waldenses, who had been lurking about in dens and caves of the earth, as well as upon the tops of mountains, now came forward with alacrity, and joining themselves to the "United Brethren," became eminently serviceable to the newly-formed societies, in consequence of their more advanced state of religious knowledge and experience. **Many of the new converts renounced the baptism of infants, and were baptized by the pastors** before they received them into church communion. [COMENI Synopsis *Hist. Persecutionum Ecclesiastes Bohem.* cap 18. and CAMERARIUS *de ecclesiis fratrum narratio*, p. 87. "Isthaec rebaptisatio, jam dictis tot causis usurpata et introducta a nos-tris, duravit in ecclesia nostra ad haec usque tempora." Apologia verae doctrinae eorum qui vulgo appellantur Waldenses et Picardi. D.G.M. Brandebar, Anno 1532. Par. 4, de Baptismo. "Initio erescente in caetu multitudinum hominum, et ex diversarum religionum professionibus accedente, si quis forte de vetirate baptismi christiani dubitarent, et animo suo angerentur, et conscientiam haberent malam, eos expetantes hoc curarunt denuo baptizandos, exigendo et sinceræ fidei confessionem et promissionem de observatione disciplinae et vitae sanctitate. Quem confitendi promittendique morem prisca ecclesia religiosissime tenuit. CAMERARIUS, ubi supra."]

The archbishop had not foreseen the consequences of settling these people on the crown lands. The

multiplication of their numbers, and their growing influence, soon drew upon them the attention, and excited the rancor of the catholic party. A clamor against him ensued; and the Waldenses, Picards, and other opprobrious names, by which they were stigmatized, became too numerous and too scandalous for an archbishop to patronize; he therefore found it necessary to treat them with indifference and keep them at a distance. Scarcely had three years transpired from the establishment of the society of "The United Brethren," than **a terrible persecution arose against them in Bohemia and Moravia**, and they were called to prove "what manner of spirit they were of." They were declared by the state unworthy of the common rights of subjects; and, **in the depth of winter, expelled from their houses in towns and villages, with the forfeiture of all their goods**. Even the sick were cast into the open fields, where numbers perished through cold and hunger. They threw them into prisons, with a view to extort from them, by means of the severity of their sufferings, a confession of seditious designs, and an impeachment of their accomplices: and when nothing could be extorted from them, **they were maimed in their hands and feet, inhumanely dragged at the tails of horses and carts, and quartered or burnt alive**. During this persecution, those who had it in their power to do so, retired into woods, fortresses, and caves of the earth, where they held their religious assemblies, elected their own teachers, and endeavored to strengthen and edify one another. The parent society at Lititz, being less molested than those in other places, did not cease to send messengers and letters to their persecuted brethren, with the view of strengthening their faith and exhorting them to patience. In process of time the storm subsided, though not until nearly every society of the Brethren in Bohemia was scattered or dispersed, and both the king and archbishop were removed from the stage of life. [Robinson's *Eccles, Researches*, p. 501.]

**Uladislaus**, prince of Poland, was now elected to the crown of Bohemia, and being a mild and tolerant prince, little inclined to persecution, the exiled brethren returned to their own homes, and resumed their occupations. Under this amiable monarch they cultivated their lands, applied themselves to literature, and for some years enjoyed prosperity as well as peace. According to the testimony of one of their bitter enemies, "They took such deep root, and extended their branches so far and wide, that it was impossible to extirpate them." In the year 1500, there were two hundred congregations of the United Brethren in Bohemia and Moravia. Many counts, barons, and noblemen joined their churches, who built them meeting houses in their cities and villages. **They got the Bible translated into the Bohemian tongue, and printed at Venice; when that edition was disposed of, they got two more printed at Nuremberg, and finding the demand for the Holy Scriptures continuing to increase, they established a printing office at Prague, another at Bunzlau in Bohemia, and a third at Kralitz in Moravia, where at first they printed nothing but Bohemian bibles.**

Although the king of Bohemia was extremely anxious to preserve peace and harmony among his subjects, whether Catholics, Calixtines, or the United Brethren, he found it no easy task to accomplish his wishes in that respect. "Every morning when he rose," says a late writer, "and every evening when he retired to rest, he put up this petition to God, 'Give peace in my time O Lord!' A prayer worthy of a king, but Uladislaus did not know that to attain the object of his prayer he ought to discharge his chaplains." The clergy were perpetually teasing him for an edict against heretics, and poisoning his mind with false representations of their sentiments and conduct; and they, at length, succeeded in obtaining a severe edict against them. The Brethren immediately drew up an apology, which they presented to the

king; and he, with his usual lenity, ordered his clergy to converse with the Picards, and endeavor to reclaim them by reason; but by all means to maintain peace among themselves. An order was consequently issued, requiring the principal ministers of the Brethren in Prague to hold a conference, on an appointed day, with some of the catholic clergy; but early on the morning of that day, Martin Poczatecius, the principal enemy of the Brethren, died suddenly, and the conference was postponed.

As the king was understood to be tolerant in his principles, the Brethren thought that a confession of their faith might probably produce some good, and they accordingly drew one up and sent it to his majesty, who was then in Hungary. It did not, however, answer the end at court; for the catholic bishops had recourse to a stratagem, which unhappily succeeded to their wishes. The king was passionately fond of his queen, who was at this time in an advanced state of pregnancy; and the bishops and prelates having a great ascendancy over the queen, they, therefore, most humbly and earnestly entreated her to obtain from the king an edict to suppress the Picards, for they assured themselves that, at such a time, he would not deny her majesty any request, or occasion her a moment's pain. The king one day entering her apartment, the queen mildly asked the favor. The monarch looked sad and sorrowful, but remained silent. Bossack, an Hungarian bishop, began instantly to write in the king's presence; and the edict was soon prepared and signed. The moment, however, that the humane monarch had put his name to the instrument, he quitted the room, retired to his closet, fell on his knees, burst into tears, and besought the Almighty to forgive him, and to frustrate the sanguinary purposes of these bishops against innocent men. At first the States would not allow this edict the force of law, so jealous were the Bohemians of their liberties; and it took four years to bring them to consent to a statute which prohibited the "United Brethren" from holding any religious assemblies, public or private; commanded that their meeting-houses should all be shut up: **that they should not be allowed either to preach or print**; and that within a given time they should all hold religious communion with either the Calixtines or the Catholics.

Although the catholic party had so far succeeded as to obtain this persecuting edict, they did not immediately reap from it all the happy fruits that they expected. The Bohemians were a bold and intrepid race of men, and not easily daunted. The king and wiser part of the magistrates, did not go heartily into the clerical measures of depopulation and destruction; and though the dominant party were so strong that the king durst not openly protect the Brethren, he was obliged to wink at the cruel use that was made of this persecuting statute by some bigoted magistrates; but, upon the whole, the pacific inclination of the court was generally understood, and people acted accordingly. Some emigrated; others retired and worshipped God as formerly, in remote places and in small companies; some ran all risks, and **many fell into the hands of their enemies and were punished**. A Bohemian nobleman caught six poor men at their devotions, in a small village: he accordingly had them taken up, and brought before the parish-priest to be examined. The latter asked but one question, namely, whether they would submit to him as a shepherd of souls? they answered to this, that "Christ was the shepherd of their souls"--upon which they were convicted on the statute against heresy, made in the twentieth year of their sovereign lord the king, and instantly committed to the flames. This is a fair specimen of their proceedings, and it is needless to enlarge or multiply instances.

In this manner the affairs of the Brethren proceeded, until Luther began the Reformation in Germany; at which time it would appear, that a continued series of persecutions had wasted the churches, and nearly

exhausted the survivors of their fortitude and patience; insomuch that the Brethren appear to have been meditating a compromise with the catholic church, under certain modifications; and actually wrote to Luther for his advice on the subject, in the year 1522. Sleidan has furnished us with the substance of the letter which Luther returned in reply, and it is of sufficient interest to merit insertion.

He informs them that the name of Bohemians had been some time very odious unto him, so long as he had been ignorant that the pope was Antichrist: but that now, since God had restored the light of the gospel to the world, he was of a far different opinion, and had declared as much in his books; so that at present the pope and his party were more incensed against him than against them; that his adversaries had many times given it out that he had removed into Bohemia, which he oftentimes wished to have done; but that lest they should have aspersed his progress, and called it a flight, he had altered his resolution. That as matters now stood, there were great hopes that the Germans and Bohemians might profess the doctrine of the gospel, and the same religion; that it was not without reason that many were grieved to see them so divided into sects among themselves; but that if they should again make defection to popery, sects would not only not be removed, but even be increased and more diffused, for that sects abounded no where more than among the Romanists; and that the Franciscans alone were an instance of this, who in many things differed among themselves, and yet all lived under the patronage and protection of the church of Rome. That his kingdom was, in some manner, maintained and supported by the dissensions of men; which was the reason also that made him set princes together by the ears, and afford continual matter of quarreling and contention; that, therefore, they should have special care, lest whilst they endeavor to crush those smaller sects, they fell not into far greater, such as the popish, which were altogether incurable, and from which Germany had been lately delivered. That there was no better way of removing inconveniences, than for the pastors of the churches to preach the pure word of God in sincerity. That if they could not retain the weak and giddy people in their duty, and hinder their desertion, they should at least endeavor to make them steadfast in receiving the Lord's supper in both kinds, and in preserving a veneration for the memory of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague; for that the pope would labor chiefly to deprive them of these two things; wherefore if any of them should relent, and give up both to the tyrant, it would be in done of them. But that though all Bohemia should apostatize, yet he would celebrate and commend the doctrine of Huss to all posterity. That, therefore, he prayed and exhorted them to persevere in that way which they had hitherto defended with the loss of much blood, and with the highest resolution, and not cast a reproach upon the flourishing gospel by their defection. That although all things were not established among them, as they ought to be, yet God would not be wanting, in time, to raise up some faithful servants of his, who would reform what was amiss, provided they continued constant, and utterly rejected the uncleanness and impiety of the Romish papacy. [Sleidan's *History of the Reformation*, p. 658.]

Mr. Robinson thus recapitulates the history of the Bohemian brethren. "Authentic records in France assure us, that a people of a certain description were driven from thence in the twelfth century. Bohemian records of equal authenticity inform us, that some of the same description arrived in Bohemia at the same time and settled near a hundred miles from Prague, at Saltz and Laun, on the river Eger, just on the borders of the kingdom. Almost two hundred years after, another undoubted record of the same country mentions a people of the same description, some as burnt at Prague, and others as inhabiting the borders of the kingdom; and a hundred and fifty years after that, we find a people of the same

description settled by connivance in the metropolis, and in several other parts of the kingdom. About one hundred and twenty years lower, we find a people in the same country living under the protection of law on the estate of Prince Lichtenstein exactly like all the former, and about thirty or forty thousand in number. The religious character of this people is so very different from that of all others, that the likeness is not easily mistaken. They had no priests, but taught one another. They had no private property, for they held all things jointly. They executed no offices, and neither exacted nor took oaths. They bore no arms, and rather chose to suffer than resist wrong, They held every thing called religion in the church of Rome in abhorrence, and worshipped God only by adoring his perfections, and endeavoring to imitate his goodness. They thought Christianity wanted no comment; and they professed the belief of that by being baptized, and their love to Christ and one another by receiving the Lord's supper. They aspired at neither wealth nor power, and their plan was industry. We are shown how highly probable it is that Bohemia afforded them work, wages, and a secure asylum, which were all they wanted. If these be facts, they are facts that do honor to human nature; they exhibit in the great picture of the world a few small figures in a background, unstained with the blood, and unruffled with the disputes of their fellow creatures." [*Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 527.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER 6**

### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES CONTINUED FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE FOURTEENTH TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

#### **SECTION 1**

#### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES, FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE FOURTEENTH, TO THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. A.D. 1350--1500**

It has been pertinently remarked by a late writer, that in reading the history of every country, there are certain periods at which the mind naturally pauses, to meditate upon and consider them, with reference, not only to their immediate effects, but to their more remote consequences. [Fox's *History of James II*, Introduction, p. 5.] This remark is as applicable to the history of the Christian church, as it is to that of any particular country. I have endeavored to conduct the reader through the mazes and labyrinths of that history, during a period of nearly fourteen hundred years, in which time we have traversed a dreary wilderness, through a dark and benighted season, until we are at length brought to approach the confines of light--the morning of the Reformation. In entering upon the last chapter of this book, it may be no unprofitable employ, therefore, for us to pause, and take a review of the existing state of Europe, at this interesting period, in reference to the great concern of religion. The picture,



indeed, has been already sketched by an able artist, and probably I cannot do better than present it to the reader.

"The state of religion at this time was truly deplorable. Ecclesiastical government, instead of that evangelical simplicity and fraternal freedom which Jesus Christ and his apostles had taught, was now become a spiritual domination under the form of a temporal empire. An innumerable multitude of dignities, titles, rights, honors, privileges, and pre-eminences belonged to it, and were all dependent on a sovereign priest, who, being an absolute monarch, required every thought to be in subjection to him. The chief ministers of religion were actually become temporal princes; and the high-priest, being absolute sovereign of the ecclesiastical state, had his court and his council, his ambassadors to negotiate, and his armies to murder--his flock. The clergy had acquired immense wealth; and, as their chief study was either to collect and to augment their revenues, or to prevent the alienation of their estates, they had constituted numberless spiritual corporations, with powers, rights, statutes, privileges, and officers. The functions of the ministry were generally neglected, and of consequence, gross ignorance prevailed. **All ranks of men were extremely depraved in their morals, and the pope's penitentiary had published the price of every crime**, as it was rated in the tax-book of the Roman chancery. Marriages, which reason and scripture allowed, the pope prohibited, and for money dispensed with those which both forbad. Church-benefices were sold to children, and to laymen, who then let them to under tenants, none of whom performed the duty for which the profits were paid: but all having obtained them by simony, spent their lives in fleecing the flock to repay themselves. **The power of the pontiff was so great, that he assumed, and what was more astonishing, he was suffered to exercise, a supremacy over many kingdoms.** When monarchs gratified his will, he put on a triple crown, ascended a throne, suffered them to call him Holiness, and to kiss his feet. When they disobliged him, he suspended all religious worship in their dominions; published false and abusive libels, called bulls, which operated as laws, to injure their persons; discharged their subjects from obedience; and gave their crowns to any who would usurp them. He claimed an infallibility of knowledge, and an omnipotence of strength; and he forbad the world to examine his claim. He was addressed by titles of blasphemy, and though he owned no jurisdiction over himself, yet he affected to extend his authority over heaven and hell, as well as over a middle place called purgatory, of all which places he said he kept the keys. This irregular church-polity was attended with quarrels, intrigues, schisms, and wars.

"Religion itself was made to consist of the performance of numerous ceremonies, of Pagan, Jewish, and Monkish extraction, all which might be performed without either faith in God, or love to mankind. The church ritual was an address, not to the reason, but to the senses of men; music stole the ear, and soothed the

passions; statues, paintings, vestments, and various ornaments, beguiled the eye; while the pause which was produced by that sudden attack which a multitude of objects made on the senses, on entering a spacious decorated edifice, was enthusiastically taken for devotion. Blind obedience was first allowed by courtesy, and then established by law. **Public worship was performed in an unknown tongue, and the sacrament was adored as the body and blood of Christ.** The credit of the ceremonial produced in the people a notion that the performance of it was the practice of piety, and **religion degenerated into gross superstition.** Vice, uncontrolled by reason or scripture, retained a Pagan rigor, and committed the most horrid crimes; and superstition atoned for them, by building and endowing religious houses, and by bestowing donations on the church. Human merit was introduced, saints were invoked, and the perfections of God were distributed by canonization, among the creatures of the pope.

"The pillars, that supported this edifice, were immense riches, arising, by imposts, from the sins of mankind; idle distinctions between supreme and subordinate adoration; senseless axioms, called the divinity of the schools; preachments of buffoonery, or blasphemy, or both; cruel casuistry, consisting of a body of dangerous and scandalous morality; false miracles and midnight visions; spurious books and paltry relics; oaths, dungeons, inquisitions, and crusades. The whole was denominated The Holy Catholic, and Apostolic Church, and laid to the charge of Jesus Christ" [*Memoirs of the Reformation in France*, prefixed to Saurin's Sermons, translated by Robinson, volume 1].

These things premised, we now return to the history of the Waldenses.

**About the year 1400, a violent outrage was committed upon the Waldenses** who inhabited the valley of **Pragela**, in **Piedmont**, by the catholic party resident in that neighborhood. The attack, which seems to have been of the most furious kind, was made towards the end of the month of December, when the mountains were covered with snow, and thereby rendered so difficult of access, that the peaceable inhabitants of the valleys were wholly unapprised that any such attempt was meditated; and the persecutors were in actual possession of their caves, ere the former seem to have been apprised of any hostile designs against them. In this pitiable plight they had recourse to the only alternative which remained for saving their lives--they fled to one of the highest mountains of the Alps, with their wives and children, the unhappy mothers carrying the cradle in one hand, and in the other leading such of their offspring as were able to walk. Their inhuman invaders, whose feet were swift to shed blood, pursued them in their flight, until night came on, and slew great numbers of them, before they could reach the mountains. Those that escaped, were, however, reserved to experience a fate not more enviable. Overtaken by the shades of night, they wandered up and down the mountains, covered with snow, destitute of the means of shelter from the inclemencies of the weather, or of supporting themselves

under it by any of the comforts which Providence has destined for that purpose; benumbed with cold, they fell an easy prey to the severity of the climate, and when the night had passed away, there were found in their cradles, or lying upon the snow, fourscore of their infants, deprived of life, many of the mothers also lying dead by their sides, and others just upon the point of expiring. During the night, their enemies were busily employed in plundering the houses of every thing that was valuable, which they conveyed away to Susa. A poor woman, belonging to the Waldenses, named Margaret Athode, was next morning found hanging upon a tree!

**This seems to have been the first general attack that was made by the Catholics on the Waldenses of Piedmont;** for though the former had repeatedly availed themselves of the edicts of emperors, the bulls of the popes, and the promptitude of inquisitorial zeal, to disturb their peace, and put many of them to death, during the three preceding centuries, yet such had been the protection afforded them by the Dukes of Savoy, that the rage of their adversaries was happily restricted to the occasional apprehension of a few solitary heretics, for whose good they never failed to light up the fires as often as opportunity was afforded them. But the outrageous attack that was now made upon them was a novelty, and it made a lasting impression on their minds. They had experienced nothing like it, say their own historians, either in their own time, or that of their forefathers; and for more than a century afterwards, they were wont to speak of it as of a dreadful scene which was still present to their view; and from generation to generation, they continued to relate, with deep impressions of horror, that sudden surprise which had occasioned so much affliction and calamity among them. [Vignaux's *Memoirs of the Waldenses*; Perrin's *Hist. des Vaudois*, book 2, chapter 3; Pierre Gilles *Hist. Ecclesiastes* c. 4; Morland's *Churches of Piedmont*, p. 194.]

From that period, until about the year 1487, the Waldenses of Piedmont appear to have remained, in a great measure, unmolested in the profession of their religion. But scenes of far more extensive cruelty were awaiting them, as will hereafter be shown; it is, however, necessary for us first to take a view of the proceedings against their brethren in other quarters. The persecution which had so furiously raged against them in France, during the earlier part of the thirteenth century, as detailed in a former section, and which may be said to have deluged the earth with their blood, had not wholly succeeded in extirpating the Waldenses from that country. **The vallies of Fraissiniere, Argentiere, and Loyse,\* seem to have abounded with them in the year 1450, at which time a Franciscan monk, armed with inquisitorial authority by the archbishop of Ambrun, was sent on a mission of persecution,** and to drive them from the neighborhood. Such was the ardor with which this zealot proceeded in his measures, that **scarcely any persons in those valleys escaped being apprehended either as heretics or as their abettors.** Those of them who were not of the profession of the Waldenses, had recourse to the king of France, Louis XI beseeching him to interfere, and, by his authority, put a stop to the

course of such persecutions. The monarch listened to their application, and issued his royal letters, in which he pointedly condemns the conduct of the inquisitors, who by measures the most vexatious had molested the persons, and possessed themselves of the property of innocent subjects, whom they had, with that intent, falsely accused of heresy, and annoyed with process upon process, both in the parliament of Dauphiny and of several other countries. [\* The reader should not forget the pleasing picture which Thuanus has sketched of the inhabitants of these valleys, and which has been already quoted. See pages 75-77 of this volume.]

Perrin has preserved a copy of these royal letters, in his *History of the Waldenses*: and they are entitled to regard from the disclosure which they make of the scandalous procedure of those agents of the court of Rome. A short extract will show the complexion of the whole. Thus his majesty proceeds,

"And, whereas, in order to obtain the confiscation of the goods of those whom they charge with the said crime [of heresy] several of the judges, and even of the inquisitors of the faith--are continuing to send out processes against several poor people, without any just or reasonable cause; and have put some upon the rack, calling them to answer without any previous informations lodged against them; and have condemned them for crimes of which they were not guilty, as hath afterwards been discovered; while from others they have exacted large sums of money to obtain their liberty, and molested and troubled them by divers unjust and illegal means, to the injury not only of the said supplicants, but also of us and the whole republic of our country of Dauphiny," etc. etc.--the king, therefore, puts a stop to such disgraceful proceedings; orders that all suits commenced against such persons as can give proof of their innocence be dismissed, and that restitution be made for any injury they may have sustained [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 3].

But the zeal or avarice of the archbishop of Ambrun, and his inquisitorial colleagues, was so far from being damped by his majesty's letters, that they proceeded with more energy than ever. They dexterously contrived to convert a certain clause of the letters, into an authority for their cruel proceedings, and found in it an entire justification of all their conduct; in consequence of which they resisted every application for redress or remuneration. Attempts were repeatedly made by some of these oppressed people to regain the property of which they had been despoiled; but though their cause was patronized, both by this monarch and by his successor, Charles VIII they never could obtain a remedy. **INNOCENT VIII** was raised to the pontifical chair in the year 1414, and soon after invested **Albert de Capitaneis**, archdeacon of Cremona, with full powers to act as his legate and commissioner. According to the usual practice of the popes on their accession to office, **this pontiff issued his bull for the extirpation of heresy, pointing it particularly against the Waldenses**, and arming Albert with authority to carry his will into effect. Having recounted, in a long preamble, the titles

which belonged to himself and to his "beloved son Albert," he thus proceeds: "Our hearty desires chiefly tend to this, that as touching those, for the gaining of whom to the church, the supreme Maker of all things was pleased to undergo human infirmities, we to whom he hath committed the care and government of his flock, may, with all watchful industry endeavor to withdraw them from the precipices of error, that providing for their salvation, as it shall please God to favor us with grace, we may continually labor, that the catholic faith may, in our times, be propagated, and the evil of heresy be rooted out from the borders of the faithful." After this precious specimen of dissimulation, his holiness condescends to be a little more explicit. "We have heard," says he, "and it is come to our knowledge, not without much displeasure, that certain sons of iniquity, followers of that abominable and pernicious sect of malignant men, called the Poor of Lyons, or Waldenses, who have long ago endeavored in Piedmont and other places, to ensnare the sheep belonging to God, to the perdition of their souls, having damnably risen up, under a feigned pretense of holiness--being given up to a reprobate sense, and made to err greatly from the way of truth--committing things contrary to the orthodox faith, offensive to the eyes of the Divine Majesty, and which occasion a great hazard of souls," etc., etc. "We, therefore, having determined to use all our endeavors, and to employ all our care, as we are bound by the duty of our pastoral charge, to root up and extirpate such a detestable sect--that the hearts of believers may not be damnably perverted from the catholic church--have thought good to constitute you, at this time, for the cause of God and the faith, the Nuncio Commissioner of us and of the apostolic see, within the dominions of our beloved son Charles, Duke of Savoy--to the end that you should induce the followers of the most wicked sect of the Waldenses, and all others polluted with heretical pravity--to abjure their errors etc. And, calling to your assistance all archbishops and bishops, seated in the said duchy [of Savoy] whom the Most High hath called to share with us in our cares--with the inquisitor, the ordinaries of the place, their vicars, etc.--**you proceed to the execution thereof against the aforementioned Waldenses, and all other heretics whatever, to rise up in arms against them, and by a joint communication of processes, to tread them under foot as venomous adders**; diligently providing that the people committed to their charge do persevere in the profession of the true faith--bending all your endeavors, and bestowing all your care towards so holy and so necessary an extermination of the same heretics."

In this style the pontiff proceeds through several succeeding pages, **giving directions for the raising of an army of crusaders**, appointing generals and officers to command it--issuing instructions how to seize the effects of all heretics, and dispose of the booty, etc., etc. and at length he thus closes the address to Albert. "Thou, therefore, beloved son, taking upon thee with a devout mind the burden of so meritorious a work, show thyself, in the execution thereof, so careful in word and deed, and so diligent and studious, that the much wished-for fruits may, through the grace of God, redound unto thee from thy labors, and that thou mayest not only

obtain the crown of glory which is bestowed as a reward on those that prosecute pious causes, but that thou mayest also ensure the approbation of us and of the apostolic see." --Given at Rome, at St. Peters, 27 April 1487, and the 3d of our popedom. [Morland's *Churches of Piedmont*, p. 188-198.]

Albert was no sooner vested with his high commission, than he proceeded to the south of France, where he called to his aid the king's lieutenant in the province of **Dauphiny**, who lost no time in levying troops for his service at the head of whom he himself marched, as directed by Albert, into the **VALLEY OF LOYSE**. The inhabitants, apprised of their approach, fled into their caves at the tops of the mountains, carrying with them their children, and whatever valuables they had, as well as what was thought necessary for their support and nourishment. The lieutenant finding the inhabitants all fled, and that not an individual appeared with whom he could converse, at length discovered their retreats, and causing quantities of wood to be placed at their entrances, ordered it to be set on fire. The consequence was, that **four hundred children were suffocated in their cradles, or in the arms of their dead mothers, while multitudes to avoid dying by suffocation, or being burnt to death, precipitated themselves headlong from their caverns upon the rocks below**, where they were dashed in pieces; or if any escaped death by the fall, they were immediately slaughtered by the brutal soldiery. "It is held as unquestionably true," says Perrin, "amongst the Waldenses dwelling in the adjacent valleys, that **more than three thousand persons, men and women, belonging to the valley of Loyse, perished on this occasion**. And, indeed, they were wholly exterminated, for that valley was afterwards peopled with new inhabitants, not one family of the Waldenses having subsequently resided in it; which proves beyond dispute, that all the inhabitants, and of both sexes, died at that time" [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 3].

Having completed their work of extermination in the valley of Loyse, they next proceeded to that of **FRAISSINIERE**; but Albert's presence and that of the army being found necessary in another quarter, he appointed as his substitute in these valleys a Franciscan monk, who, in the year 1489, began to exhibit fresh informations against the inhabitants of Fraissiniere. He cited them to appear before him at Ambrun; but disregarding his citation, they were first excommunicated, then anathematized, and lastly, condemned as contumacious heretics, to be delivered over to the secular power, and their goods confiscated. A counselor, of the name of Ponce, attended on this occasion in behalf of the parliament of Dauphiny, the object of which was supposed to be that of precluding any appeal being made from this mixt judgment. The sentence was pronounced at the great church of Ambrun, and afterwards fixed upon the door of the church--to which were appended thirty-two articles of the faith of the Waldenses, chiefly relating to the mass, purgatory, the invocation of saints, pilgrimages, the observance of feasts, the distinction of meats on certain days, etc. on all which subjects they were regarded as heretical. To these,

indeed, were added some detestable charges, concerning incest and uncleanness, but which, as they never had the semblance of probability to support, or even render them plausible, I deem it unnecessary to particularize.

The persecution which ensued, is said to have been extremely severe. For the Waldenses being condemned as heretics by the inquisitor; Ponce, the counselor, and Oronce, the judge, **committed them to the flames, as fast as they were apprehended, without permitting them to make any appeal.** The number of sufferers was also considerably augmented on another ground; for, **whoever presumed to intercede in their behalf, though it were the child for the parent, or the parent for the child, he was instantly committed to prison, and himself prosecuted as a favorer of heretics.** [Perrin's *History* book 2, chapter 3.]

While these merciless proceedings were going on against the Waldenses in France, Albert de Capatineis had advanced in the year 1488, at the head of eighteen thousand soldiers, against the valleys of **PIEDMONT**. The invading army was also joined by many of the Piedmontese Catholics, who hastened to it from all parts, allured by the specious promise of obtaining the remission of their sins, and the hope of sharing in the sweets of plunder. The more effectually to get possession of the country, the enemy's forces were divided into detachments, and marching in different directions against Angrogne, Lucerne, la Perouse, St. Martin, Praviglarm, and Biolet, which is in the marquisate of Saluces; thus, as it were, encompassing the whole of the valleys. They also raised troops in Dauphiny, to overrun the valley of Pragela. But the Waldenses, armed with wooden targets and cross bows, availing themselves of the advantages of their situation, everywhere defended the passes of their mountains, and repulsed their invaders--"the women and children on their knees, during the conflict, entreating the Lord to protect his people."

When information of this affair was brought to the Duke of Savoy, his heart was touched with compassion towards his subjects. He was convinced they had always been a loyal and obedient people, and he candidly distinguished between the resistance which on this occasion, his subjects had made, and a spirit of sedition and turbulence. They sent a deputation to wait upon him, and explain the motives of their conduct; at the same time offering an apology for whatever might seem improper. The prince accepted their apology and forgave them what was passed. But having been informed that their young children were born with black throats--that they were hairy, and had four rows of teeth, with only one eye, and that placed in the middle of their forehead, he commanded some of them to be brought before him to Pignerol, where, being satisfied by ocular demonstration, that the Waldenses were not monsters, he blamed himself for being so easily imposed upon by the clergy of the catholic church, as to credit such idle reports; and, at the same time, declared his determination to protect them henceforward in the undisturbed possession of those privileges which had been allowed their ancestors, and which the rest of his

subjects in Piedmont still enjoyed. [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 3; Morland's *History*, p. 223.]

But though this declaration sufficiently manifested the kind intentions of the prince towards his subjects, he seems to have wanted the power necessary for carrying them into effect. The inquisitors, who lay in ambush in a convent near Pignerol, issued their processes daily against the Waldenses, and as often as they could apprehend any of them they were delivered over for punishment to the secular power. In this way they continued to harass them in that quarter until the year 1532. And it appears from their history, that by these means a visible impression was made upon their public church-meetings. The fear of the inquisitors had imperceptibly led them to study to avoid publicity; and in process of time they assembled for worship wholly in private. In the year last mentioned, however, they seem to have been sensibly struck with the impropriety of this mode of procedure; for upon reviewing the existing state of matters among them, they came to the determination no longer to conceal their meetings for worship, but resolved that their elders should preach the gospel openly and boldly, unawed by the apprehension of danger from their adversaries.

The Duke of Savoy, instigated by the archbishop and the inquisitor of Turin, seems to have taken umbrage at this reappearance in public of the Waldenses; for, on being told of it, he so far yielded to the solicitations of the clergy, as to dispatch one of his officers at the head of five hundred men, horse and foot, who, before the inhabitants were apprised, entered the valleys, pillaging, plundering, and laying waste whatever came in their way. The unsuspecting people were, at the time the army approached, industriously employed about the cultivation of their lands. But recovering from the panic into which they had been thrown by this unexpected attack, they took courage, and every man quitting his plough and his agricultural pursuits, they fled to the passes of their mountains, which they secured; and then arming themselves with slings and stones, encountered their invaders so manfully that they compelled them to flee, leaving their booty behind, and many of their men dead upon the field. When the news of this reached the Duke of Savoy, he remarked that experience had sufficiently shown it to be an improper plan to attempt to reclaim and subdue the inhabitants of Piedmont by military force; the strength of their country, and their intimate acquaintance with the defiles and passes of the mountains giving them an infinite advantage over their assailants; and, therefore, while the skin of one of the Waldenses was to be purchased at the expense of the lives of a dozen of his other subjects, it was foolish to proceed in that way. He consequently, declined employing his military force any more against them, and relinquished it to the inquisitors after heresy, to apprehend them two or three at a time, as they came in or went out of the valleys. [Morland's *History*, p. 224.]

I believe I must here interrupt the narrative, for the purpose of introducing a short extract from that lively French writer, Monsieur Voltaire, in which he furnishes us



with an estimate of the character of the Waldenses in France, of whom we have been speaking. It is interesting to compare the opinions of different writers upon any particular subject; and the reader cannot be displeased at having the opportunity of seeing how nearly, on this topic, those of Voltaire, a man of no religion, coincided with the sentiments of the liberal Sleidan, and the incomparable Thuanus, to both of whom we have already had occasion to advert, and shall again in the sequel.

"In the twelfth century, there was one Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, whose piety and errors are said to have given rise to the Vaudois, (Waldenses.) This man having retired with several poor people, whom he maintained, to the desert valleys betwixt Provence and Dauphine, acted both as their high-priest and father, instructing them in his doctrine, in which he differed very little from the Albigenses, or from Wickliff, John Huss, Luther, and Zuinglius, in regard to several of the chief articles. These men lived a great while in obscurity, busied in the culture of barren lands, which, with indefatigable industry, they rendered fit for corn and pasture: a proof of our being greatly to blame, if through neglect, we suffer any part of France to be uncultivated. The neighboring grounds were let to them on leases; and they improved them by their labor, so as to maintain themselves, and to enrich their landlords, who never complained of their behavior. In the space of 250 years, their number increased to near 18,000, who were dispersed in thirty small towns, besides hamlets. All this was the fruit of their industry. There were no priests among them, no quarrels about religious worship, no law-suits; they determined their differences among themselves. None but those who repaired to the neighboring cities knew that there existed any such things as mass or bishops. They prayed to God in their own jargon [what Mons. Voltaire means by this uncouth speech is, that the Waldenses had no liturgy or forms of public prayer], and, being continually employed, they had the happiness to know no vice. This peaceful state they enjoyed for above 200 years, since the wars against the Albigenses, with which the nation had been wearied. When mankind have long rioted in cruelty, their fury abates and sinks into languor and indifference; as we see constantly verified both in the case of individuals and whole nations. Such was the tranquillity which the Waldenses enjoyed, when the reformers of Germany and Geneva came to hear that there were others of the same persuasion as themselves. Immediately they sent some of their ministers, a name given to the curates of the Protestant churches, to visit them; and since then, the Waldenses are but too well known" [Voltaire's *Universal History*, volume 2, p. 338, 12mo. edit. Edin. 1782].

So for Mons. Voltaire, whose narrative, considering the principles of the author, is as candid and correct as could reasonably be expected. Of the number of persons who professed the faith of the Waldenses, both within and without the valleys of Piedmont, at the beginning of the sixteenth century--the period when Luther broke off from the church of Rome and began the Reformation in Germany, it would be

impossible to attain any certainty. But it is presumed the reader will have seen enough in the preceding pages to satisfy him, that the opinion which has so currently prevailed among us, of the almost total extinction of the Christian profession, in its purity, at the time of, and for ages preceding, the Lutheran reformation, is altogether a popular error. There was a period, in the history of ancient Israel, when idolatry and profaneness appeared to have so wholly deluged the land, that the prophet Elijah was led to consider himself as a solitary worshipper of the true God, in the midst of the creation. Yet the Lord had reserved to himself seven thousand souls who had not bowed the knee to Baal, although unknown to the prophet. It appears from what Voltaire has just remarked, and, indeed, an attentive reader of the works of Luther and his associates will easily perceive, that their minds labored under a somewhat similar mistake as to their own case. It was not without surprise they learnt, that there were numbers around them, in every country, opposed to the corruptions of the church of Rome, and sighing in secret for a reform. It may also be added, that Protestants in every succeeding age have but too implicitly imbibed their error. [I might instance in proof of this fact, even in our own times, Mr. Cox's interesting *Life of Melancthon*, recently published. The author of that work does indeed speak of "Waldus, Wickliff, Huss, and Jerome of Prague," as of imperishable names; and he adds, "but in vain did they struggle against the torrent of corruption that deluged the earth. They could oppose, in their respective times and stations, but a momentary resistance, and were swept away. Their efforts, indeed, produced some effects, but they were evanescent, for 'darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.' But when Luther appeared," etc., page 3. Now what I object to, in this statement is, that it is calculated to mislead the reader, inasmuch as it has a tendency to impress him with this very erroneous notion, that during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, the four individuals, whose names he records, were the only advocates of reform. **Thus the thousands, and tens of thousands, of the Waldenses and Albigenses, who at the constant peril, and generally at the expence of their lives, kept up a standing testimony against the abominations of the man of sin, are wholly overlooked!** This is scarcely pardonable in a Dissenter who knew better, and can only have arisen from the most culpable inadvertency.]

The blessed God hath never left himself without witnesses in the world; and even during the reign of Antichrist--a period of the most general and awful defection from the purity of his worship, he had reserved to himself thousands and tens of thousands of such as kept his commandments and the faith of Jesus. Nor is there any thing in this to occasion our surprise. The real followers of Christ are subjects of a kingdom that is not of this world. And having no national establishment, nor aiming at worldly power, their principles and conduct have seldom been thought worthy of regard by the world, except in so far as their public testimony against it has subjected them to persecution. The true profession of Christianity leads its friends to cultivate peace and union among themselves, and, like its divine author, to

avoid all turbulence and faction in the state.

But amidst the rubbish of error, as a late writer has justly remarked, which had accumulated century after century till the Reformation, God determined to erect the temple of Truth, and his providence cleared an ample space, chose a variety of workmen, and reared the admirable structure. And as in the erection of a building, it is necessary that there be different kinds of laborers, all cooperating together and all essential to complete the undertaking, so it was requisite, in erecting this great edifice, to prepare and to employ persons very differently constituted, but all capable of useful cooperation. If the Reformation claimed the steady efforts of true courage and inextinguishable zeal, it ought also to be remembered, that it no less required a proportion of nice discernment, elegant taste, and literary skill;--if a superstition which invested a mortal with the prerogative of infallibility, were to be attacked and leveled with the dust, the ignorance which, with its characteristic blindness supported that superstition, was at the same time to be dethroned and demolished; if old abuses were to be removed, and a new order of things to be introduced and systematized, it was desirable to find not only a nervous, but a polished mind, at once to clear away the rubbish of error, and clothe unwelcome novelties with attractive beauty;--in a word, if existing circumstances called for a LUTHER, they also demanded a MELANCTHON. [Cox's life of Melancthon, p. 38.]

In the year 1530, George Morel, one of the pastors of a church of the Waldenses, published *Memoirs of the History of their Churches*, in which he states, that at the time he wrote, there were above eight hundred thousand persons professing the religion of the Waldenses [Morland's *Evangelical Churches*, p. 224]; nor will this appear an exaggerated statement, if we consider the view that was given, in the last section, of their dispersions throughout almost every country of Europe--the immense numbers that suffered martyrdom; and what was formerly mentioned, that in the year 1315, namely two centuries before this time, there were eighty thousand of them in the small kingdom of Bohemia.

It seems reasonable, however, to conclude, that the Waldenses must have beheld with infinite satisfaction, the schism which took place in the Roman church, when Luther and his associates withdrew from its communion. For, independent of the labors of this intrepid reformer, the great cause for which the Waldenses were contending, viz. the purity of the doctrines of the gospel, and the simplicity of christian worship--was powerfully supported by a host of learned men, who rose up in rapid succession, and ranged themselves on the side of Luther. Among these were Philip Melancthon, John Ecolampadius, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, Theodore Beza; Zuinglius, Peter Martyr, Bullinger, and many others all advocates of reform, and men of eminent talents, who, by their various labors, both from the pulpit and the press, contributed greatly to disseminate the knowledge of divine truth, and free the minds of their contemporaries from the slavish shackles of ignorance and superstition.

But although we may readily conceive the pleasure which it must have yielded the Waldenses, to contemplate the labors of these great men in so glorious a cause, they do not appear to have acted precipitately in interfering with them, or soliciting an union of churches. **The reformers, with all their zeal and learning, were babes in scriptural knowledge, when compared with the more illiterate Waldenses--** particularly in regard to the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and its institutions, laws, and worship in general. Luther, for instance; besides that both he and Calvin always contended for a form of national Christianity--a principle which, the moment it is received into the mind, must necessarily darken it as to the nature of the kingdom of Christ; **Luther, with all his zeal against popery, was never able to disentangle his own mind from the inexplicable doctrine of transubstantiation,** which he had imbibed in the church of Rome. He, indeed, changed the name, but he retained all the absurdity of the thing. He rejected the word transubstantiation, but insisted strenuously on a consubstantiation--that is, the bread and wine were not changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, but the body and blood of Christ were really and actually present in the elements of bread and wine, and were therefore literally eaten and drank by the communicants! **[It is not intended by this remark, to insinuate any disparagement to the character of this great reformer,** of whose laborious exertions in the cause of truth and virtue no one can entertain a higher opinion than myself. His praise is in all the churches, and will be handed down to the latest posterity with increasing lustre. Let me further add, that, what appears to me the most amiable and interesting part of his character, seems to be the least generally known among us in the present day. To explain my meaning, I shall here quote a passage from the writings of one of his contemporaries, who, in a letter to Philip Melancthon, thus describes him: "I cannot sufficiently admire the extraordinary cheerfulness, constancy, faith, and hope of this man, in these trying and vexatious times. He continually nourishes these good affections, by a very diligent study of the word of God. Then not a day passes in which he does not occupy in prayer at least three of his very best hours. I once happened to hear him at prayer. Gracious God! What spirit and what faith there was in his language! He petitions God with as much reverence as if he were actually in the divine presence, and yet with as firm a hope and confidence, as he would address a father and a friend. "I know," says he, "thou art our Father and our God; therefore I am sure thou wilt bring to nought the persecutors of thy children. For shouldst thou fail to do this, thine own cause, being connected with ours, would be endangered. It is entirely thine own concern: we, by thy providence, have been compelled to take a part. Thou, therefore, wilt be our defense." "Whilst I was listening to Luther praying in this manner at a distance, my soul seemed on fire within me, to hear the man address God so like a friend, and yet with so much gravity and reverence; and also to hear him in the course of his prayer, insisting on the promises contained in the Psalms, as if he were certain his petitions would be granted."-Caelst I. 375, Com. de Luth. 59.]

And with respect to **Calvin**, it is manifest, that the leading, and to me at least, the most hateful feature in all the multiform character of popery adhered to him through life--I mean **the spirit of persecution**. Holding, as I do, many doctrinal sentiments in common with Calvin, I am prompted to speak my opinion of him with the less reserve. I regard him as a man whom the Creator had endowed with transcendent talents, and have no doubt that he knew what "flesh and blood could never reveal to him." He seems to have been blessed with an extraordinary insight into the economy of human redemption, as revealed in the sacred writings; and his vast and capacious mind took a comprehensive grasp of a system which angels contemplate with wonder and amazement, and in which they study the manifold wisdom of God. No mere man, probably, ever surpassed Calvin, in his indefatigable labors, according to the measure of his bodily strength, in making known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus, both from the pulpit and the press; and his bitterest enemies cannot deny that the progress of the Reformation was wonderfully accelerated by his means.

Yet, with all these excellencies, Calvin was a persecutor! He had yet to learn, or at least how to practice, that simple lesson of the kingdom of heaven, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." Calvin could never comprehend, how another man could have as great a right to think wrong, as he himself had to think right! And that it is the sole prerogative of the King of Zion to punish his enemies and the corrupters of his truth. Upon this point his judgment was perverted by the principles of his education, and unhappily for his own character and the cause of truth, his conduct was founded upon this erroneous judgment. His behavior throughout the whole affair of Servetus, is too well known to need any explanation in this place; but I conceive it to be the imperious duty of every friend to toleration and the rights of conscience, to express their marked abhorrence of this part of the character of Calvin. And more especially is it the duty of those, the similarity of whose theological creed to that which he contended for, hath subjected them to the imputation of being his followers. As an obscure, and humble individual of that class, I strenuously deprecate every attempt to palliate the enormity of Calvin's conduct in the instance referred to, by pleading, as many have done, that Socinus was as bitter a persecutor as himself: for until it be made apparent to my understanding how two blacks constitute one white, I must regard such pleas as extremely ill-judged. The truth is, and it ought to be avowed, that the conduct of Calvin admits of no apology! It was a violent outrage upon the laws of humanity as well as upon the laws of God, and has fixed a stigma upon the character of that otherwise great man, which will never be obliterated. But let not the enemies of the truth, from this take occasion, as they too often have done, to identify the spirit of persecution with the doctrines which Calvin held. His conduct, in this particular, has drawn tears of lamentation and regret from the eyes of thousands, since his time, on account of the reproach it has brought upon the way of truth, "causing it to be evil spoken of," and it will continue to suffuse with all the consciousness of shame, the cheeks of thousands yet unborn.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 2**

### **HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES FROM THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY; AND MORE ESPECIALLY OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THEM IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE. A.D. 1500-1550**

The history of Modern Europe does not present us with a more interesting period than the commencement of the sixteenth century, the era at which we are now arrived. The sanguinary proceedings that had been carried on against the Waldenses in the southern provinces of France, towards the close of the former century, had apparently exhausted the malice of the court of Rome; the heretics, for the moment at least, were driven from public view; and the state of the catholic church was more than usually tranquil. The empire and the priesthood, which for several centuries had been constantly in arms against each other, had depopulated Italy, Germany, and almost every other country in Europe, but the contest ended in the triumph of the church. The Roman pontiffs, says a late writer, have always possessed an advantage over the other sovereigns of Europe, from the singular union of ecclesiastical and temporal power in the same person; two engines which long experience had taught them to use with a dexterity equal to that with which the heroes of antiquity availed themselves by turns of the shield and the spear. When schemes of ambition and aggrandizement were to be pursued; the pope, as a temporal prince, could enter into alliances, raise supplies, and furnish his contingent of troops, so as effectually to carry on an offensive war; but no sooner was he endangered by defeat, and alarmed for the safety of his own government, than he

resorted for shelter to his pontifical robes, and loudly called upon all Christendom to defend from violation the head of the holy church. These characters were successively assumed with great address and advantage; and although some difficulties might occasionally arise in the exercise of them, yet the world has been sufficiently indulgent to their situation; nor has even the shedding of Christian blood been thought an invincible objection to the conferring on a deceased pontiff the honor of adoration, and placing him in the highest order of sainthood conferred by the church. [Roscoe's *Life and Pontificate of Leo X*, volume 1, chapter 1; the reference is to the case of Saint Leo IX.]

At the opening of the sixteenth century the pontifical chair was filled by **Alexander VI** who died in 1508, after a reign of eleven years, leaving behind him a memory, says Voltaire, more odious than the Nero's or Caligula's, because a greater degree of guilt arose from the sanctity of his character. He was succeeded by **Julius II** who, after a military but successful reign of a few years, gave place to the celebrated **Leo X** in whose pontificate Luther commenced hostilities with the papacy, threw off his allegiance to the See of Rome, and entered upon his career of reform. A.D. 1517.

To enter upon any thing like a circumstantial detail of the History of the Reformation, would not only demand much more space than can be allotted to it in the present undertaking, but would also, in a great measure, be to depart from my leading object. Nor, indeed, is such a narrative called for by the public exigence. Any deficiency of that kind which may be experienced by the readers of the present work, may be readily supplied by consulting the authors mentioned below, whose writings are in the hands of every scholar. [Milner's *History of the Christian Church*, volume 4; and Sleidan's *History of the Reformation*; Robertson's *History of Charles V*, etc., etc.] Instead, therefore, of treading this beaten track over again, I shall only remark upon it, that the flame which was kindled throughout Europe, at this time, by the preaching and writings of Luther and his associates, so completely occupied the attention of the catholic party for about a dozen years, namely, from 1517 to 1530, that the Waldenses, both in France and Piedmont, were happily, in a great measure, overlooked. But as the conflagration excited by Luther's hostility gradually subsided, they began again to attract the notice of their adversaries and to come in for an equal share of their malice and malignity; of the truth of which the reader will soon have before him abundant proof.

In the year 1530, the Waldenses seem to have been entirely employed in paving the way for a more unreserved intercourse between them and the German Reformers. Such of them as resided in the south of France, had, at this time, been sustaining the fire of papal persecution, and it would seem that they had not encountered it with their usual fortitude. Many amongst them had been induced to shrink from the cross; and to avoid its inconvenience, were fallen into the practice of feigning a complaisant kind of acquiescence with the national forms of worship. Some of the

Waldensian churches of Provence appear to have been deeply affected at seeing this Laodicean conduct prevail; and to bring the matter to its proper bearing, they commissioned two of their pastors, viz. George Morel and Peter Burgoine, to confer with the other churches and with some of the Reformers upon that subject. They first visited their sister churches in the neighboring provinces of Dauphiny, and from thence proceeded on their journey towards Germany, to have a personal interview with John Ecolampadius, minister of Basle, in Switzerland; with Martin Bucer, at Strasburgh; and Richard Haller, at Berne. The churches sent letters by them explaining their situation, and asking their advice. The following is an extract of their letter to Ecolampadius.

Health be to you, Mr. Ecolampadius,

"Whereas several persons have given us to understand that He who is able to do all things hath replenished you with the blessings of his Holy Spirit, as conspicuously appear by its fruits, we have recourse to you from a far country under the firm hope and confidence, that by your means the Holy Spirit will enlighten our minds into the knowledge of several things, concerning which we, at present, stand in doubt." They then proceed to explain the immediate occasion of their writing--"We, poor instructors of this small people," say they, **"have sustained, for above these four hundred years, most severe and cruel persecutions,** not without signal marks of Christ's favor, as all the faithful can testify; for he has often interposed for the deliverance of his people, when under the harrow of these cruel and severe persecutions; and we now come unto you for advice and consolation in this our state of distress," etc., etc.

The particular subjects of difficulty and distress may be easily gathered from the letter which Ecolampadius wrote them in reply, and which is so excellent that I shall here insert it entire.

Ecolampadius wishes the grace of God, through Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit, to his well-beloved brethren in Christ, called WALDENSES.

"We understand that the fear of persecution hath caused you to conceal and dissemble your faith. Now, with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. But those who are afraid to confess Christ before the world, shall find no acceptance with God the Father; for our God is truth without any dissimulation; and as he is a jealous God, he cannot endure that any of his servants should take upon them the yoke of antichrist. For there is no fellowship or communion between Christ and Belial; and if you communicate with infidels, by going to their abominable masses, you will there hear blasphemies against the death and sufferings of Christ. For when they boast, that



by means of such sacrifices they make satisfaction to God for the sins of both the living and the dead, what naturally follows from thence, but that Christ by his death hath not made sufficient expiation and satisfaction, and consequently that Christ is not Jesus--that is, not a Savior, and that he died for us in vain? That if we participate of that impure table, we thereby declare ourselves to be of one and the same body with the wicked, however contrary we may pretend it to be to our wills and inclinations. And when we say Amen to their prayers, do we not deny Christ?

**"What death ought we not rather to undergo; what torture and torment ought we not rather to endure--nay, into what abyss of woe and misery ought we not rather to plunge ourselves, than by our presence to testify our consent to, and approbation of, the blasphemies of the wicked?** I know that your infirmity is great; but those who have been taught that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, ought to be more courageous, and always to stand in awe of Him who can cast both body and soul into hell. And what! is it enough for us to have preserved this life alone? Shall this be more precious to us than that of Christ? And are we satisfied with having enjoyed the delights and pleasures of this world? Are there not crowns laid before us, and shall we flinch back and recoil? Who will believe that our faith was true and sincere, if it want zeal and ardor in the time of persecution? We beseech the Lord to increase your faith. But surely it is better for us to lose our lives than to be overcome by temptations. And, therefore, brethren, I beseech you thoroughly to consider this matter; for if it be lawful for us to conceal our faith under the tyranny of antichrist, it must be lawful so to do under that of the Turk, and, with Dioclesian, to worship a Jupiter or a Venus. It would then have been lawful for Tobit to worship the calf in Bethel--and what then will become of our faith towards God? **If we do not pay to God that honor which is due to him, and if our lives be nothing else than hypocrisy and dissimulation, he will spue us out of his mouth, like base and lukewarm wretches.** And how shall we glorify the Lord in the midst of sufferings and tribulations, if we deny him! We must not, brethren, look back, when once we have put our hand to the plough; nor must we yield to the dictates and instigations of our flesh, which by prompting us to sin, though it may endure many things that are distressing in this world--may, after all, suffer shipwreck in the haven."

This excellent letter came very opportunely to the aid of the poor persecuted Waldenses, who were immediately called to carry its principles into effect. Peter Masson, one of their pastors, and messengers of the churches on this occasion, returning home, was seized at Dijon, and condemned to death as a Lutheran. George Morel narrowly escaped with his letters and papers, but arrived safe in Provence, where he labored assiduously and with much success in re-establishing the Waldensian churches. But the reader will best learn the state of affairs among the Waldensian brethren in the south of France, from the year 1540 to 1550, by my laying before him the following extracts from two eminent writers, who lived shortly

after the events which they have recorded, and whose works are of unquestionable veracity; and I the rather do this, that I may not be suspected of any wish to exaggerate the sanguinary proceedings of the catholic party against the Waldenses. The following is Sleidan's account.

"In Provence, in France, there are a people called Waldenses, who, by an ancient custom, acknowledge not the pope of Rome, having always professed a greater purity of doctrine; and, since Luther appeared, eagerly thirsted after knowledge. Many times had they been complained of to the king, as despisers of magistrates and fomenters of rebellion, which envious, rather than true accusation, is by most made use of at this day. They live together in some towns and villages, amongst which is Merindole. **About five years since, sentence was pronounced against them in the parliament of Aix, the chief judicature of the province, that they shall all promiscuously be destroyed, that the houses shall be pulled down, the village leveled with the ground, all the trees also cut down, and the place rendered a desert.** Now though this sentence was pronounced, yet it was not then put in execution, William de Bellay, of Langey, the king's lieutenant in Piedmont, with some others, having represented the matter to the king, as a case that ought to be reviewed by himself. But, at length, this year, 1545, John Meinier, president of the parliament of Aix, having, April the 12th, called the parliament, read to them the king's letters, which warranted him to put the sentence into execution. Now Meinier is said to have procured these letters by means of the Cardinal of Tournon, and the solicitation of Philip Cortine, a proper agent in the case. However, having received them in the month of January, he did not immediately produce them, but kept them till a season more proper for the exploit. The letters being read, some of the parliament were selected to see the matter put in execution, to whom Meinier offered himself as assistant, because that in the absence of Grignian, the governor of the province, he had the chief command. Before that time, he had by the king's orders raised forces for the English war, and these he made use of for his purpose: besides these, he commanded all that were able to carry arms in Marseilles, Aix, Aries, and other populous places, to repair to him, under severe penalties, if they disobeyed, having assistance likewise sent him from the country of Avignon, under the dominion of the pope. The first attempt then was not made upon those of Merindole, but upon the country adjoining the town of Pertuse. April the thirteenth, Meinier attended by a multitude of gentleman and officers, came to Cadenet. In the meantime some officers made an irruption into one or two villages upon the river of La Druance, and putting all to fire and sword, plundered and carried away a great many cattle. The same also was done in other places, whilst those of Merindole seeing all in a flame about them, left their habitations, flew into the woods, and in great consternation spent the night at the village of Sainfalaise. The inhabitants of that place were themselves preparing to fly; for the pope's vice-legate had ordered some officers to fall upon them, and put them to the sword. Next day they

advanced farther into the woods; for they were beset on all hands with danger, **Meinier having made it death for any person to aid or assist them, and commanding them all, without respect, to be killed wherever they were found.** The same edict was in force in the neighboring places of the pope's jurisdiction, and some bishops of that country were reported to have maintained a great part of those forces. They had a tedious and uneasy journey of it then, marching with their children on their backs and in their arms, nay, and some in the cradle; poor women also big with child following them. When they were got to the appointed place, whither many in that forlorn condition had fled, they had intelligence not long after, that Meinier was mustering together all his forces, that he might fall upon them, and this news they learnt towards the evening. Wherefore, consulting together what was best to be done, they resolved upon the spot, because the ways were rough and difficult, to leave their wives, daughters, and little children there, with some few to bear them company, amongst whom was one of their ministers, and the rest betook themselves to the town of Mus: this they did in hope, that the enemy might show some compassion towards a helpless and comfortless multitude. But what wailing and lamentation, what sighing and embracing, there was at parting, any man may easily imagine. Having marched all night long, and passed the mountain De Leberon, they had the sad prospect of many villages and farms all in a flame. Meinier, in the meantime, having divided his forces, set about the work; and, because he had got intelligence of the place to which those of Merindole, had betaken themselves, he himself marched to Merindole and sent the rest of his men in search and pursuit of them. But, before these were come into the wood, one of the soldiers, moved with pity, ran before, and from the top of a rock, in the place where he judged the poor fugitives might have rested, he threw down two stones, calling to them by intervals, though he did not see them, that they should instantly fly for their lives. And at the same instant, two of those who had betaken themselves to Mus came; and having got notice of the enemy's approach, advised the minister of the church, and the rest of those few guards that were left with the women, to be gone, having showed them a steep way through the wood, by which they might escape all danger in their flight. Hardly were these gone, when the raging soldiers came in shouting and making a frightful noise, and with drawn swords preparing for the butchery. However, at that time, they forbore to kill, but having committed many insolencies, and robbed the poor creatures of all their money and provisions, they carried them away prisoners. They had purposed to have used them more basely, but a captain of horse prevented it, who by chance coming in, threatened them, and commanded them to march straight to Meinier; so that they proceeded no farther, but leaving the women there, who were about five hundred in number, they carried off the cattle and booty. In the meantime Meinier came to Merindole, and finding it forsaken by the inhabitants, he plundered and set it on fire, which was ushered in by a very cruel action; for **having found there one single youth, he commanded him to be tied to an olive tree, and there shot**

**to death.** He marched next to **Cabriere**, and began to batter the town; but, by the mediation of Captain Poulain, he persuaded the town's people, upon promise of indemnity, to open the gates; which being done, and the soldiers let in, after a little pause, **all were put to the sword, without respect to age or sex.** Many fled to the church, others to other places, and some into the wine-cellar of the castle; but being dragged out into a meadow, and **stripped naked, they were all put to the sword,** not only the men, but also the women, and many of these with child too. Meinier also shut up about **forty women in a barn full of hay and straw, and then set it on fire;** and after that, the poor creatures having attempted, in vain, to smother the fire with their clothes, which for that end they had pulled off, betook themselves to the great window, at which the hay is commonly pitched up into the barn, with an intention to leap down from thence: but they were kept in with pikes and spears, so that all of them perished in the flames; and this happened on the twentieth of April. Meinier after this sent part of his forces to besiege the town of **Coste**; but when they were just upon their march, those were found, who, as we said a little before, had fled into the wine-cellar of the castle: a noise being thereupon raised, as if there had been some ambush laid, the soldiers were recalled, who put every man of them to the sword. **The number of the slain, as well in the town as abroad in the fields, amounted to eight hundred!** The young infants, which survived the fury, were for the most re-baptized by the enemy. Affairs thus dispatched at Cabriere, the forces were sent to Coste: the lord of that town had beforehand agreed with the inhabitants, that they should carry their arms into the castle, and in four places make breaches in the walls; which if they did, he promised them that he would use his interest, which he knew could easily prevail with Meinier, that they should receive no damage. Being over persuaded, they obeyed; and he departed with a purpose seemingly to treat and intercede for them; but he was not gone far before the soldiers met him, who nevertheless proceeded in their march, and attacked the place. At the first onset they did but little, but next day they more briskly renewed the assault: and having burnt all the suburbs about, they easily became masters of the place, and the rather, that the night before, most had deserted the town and fled, having got down over the walls by ropes. After the victorious had put all that stood in their way to fire and sword, they ran into a garden adjoining the castle, and there satiated their lust upon the women and young girls promiscuously, who in great fear and consternation had fled thither, and for a day and night's time, that they kept them shut up there, **so inhumanely and barbarously did they use them, that the pregnant women and younger girls shortly after died of it.** In the meantime the Merindolians, and many others, who wandered with them over the woods and rocks, being taken, **were either sent to the galleys, or put to death, and many also were starved.** Not far also from the town of Mus, as we mentioned before, some five-and-twenty men had got into a cave, and kept lurking there, but being betrayed, all of them were either smothered with smoke, or burnt: so that no kind of cruelty was omitted. Some,

however, that had escaped this butchery, got to Geneva, and the places thereabouts. When the news of this was brought into Germany, many were highly offended thereat; and the Swiss, who are not of the popish religion, interceded with the French king, that he would be merciful to those who had fled their country. But the king answered them, that he had just cause for what he had done; and that what he did within his own territories, and how he punished the guilty, concerned them no more to know, than it did him what was done amongst them" [Sleidan's *History of the Reformation*, book 16.]

I cannot better close this section than by an extract from an eminent catholic writer, who was contemporary with the dreadful occurrences which he has so impartially recorded; and notwithstanding its length, and also that it touches upon some particulars already adverted to by Sleidan, I persuade myself that its importance and interesting nature will more than compensate for its prolixity.

"When the inhabitants of Merindole and Cabriere, at the report of those things which were done in Germany, lifted up their crests, and hiring teachers out of Germany, discovered themselves more manifestly than they had done before, they were brought to judgment by the parliament of Aix, at the instance of the king's procurator; but being admonished by their friends and deterred by the danger that undoubtedly attended their trial, they failed to appear. And having been summoned for three market-days together, they were condemned as contumacious, by a most horrible and immeasurably cruel sentence, on the eighteenth day of November, about the year 1540, Bartholomew la Chassagne, a lawyer of great reputation, being at that time president of the parliament. **By that decree the fathers of families were condemned to the flames, and the estates, wives, children, and servants of the condemned parties confiscated to the use of the treasury.** And because Merindole had hitherto been the usual den and receptacle of such sort of infected persons, it was ordered, that all the houses should be laid level with the ground, that the subterraneous caves and vaults, where they might be concealed, should be demolished and filled up; that the wood round about it should be cut down, and even the very trees of the gardens; that the possessions of those who dwelt at Merindole should not be so much as let for the future to any of the same family, or even of the same name with the former owners. The execution of this cruel decree was committed to the ordinary judges of Aix, Tournes, St. Maximim, and Apt; but it was thought by most people very proper to be suspended, until in process of time the sentence issued against the absent and contumacious, should pass by the laws and customs of the realm into a definite sentence. Others, on the contrary, judged it more fit to be precipitated, out of hatred to the crime, and regard to the danger which that contagion certainly threatened, if any delay were interposed. In the first place the bishops of Aix and Arles pressed Chassagne to proceed against the rebels with an armed force, promising, in their own and the name of the other ecclesiastics, a

great sum of money towards the expenses of that war. Whilst they disputed on each side with great warmth, the matter was put off, by a method ridiculous enough in itself, but well accommodated to the person with whom it was used. There was at Aix, Nicolas Allens, a gentleman of Arles, of great respectability, and not unskilled in letters, an intimate friend of Chassagne's, who shocked at the injustice of the decree, and greatly desiring to have it respited, at a private conference, addressed himself to the wavering president in the following speech.

"You are not ignorant of the discourses which everywhere pass in relation to the sentence lately issued against the inhabitants of Merindole; nor is it my business or inclination to give my opinion of them, well knowing how important it is to a well ordered commonwealth, that judgments should be solemnly regarded and not rashly called in question. But if we consider the magnitude of the affair, it seems worthy of inquiry, whether the execution ought not to be deferred, and the bitterness of the sentence mitigated by the advantage of a delay. As various and very considerable reasons may be alleged for that delay, I have determined to treat familiarly with you, by the help of your own arguments, agreeably to that intimacy which subsists between us. Do you not remember, whilst you were yet sitting only on the lower bench of justice at Autun, what you formerly thought in **THE CASE OF THE MICE**? For you have even published a narrative of it; and such is your modesty and candor, that I have observed you to call to mind the transactions of those times with pleasure. This is the account you give. When, in the bailliage of Autun, a great multitude of mice had done much damage by eating the corn, the country people could think of no more immediate remedy for this new disaster, than that the bishop or his vicar should excommunicate the mice. The affair then being laid before the bishop's vicar, he was of opinion, that the crier of the court should give them three citations; which done, he was still unwilling to pronounce sentence, till the mice had an advocate assigned them, who should plead for them in their absence. You, therefore, undertook the patronage of the mice, and in that ease, in pursuance of the character which you sustained, you by many arguments persuaded the judges, that the mice had not been regularly summoned; you obtained for them that a fresh day should be set them by the curates of the respective parishes, forasmuch as the lives of all the mice were concerned in the issue of that trial. And when you had gained that point, you again showed, that too short a time had been given them, considering that the mice who were to appear were waylaid in every village by the cats. You then brought many things out of the Holy Scriptures in defense of your clients, and prevailed at length to have a longer time assigned them, in which proceeding you acquired great reputation for equity and knowledge of the law. I now call you to your own book, and your own arguments. For what can sound harsher in the ears of mankind, than that you, who in the case of mice thought the due course of judgment proper to be observed, should think it fit to be perverted in a cause wherein the life, safety, and fortunes of men are concerned. Beware, therefore,

lest you incur the fault of those fencing masters, who, when they fight at blunts, observe the rules of the science, and often come off conquerors; but when they are to draw their sword against an enemy, are either so enraged or confounded, that they forget their art, and generally suffer themselves to be stabbed. What you observed in that ludicrous process, when you were yet but a youth, and little better than a private person, will you neglect in so serious an affair, at that age and in that station, wherein you have raised such an universal opinion of yourself? Are the lives of so many wretched men so cheap a thing, that they shall find a harder fate at your hands, now you are judge, than the mice formerly experienced under your patronage? I do not speak of their innocence. But you yourself know how many things they are maliciously and wrongfully charged with, and that in other respects they are diligent worshippers of God, and never refuse to pay their landlords their dues, nor to yield tribute or obedience to the prince or the magistrate. Therefore, by the friendship which is betwixt us, I conjure you again and again maturely to weigh these reasons, and to persuade yourself, that in a cause which respects the life and death and fortunes of men, no delay can be too long.

[That this whimsical circumstance, namely, the excommunication of the mice by the spiritual court, actually took place, as related by our author, can admit of no reasonable doubt. Nor, indeed, ought it that the cause of the poor mice was successfully pleaded by this eminent counsellor. The question, however, will naturally strike a reflecting mind, "Were the inhabitants of the country, who indicted the mice for misdemeanor, really in earnest in this ludicrous affair; or was it only what, in modern style, is called a hoax upon the clergy?" For myself, I have little doubt that the latter was the case; and that both the indictment and the pleadings of the counsel were designed to burlesque the proceedings of the catholic clergy, in their treatment of the heretics. The main difficulty is to believe that the clergy themselves could be so stupid as not to see it in this light. And I am perfectly aware that, in the present enlightened era, an historian is in danger of shocking the credibility of his readers even while he impartially relates the mummerly that was prevalent among the Catholics of those days: Witness the feast of the ass, mentioned in my first volume. AUTHOR.]

"By this speech Aliens prevailed with Chassagne to respite the business, and to dismiss the troops which had already rendezvoused in great numbers, until he could know the mind of the king; who being informed of the decree by William du Bellay Sieur de Langey, lieutenant general in Piedmont, commanded the latter to inform himself of the case, and to transmit him an account of it. Accordingly, after due inquiry, he made this discovery, that the Vaudois, or Waldenses, were a people, who about three hundred years before had hired, of the owners, a rocky and uncultivated part of the country, which by dint of pains and constant tillage, they had rendered productive of fruits and fit for cattle; that they were extremely

patient of labor and want; abhorring all contentions; kind to the poor; that they paid the prince's taxes, and their lord's dues with the greatest exactness and fidelity; that they kept up a show of divine worship by daily prayer and innocence of manners; but seldom came to the churches of the saints, unless by chance when they went to the neighboring towns for traffic or other business; and whenever they set their feet in them, they paid no adoration to the statues of God or the saints, nor brought them any tapers or other presents; nor ever entreated the priests to say mass for them, or the souls of their relations; nor crossed their foreheads, as is the manner of others; that when it thundered they never sprinkled themselves with holy water, but, lifting up their eyes to heaven, implored the assistance of God; that they never made religious pilgrimages, nor uncovered their heads in the public ways before the crucifixes: that they performed their worship in a strange manner, and in the vulgar tongue; and lastly, paid no honor to the Pope or the bishops, but esteemed some select persons of their own number as priests and doctors. When this report was made to Francis, on the eighth day of February, he dispatched an arret to the parliament of Aix, wherein, having pardoned all past crimes, he allowed the Waldenses the space of three months, within which time they were required publicly to revoke their opinions: and that it might be known who they were that were willing to reap the benefit of the amnesty, it was ordered that chosen persons out of the towns and villages should appear at Aix, in the name of the rest of the multitude, and publicly abjure their error: if they persisted in it, the parliament were empowered and commanded to punish them after the example of former ages, and if need were, to call in the military officers to their aid. The arret being read in the senate, Francis Chais and William Armand came to Aix, in the name of the people of Merindole, and presented a petition to the parliament, that the cause might be reheard and examined by a disputation of divines; contending that it was unjust, that, before they were convicted, they should confess themselves heretics, or be condemned unheard. La Chassagne, in whose breast his friend's advice had made a deep impression, calling aside the deputies in the presence of the king's advocates, admonished them to acknowledge their error, and not by their excessive obstinacy lay the judges under the necessity of dealing with them more harshly than agreed with their inclinations: But as they still continued to press La Chassagne to take cognizance of their opinions, he at length obtained of those stubborn people, that they should present the heads of their doctrine to the parliament, who would transmit them to his majesty. The townsmen of Cabrieres, in the county of Venaissin, were attacked at the same time by those of Avignon; and, as they were all concerned in the common danger, they drew up a common profession of their religion, resembling Luther's in the most points, and sent one copy to Francis, who put it into the hands of Castellain to be examined by him, and another to Cardinal James Sadolet, bishop of Carpentras; who, being of a pious and mild disposition, received the suppliants with great humanity, and ingenuously declared, that whatever else they were charged with, beyond what



was contained in that book, were mere slanders invented to create them ill-will; for that after a thorough inquiry he had gained a perfect knowledge of that matter; but that in the book which was offered, there seemed to be many things which might be mended by a small alteration, and others reflecting upon the Pope and the prelates, which might be corrected by a more temperate style: that however he wished them well; and that it would never be with his good liking, if they were treated in an hostile manner; and that he would repair, by the first opportunity, to his seat at Cabrieres, and examine the whole affair upon the spot. Besides these expressions he showed them real marks of a favorable and sincere regard, by repressing the deputy of Avignon, who was advancing with an armed force, and admonishing him to retire. The confession of the people of Merindole being exhibited, by a decree of parliament, John Durandi and the bishop of Cavaillon with some other divines, went to Merindole, to convince the poor villagers of their error, and to grant a pardon to such as should, upon oath, renounce it: but although they continued in their obstinate spirit of opposition, yet, as long as Chassagne lived, no violence was employed against them, because the king had taken to himself the cognizance of the whole matter: but when he was carried off by a sudden death, and succeeded by John Meinier, baron Oppede, (a vehement man, and one, who for certain affronts received from the people of Cabrieres, to whom some of his farms were adjoining, was their bitter enemy) the hatred against the Waldenses was renewed. This nobleman, in the absence of Lewis des Emars, count of Grignan, who had been sent by the king to the diet of Worms, took upon himself the chief command in Provence, and assured Francis, by letters, that the Waldenses were met together to the number of sixteen thousand men, with a design to seize Marseilles, and to raise commotions in Provence. He also sent Philip Courtin, apparitor of the court, to demand, in the name of the king's advocate, that the judgment given against the rebels might be put in execution. The king, exasperated by this information, and being further instigated by the Cardinal De Tournon, a kinsman to Grignan, and a bitter enemy to this sort of men, sent letters to the parliament, in the month of January, in the year 1545, whereby he permitted them to proceed against the Merindolians and the rest of the Waldenses, according to law: and when the states of the empire, by their letters from Ratisbon, and the protestant Swiss Cantons were urgent, that not only the penalty, but the condition of acknowledging their error might be remitted, because thereby force was offered to resolution and conscience, he constantly denied their request; and when afterwards he was pressed by them to be merciful to the dispersed remains of those people, he bluntly answered, that they ought not to trouble themselves with what he did in his own country, or how he punished delinquents, any more than he concerned himself with their affairs. Meinier, therefore, having received those orders, kept them by him for some time, in expectation of a fairer opportunity: for in the meanwhile levies were made everywhere under the pretense of the English war, and he would not suffer the secret to be divulged, that so he might fall upon them unawares. But when things

were in readiness, and he had under severe penalties summoned all those who were capable of bearing arms at Aix, Aries, Marseilles, and other populous towns, to come into the field; and when six companies of foot, with a squadron of horse, commanded by Poulain, and other auxiliary troops from Piedmont and Avignon were already assembled, the royal letters which had been hitherto suppressed, were read in parliament: whereupon the senators, upon the 12th of April, decreed the execution of the sentence passed upon the people of Merindole; and the business was committed to the president, Francis de la Fons, with the counselors Honore de Tributis, and Bernard de Badet, to whom was joined Nicholas Guerin the king's advocate, and principal incendiary of the war. Oppede, the day following, accompanied with a great body of nobles, repaired to the army at Cadenet, bringing with him four hundred pioneers. **The first attack was made upon the country adjoined to the town of Pertuys; the villages of Pupin, La Mote, and St. Martin, near the Durance; these were taken, pillaged, and set on fire.** On the following day the little towns of Ville-Laure, Lourmarin, Gensson, Trezemines, and La Roque, from whence the multitude had fled, were cruelly burnt, and all the cattle driven away. Then Oppede consulted about attacking Merindole; but when the inhabitants saw the country round about in flames, they fled into the neighboring woods with their wives and children; which exhibited a most lamentable spectacle, for in those byways were to be seen marching, old men mixed with boys, and women carrying their crying infants in cradles, or in their arms or laps. They rested the first night at Sanfalaize, where also the inhabitants were preparing all things for a flight, because they knew that the Bishop of Cavaillon, the pope's legate, had ordered his men to massacre them. The next day they advanced further under the security of the thick woods, full of fears from every other quarter: **for Oppede had outlawed the Waldenses, and had ordered, under pain of death, that none should give them any relief, but that wherever they were found, they should (without respect to age or sex) be all murdered.** And now after an excessively long journey, they had reached their appointed station, the women being hardly able to stand under the burden of their big bellies, or children; and many others, who had left their habitations, had flocked together at the same place, when towards night they were informed Meinier was at hand with all his forces. Hereupon they were obliged to take counsel on a sudden; and leaving there all the women and feeble part of their company, whom they imagined the enemy would spare, put themselves again on the way, whilst nothing could be heard but the most dismal groans, with the lamentations and screamings of the women, which were re-echoed by the mountains and woods, and all things were in the utmost hurry and confusion. When they had spent the whole night in traveling, at last climbing over Mount Lubieres, and seeing the villages every where in flames and the farms deserted, they proceeded to the town of Mus: here Oppede divided his troops into two parts, one of which he sent to pursue the fugitives, for he had been informed of their flight by certain spies, and the other he took with him to Merindole. At that

juncture one of Oppede's men, touched with compassion, ran before, and from the top of the rock, where he guessed the Merindolians were settled, flung down two stones, and in the interval called out with a miserable voice to them to save themselves by flight: immediately some persons went out of Mus, to order the pastor and the guides, who were left with the unarmed multitude, to escape, showing them a byway through the brambles; and not long after Oppede's men appeared, and full of rage, with drawn swords, demanded the slaughter of the whole company; they were preparing to use the women in a still viler manner, but were hindered by a captain, who threatened them with death, if they did not forbear: so after they had stripped them and drove away their cattle, they departed. Oppede entered the town of Merindole, now destitute of inhabitants, and finding there only **one youth, Maurice Blanc** by name, wreaked upon him that fury which he could not vent upon the whole body of the people; and, **tying him to an olive-tree, ordered him to be cruelly shot to death: then, burning and demolishing the town**, he marched straightway to Cabrieres. When the townsmen, of whom no more than sixty, with about thirty women, were left in the place, had at first shut their gates against him, some great guns were brought down, upon which they surrendered on a promise, confirmed by Poulain and the lord of the place, of having their lives saved: but when the garrison was admitted they were all seized, even they who lay hid in the dungeon of the castle, or thought themselves secured by the sacredness of the church; and being dragged out from thence into a hollow meadow **were put to death, without regard to age or the assurances given: the number of the slain, within and without the town, amounted to eight hundred: the women, by the command of Oppede, were thrust into a barn filled with straw, and fire being set to it, when they endeavored to leap out of the window, they were pushed back by poles and pikes, and miserably suffocated and consumed in the flames.** Thence they proceeded to LaCoste, the lord of which place having passed his word to the townsmen for their safety, provided they carried their arms into the castle, and broke down their walls in four places, the credulous people did as they were commanded; notwithstanding which, on the arrival of Oppede, the suburbs being burnt and the town taken, **all that were found left in the place were murdered to a man. The women who, to avoid the first fury of the soldiers, had retired into a garden near the castle, were deflowered, and, after the rage of lust was extinguished, handled in so cruel a manner, that most of those who were with child, and even the virgins, died either of grief, or by hunger and torments.** The men, who sheltered themselves at Mus, being at length discovered, underwent the same fate with the others: the remainder of them, wandering here and there among the woods and solitary mountains, led a wretched life, deprived both of wives and children; **some few escaped**, partly to Geneva, and partly to the Swiss Cantons. **In all there are twenty-two villages reckoned, which were punished with the last severity by Oppede;** by whose authority judges were again selected, to make inquiry after the heretics; and these

condemned the rest of those poor wretches either to the galleys, or to the payment of excessive fines. Some, indeed, were absolved; and among these the tenants of Cental, who solemnly abjured their error. When these things were done, Oppede and the committee of judges, being terrified by their conscience, and justly apprehending that one time or other their heads might be endangered by those practices, deputed the president De la Fons to the king to load the slaughtered and harassed people with the most execrable crimes, and to make it appear that, considering the heinousness of their offense, they had been very gently treated. He accordingly, on the 18th day of August, By the suggestions (as it is thought) of the Cardinal De Tournon, obtained an instrument from the king, wherein he seemed to approve the punishment which was taken of those guilty persons; of which however he afterwards repented. Many writers, have reported, that, among the last commands which he gave to his son Henry, he added this expressly, that he should make inquisition into the injuries done in that cause by the parliament of Aix to the Provencals; and, even before he died, he caused John Romano, a monk, to be apprehended, and commanded the parliament of Aix to punish him; for he, in the examination of heretics, invented a new kind of torture, ordering the tortured parties to put on boots full of boiling tallow, and after laughing at them, and clapping on a pair of spurs, he would ask them, whether they were not finely equipt for a journey. But this man, being well informed of the decree of the parliament, fled to Avignon; where, though secured, as he imagined, from men, he did not escape the Divine vengeance, being robbed of all his effects by his servants, and reduced to extreme poverty, whilst his body was so overrun with filthy boils, that he wished for death, which yet he did not obtain until very late, and after the most horrible torments.

"Upon the death, therefore, of Francis, when the Cardinal De Tournon and the Count De Grignan, who had long flourished in the king's favor, were violently hated by those who were placed about the new king; the Merindolians and Waldenses, who knew of their disgrace, gathering together their remains into a body, formed a complaint of the injustice and cruelty of the parliament of Aix, and, out of spite to them, easily obtained to have their cause heard over again. The Duke of Guise was their principal encourager, who procured for himself the county of Grignan under the title of a gift or sale from Lewis des Emars, to exempt him from danger. For though all things had been acted in the count's absence, as we mentioned, yet because they were said to be done by Oppede his lieutenant, and by his order, he also himself was brought into a share of peril. The matter was first debated in the great council, as it is called: afterwards when Oppede, De la Fons, De Tributiis, Badet, and Guerin, being called upon to answer, they defended themselves by the plea of a sentence past, against the execution whereof the royal advocate had not appealed; at length, by a new arret of the 17th day of March, the king took the cause into his own cognizance. And because the question concerned the force and authority of the supreme court of Aix, he

committed the hearing both of the matter itself, and of the appeals, to the grand chamber of the parliament of Paris; where the cause was publicly managed, with great contention, and before a large concourse of people, for fifty days, by James Aubury on the part of the Merindolians, Peter Robert for the parliament of Aix, and Denys de Ryants for the king's advocate. When upon the mention of so many horrid facts of which the defendants were accused, the minds of all men were, in the utmost attention and expectation of the issue, they were entirely disappointed of their hopes, Guerin alone, who happened to be destitute of friends at court, suffering the punishment of death. Oppede, who with Grignan, escaped by the intercession of the Duke of Guise, was restored to his former post, together with his colleagues: but, in a little time, being grievously afflicted with pains in the bowels, he breathed out his sanguinary soul in the midst of the most cruel torments, and paid the deserved penalty, which his judges had not exacted, late indeed, but therefore so much the heavier, to God" [Thuani *Historia sui temporis*, lib. vi].

Such is the relation of this dreadful scene of cruelty, oppression, and carnage--detailed not by the poor persecuted Waldenses themselves, but by a catholic historian, whose impartiality and rigid adherence to truth has never been questioned except by his own party.

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 3**

### **A VIEW OF THE CONDUCT OF THE COURT OF ROME, AND THE OPERATION OF ITS FAVORITE INSTRUMENT, THE INQUISITION, ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY; INCLUDING DETAILS OF THE HORRID CRUELITIES EXERCISED TOWARDS THE FRIENDS OF REFORM, PARTICULARLY IN SPAIN AND THE NETHERLANDS. A.D. 1550-1557**

Having devoted a former section to the purpose of tracing the rise, spirit, operation, and progress of that infernal instrument of cruelty, known by the name of the Inquisition; that we may not wholly lose sight of the influence of this engine of spiritual despotism, we shall, for a moment, suspend the immediate narrative of the Waldenses in France and Piedmont, in order that we may take a cursory view of the state of affairs, in reference to religion, in Spain and the Netherlands, at the period at which we are now arrived, namely, about twenty years after the Reformation by Luther.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state, that, in the succession of kings by whom **SPAIN** had been governed for about the space of three hundred years, the popes of Rome had generally found a race of obsequious princes, seldom reluctant to yield their concurrence with any measures that might be proposed for the destruction of heretics. But it was now the misfortune of that country to possess a monarch whose zeal for the extirpation of heretical pravity, surpassed even that of popes and

cardinals. This monarch was **PHILIP II** son of the emperor Charles V and of Isbella, daughter of Immanuel the Great, king of Portugal. He was born on the 27th of May, 1527, and educated in Spain, under ecclesiastics noted for their bigotry, which may account for several of those features in his character that afterwards appeared so prominently in his conduct. He was the most powerful monarch of the age; for, besides the government of Spain, he possessed the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; the duchy of Milan, Franche Compte and the Netherlands, or, as they were then generally termed, the Low Countries.

These provinces, which, on account of their situation, are called the Netherlands, had been long governed by their respective princes, under the titles of dukes, marquises, or counts; and under the administration of the princes of the house of Burgundy, they had flourished in trade, commerce, and manufactures, beyond any other European state. No city in those days, except Venice, possessed such extensive commerce as Antwerp. It was the great mart of all the northern nations. Bruges was little inferior; and in the city of Ghent there were many thousand artificers employed in the woolen manufacture, long before the art was known to the English, from whom the wool was purchased by the industrious Flemings. In consequence of the constant intercourse which subsisted between Germany and the Netherlands, we may naturally suppose that the doctrines of the Reformers would be early propagated from the former to the latter country; and, accordingly **in the month of May, 1521, even before the days of Philip, his father, the emperor Charles V had published an edict, in which all the penalties of high treason were pronounced against heretics.** In the execution of this edict, which Charles from time to time renewed, all the fury of persecution was exercised; and it is affirmed by several contemporary historians, that, during his reign, **fifty thousand of the inhabitants of the Netherlands were put to death on account of their religious principles.** [Paul's *History of the Council of Trent*, book 5; Grotius doubles the number!] These principles, however, far from being extirpated became more generally propagated and diffused amidst the severities which were employed to suppress them.

Before the emperor Charles V had resigned the reins of government to his son Philip, great numbers of his subjects had begun to retire from the provinces of the Netherlands and to transport their families and effects to the neighboring states; and when he was informed of this, by the regent, who was his sister, and queen dowager of Hungary, his heart relented for the calamities of his people, and he dreaded the consequences of depopulating a country from which he had often received the most effectual assistance and support. But these considerations had no influence on his son Philip. He republished the edicts of his father, and ordered the governors and magistrates to carry them into rigorous execution. In these edicts it was enacted, that all persons who held erroneous opinions in religion, should be deprived of their offices, and degraded from their rank. **It was ordained, that whoever should be convicted of having taught heretical doctrines, or of having been present at the**

**religious meetings of heretics, should, if they were men, be put to death by the sword; and, if women, be burned alive. Such were the punishments denounced even against those who repented of their errors and forsook them; while all who persisted in them were condemned to the flames. And even those who afforded shelter to heretics in their houses, or who omitted to give information against them, were subjected to the same penalties as heretics themselves.**

But Philip could not content himself with publishing and executing these cruel edicts. He also established a particular **tribunal for the extirpation of heresy**, which, although it was not called by the name Inquisition, had all the essentials of that iniquitous institution. **Persons were committed to prison upon bare suspicion, and put to the torture on the slightest evidence. The accused were not confronted with their accusers, or made acquainted with the crimes for which they suffered.** The civil judges were not allowed to take any further concern in prosecutions for heresy, than to execute the sentences which the inquisitors pronounced. **The possessions of the sufferers were confiscated; and informers were encouraged by an assurance of impunity in case they themselves were guilty, and by the promise of rewards.** [Grotius, *Annales*, lib. 1.]

That the establishment of this arbitrary tribunal should have excited considerable commotion in the **NETHERLANDS**, can occasion no surprise. It had created disturbances even in Spain and Italy, where civil liberty was not enjoyed in the measure that it was in the Netherlands. Among the Flemings, therefore, it excited the most terrible apprehensions; they considered it as utterly subversive of their liberty. But to the grievances already enumerated, the inhabitants of the Netherlands further complained that the provinces were filled with Spanish soldiers, whose insolent and rapacious behavior was intolerable. And to all these causes of discontent, Philip added another by increasing the number of bishoprics, from five to seventeen, which was the number of the provinces. These new bishops were regarded as so many new inquisitors; and their creation was considered as an encroachment on the privileges of the provinces, and a violation on the part of the king, of the oath which he had taken at his accession, to preserve the church in the condition in which he found it. Such was the state of affairs, when Philip, who had for some time taken up his residence among his subjects in the Netherlands, proposed in the year 1559, to quit the country and fix the seat of his government in Spain. During his absence the government of the Netherlands was conferred upon the **Duchess of Parma**, who was a natural daughter of the late emperor, and who sustained the title of regent.

As Philip did not intend to return speedily to the Netherlands, he thought proper, before his departure, to summon a convention of the states, which was accordingly held at Ghent. He himself was present, accompanied by the new regent, at the first opening of the assembly; but as he could not speak the language of the country, he employed the Bishop of Arras to address the deputies in his name. Among other



things, the latter was instructed earnestly to exhort the states to study to preserve the public peace; and to this end he thought nothing could conduce so much as the extirpation of heresy, which, whilst it set men at variance with God, put arms into their hands against their civil sovereign. They were, therefore, strenuously exhorted to maintain the purity of their ancient faith; and for this purpose, to execute vigorously the several edicts published for the suppression of heresy.

The reply of the deputies of the states to this speech, contained the warmest sentiments of loyalty, but it was also accompanied with intimations, that they had expected the foreign troops would have been immediately transported to Spain, that they were unable to discover any reason for keeping them any longer in the Netherlands, but such as filled their minds with terror. Their suspicion that the Inquisition was about to be established in the Netherlands, excited the most disquieting apprehensions. Some of the deputies did not scruple to remonstrate openly, that the Netherlands had never been accustomed to an institution of so much rigor and severity; that the people trembled at the very name of the Inquisition, and would fly to the remotest corners of the earth rather than submit to it; that it was not by fire and the sword, but by the gentlest and softest remedies, that the evil complained of must be cured. Various representations of this kind were addressed to the king himself by some of the deputies, who endeavored to persuade him at least to moderate the edicts, if he would not entirely annul them; but on this head Philip was inexorable. And when one of his ministers reported, that, by persisting in the execution of those edicts, he might kindle the seeds of rebellion, and thereby lose the sovereignty of the provinces; he replied, "That he had much rather be no king at all, than have heretics for his subjects" [Bentivoglio. lib. 1, p. 9,10].

His religion was, of all superstitions, the most intolerant; his temper of mind, which was naturally haughty and severe; his pride which would have been wounded by yielding to what he had repeatedly declared he would never yield; his engagements with the pope, and an oath which he had taken to devote his reign to the defense of the popish faith and the extirpation of heresy; above all, his thirst for despotic power, with which he considered the liberties claimed in religious matters by the Protestants as utterly incompatible; all these united causes, rendered him deaf to the remonstrances which were made to him, and fixed him unalterably in his resolution to execute the edicts with the utmost rigor. He showed himself equally inflexible with regard to the new bishoprics: nor would he consent, at this time, to withdraw the Spanish soldiers. In order, however, to lessen the odium arising from his refusal, he offered the command of these troops to the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont, the two ablest and most popular noblemen in the Netherlands; the former of whom he had appointed governor of Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht; and the latter of Artois and Flanders. Both of them declined accepting of the offer which was made to them and had the courage to declare, that they considered the continuance of the troops in the Low Countries, after peace had been established in France, as a violation of the

fundamental laws of the constitution.

**The Prince of Orange**, so well known in history by the name of **William the First**, was the representative of the ancient and illustrious family of Nassau in Germany. From his ancestors, one of whom had been Emperor of Germany, he inherited several rich possessions in the Netherlands and he had succeeded to the principality of Orange by the will of Rene Nassau and Chalons, his cousin-german, in the year 1544. From that time the late emperor had kept him perpetually about his person, and had early discovered in him all those extraordinary talents which rendered him afterwards one of the most illustrious personages of the age. It does not appear, that, before the assembly of the states, Philip had any just ground for his suspicions of William's conduct; and there is only one circumstance recorded to which they can be ascribed. The prince having been sent to France as an hostage for the execution of some articles of the peace of Chateau-Cambresis, had, during his residence there, discovered a scheme formed by the French and Spanish monarchs for the extirpation of the Protestants. This scheme he had communicated to such of his friends in the Netherlands as had embraced the reformed religion, and from that time the king ceased to treat him with his wonted confidence. [Thuanus, tom. 1, lib. 22. sect. 10.]

On the 20th of August, 1559, Philip set sail from the Netherlands with a fleet of seventy ships, and on the 29th arrived at Laredo, in the province of Biscay. He reached the port in safety; but no sooner had he landed than a dreadful storm arose, in which a part of his fleet was shipwrecked; above a thousand men perished, and a great number of capital paintings, statues, and other curious works of art were lost, which the late emperor, Charles, had been employed, during forty years, in collecting in Germany, Italy, and Flanders. Philip thought he could not, on this occasion, better express his gratitude for his own personal preservation, than by declaring his resolution to dedicate his life to the defense of the catholic faith and the extirpation of heresy; and such were the feelings with which he was animated when he entered Spain.

The Inquisition had been introduced into Spain about a century before this time, as hath already been noticed in a former section of this work; and it met with the entire approbation and countenance of Philip, who had imbibed, in all its virulence, that spirit of bigotry and persecution which gave it birth. He regarded heretics as the most odious of criminals; and considered a departure of his subjects from the Roman superstition, as the most dreadful calamity that could befall them. He was, therefore, determined to support the inquisitors with all his power; and he encouraged them to exert themselves in the exercise of their office with the utmost vigilance. The zeal and diligence of these men corresponded to the ardor with which their sovereign was inflamed; yet so irresistible was the spirit of inquiry and the force of truth, that the opinions of the Reformers had found their way into Spain, and were embraced openly by great numbers of both sexes, among whom were several priests and nuns. Before

Philip's arrival in the city of Valladolid, an auto-de-fe had been celebrated, in which **a great number of Protestants had been committed to the flames**. There were still in the prisons of the Inquisition more than thirty persons, against whom the same dreadful punishment had been denounced. Philip, eager to give public proof as early as possible of his abhorrence of these innovators, desired the inquisitors to fix a day for their execution; and he resolved to witness it. The dreadful ceremony (more repugnant to humanity, as well as to the spirit of the Christian religion, than the most abominable sacrifices recorded in the annals of the Pagan world) was conducted with the greatest solemnity which the inquisitors could devise; and Philip, attended by his son Don Carlos, by his sister, and by his courtiers and guards, sat within sight of the unhappy victims. After hearing a sermon from the bishop of Zamora, he rose from his seat, and having drawn his sword, as a signal, that with it he would defend the holy faith, he took an oath administered to him by the inquisitor-general, to support the inquisition and its ministers against all heretics and apostates, and to compel his subjects every where to yield obedience to its decrees. Among the Protestants condemned, there was a nobleman of the name of **Don Carlos di Sessa**, who, when the executioners were conducting him to the stake, called out to the king for mercy, saying, "And canst thou thus O king! witness the torments of thy subjects? Save us from this cruel death; we do not deserve it." **"No," Philip sternly replied, "I would myself carry wood to burn my own son, were he such a wretch as thou."** After which he beheld the horrid spectacle that followed, with a composure and tranquillity that betokened the most unfeeling heart.

This dreadful severity, joined with certain rigid laws, enacted to prevent the importation of Lutheran books, soon produced the desired effect. **After the celebration of another auto-de-fe, in which about fifty protestants suffered, all the rest, if there were any still remaining, either concealed their sentiments, or made their escape into foreign parts.** [Watson's *History of Philip II*, Volume 1. book 4.]

But though Philip had, for a moment, banished the heretics from his Spanish dominions, he had the mortification to contemplate the rapid progress of heresy in almost every other state in Europe; and in order to obstruct it, he employed all his influence to procure the convocation of a general council of the church. For several centuries before the Reformation, and for some time after it had been set on foot, the bigotry of the Papists would not suffer them to think of any other means of extirpating the opinions of the Protestants, but persecution; which was exercised against them with the same unrelenting severity, as if they had been guilty of the most atrocious crimes. But it soon appeared how inadequate this barbarous procedure was to the purpose which the Romanists intended. Those bloody edicts which were published, those fires which were lighted up, and that variety of torments which priests and inquisitors invented with ingenious cruelty, served in reality to propagate the doctrines against which they were employed, and contributed to

in flame, rather than extinguish, that ardent zeal with which the Protestants were animated. Being firmly persuaded, that the cause which they maintained, was the cause of God and truth, and that their perseverance would be rewarded with a happy immortality, they courted their punishments instead of avoiding them; and, in bearing them, displayed a degree of fortitude and patience, which, by exciting admiration in the beholders, produced innumerable proselytes to the faith for which they suffered.

Several princes had been converted to that faith. In some states the Protestants had become more numerous and powerful than their opponents; and in others, their opinions so generally prevailed, that the catholic princes found it no longer possible to extirpate them, without depriving themselves of great multitudes of their most industrious subjects, on whom the wealth and importance of their states depended. The time when persecution might have proved effectual was past, and the princes came at length to perceive the necessity of having recourse to some more gentle means than had been hitherto employed. They were, at the same time, sensible, notwithstanding their prejudices against the Reformers, some reformation was extremely necessary; they had long borne with great impatience the numberless encroachments of the court of Rome; and were convinced, that if some abuses were removed, it would not be impracticable to persuade many of the Protestants to return into the bosom of the church.

A general council appeared to be the only expedient by which this important end could be obtained; and the late emperor Charles had taken infinite pains to procure the convocation of that assembly. In former times the councils of the church had been convened by the emperors themselves; but, in the time of Charles, the power of calling them was, by all true Catholics, considered as the peculiar prerogative of the popes; who dreaded that such assemblies might derogate from their usurped authority, and were therefore inclined, if possible, to prevent them from being held. With the timid Clement, Charles employed all his art and influence to procure a council, but in vain. Paul the third was no less averse to this measure than Clement; but the emperor being seconded by almost all the catholic princes in Europe, Paul yielded to their importunities, and summoned **a council to meet in TRENT**. From this place it was afterwards translated to Bologna. After the death of Paul it was again assembled in Trent, in 1551, and continued to be held there till the year following; when it was delayed for two years, upon war being declared against the emperor by the Elector of Saxony.

In the sessions which were held under Paul, that fundamental tenet of the reformers, by which the writings of the evangelists and apostles are held to be the only rule of the Christian faith, was condemned; and **equal authority was ascribed to the books termed Apocryphal, and to the oral traditions of the church**. From the manner in which the deliberations of this assembly were conducted; from the nature

of its decisions, and from the blind attachment of a great majority of its members to the court of Rome, there was little ground to hope for the attainment of those ends for which the calling of it had been so earnestly desired. But no other expedient could be devised, which the Catholics thought so likely to stop the progress of heresy; and, therefore, as soon as the war between France and Spain was concluded, the several Catholics began to think seriously of the restoration of the council.

The state of Europe at that time seemed, more than ever, to require the application of some immediate remedy. The power and the number of the Protestants were every day becoming more and more considerable. Both England and Scotland had disclaimed allegiance to the See of Rome, and new-modeled their religion. In the Netherlands the reformers had greatly multiplied of late, notwithstanding the most dreadful cruelties had been exercised against them; and in France, where every province was involved in the most terrible combustion, there was ground to apprehend, that they would soon become too powerful for the Catholics, and be able to wrest from them the reins of government. The new opinions had penetrated even into Italy, and had been embraced by a considerable number of persons both in Naples and Savoy. From the former of these states they were extirpated by the unrelenting severity of Philip; who issued orders to his viceroy to put all heretics to death without mercy, and even to pursue with fire and sword a remnant of them who had fled from Cosenza, and were living quietly among the mountains. [F. Paul, lib. 5.]

But the Duke of Savoy, unwilling to deprive himself of so great a number of useful subjects as at that time professed the protestant faith, was inclined to attempt to enlighten and convince them; and with this view he desired the pope's permission to hold a colloquy of the principal ecclesiastics in his dominions, on the subject of religion. Pius was about the same time informed, that in France a resolution had been embraced to have recourse to the same expedient. He believed that no measure could be devised more likely to prove fatal to that exclusive prerogative which he claimed of judging in matters of religion. He dreaded that the example of France and Savoy would be quickly followed by other states, and the decrees of provincial synods substituted in the place of those of the Holy See. It highly concerned him, therefore, to prevent this measure (so pernicious to his authority) from taking place. Nor did he find much difficulty in dissuading the Duke of Savoy from adopting it. "If the heretics," said he to the duke's ambassador, "stand in need of instruction, I will send divines and a legate, by whom they may be both instructed and absolved. But your master will find, that they will lend a deaf ear to all the instructions that can be given them, and will put no other interpretation upon his conduct, but that he wants power to compel them to submit. No good effect was ever produced by that lenity which he inclines to exercise; but from experience he may learn, that the sooner he shall execute justice on these men, and make use of force to reduce them, the more certain will be his success; and if he will comply with the counsel which I offer, he shall receive from me such assistance as will enable him to carry it into execution."

The Duke, who was sincerely attached to the Romish faith, and closely connected with Philip, unfortunately complied with this violent counsel, and engaged in a bloody war with his Protestant subjects, of which he had afterwards the greatest reason to repent.

But to return to the state of affairs in the Netherlands: the seeds of discord which were sown in that unhappy country, in the beginning of the reign of Philip II continued to approximate towards maturity. At his departure from among them he had given strict orders to the regent to enforce a rigorous execution of his edicts, and the persecutions were, accordingly, carried on as formerly. The council of Trent had published its decrees, and Philip resolved to have them obeyed throughout all his dominions. The disturbances which subsisted in the Low Countries, ought to have deterred him from adding fuel to a flame which already burnt with so much violence. But his bigotry, together with his arbitrary maxims of government, rendered him averse to every mild expedient, and determined him to enforce obedience to the decrees in the Netherlands, as well as in Spain and Italy. When the regent laid his instructions on this head before the council of state, she found the counselors much divided in their opinions. The Prince of Orange maintained, that the regent could not require the people of the Netherlands to receive the decrees, because several of them were contrary to the fundamental laws of the constitution. He represented that some catholic princes had thought proper to reject them; and proposed that a remonstrance should be made to the king on the necessity of recalling his instructions.

"Let us not, by our misrepresentations," said he, "make him believe the number of heretics to be smaller than it is. Let us acquaint him, that every province, every town, every village, is full of them. Let us not conceal from him how much they despise the edicts, and how little they respect the magistrates; that he may see how impracticable it is to introduce the Inquisition, and be convinced that the remedy which he would have us to apply, would be infinitely worse than the disease." He added, "That although he was a true Catholic, and a faithful subject of the king, yet he thought the calamities which had been lately experienced in France and Germany, afforded a sufficient proof that the consciences of men were not to be compelled; and that heresy was not to be extirpated by fire and sword, but by reasoning and persuasion; to which it was in vain to expect that men would be brought to listen, until the present practice of butchering them like beasts was wholly laid aside." He represented likewise the absurdity of publishing, on this occasion, the decrees of the council of Trent, and proposed that Count Egmont should be instructed to request the king to suspend the publication of them till the present tumults were allayed.

Many of the other nobles set on foot, at this time, a confederacy by which they bound themselves to support one another, in preventing the Inquisition from being established in the Netherlands. The prime mover of this expedient was **Philip de**

**Marnix**, Lord of St. Aldegonde, a nobleman highly distinguished for his eloquence, his address, and his political abilities, who had the merit of contributing more than any other person (the Prince of Orange alone excepted) towards accomplishing that happy revolution, by which the northern provinces were rescued from the Spanish yoke. By his advice, and according to his direction, a writing was drawn up, termed **THE COMPROMISE**, which is here inserted, as it marks strongly the spirit by which the people of the Netherlands were animated.

"Whereas certain malicious persons, under the cloak of zeal for the catholic religion, but in reality prompted by ambition, pride, and avarice, have by their misrepresentations, persuaded our lord, the king, to introduce into these provinces that most pernicious tribunal the Inquisition, which is not only contrary to all human and divine laws, but exceeds in cruelty the most barbarous institutions of the most savage tyrants in the heathen world; which subjects all authority to that of the inquisitors, reduces all men to a perpetual state of miserable slavery, and by the visitations which it appoints, exposes the best men to continual apprehensions; so that if a priest, a Spaniard, or wicked minion of power, shall incline, he may, by means of this institution, accuse any man, however innocent, and cause him to be imprisoned, condemned, and put to death, without being confronted with his accusers, and without being allowed to bring evidence of his innocence, or to speak in his defense: for these reasons we whose names are hereto subscribed have resolved to provide for the security of our families, goods, and persons; and for this purpose we hereby enter into a sacred league with one another, promising with a solemn oath, to oppose with all our power, the introduction of the above-named Inquisition into these provinces; whether it shall be attempted openly or secretly, and by whatever name it shall be called, whether that of Inquisition, Visitation, Commission, or Edict: declaring at the same time, that we are far from entertaining the design of attempting anything prejudicial to the interest of our sovereign the king; but, on the contrary, that our fixed intention is, to support and defend his government, to maintain peace, and to prevent, to the utmost of our power, all seditions, tumults, and revolts. This agreement we have sworn; and we hereby promise and swear to maintain it for ever sacred; and we call Almighty God to witness, that neither in word or deed shall we ever weaken or counteract it.

"We likewise promise and swear, mutually to defend one another, in all places and on all occasions, against every attack that shall be made, or prosecution that shall be raised, against any individual amongst us, on account of his concern in this confederacy. And we declare, that no pretense of the persecutors, who may allege rebellion, insurrection, or any other plea, shall exempt us from this our oath and promise. No action can deserve the name of rebellion, that proceeds from opposition to the iniquitous decrees of the Inquisition; and, therefore, whether any of us be attacked directly on account of opposing these decrees, or under

pretense of punishing rebellion or insurrection, we hereby swear to endeavor, by all lawful means, to procure his deliverance.

"In this and every part of our conduct regarding the inquisition, our meaning is, to submit to the general opinion of our confederates, or to that of those who shall be appointed by the rest to assist us with their counsel.

"In witness of this our league, we invoke the holy name of the living God, as the searcher of our hearts; humbly beseeching him to grant us the grace of his Holy Spirit, and that all our enterprises may be attended with success, may promote the honor of his name, contribute to the welfare of our souls, and advance the peace and true interest of the Netherlands."

Such were the terms of the Compromise, which was quickly circulated through the provinces, and subscribed by persons of all ranks, whether Catholics or Protestants. Books were, at the same time multiplied, in which liberty of conscience was pleaded, the absurdities in the popish doctrines and worship exposed, and hideous pictures drawn of the Inquisition.

The regent felt great anxiety with regard to the consequence with which so much ill-humor and discontent were likely to be attended. She had never fully credited the representations which the Prince of Orange and some of her other counselors had often made to her. And she now complained bitterly of the situation to which she was reduced by the orders sent from Spain. "For to what purpose was it," she added, "to publish edicts, when I wanted power to enforce their execution! They have served only to increase the people's audacity, and to bring my authority into contempt."

The Prince of Orange, and the counts Horn and Egmont, had, ever since the last republication of the edicts, absented themselves from the council. The regent now wrote to them in the most urgent manner, requiring their attendance. They readily complied; and the regent, after having informed them of her design in calling them together, desired they would deliver their opinions without reserve. The Prince of Orange was among the last who rose, and he spoke as follows:

"Would to heaven, I had been so fortunate as to gain belief, when I ventured to foretell what has now happened. Desperate remedies would not, in that case, have been first applied, nor persons who had fallen into error been confirmed in it, by the means employed to reclaim them. We should not certainly think favorably of a physician's prudence, who, in the beginning of a disease, when gentle remedies were likely to prove effectual, should propose the burning or cutting off the part infected. There are two species of inquisition. The one is exercised in the name of the pope, and the other has been long practiced by the bishops. To the



latter men are, in some measure, reconciled by the power of custom; and considering how well we are now provided with bishops in all the provinces, it may reasonably be expected that this sort will alone be found sufficient. The former has been, and will for ever be, an object of abhorrence, and ought to be abolished without delay.

"With respect to those edicts which have been so often published against the innovators in religion, hearken not to me, but to your own experience, which will inform you, that the persecutions to which they have given rise, have served only to increase and propagate the errors against which they have been exercised. The Netherlands have for several years been a school, in which, if we have not been extremely inattentive, we may have learned the folly of persecution. Men do not for nothing forego the advantages of life; much less do they expose themselves to torture and death for nothing. The contempt of death and pain, exhibited by heretics in suffering for their religion, is calculated to produce the most powerful effects upon the minds of spectators. It works on their compassion, it excites their admiration of the sufferers, and creates in them a suspicion that truth must certainly be found where they observe so much constancy and fortitude. Heretics have been treated with the same severity in France and England as in the Low Countries. But has it been attended there with better success! On the contrary, is there not reason, there as well as here, to say what was said of the Christians of old, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. The emperor Julian, the most formidable enemy that Christianity ever had, was fully sensible of the truth of this. Harassing and tormenting could only serve, he knew, to inflame that ardent zeal which he wanted to extinguish. He had recourse therefore to the expedient of ridicule and contempt; and this he found to be more effectual. The Grecian empire was, at different periods, infected with heresies of various kinds. A Erius taught errors in the reign of Constance; Nestorius in that of Theodosius; Arius in that of Constantine. No such punishments were inflicted, either on the heresiarchs themselves or on their disciples, as are now practiced in the Netherlands; and yet where are all those false opinions now, which the first broachers were at so much pains to propagate? Such is the nature of heresy, if it rests, it rusts; but he who rubs it, whets it. Let it be neglected and overlooked, it will soon lose the charm of novelty; and with that, it will lose the greatest part of its attractive power. But they are not the examples only of heathen princes which I would recommend to the regent's imitation. In complying with my advice, she will tread in the steps of our late glorious emperor, her father; who, from experience, was convinced, that gentle measures were more likely to prove effectual than severe ones; and therefore adopted the former, in preference to the latter, for several years before his resignation.

"The king himself appeared, at a certain period, inclined to make trial of mild expedients. But, through

the influence of the bishops and other ecclesiastics, he has changed his views. Let these men answer for their conduct if they can. For my own part, I am entirely satisfied that it is impossible to root out the present evils in the Netherlands by force, without shaking the state from its foundation. I conclude with reminding you of what we have all heard frequently, That the Protestants in the Low Countries have opened a correspondence with those in France. Let us beware of irritating them more than we have already done, lest, by imitating the French Catholics in their severity, we, like them, involve our country in the dreadful miseries of a civil war."

The regent finding that her situation become every day more critical, informed the king of it, who immediately sent the **Duke of Alva**, a nobleman of the most imperious character, tyrannical and vindictive in the extreme, to execute his pleasure in the Netherlands, armed with full power to punish or to pardon crimes of every sort. He began his administration with publishing a declaration, that a month should be allowed to the reformers for preparing to leave the country, without receiving, during that space, any trouble or molestation, and at the same time he issued secret orders to the inquisitors to proceed immediately in the execution of their edicts with the utmost rigor. To assist and encourage these men in the exercise of their office, he instituted a new council, to which he gave the name of the **Council of Tumults**, which he appointed to take cognizance of the late disorders, and to search after and punish all those who had been concerned, directly or indirectly, in promoting them. This council consisted of twelve persons, the greatest part of whom were Spaniards. The duke was the president himself, and in his absence Vargas, a Spanish lawyer, distinguished above all his countrymen by his avarice and cruelty. One of the first deeds of this tribunal, which might well be called, as the Flemings termed it, the Council of Blood, was to declare, That to have presented or subscribed any petition against the late erection of bishoprics, or against the edicts or Inquisition, or to have permitted the exercise of the new religion under any pretense whatever; or to insinuate by word of mouth or writing, that the king has no right to abolish those pretended privileges which have been the source of so much impiety, is treason against the king, and justly merits the severest punishment he shall be pleased to inflict.

The governor had already stationed his army in such a manner as he thought would most effectually secure the execution of this cruel, undistinguishing resolution of the council. In Antwerp he built a citadel, and compelled the inhabitants to defray the expense which this instrument of their own slavery had cost him. He began to build citadels in other places: and, in the mean time, he spread his troops over the country in such formidable bodies, that the people, over whom they exercised the most oppressive tyranny, either forsook their habitations, or gave themselves up to despair. Above twenty thousand persons escaped, at this time, into France, England, and the Protestant provinces of Germany. Great numbers were prevented from flying, and seized whilst they were meditating flight, by the cruel hand of the persecutor. The innocent were overwhelmed with horror at the sight of the dreadful punishments

inflicted on the guilty; and lamented at this once flourishing country, so much distinguished for the mildness of its government and the happiness of its people, should now present no other object to view, but confiscations, imprisonments, and blood.

**There was no distinction made of age, sex, or condition.** Persons in their earliest youth; persons worn out, and ready to sink under the infirmities of age; persons of the highest rank, as well as the lowest of the people, on the slightest evidence, and sometimes even on bare suspicion, were alike sacrificed to the rapacity and cruelty of the governor and his associates. **Although in the space of a few months upwards of eighteen hundred persons suffered by the hand of the executioner; yet the Duke of Alva's thirst of blood was not satiated.** Prisoners were not brought in so fast, nor seized in such considerable numbers, as he desired. The time of Carnival was approaching, when he expected that he should find the reformers off their guard. They would then leave their skulking-places, he supposed, and visit their families, while the Catholics were immersed in mirth and dissipation. On this occasion his soldiers, accompanied by the inquisitors, like so many wolves, were let loose among the Protestants; who **were seized in the middle of the night in their beds, and from thence dragged to prisons and dungeons.**

**Many who had been only once present at the protestant assemblies, even although they declared their faith in the catholic religion to be firm and unshaken, were hanged or drowned: while those who professed themselves to be Protestants, or refused to abjure their religion, were put to the rack, in order to make them discover their associates; they were then dragged by horses to the place of execution, and their bodies being committed to the flames, their sufferings were prolonged with ingenious cruelty.**

**To prevent them from bearing testimony, in the midst of their torments, to the truth of their profession, their executioners were not satisfied with barely confining their tongues; they first scorched them with a glowing iron, and then screwed them into a machine, contrived on purpose to produce the most excruciating pain.**

It is shocking to recount the numberless instances of inhuman cruelty perpetrated by Alva and his associates, especially when we consider that the unhappy victims were not those hardened wretches, who, by daring and bloody deeds, are guilty of violating the laws of nature and humanity, but were generally persons of the most inoffensive characters; who, having imbibed the new opinions in religion, had too much probity to disguise their sentiments; or, at the worst, had been betrayed into indiscretions by their zeal for propagating truths, which they believed to be of the highest importance to the glory of God and the happiness of men.

Alva communicated a great share of his savage spirit to the inferior magistrates; who knew that they could not recommend themselves more effectually either to the king or to the governor, than by the exercise of rigor and severity. Several of them, however, whose humanity prevailed over the considerations of safety and interest, were induced to give the Protestants timely warning to withdraw. Even the members of the bloody council began to feel their hearts revolt against the reiterated instances of cruelty, to which their sanction was required. Some of them applied for dismissal; others had the courage to absent themselves; and out of the twelve, of which the council was composed, there were seldom above three or four present.

About this time the magistrates of Antwerp, whose behavior, from the beginning of Alva's administration, had been extremely obsequious, thought they might venture to interpose in favor of certain citizens whom the inquisitors had imprisoned. Their petition was conceived in the humblest terms; and they represented, that although the persons for whom they pleaded had been present two or three times in the Protestant assemblies, yet it was only curiosity that had led them thither; they were still true sons of the church, and faithful subjects to the king; and they had remained in the country till the time of their imprisonment, on the faith of the declaration which the governor had made, that they should not receive any disturbance on account of what had passed, till the expiration of a month after his arrival in the Netherlands.

To this petition Alva haughtily replied, that he was amazed at their folly in presuming to apply to him in behalf of heretics; and they should have reason, he added, to repent bitterly of their conduct, if they did not act more prudently in future; for they might rest assured, that he would hang them all, for an example to deter others from the like presumption. Notwithstanding this, some of the catholic nobility, and Viglius, who had formerly concurred in all the arbitrary measures of Granvelle, but whose heart melted at the present misery of his countrymen, had the courage to remonstrate to the king against the governor's barbarity. Even the pope exhorted him to greater moderation. Philip, however, refused to countermand the orders which he had given, till he should hear from Vargas; who advised him to persevere in the plan which he had adopted, assured him of its success, and at the same time flattered him with the hopes of an inexhaustible fund of wealth that would arise from confiscation. Vargas being seconded by the inquisitors at Madrid, Philip lent a deaf ear to the remonstrance which had been made to him, and the persecutions were continued with the same unrelenting fury as before. The people of the Netherlands were confirmed in their despair of obtaining mercy from Philip, by the accounts transmitted to them at this time from Spain, of **his cruel treatment of his son Don Carlos**. Various relations are given of that tragical and mysterious affair by the contemporary historians; but the following appears the most consistent and probable. This young prince had from his earliest youth been noted for the impetuosity and violence of his temper; and though he never gave reason to think

favorably of his understanding, or his capacity for government, he had discovered the most intemperate ambition to be admitted by his father to a share in the administration of his dominions. Philip, whether from jealousy, or a conviction of his son's unfitness for any important trust, refused to gratify his ambition, he behaved towards him with distance and reserve, while he gave all his confidence to the Duke of Alva, Ruy Gomez de Sylva, and the president Spinosa; against whom Don Carlos, partly on this account, and partly because he considered them as spies upon his conduct, had conceived the most irreconcilable aversion. In this disposition he did not scruple, on different occasions, to censure the measures of his father's government and particularly those which had been adopted in the Netherlands. He had sometimes expressed his compassion for the people there; had threatened the Duke of Alva, and even made an attempt upon his life, for accepting the government; had been suspected of holding secret interviews with the Marquis of Mons, and the Baron de Montigny; and had afterwards formed the design of retiring into the Netherlands, with an intention to put himself at the head of the malcontents.

Of this design intelligence was carried, by some of the courtiers, to the king; who after having consulted with the inquisitors, at Madrid, as he usually did in matters of great importance and difficulty, resolved to prevent the prince from putting his scheme into execution, by depriving him of his liberty. For this purpose he went into his chamber in the middle of the night, attended by some of his privy counselors and guards: and, after reproaching him with his undutiful behavior, told him that he had come to exercise his paternal correction and chastisement. Then having dismissed all his attendants, he commanded him to be clothed in a dark colored mourning dress, and appointed guards to watch over him, and to confine him to his chamber. The high spirited young prince was extremely shocked at such unworthy treatment, and prayed his father and his attendants to put an immediate end to his life. He threw himself headlong into the fire, and would have put an end to his life had he not been prevented by the guards. During his confinement, his despair and anguish rose to a degree of frenzy. He would fast sometimes for whole days together, then eat voraciously, and endeavor to choke himself by swallowing his victuals without chewing. Several princes interceded for his release, as did many of the principal Spanish nobles. **But his father was relentless and inexorable. After six months' imprisonment, he caused the Inquisition of Madrid to pass sentence against his son, and under the cover of that sentence, ordered poison to be given him, which in a few hours put a period to his miserable life, at the age of twenty-three.**

Philip had, before this time, given a proof of the cruelty of his disposition; when, as above related, he chose to be present at the execution of his protestant subjects in Spain. His singular conduct on that occasion, and the composure with which he beheld the torments of the unhappy sufferers, were ascribed by some to the power of superstition: while they were regarded by others, as the most convincing evidence of

the sincerity of his zeal for the true religion. But his severity towards his son did not admit of any such interpretation. It was considered by all the world as a proof that his heart was dead to the sentiments of natural affection and humanity; and his subjects were everywhere filled with astonishment. **It struck terror in a particular manner, into the inhabitants of the Low Countries; who saw how vain it was to expect mercy from a prince, who had so obstinately refused to exercise it towards his own son; whose only crime, they believed, was his attachment to them, and his compassion of their calamities.** [Watson's *History of Philip II*, volume 1, book 8.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 4**

### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES CONTINUED, FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. A.D. 1551-1600**

Among the distinguished favors which it hath pleased the Father of Lights to confer upon mankind, the invention of the art of printing has been, in its consequences, none of the least beneficial. Before this discovery, learning was accessible to none but persons of princely fortunes; but by this means it was brought within the reach of almost everyone; and that information became generally diffused which was necessary to subvert the cause of tyranny and superstition; thus, through the overruling providence of God, **the art of printing turned out to be one of the most important events that have happened since the first promulgation of the gospel.** Knowledge; which had indeed been gaining ground for some centuries before, was now wonderfully accelerated in its progress. The light acquired by one, was quickly diffused abroad, and communicated to multitudes. The facility of communication brought learning within the reach of the middle ranks--the dead languages became a general object of study--the Scriptures began to be consulted, not only in the Latin Vulgate, but also in the Greek--reading produced reflection, and thus diffused a light which it was no longer possible to conceal under a bushel. It would have been strange indeed, had the advocates of a system which was founded in ignorance, expressed no apprehensions of alarm at the introduction of these novelties. The faculty of Theology at Paris declared before the assembled parliament, that religion was undone, if the study of Greek and Hebrew was permitted. But the

language of the monks in those days is still more amusing. We are informed by Conrad of Heresbach, a very grave and respectable author of that period, that one of their number is said thus to have expressed himself--"They have invented a new language, which they call Greek; you must be carefully on your guard against it; it is the mother of all heresy. I observe in the hands of many persons a book written in that language, which they call the New Testament. It is a book full of daggers and poison. As to the Hebrew, my dear brethren, it is certain that all those who learn it immediately become Jews" [See Villers' Essay on the Reformation, by Luther, translated by Mill, p. 94. note; and Mr. Cox's *Life of Melancthon*, p. 29].

The art of printing, which originated with John Guttenberg, a citizen of Mentz, was first attempted by him at Strasburg, from 1436 to 1440. His efforts which were, no doubt, at first very rude and indigested, had been greatly matured by skill and experience in the course of a century; and consequently, about the year 1535, we find the Waldenses of Piedmont anxious to avail themselves of it with a view to a more general circulation of the word of life. Hitherto they had been obliged to confine themselves to manuscripts; and, in the Waldensian tongue, they seem not to have generally possessed an entire version of the whole Bible, but the New Testament only, and some particular books of the Old. They now, however, contracted with a printer at Neufchatel, in Switzerland, for an entire **impression of the whole Bible in French**, for the sum of fifteen hundred crowns of gold. An elaborate preface, somewhat too declamatory for a publication of that kind, was prefixed by **Robert Olivetan**, who appears to have been one of their number, and who professes to have **translated it for the use of the churches**. Both Perrin and Sir Samuel Morland affirm this to have been the first French Bible that was printed and published; and on their authority I had so stated the fact in the first edition of this work. But on consulting Du Pin on the Canon, I am now convinced that this is a mistake. The words of the latter are, "The first edition of the French Bible, [printed] in the year 1530, is to be seen in the French king's library; the second of the year 1534, is larger, and extant in the libraries of St. Germain de Prez, and of St. Genevieve. These two editions are prior to that of Robert Olivetan, [which was] the first done by the Protestants in the year 1535" [2 Du Pin on the Canon, etc. Volume 1, p. 217].

The works of Luther, of Calvin, and others of the reformers, beginning about this time to be in general use, they sent Martin Gonin, one of their number, to Geneva, to procure a supply of such books as he should think calculated to promote the instruction of the people. But on his journey he was unfortunately apprehended under suspicion of being a spy: and a discovery being made that he was a Waldensian, he was sent for safety to Grenoble, and there thrown into prison. The inquisitors having been made acquainted with the case, he was, by their advice, cast into the river Lyzere, during the night, for this important reason, as given by the inquisitor, that it was not expedient the world should hear him declare his faith, lest those who heard him should become worse than himself. [Perrin's *Waldenses*, book



## 2, chapter 4.]

It was formerly noticed, that in the year 1560, **THE WALDENSES IN CALABRIA** formed a junction with Calvin's church at Geneva. The consequence of this was, that several pastors or public teachers went from the neighborhood of Geneva to settle with the churches in Calabria. It seems probable that this circumstance had contributed to revive the profession in Calabria, or at least had brought the Waldenses more into public notice than they had hitherto been; and it spread an alarm among the Catholics, which reached the ears of pope Pius IV. **Measures were, therefore, immediately taken for wholly exterminating the Waldenses in that quarter; and a scene of carnage ensued, which in enormity has seldom been exceeded.** Two monks were first sent to the inhabitants of St. Xist, who assembled the people, and by a smooth harangue, endeavored to persuade them to desist from hearing these new teachers, whom they knew they had lately received from Geneva; promising them, in case of compliance, every advantage they could wish: but, on the other hand, plainly intimating that they would subject themselves to be condemned as heretics, and to forfeit their lives and fortunes, if they refused to return to the church of Rome. And at once to bring matters to the test, they caused a bell to be immediately tolled for mass, commanding the people to attend. Instead of complying, however, the Waldenses forsook their houses, and as many as were able fled to the woods, with their wives and children. Two companies of soldiers were instantly ordered out to pursue them, who hunted them like wild beasts, crying, *Amassa, Amassa*; that is, kill, kill! and numbers were put to death. Such as reached the tops of the mountains, procured the privilege of being heard in their own defense. They stated, that they and their forefathers had now for several ages been residents of that country--that during all that period their lives and conversation had been irreproachable--that they ardently wished to remain there, if they should be allowed to continue unmolested in the profession of their faith, but that if this were denied them, they implored their pursuers to have pity on their wives and children, and to permit them to retire, under the providence of God, either by sea or land, wherever it should please the Lord to conduct them--that they would very cheerfully sacrifice all their worldly possessions rather than fall into idolatry. They therefore, entreated in the name of all that was sacred, that they might not be reduced to the necessity of defending themselves, which if they were compelled to do, must be at the peril of those who forced them to such extremities. This expostulation only exasperated the soldiers, who immediately rushing upon them in the most impetuous manner, a terrible affray ensued, in which several lives were lost, and the military at last put to flight.

The inquisitors, on this, wrote to the Viceroy of Naples, urging him to send them some companies of soldiers, to apprehend certain heretics of St. Xist and de la Garde, who had fled into the woods; at the same time apprising him that by ridding the church of such a plague, he would perform what was acceptable to the pope and

meritorious to himself. The viceroy cheerfully obeyed the summons, and marched at the head of his troops to the city of **ST. XIST**, where, on his arrival, he caused it to be proclaimed by sound of trumpet, that the place was condemned to fire and sword. Proclamation was at the same time made throughout all the kingdom of Naples, inviting persons to come to the war against the heretics of St. Xist, and promising as a recompense the customary advantages. Numbers consequently flocked to his standard, and were conducted to the woods and mountains whither the Waldenses had sought an asylum. Here they chased them so furiously, that the greater part were slain by the sword, and the rest, wounded and destitute, retired into caverns upon the tops of the rocks, where they perished by famine. Having accomplished their wishes on the fugitives from St. Xist, they next proceeded to la Garde, and apprehended seventy persons who were brought before the inquisitor Penza, at Montauld. This merciless bigot caused them to be stretched upon the rack, with the view of extorting from them a confession of adultery and other abominable practices too filthy to be mentioned; in no one instance of which did he succeed, though their tortures in many instances were so violent as to extinguish life. A person of the name of Marson was stripped naked and beat with rods, then drawn through the streets and burnt with fire-brands. One of his sons was assassinated, and another led to the top of a tower where a crucifix was presented to him, with a promise, that if he would salute it his life should be spared. The youth replied, that he would rather die than commit idolatry, and as to their threats of casting him headlong from the tower, he preferred that his body should be dashed in pieces on the earth, to having his soul cast into hell for denying Christ and his truth. The inquisitor, enraged at his answer, commanded him instantly to be precipitated, "that we may see," said he, "whether his God will preserve him."

**Bernardine Conde** was condemned to be burnt alive. As they led him to the stake, a crucifix was put into his hands, which he threw to the ground. The enraged inquisitor sent him back to prison, and to aggravate his torture he was first smeared over with pitch and then committed to the flames. The same inquisitor Penza **caused the throats of eighty of them to be cut, just as butchers slaughter their sheep**; their bodies were afterwards divided into four quarters, and the public way between Montauld and Castle Viller, for the space of thirty miles, was planted with stakes, and a quarter of the human frame stuck upon each of them. Four of the principal inhabitants of la Garde, viz. James Fermar, Anthony Palomb, Peter Jacio, and John Morglia were, by his order, hanged, in a place called Moran; but they met their deaths with surprising fortitude. A young man, of the name of Samson, defended himself dexterously for a length of time against those who came to apprehend him; but being wounded, he was seized and led to the top of a tower, where he was commanded to confess himself to a priest then present, before he was cast down. This, however, he refused, adding that he had already confessed himself to God, on which he was cast headlong from the tower. The following day the viceroy, walking at the foot of the tower, saw the unhappy youth still alive, but anguishing in tortures,

having nearly all his bones broken. The monster kicked him on the head, and said, "Is the dog yet alive? give him to the hogs."

This is only a specimen of the brutal outrages that were carried on at this time against the Waldenses in Calabria; but the reader will, probably, think it quite sufficient. **POPE PIUS IV** was so resolutely bent upon ridding the country of them, that he afterwards sent the Marquis of Butiane to perfect what was left undone, with a promise that **if he succeeded in clearing Calabria of the Waldenses, he would give his son a cardinal's hat**. He, indeed, found but little difficulty in effecting it; for the inquisitorial monks and Viceroy of Naples had already put to death so many, transporting others to the Spanish galleys, and banishing all fugitives, selling or slaying their wives and children, that not much remained for the marquis to accomplish.

Of their pastors, **Stephen Megrin** was imprisoned at Cossence, and literally starved to death. **Lewis Pascal** was conveyed to Rome, and there condemned to be burnt alive. As this man had been remarkable for his zeal, and the confidence with which he had maintained the Pope to be antichrist, he was reserved as a gratifying spectacle for his holiness and the conclave of cardinals, who were present at his death. But such was the address which Pascal delivered to the people, from the word of God, that the Pope would gladly have wished himself elsewhere, or that Pascal had been dumb and the people deaf! The account that is given us of his dying behavior, can scarcely fail to remind one of the case of the martyr Stephen; and his ardent zeal in the cause of Christ, added to his fervent supplications to the throne of grace, deeply affected the spectators, while the pope and cardinals gnashed their teeth through rage.

Such was the end of the Waldenses of Calabria, who were wholly exterminated: for if any of the fugitives returned, it was upon the express condition that they would in all things conform themselves to the laws of the church of Rome. [Perrin's *History of the Waldenses*, book 2, chapter 7.]

About this time, Francis I king of France, obtained possession of the whole country of **PIEDMONT** by conquest, and regulated its affairs by means of its parliament at Turin. The Pontifical chair was then filled by **Paul III** who plied the parliament so sedulously to proceed against these pernicious heretics, the Waldenses, that the recent scenes of France were now re-acted in Piedmont; **numbers of the Waldenses being committed to the flames**. Happily these things were, in a great measure, new among them. They, therefore, presented an address to the king, humbly supplicating that they might be indulged with the same privileges under his government, which they and their forefathers had so long enjoyed under the house of Savoy. But Francis turned a deaf ear to their prayer, commanding them to be regulated in the concerns

of religion by the laws of the Roman church, or they should be punished as heretics, adding, that he did not burn the followers of Luther in every part of France, to permit a nest of heretics, to rest secure in the bosom of the Alps. They were, therefore, commanded by the parliament to send away their pastors on pain of death; and in their room to receive priests belonging to the catholic church, to conduct their worship and sing masses for them. The Waldenses replied, that in what regarded their religious worship, they could obey no commands which interfered with the laws of God, to whom they rather chose to be obedient, in every thing that concerned his service, than to follow the fancies and inclinations of men. [Sir Samuel Morland's *Churches of Piedmont*, p. 224. 414]

But the multiplicity of important concerns which, at that critical juncture, engaged the king's attention, not permitting him to prosecute his measures against the Waldenses, the parliament relinquished the matter to the court of Inquisition, who **committed to the flames as many as they could apprehend**. In the year 1555, several were burnt, in the Castle Yard at Turin, and among others, **Bartholomew Hector**, a bookseller, who, by his admirable fortitude under his sufferings, his holy conversation, and fervent prayers to God, so deeply affected the spectators, that he drew tears from their eyes, and the language of compassionate sympathy from their lips. Not long after this, the parliament of Turin, resolving to second, by every means in their power, the efforts of the inquisitors, appointed a person of the name of St. Julian, president, and sent him throughout the valleys, armed with the king's authority, and accompanied by an assessor, to compel the Waldenses either to conform to the church of Rome or to put them to death; promising to render their agents every assistance they might require, either to reduce to obedience, or exterminate them.

On their arrival at **Perouse** they issued a proclamation in the name of the king, commanding every one of the inhabitants to attend mass on pain of death. From thence they proceeded to **Pignerol**, where they summoned several persons to appear before them, and drew up indictments, probably with the view of terrifying the Waldenses; but not finding these methods to succeed to their expectations, they next had recourse to a new and more alluring expedient. St. Julian had brought with him several monks from the valley of Angrogne, one of whom he caused to preach before a large concourse of people. The zealous ecclesiastic labored indefatigably to persuade them to return to the church of Rome, the praises of which he extolled to the skies. The people heard him patiently to the end of his harangue; and then rising up, requested that one of their pastors, who happened to be present, might be indulged with the privilege of making some remarks on the sermon, but the president very prudently declined the proposal. His refusal, however, occasioned such murmuring throughout the auditory, that the president and his monks were petrified with astonishment, and took the first opportunity that was afforded them of decently retiring and returning to Turin.

On their arrival they informed the parliament of their proceedings, intimating how difficult it would be to subdue these people by coercive measures; and giving it as their opinion, that, even if attempted, the country afforded such facilities of defending themselves, that, either to reduce them to the obedience of the church of Rome, or to rid the country of them, must be an Herculean task, and performed at the expense of so much blood, that to exterminate them must be the work of a king, and of a king of France too: they, therefore, submitted it to consideration, that it would be prudent to transmit a report of this matter to his majesty, and leave the further prosecution of the Waldenses to his own discretion. This advice was adopted, and a year elapsed before the parliament took any further measures relative to them.

His majesty, however, at length reported his pleasure upon the message of the parliament; and it was, that all his subjects in Piedmont should be compelled to attend mass on pain of corporal punishment and the confiscation of their goods; and St. Julian was again sent to Angrogne to enforce obedience; but the people were still as averse to compliance as ever they had been. They answered that they were not bound to obey such decrees as were inconsistent with their duty to God. He then commanded twelve of the principal persons among them, with all the pastors and all the schoolmasters in the valleys, to surrender themselves prisoners at Turin, there to receive such sentences as should be passed upon them. They returned for answer, that such commands came from men only, and not from God, and that as they could not appear at Turin but at the risk of their lives and of being troubled on account of their religious profession, they declined compliance.

This contumacious behavior inflamed the parliament to the highest pitch. They proceeded against them in the most summary manner, **causing all that could be apprehended in Piedmont, and on the confines of the valleys, to be committed to the flames at Turin**; and among others a Mr. **Jeffrey Varnigle** was burnt in the year 1557, in the Castle Yard. He was attended by an immense concourse of spectators, upon whom his death made a strong and lasting impression; his fervent piety and resignation to the will of God tending greatly to confirm and establish their own minds.

While these things were in progress, Francis was removed from the stage of life, and his son **Henry II** raised to the throne. The protestant princes of Germany, now moved with compassion for the poor persecuted Waldenses, interceded for them with Henry, entreating him to permit them the same religious privileges which their forefathers had enjoyed from generation to generation. And their application was not without success, for they continued unmolested until peace was concluded between France and Spain, in the year 1559, at which time Piedmont was again restored to the Duke of Savoy.

No sooner had the inhabitants of Piedmont become the subjects of Philbert Emanuel, than a most pressing application was made to him by the monks of Pignerol to prosecute the most sanguinary measures against the Waldenses; and the latter, to counteract it, presented a humble petition to their sovereign, in which they informed him they were not ignorant of the many accusations laid against them, nor of the various calumnies that were cast upon them, with the view of rendering them odious to all the princes and monarchs of the Christian world. They then make a bold avowal of their principles as these respected the Christian faith, their readiness to yield obedience to their civil rulers, in everything that did not infringe upon the rights of conscience--their anxious wish to live peaceably with their neighbors; boldly affirming, that though often provoked to it, they had done violence to no man; and in this respect, they challenged any complaint that could be brought against them. They appealed to their published confessions of faith that they were not obstinate in their opinions; but on the contrary ready to receive all holy and pious admonitions that were sanctioned by the word of God; and that they were so far from evading discussion, that, on the contrary, they anxiously desired it. They implore his highness to consider that their religious profession was not a thing of yesterday, as their adversaries falsely reported; but had been the profession of their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers; yea, of their predecessors of still more ancient times, even of the martyrs, confessors, apostles, and prophets; and they called upon their adversaries to prove the contrary if they were able. Persuaded, therefore, as they were, that their religion was not a human invention, but founded upon the word of God, which shall remain for ever, they were confident that no human force should be able to extinguish it.

They call to the mind of their prince, the grievous persecutions that for many ages past had been carried on against their brethren, and which had been so far from destroying the sect, that their numbers were increasing daily--an argument, as they remarked, that the work and council was not of men but of God, and consequently not to be destroyed by violence. They remind him, that it is no trifling thing to fight against God; and beseech him to consider well what he is about to undertake, before he embrues his hands in innocent blood. "We shall religiously obey all your highness's edicts," say they, "so far as conscience will permit--but JESUS IS OUR SAVIOR, and when conscience says NAY, your highness knows that it is our duty to obey God rather than man. While we frankly acknowledge the right of Caesar to demand from us what belongs to Caesar, we must also render to God what is due to HIM."

But whether this petition did not arrive in time, or that the duke actually turned a deaf ear to it, it seems that in the year 1561 the inhabitants of the valleys were considerably harassed by the military; in consequence of which they came to the resolution of sending deputies to Turin, to prevail upon the duchess, who was reported to be favorably disposed towards their cause, to intercede for them. In this

instance they were more successful. An edict was issued in favor of the Waldenses, bearing date the 5th of June, 1561, granting them the privilege of holding their public assemblies in all the usual places, free from molestation; and that such of them as had been injured by the seizure and confiscation of their property, should have it restored, or receive a compensation for the same.

The following account of this matter, given by Sleidan's Continuator, appears to me of too much importance to be omitted in this place.

"There was in Piedmont," says he, "a valley called by the name of Perouse, and St. Martin; inhabited by about fifteen thousand souls, whose ancestors about four hundred years since, had, upon the preaching of Waldo, Speronus, and Arnold, made a defection from the church of Rome, and had, at times, been severely treated for it, by the French, under whom they had been; but by the last treaty they were assigned to the Duke of Savoy. This people about the year 1555, had embraced the Reformation, and had suffered it to be publicly preached, though it was forbidden by the council at Turin, which, the year following, sent one of its own members to inquire after the offenders, and to punish them; to whom the inhabitants delivered the confession of their faith; 'Declaring that they professed the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testaments, and comprehended in the Apostles' Creed; and admitted the sacraments instituted by Christ, and the ten commandments, etc. That they believed the supreme civil magistrates were instituted by God, and they were to be obeyed, and that whosoever resisted them, fought against God. They said they had received this doctrine from their ancestors, and that if they were in any error they were ready to receive instruction from the word of God, and would presently renounce any heretical or erroneous doctrine which should be so shown to them.'

"On this a solemn disputation was appointed, concerning the sacrifice of the mass, auricular confession, tradition, prayers and oblations for the dead, and the ceremonies of the church and her censures: all which they rejected, alleging that they were human inventions, and contrary to the word of God. This confession was sent by the Duke of Savoy to the King of France, who about a year after returned an answer, That he had caused it to be examined by his learned divines; who had all condemned it as erroneous and contrary to true religion; and, therefore, the king commanded them to reject the confession and to submit to the holy church of Rome; and if they did not do so, their persons and estates should be confiscated. But they, on the contrary, were resolved to stand by their former confession. They were, therefore, commanded not to admit any teacher who was not sent by the Archbishop of Turin, or the council there; and that if any teachers came among them from Geneva, they should discover or apprehend them, upon pain of death, and loss of all they had. For three years after this, the Waldenses were let alone and no way molested; but this year; 1560, the Duke of Savoy,

much against his will and inclination, was drawn by the pope to make war upon them. In the beginning of March, **Jean de Carpuignan, and one Mathurim and his wife were apprehended and burnt**, and several of the neighboring valleys were plundered, and many of the inhabitants put to death; **about sixty were sent to the galleys**, and some recanted and professed the Roman Catholic religion. After this, Thomas Jacomel, a Dominican, was sent with one Turbis for his assistant, who was a bloody man, to inquire diligently and severely into all that were suspected; but the nobility interposing, there was no great severity shown. The monks of the abbey of Pignerol, which was seated in the entrance of the valley, on the other side, kept a parcel of soldiers in pay, and entrapping as many of these poor people as they could, as they passed to and fro, they used them very cruelly; and some others of the nobility did the same thing; and a sedition following upon it, they fined the poor inhabitants one thousand six hundred crowns. Upon this a sharp war ensued, which ended in the ruin of the aggressors of the church of Rome.

**"The pastor of Perouse was taken and burnt with a slow fire, together with many of his flock**, and the inhabitants were despoiled of all they had, and forced to flee to the mountains. Being thus enraged with hard usage, in the month of July, fifty of them set upon one hundred and twenty soldiers belonging to the abbey of Pignerol, put them to flight, and slew the greatest part of them; and about four hundred more of their party coming up, they took the abbey of Pignerol, and delivered all their people which were imprisoned there. In October following, news being brought that the Duke of Savoy was sending an army to destroy them; they resolved, that it was not lawful to take arms against their prince, but that they would take what they could carry away, and betake themselves to the mountains, and there await the good pleasure of God, who never forsakes his own, and can turn the hearts of princes which way he pleaseth. There was not one man amongst them who repined against this decree. In aftertimes they had pastors who taught them otherwise, and told them it was not their prince, but the Pope that they resisted, and that they fought not for their religion, but for their wives and children. The 2d of November the forces of the Duke of Savoy entered their borders, and the soldiers attempting to get above them, they betook themselves to their slings, and maintained a fight against them (though they were but few in number) the space of a whole day, with no great loss. At last, the general finding they were not to be forced, gave them leave to petition the Duke of Savoy, 'that they might live in peace, assuring him that nothing but utter ruin could have forced them to take arms against him: for which they humbly implored his highness's pardon, and begging the liberty of their consciences, and that they might not be forced to submit to the traditions of the church of Rome; but might, with his leave, enjoy the religion they had learned from their ancestors.'



**"This petition was seconded by the Duchess of Savoy, who was a merciful princess,** and had great power over the affections of the Duke. It being ever her judgment that this people were not to be so severely used, who had not changed their religion a few days ago, but had been in possession of it from their ancestors so many ages. Upon this they were to be received to mercy; but the soldiery fell upon them when they suspected nothing, and plundered them three days together. The general seemed to be much concerned at this breach of faith: yet after this they were fined eight thousand crowns, which they were forced to borrow on great usury, and **they were also commanded to bring all their arms into the castles** which the duke had garrisoned in their country. And at last they were **commanded to eject all their pastors** (which was submitted to with the tears of their people) that they might avoid the fury of the soldiers. The general pretended not to be satisfied that their pastors were in reality gone, and when they suffered them to search their houses, the soldiers plundered them again, and then burnt their town. There was one town called Angrogne, in a valley of the same name, where the general pretended to show them more favor, and agreed that they should have one pastor left them: but they forced him also to flee into the mountains afterwards, and plundered his house, and all his neighbors, and then enjoined the Sindicks (or chief magistrates) to bring in the pastor; threatening that otherwise they would burn and destroy the whole territory; and when they had so done they withdrew.

"In the mean time their messengers were gone with their petition, mentioned above, to the Duke at Vercelli, where they attended forty days before they could get an audience, and then they were forced to promise they would admit the mass; and when the prince had, upon the set terms, forgiven their taking arms against him, they were commanded to ask pardon too of the Pope's nuncio, which at last they did. During their absence, the inhabitants of Angrogne had permitted no sermons but in private, that they might not exasperate the prince, or make the affairs of their deputies more difficult. But they resolved when these were returned to exercise their religion openly, and not to give anything to the maintaining of the soldiers, whether their request was granted or denied.

"In the beginning of January the deputies returned, and when their principals understood what had been done, they wrote to the rest of the valleys to give them an account of it; and desired a public consultation or diet; at which it was resolved that they should all join in a league to defend their religion, which they believed was agreeable to the word of God, professing in the mean time to obey their prince according to the command of God, and that they would, for the future, make no agreement or peace, but by common consent, in which the freedom of their religion should be saved. Upon this they became more confident, refused the conditions offered by the Duke of Savoy, and the promises made by their deputies. And the next day they entered into the church of Bobbio, and broke

down all the images and altars, and then marching to Villare, where they intended to do the like, they met the soldiers, who had heard what was done, going to plunder Bobbio, stopped them, and with their slings so pelted them, but they were glad to shift for their lives, and left these reformers to do the same thing at Villare. The captain of Turin attempting to quell this outrage was beaten, and the duke's officers were glad to seek to their pastors for a passport. After this they beat the captain of Turin in a second fight. By this time the whole army drew into the field, and the inhabitants of these valleys not being able to resist them, the soldiers burnt all their towns and houses and destroyed all the people they took. In these broils Monteil, one of the Duke of Savoy's chief officers, was slain by a lad of eighteen years of age; and Truchet, another of them, by a dwarf. The Duke of Savoy had sent seven thousand soldiers to destroy this handful of men; and yet such was the desperation, and the advantages of their country, that they beat his soldiers wheresoever they met them. And in all these fights their enemies observed that they had slain only fourteen of the inhabitants, and thence concluded that God fought for them. So the Savoyards began to treat for a peace, which at last was concluded to the advantage of these poor despicable people. The duke remitted the eight thousand crowns they were to pay by the former treaty, and suffered them to enjoy their religious liberty: so that he got nothing by this war but loss and shame, the ruin of his people on both sides, and the desolating of his country" [Sleidan's *History of the Reformation*, Continuation, p. 52-54].

This calm, however, only lasted about four years; for **in 1565, at the importunate request of the catholic party, an Edict was issued**, enjoining every subject throughout the dominions of the Duke of Savoy, not conforming to the church of Rome, to appear before the magistrates of their several districts, within ten days after its publication, and there either declared their readiness to go to mass, or quit the country in two months. The magistrates were, at the same time, directed to take particular cognizance of such as refused compliance, and to transmit information thereof to his highness.

The protestant princes of Germany, having received information of this tremendous blow, which now threatened the Waldenses, very humanely interposed with the Duke, for the purpose of warding it off. The Elector Palatine of the Rhine, in particular, addressed a letter to him, which he transmitted by the hands of one of his counselors. I regret that its length, (for it occupies seven pages in folio) renders its entire insertion here impracticable; but some judgment may be formed of the noble sentiments that it breathes throughout from the following extracts:

"I plainly see," says the Elector Palatine, "whither the designs of your highness's counsels tend. It is to drag these poor people to prison, and there, by means of torment, to constrain them to confess some treason, that so a pretext may be

afforded for destroying all the churches of the valleys, as seditious, and to condemn them as disturbers of the public peace. But let your highness recollect, that there is a God in heaven, who not only beholds the actions of men, but who also tries their hearts and reins, and to whom all things are naked and open. Let your highness beware of willfully fighting against God, and of persecuting Christ in his members; for though he may bear it for awhile, to try the patience of his saints; he will, nevertheless, in the end, chastise the persecutors of his churches and people with horrible punishments. Let not your highness suffer yourself to be abused by the persuasions of the Papists, who may possibly promise you the kingdom of heaven, and eternal life, as a reward, in case you banish, imprison, and exterminate your subjects. But the infliction of cruelties and inhuman actions, are not the highway to the kingdom of heaven--there must be some other found out. Your highness may see what success has attended the last forty years of persecution. What advantage have those, who called themselves Catholics, derived from all the fires, swords, gibbets, prisons, tortures, and banishments which they have exercised in Germany, England, France, and Scotland! No; the history of both the Jews and the primitive Christians, abundantly shows that in the concerns of religion the power, authority, or severity of men availed nothing. Do we not find that those who have persecuted, banished, or delivered up unto death, the Christians, have been so far from gaining any thing thereby, that, on the contrary they have increased their number, inasmuch that it has become a proverb--'The ashes of the martyrs are the seed of the Christian church.' In this respect the church resembles the palm tree, which the more it is weighed down, the loftier it rises. Be assured, that true religion is nothing else than a firm and settled persuasion of the existence of God, and of his will, as revealed in his word, imprinted on the mind by the Holy Spirit, which having once taken root, cannot easily be eradicated by tortures and torments--for those who are the subjects of it, will sooner endure the worst that can befall them, than embrace any thing which appears to them contrary to religion and godliness.

"By the grace of God, evangelical truth now shines in such splendor, that the errors and deceits of the Bishop of Rome and all his clergy, are sufficiently known in a manner by all men; nor must the Pope think, henceforward, to abuse the world as he has done in former times. I, therefore, beseech your highness, whom I understand to be of a sweet and gentle disposition, that you would lay these things to heart, and not further molest these poor people for the sake of their religion, nor refuse them the free exercise of it, but rather allow them the liberty of assembling in public for the worship and service of God; in doing which you will readily discover the falsehood of the charges brought against them by their adversaries, and have a proof of their loyalty and obedience. Your highness is not ignorant what evils were brought upon France by their violence, in banishing and persecuting [the Christians there,] what a flame was raised, which in a manner consumed the whole kingdom, and what ruin ensued, all which has been

appeased by one single edict, granting liberty of conscience; the result of which is, that the most entire peace and tranquillity reigns among them, though they profess different forms of religion. And, indeed, the plain truth is, that if your highness, out of complaisance to the Bishop of Rome, the cardinals, prelates, and others who are interested in the Roman religion, are resolved still to continue to persecute these poor people, you will unquestionably experience the same evils that have come upon other kingdoms. Nothing that is violent is of long duration; and we must not always follow the wolf into the wood. Poverty and hunger are no inconsiderable torments, nor is it an easy thing to lead so long and miserable a life in exile, when deprived of one's goods and estates. It is the height of injustice and misery to be compelled to submit to the tyrannical yoke of the Bishop of Rome, and to be prohibited worshipping God according to his word. And it is wholly intolerable for good and faithful subjects to be accused as rebels or seditious persons.

"I learn, not without much grief, that scarcely any thing has yet been done in regard to the things which your highness promised my JUNIUS by word of mouth, \* and that those poor wretches who are kept in the galleys on account of their religion, whose names he delivered in to your highness, are yet detained; from which I plainly perceive that these are the doings of your highness's counselors, who are carried away with deadly hatred against our religion, of which I have proof, not merely by hearsay, but in the actual case of two who have been lately banished. But let me tell you in a word, that this severity is neither well-pleasing to God nor man, nor is it the way to bring men to the true knowledge of God, which must be done by persuasion and an appeal to the Scriptures--not by persecution. Your highness may probably tell me, that our religion has been long condemned--but I ask, by whom, and how? By him who has violated and corrupted all rights, human and divine, making himself both party and judge, and **who has lately, at the Council of Trent, confirmed all his idolatries, and all the superstitions and abuses that have been introduced into the church.** Let your highness carefully examine the Holy Scriptures, and you will find this to be the case. Never suffer yourself to be deluded by those deceivers, who maintain their idolatries and superstitions merely to serve their own bellies, and that they may lead the lives of epicures. Let your highness well consider, that you must one day appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of the souls of your subjects, and where it will avail you nothing to say, 'I thought so,' or, 'I esteemed it to be so,' God has revealed his will in his word, and it is his pleasure that we should follow the same without turning either to the right hand or to the left. **The word of God is also clear and plain; let your highness only hear and embrace it, and you will easily find out the truth.** I say all this, as one who wishes well to your highness's soul, as much so indeed as I do to that of my own, and I pray the Lord incessantly that it may please him to enlighten your understanding, and call you home to his true light, that you may discern truth from falsehood, and that thus having a

knowledge of the horrible abuses of the church of Rome, you may serve God in sincerity and truth.

"I therefore beseech your highness to give us a pledge of that esteem which you have for us, by delivering those poor people which are now in the galleys, and recalling those that have been recently banished by the senate of Savoy, as you promised my JUNIUS and myself, by your letters. Have compassion upon so many wandering exiles, deprived of all their property and effects. Call them home, and restore them to their houses and habitations: and grant both to them, and to the other inhabitants of your highness's country, the public exercise of their religious worship, which they esteem more necessary than their daily food. Absolve such of these poor people of the valleys as have been falsely accused, that so they may all live in peace and tranquillity under your highness's government. Make such articles of peace with them as may be preserved inviolate--support them in the quiet exercise of that religion which you have permitted them, and defend them in the same, bridling and restraining the bitter hatred which their governor Castrocara exercises towards them; and warn him to molest them no more for the future, as he has hitherto done; enjoin upon him that he refrain from falsely imputing to them crimes and accusations, by means of which he thinks to varnish over his tyranny; for such things are altogether unsuitable to the office of a magistrate and a governor, who ought to be a father to those that are committed to his charge. **Do not render yourself an instrument to the Pope and his creatures, of gratifying their insatiable desires to spill the blood of Christians.** Countenance not their cruelty and inhumanity against those who are in no wise perverse, but real Christians, and who have nothing more at heart than to serve God purely and uprightly under your highness's government, to whom they are ready to yield all that obedience and fidelity which is your due, and to lay themselves out (their property, their persons, and their lives, if necessity calls for them) for your service. The great and all-powerful God guide and govern your highness by his Holy Spirit, and preserve and defend you long in health and safety" [Morland's *Churches of Piedmont*, p. 243-249]. [\* For understanding this, the reader must notice, that the elector had before this time, by means of one of his ministers, whose name was Junius, been interceding with the Duke, in behalf of some of the Waldenses, and that the latter had promised to redress the grievance, which, however, the catholic clergy and the Duke's own ministers had successfully maneuvered to prevent.]

This letter, which breathes throughout the spirit of genuine Christianity, will be found, by those who bestow proper attention upon it, to throw much light upon the state of the Waldenses in Piedmont, at the middle of the sixteenth century. For while it gives us the most favorable view of their peaceable, prudent, and exemplary conduct, it unmasks the perfidious and cruel proceedings of the catholic party towards them, and the distresses and afflictions with which they were perpetually

harassed, on account of their profession. It appears to have had the happiest effects upon the Duke; and, supported as it was, by the personal application of **the Duchess, who is said to have been "a pious and virtuous princess,"** it bridled the fury of the governor Castrocaro, and averted the dreadful storm which hung over them. They appear to have enjoyed peace until the year 1571, at which time the rage of this inhuman governor again burst forth. The Duke, at that instant, had been drawn in to join several of the princes of Europe, in a league offensive against the Protestants; which he had no sooner done, than he began to molest his protestant subjects in the valleys. He first of all forbade them to hold any correspondence with the Waldenses of Dauphiny, on pain of death. And next they were forbidden to assemble in any synod or council, unless it were in the presence of the intolerant Castrocaro. These things sufficiently indicated the gathering of another storm; but **the Duchess again humanely interposed, and with effect; for she procured the continuance of their privileges; and, indeed, during her life, she remained as it were a sanctuary and place of refuge for the members of the churches of Piedmont, whenever they found themselves assailed by their adversaries.**

In the following year, 1572, the dreadful massacre of the Huguenots, on St. Bartholomew's day, took place at Paris, and several of the other cities of France. No sooner had the news of this reached Castrocaro, than he prepared himself for similar exploits in Piedmont: and so terrific was the attitude in which he placed himself, that the Waldensian brethren thought it necessary to retire, with their wives, and children, and moveable effects, to the tops of the mountains and other places of real or fancied security. But God who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and who, at his pleasure, restrains the wrath of men, on this occasion disposed the heart of the Duke to befriend them. The massacres that had taken place in France filled him with disgust and horror; and so far was he from allowing the governor to act a similar part towards his subjects, that he caused a proclamation to be issued, commanding those who had left their habitations to return to their own houses, promising that they should sustain neither danger nor injury thereby; and they found him true to his word, for, from that time to the death of the Duchess, which took place on the 19th of October, 1574, they suffered but little inconvenience. **After the death of this amiable lady, however, the Popish party came forth, like lions out of their dens, and sought, by all possible means to destroy the Waldenses;** but the kind providence of God raised them up friends, from time to time, who interceded on their behalf with the Duke, whose heart seems to have been gradually and increasingly inclined towards them; for he continued to treat them with much gentleness and moderation from that time until the period of his own death, which happened on the 30th of August, 1580.

The late duke was succeeded in the government of the country by his son **CHARLES EMANUEL**, upon whose accession to the throne a trifling contest about territory arose between him and a French prince, which was near involving the Waldenses in a

dilemma. The young Duke had seized upon the marquisate of Saluces, on which Monsieur de l'Esdiguieres, by way of retaliation, marched his army, and seized the valleys of Piedmont. When the fracas was over, a rumor was spread abroad that the Waldenses had taken the oath of fidelity to the King of France, and that the Duke displeased with that part of their conduct, had formed the resolution of extirpating all the Protestant churches in his dominions. There does appear to have been some truth in the latter part of this representation; for, some members of the Duke's council actually proposed the thing, but it was overruled by the wiser and greater part of the members, and it met with a stern repulse from the Duke himself. The Waldenses, however, thought it expedient to appoint their deputies to wait upon him, which they did at Villaro, assuring his highness of their loyalty and fidelity to his government, and supplicating a continuance of his favor and protection. His answer, which was made in the presence of a great number of his lords and courtiers was calculated to revive their drooping spirits. **"Only be faithful to me," said the Duke, "and I shall not fail to be a good prince, nay, a father to you. And as to your liberty of conscience and the free exercise of your religion, I shall be so far from introducing any innovations into those liberties which you have enjoyed to the present time, that if any offer to molest you, have your recourse to myself, and I shall effectually relieve and protect you."**

This certainly was a very remarkable declaration, especially when we consider that it came from one who professed himself a member of the church of Rome. But it was spoken in the presence of many persons of high consideration, and in the most condescending manner; and it proved eminently conducive to the interests of the Waldenses. It countervailed the threats of their implacable adversaries, and kept them in check; and such, with occasional interruptions indeed from the catholic party, sometimes by secret stratagems, and at others by open force, continued their condition until the end of the century. About that time the scene greatly changed, and the years 1601 and 1602 were prolific of mischief to the churches, both in the valley of Lucerne and the marquisate of Saluces, of which some mention will be made in the next section; I shall close the present with a short article of biography which may serve as all introduction to the history of the Waldenses during the seventeenth century.

In the year 1601, **Bartholomew Copin**, a Waldensian of the valley of Lucerne, had occasion to attend a public fair at Ast, a city in Piedmont, to which he had brought for sale some articles of merchandise. Sitting at table one evening in company with several other merchants, one of them started a discourse upon the subject of the diversity of religious professions, and took occasion to speak reproachfully of the Waldenses of Angrogne and the neighboring valleys. Copin undertook their defense; conceiving that if he permitted such calumnies to pass uncontradicted, he should appear to be acquiescing in their justice, and of course should partake in the guilt that attached to them. "And what," said the stranger to Copin, "are you one of the

Waldenses?" "Yes," said he, "I am." "And what, do you not believe the real presence of God in the host?" "No," said Copin. "See," replied the other, "what a false religion yours is." "Of the truth of my religion," said Copin, "I have no more doubt, than I have of the existence of God himself, or that I myself shall die." On the following day, Copin was summoned to appear before the bishop of Ast, who told him that he had been informed of certain scandalous opinions and discourses which he had held the preceding evening at his lodgings; and that unless he confessed his fault, and asked pardon, he should certainly have him punished. Copin acknowledged that he had been stimulated to say what he did; but that, nevertheless, he had said nothing that was untrue, or which he would not maintain at the peril of his life. He owned that he had some property in the world, and a wife and children, but that his affections were not so riveted to those objects, as to prefer them to the testimony of a good conscience. And as to his life and conversation, if the bishop thought proper to inquire of the merchants of Ast, all of whom knew him, he might be fully satisfied of his uprightness and integrity.

This, however, did not satisfy his lordship, who instantly sent him to prison; and on the following day, the bishop's secretary paid Copin a visit, when he expressed great regard for him, but thought it necessary to apprise him that, unless he acknowledged his fault, he was in danger of losing his life. Copin replied, that his life was in the hands of God--that he had no wish to preserve it to the prejudice of his glory--and that as there were but two or three steps between him and heaven, he trusted he would support him by his grace, and not leave him to turn aside. He was next brought before the inquisitor, who examined him in the presence of the bishop; but Copin always repulsed them with the word of God, telling them that were he to be ashamed of and deny Christ, he would be ashamed of and deny him before his heavenly Father. The inquisitor, finding he was not to be moved by either his fair speeches or terrific frowns, then thus addressed him. "Out upon thee, thou cursed Lutheran; thou shalt go to the devils in hell, and when tormented by those foul spirits, thou wilt call to mind the holy instructions we have given thee, to bring thee to salvation--but thou chooseth rather to go to hell, than reconcile thyself to thy holy mother, the church." Copin only answered, that he had long been reconciled to the holy church.

Copin, foreseeing that his death was resolved on, and that his time here would probably be short, was one day greatly surprised by a visit from his wife and son, who seem to have been enticed to the prison by the catholic party for sinister purposes, and who were permitted to sup with him in the prison. He improved the time, however, in exhorting his wife to submission to the will of God: telling her she would soon be deprived of her husband, and the child of its father; he reminded her that it was not his duty to love wife or children more than Christ--that she ought to esteem him happy in that it pleased God to confer upon him the honor of bearing witness to his truth at the expense of his life; and that he hoped God would grant



him grace to suffer any torments for his sake. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the parting scene, which the reader's own reflections will enable him to realize. The affecting lamentations of the wife and child were sufficient to melt the most obdurate heart into pity and compassion, but having received his last benediction, they were dismissed the prison, and Copin was locked up as before. On the next day he wrote the following letter.

TO MY WELL-BELOVED CONSORT, SUSANNA COPIN "My dearest Consort! "I derived much consolation from your late visit--and indeed so much the more, by how much the less it was expected. I believe, also, it was no little satisfaction to yourself, to have the opportunity of supping with me, as it fell out on Saturday, the 15th of September, 1601. I know not how it came about that we were permitted so to do; but all things are in the hands of God, and be the cause what it may, I do not think we shall eat together any more. And, therefore, beseech God to be your comforter, and put your trust in him, who hath promised never to forsake those that depend upon him. You want not prudence, and therefore so manage and govern your house, that you may have Samuel and Martha in proper subjection to you, and I command them, by the authority that God hath given me, that they honor and obey you, and in so doing they will be blessed of God. As to the rest, be neither troubled nor concerned about me; for if divine Providence hath decreed to put a period to my life, and if it please him to demand a restitution of that soul which he hath a long time lent me, my confidence is in him, that out of his immense mercy and divine goodness, he will receive it into heaven, for the sake of his Son Christ Jesus, who, I believe, **hath made expiation for our sins by his sufferings and death**. Be constant in prayer to God, and serve him fully--for thus you will be happy. You need not send me any thing for three weeks to come; but at the expiration of that time you may, if you please, send me some money, to pay the gaoler and my own support, if I live so long. Recollect what I have often told you, that God added fifteen years to the life of king Hezekiah, but that he had prolonged my term much more, for you have seen me, as it were, dead a long time ago, and yet I still survive; and I hope and trust that he will preserve my life until my death be more for his glory and my own happiness, through his goodness and mercy towards me." From the prison of Ast, Sept. 16th, 1601.

Poor Copin was soon afterwards found dead in his cell, not without symptoms of having been strangled! After his death he was condemned to be burnt; and the body having been brought out of prison, sentence was read over it, and it was cast into the fire. [Perrin's *History*, book 2, chapter 4.]

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 5**

### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES DURING THE FORMER PART OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. A.D. 1600-1665**

**On the southern side of the valleys of Piedmont** lies a considerable tract of extremely fertile country, including. extensive valleys and plain lands, with several large cities, all passing under the general term of **THE MARQUISATE OF SALUCES**. [This name is, in our old historians, frequently spelt "Saluzzes."] Its most northern valley is that of Po, so named from the river Po taking its rise there; and it is separated only by a single mountain on the north side from the valley of Lucerne, in Piedmont.

Previous to the year 1588, the marquisate of Saluces was subject to the jurisdiction of the kings of France; but at that period an exchange of territory was made between the French monarch and the Duke of Savoy in consequence of which the latter gave up la Bresse to France, and the marquisate of Saluces was annexed to the dominions of the Duke of Savoy. The contiguity of Saluces to the valleys of Piedmont, together with its great similarity in regard to territorial surface, had entitled it, for several centuries, to participate of the light of Divine truth, which shone in the neighboring valleys; and in the beginning of the seventeenth century there were eight flourishing churches in the marquisate, of which Pravillelm, Biolets, Bietone, and Dronier were the chief; but they had all maintained the purity of the Christian profession for ages, living in great harmony, and holding fellowship with the neighboring churches of the same faith and order. Their external peace had, indeed, been frequently invaded by

the kings of France, and their constancy and patience under sufferings put severely to the test--but if the French monarchs had chastised them with whips, it was reserved for their new sovereign, Charles Emanuel, to do it with scorpions. [*Sir Samuel Morland's History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 258; Perrin's *Hist des Vaudois*, book 2, chapter 5; Boyer's *History of the Waldenses*, chapter 9.]

In the year 1597, the Duke of Savoy made his pleasure known to his new subjects, by a letter issued from Turin, dated the 27th of March of that year, of which the following is a copy.

Well-beloved Friends, etc. It being our desire that all our subjects in the marquisate of Saluces should live under obedience to our mother, the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church--and knowing how much our exhortations have prevailed upon others, hoping also that they will have the same effect upon you, and that you are willing to adhere to the truth--we have thought it proper, upon these grounds, to address you in this letter, to the end that, laying aside all heretical obstinacy, you may embrace the true religion, both out of respect to God's glory and love to your own selves. In which religion we, for our parts, are resolved to live and die; which conduct of yours, on account of so good an example, will undoubtedly lead you to eternal life. Only dispose yourselves to do this, and we shall preserve the remembrance of it for your benefit, as the lord de la Monte will more particularly certify you on our part, to whom we refer ourselves in this regard, praying the Lord to assist you by his holy grace [Morland, p. 263].

The publication of this letter occasioned a general consultation among the churches of the marquisate, and they returned an answer to it, in the form of a petition to the Duke of Savoy, in which they first of all tender their thanks to his highness for having permitted them so long to enjoy their religious privileges free from molestation, in the same manner as he had found them when he took possession of the marquisate, in 1588. They then proceed humbly to entreat him that he will be pleased to indulge them with a continuance of the same privilege, **inasmuch as they were persuaded that their religious profession was founded on the Holy Scriptures, by which standard they labored so to regulate their lives and conversations**, as to give no just cause of offense to any one. And when they reflected that even the Jews and other enemies of Christ were there allowed to live in peace, and the enjoyment of their religious worship, they confidently hoped that those who were found to be Christians, and faithful to God and their prince, would not be debarred the same privilege.

This answer was not wholly without effect. They remained undisturbed until the **year 1601, when, in the month of July, an edict was issued, commanding all the inhabitants of the marquisate of Saluces, who dissented from the church of Rome, to appear individually before the magistrates, within the space of fifteen**

**days, and there declare whether or not they would renounce their religious profession and go to mass.** In the former case, it was promised them that they should remain peaceably in their houses, and be entitled to peculiar advantages; while in the latter, they were peremptorily ordered to depart out of his highness's dominions, within the space of two months, and never to return without permission, under pain of death and the confiscation of their property.

The Waldenses appear to have had considerable difficulty in persuading themselves that this was anything more than a threat; in which unfounded supposition they were encouraged by some persons of note among them. They, therefore, made no preparation for a departure, by the settlement of their affairs; but appointed deputies to wait on the Duke, to obtain a revocation; or if that could not be effected, at any rate, a modification of this rigorous edict. But **CLEMENT VIII** who was then pope, had got complete possession of the Duke's ear, and rendered him deaf to every entreaty. To carry the edict into full effect, **a great number of inquisitorial monks were dispatched into the marquisate, who on their arrival, went from house to house, examining the inhabitants concerning their religious profession--**and just at the expiration of the term allowed by the edict, their deputies returned, but, to their surprise and amazement, informed them that every hope of redress had vanished. The consequence was, that **more than five hundred families were driven into exile!**

"The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide."

Some crossed the Alps, and retired into Dauphiny, in France; others to Geneva, and its neighborhood; while many sought refuge among their friends in the valleys of Piedmont; where, for awhile they remained undisturbed, notwithstanding the edict had expressly mentioned that they should depart out of the dominions of the Duke of Savoy. [Perrin, book 2, chapter 5; Morland, p.265.]

Whether their catholic persecutors, not content with this too gentle mode of punishment, endeavored, by loading them with reproaches and false accusations, to steel the hearts of the inhabitants of other countries against them, and thereby prevent their finding an asylum; or whatever was their particular inducement thereto, it is certain that they considered it necessary, in the year 1608, to publish a declaration explanatory of the cause of their banishment. Perrin has given us a copy of it, and the following is the substance:

It begins by stating, that from time immemorial, and, from generation to generation, the same doctrines and religious profession had been maintained by their predecessors in the marquisate of Saluces; and that, while under the jurisdiction of

the kings of France, they had been permitted to profess their faith without molestation, just as their brethren of the valleys of Lucerne, la Perouse, etc. (in Piedmont) had done; but that his highness, instigated by the evil counsels of persons swayed by prejudice and passion rather than of his own free will, had issued an edict to disturb and molest them. "To the end, therefore," say they, "that all men may know that it is not for any crime or misdemeanor, perpetrated against the person of our prince, or for rebellion, or opposition to his edicts, or for murder, or theft, that we are thus persecuted, and spoiled of our goods: WE PROTEST AND DECLARE, that the doctrine maintained by the reformed churches of France, Switzerland, Germany, Geneva, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and other kingdoms, is the only Christian doctrine approved of God, and which brings salvation to men. We are, therefore, determined to adhere to it, to the end of our lives, and at the risk of every thing that is dear to us. If any presume to think us in an error, we desire to be shown wherein, promising to abjure and turn from it, and to follow the better way that shall be shown us; for we have nothing more at heart, than, with a good conscience, to worship God, agreeably to his own will, and attain the salvation of our souls. But as attempts have been made, by mere force, to compel us to forsake the way of salvation, and to follow after the erroneous doctrines and superstitions invented by men, we chose to lose our houses and properties, nay, and our very lives also, rather than comply."

They, therefore, implore the reformed churches, in the midst of their exile and calamity, to receive them into their fellowship; being prepared, if it should please God so to order it, to seal their testimony with their blood. They returned thanks to God, for the honor conferred upon them, by calling them to suffer afflictions and persecutions for his name's sake, committing the issue of their affairs, and the righteousness of their cause, unto the divine Providence, trusting that he will effect their deliverance when and how he pleases. And they conclude with a prayer to God, that he who hath the hearts of kings and princes in his hand, would be graciously pleased to soften the heart of his highness, and incline him to pity those who never did, and who are resolved that they never will offend him; and that it may be given him, to perceive that they are more loyal and faithful to him than those are who have instigated him to such persecutions. And, finally, that the Lord will be pleased to support them in the midst of their trials, and to fortify them with patience and constancy, that they and their posterity may persevere in the profession of the truth to the end of their lives.

It does not appear that this affecting address produced any amelioration of the condition of the poor exiles. All the churches in the marquisate of Saluces were completely dispersed: and the pope, with the assistance of his inquisitorial band, took special care to keep the country clear of them, as they had formerly done that of Calabria. During the persecution, **MONSIEUR VIGNAUX**, pastor of the church of Villaro, in the valley of Lucerne, whose history of the Waldenses I have frequently

adverted to [see particularly page 84], was indefatigable in his exertions to serve his afflicted brethren. He was then far advanced in life; his years had given him the advantage of much experience in the Christian profession; and he was remarkable for his gravity and other excellent qualities. Deeply feeling for their distresses, he employed himself in writing long letters to his poor persecuted brethren in every quarter, exhorting them to patience and perseverance, and encouraging them by all the consolatory considerations which the gospel affords, not to faint nor be discouraged, but to bear up under their troubles. He also wrote to several of the nobility, to whom he was known, either personally or by report, particularly to the governor of the marquisate, with whom he was intimately acquainted, stating the injustice and cruelty that was done to his friends, and urging all the motives and reasons that he could devise, to induce him to mitigate their sufferings; but, so far as appears, without the least effect.

From this period, the Waldenses appear to have been tolerably free from very severe persecution for half a century. But, **in the month of January, 1655, the tragedy of Saluces was reacted over almost all the valleys of Piedmont, and with tenfold cruelty.** On the 25th of that month, a public document appeared, which has since been but too well known by the title of "the order of Gastaldo." Thus runs the preamble:

"ANDREW GASTALDO, Doctor of the Civil Law, Master Auditor Ordinary, sitting in the most illustrious chamber of accounts of his royal highness, and Conservator General of the holy faith, for the observation of the orders published against the pretended reformed religion of the valley of Lucerne, Perouse, and St. Martino, and upon this account especially deputed by his said royal highness."

After stating the authority which had been vested in him by the duke, on the 13th of the same month, it proceeds "to command and enjoin every head of a family, with its members, of the reformed religion, of whatever rank, degree, or condition soever, without exception, inhabiting or possessing estates in the places of Lucerne, Lucernetta, S. Giovanni, La Torre, Bubbiana, and Fenile, Campiglione, Bricherassio, and S. Secondo, within three days after the publication of those presents, to withdraw and depart, and to be with their families withdrawn out of the said places, and transported into the places allowed by his royal highness, during his good pleasure, etc. **under pain of death and confiscation of houses and goods.**-- Provided always that they do not make it appear to us within twenty days following, that they are become Catholics, or that they have sold their goods to the Catholics. Furthermore, his royal highness intends and wills that in the places (to which they were to transport themselves) the holy mass shall be celebrated in every one of them, and that for any person of the said reformed religion to molest, either in deed or word, the missionary fathers and those that attend them, much less to divert or dissuade any one of the said religion from turning Catholic, he shall do it **on pain of**

**death,"** etc.

It is not difficult to conjecture what must have been the distress and misery consequent upon a compliance with such an order as this, and more especially in such a country as Piedmont, at such a season of the year. Thousands of families, comprehending the aged and infirm, the sick and afflicted, the mother advanced in pregnancy, and the one scarcely raised up from her confinement--the delicate female and the helpless infant--**all compelled to abandon their homes in the very depth of winter**, in a country where the snow is visible upon the tops of the mountains, throughout every month of the year. All this surely presents a picture of distress sufficient to rend the heart.

On the first issuing of the edict, the Waldenses sent deputies to the governor of the province, humbly representing to him the unreasonableness and the cruelty of this command. They stated the absolute impossibility of so many souls finding subsistence in the places to which they were ordered to transport themselves: the countries scarcely affording adequate supply for their present inhabitants. To which they added, that this command was expressly contrary to all their rights as the peaceable subjects of his highness, and the concessions which had been uniformly granted them, of maintaining without molestation their religious profession: but the inhuman governor refused to pay the least attention to their application. Disappointed in this, they next begged time to present their humble supplication to his royal highness. But even this boon was refused them unless they would allow him to draw up their petition and prescribe the form of it. Finding that what he proposed was equally inimical to their rights and consciences, they declined his proposal. They now found that the only alternative which remained for them was to abandon their houses and properties, and to retire with their families, their wives and children, aged parents, and helpless infants, the halt, the lame, and the blind, to traverse the country, through the rain, snow, and ice, encompassed with a thousand difficulties.

But these things were only the beginnings of sorrow to this afflicted people. For no sooner had they quitted their houses, than a banditti broke into them, pillaging and plundering whatever they had left behind. They next proceeded to raze their habitations to the ground, to cut down the trees and turn the neighborhood into a desolate wilderness; and all this without the least remonstrance or prohibition from Gastaldo. These things, however, were only a trifle in comparison of what followed. But the reader will best learn this sad story from the parties who were interested in this melancholy catastrophe; and the following is a copy of the letter which some of the survivors wrote to their Christian friends in distant countries, as soon as the tragedy was over.

### ***A BRIEF NARRATIVE OF THOSE HORRIBLE CRUELITIES WHICH WERE***

***EXERCISED TOWARDS THE WALDENSES IN THE LATE MASSACRE, IN APRIL, 1655.***

**BRETHREN AND FATHERS!**

Our tears are no more tears of water but of blood, which not only obscure our sight, but oppress our very hearts. Our pen is guided by a trembling hand, and our minds distracted by such unexpected alarms, that we are incapable of framing a letter which shall correspond with our wishes, or the strangeness of our desolations. In this respect, therefore, we plead your excuse, and that you would endeavor to collect our meaning from what we would impart to you.

Whatever reports may have been circulated concerning our obstinacy in refusing to have recourse to his royal highness for a redress of our heavy grievances and molestations, you cannot but know that we have never desisted from writing supplicatory letters, or presenting our humble requests, by the hands of our deputies, and that they were sent and referred, sometimes to the council de propaganda fide [a Council established by the court of Rome for propagating the faith or, in plain English, for extirpating heretics], at other times to the Marquis of Pionessa [this unfeeling man seems to have sustained the station of prime minister in the court of the Duke of Savoy, and commander-in-chief of his army], and that the three last times they were positively rejected, and refused so much as an audience, under the pretext that they had no credentials nor instructions which should authorize them to promise or accept, on the behalf of their respective churches, whatever it might please his highness to grant or bestow upon them. And by the instigation and contrivance of the Roman clergy, there **was secretly placed in ambush an army of six thousand men, who, animated and encouraged thereto by the personal presence and active exertions of the Marquis of Pionessa, fell suddenly and in the most violent manner, upon the inhabitants of S. Giovanni and La Torre.**

This army having once entered and got a footing, was soon augmented by the addition of a multitude of the neighboring inhabitants throughout all Piedmont, who hearing that we were given up as a prey to the plunderers, fell upon the poor people with impetuous fury. To all those were added an incalculable number of persons that had been outlawed, prisoners, and other offenders, who expected thereby to have saved their souls and filled their purses. And the better to effect their purposes, the inhabitants were compelled to receive five or six regiments of the French army, besides some Irish, to whom, it is reported, our country was promised, with several troops of vagabond persons, under the pretext of coming into the valleys for fresh quarters. This great multitude, by virtue of a license from the Marquis of Pionessa, instigated by the monks, and enticed and conducted by



our wicked and unnatural neighbors, attacked us with such violence on every side, especially in Angrogne, Villaro, and Bobio; and in a manner so horribly treacherous, that in an instant all was one entire scene of confusion, and the inhabitants, after a fruitless skirmish to defend themselves, were compelled to flee for their lives, with their wives and children; and that not merely the inhabitants of the plain, but those of the mountains also. Nor was all their diligence sufficient to prevent the destruction of a very considerable number of them. For, in many places, such as Villaro and Bobio, they were so hemmed in on every side, the army having seized on the fort of Mareburg, and by that means blocked up the avenue, that there remained no possibility of escape, and nothing remained for them but to be massacred and put to death. **In one place they mercilessly tortured not less than an hundred and fifty women and their children,** chopping off the heads of some, and dashing the brains of others against the rocks. And in regard to those whom they took prisoners, from fifteen years old and upwards, who refused to go to mass, **they hanged some, and nailed others to the trees by the feet, with their heads downward.** It is reported that they carried some persons of note prisoners to Turin, viz. our poor brother and pastor, Mr. Gros, with some part of his family. In short, there is neither cattle nor provisions of any kind left in the valley of Lucerne; it is but too evident that all is lost, since **there are some whole districts, especially S. Giovanni and La Torre, where the business of setting fire to our houses and churches was so dexterously managed, by a Franciscan friar, and a certain priest, that they left not so much as one of either unburnt.** In these desolations, the mother has been bereft of her dear child--the husband of his affectionate wife! Those who were once the richest amongst us are reduced to the necessity of begging their bread, while others still remain weltering in their own blood, and deprived of all the comforts of life. And as to the churches in S. Martino and other places, who, on all former occasions, have been a sanctuary to the persecuted, they have themselves now been summoned to quit their dwellings, and every soul of them to depart, and that instantaneously and without respite, under pain of being put to death. Nor is there any mercy to be expected by any of them who are found within the dominions of his royal highness.

The pretext which is alleged for justifying these horrid proceedings is, that we are rebels against the orders of his highness, for not having brought the whole city of Geneva within the walls of Mary Magdalene church; or, in plainer terms, for not having performed an utter impossibility in departing, in a moment, from our houses and homes in Bubbiana, Lucerne, Fenile, Bricheras, La Torre, S. Giovanni, and S. Secondo; and also, for having renewed our repeated supplications to his royal highness, to commiserate our situation, who, while on the one hand he promised us to make no innovations in our lot, on the other refused us permission to depart peaceably out of his dominions, for which we have often entreated him, in case he would not allow us to continue and enjoy the

liberty of our consciences, as his predecessors had always done. True it is, that the Marquis of Pionessa adduced another reason, and we have the original copy of his writing in our possession, which is, that it was his royal highness's pleasure to abase us and humble our pride, for endeavoring to shroud ourselves, and take sanctuary, under the protection of foreign princes and states. To conclude, our beautiful and flourishing churches are utterly lost, and that without remedy, unless our God work miracles for us. Their time is come, and our measure is full! O have pity upon the desolations of Jerusalem, and be grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. Show forth your compassions, and let your bowels yearn in behalf of so many thousands of poor souls, who are reduced to a morsel of bread, for following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. We recommend our pastors, with their scattered and dispersed flocks, to your fervent christian prayers, and rest in haste, Your brethren in the Lord. April 27th 1655.

The reader may collect from this letter some general notion of the tenor of the proceedings that were at this time carried on against the Waldenses in Piedmont; and they appear to have been extended progressively throughout almost the whole country. But if credit is to be given to the statements of our countryman, Sir Samuel Morland, who in the very same year was sent by the English government to administer pecuniary assistance to these afflicted people, ]--if any regard is due to the attestations which he has produced from persons who were spectators of the dreadful work of carnage; it is but a faint impression of the scene which can be derived from that letter. The representation given us by Sir Samuel, and further corroborated by Leger, in his *General History of the Churches of Piedmont*, begs all description for atrocity. Nor, if the infernal regions had been disemboweled of their inhabitants, and the whole let loose among the valleys of Piedmont, could we have expected the perpetration of greater enormities. The bare report of them spread amazement throughout all the protestant states of Europe, as we shall presently see; and the principal actors in this deep tragedy found it necessary to aim at extricating their characters from the odium which attached to it. In particular, the Marquis of Pionessa labored to cast the blame upon certain officers of his army, which induced one of them, not only to give up the command of the regiment, but actually to draw up an affidavit, which he attested with his own hand, and got it further corroborated by the testimony of two of his brother officers, in vindication of his conduct in that affair. Sir Samuel Morland obtained possession of the original document, which he deposited in the University of Cambridge, along with an infinite number of other interesting manuscripts relating to this subject, and it appears of sufficient importance to be submitted to the reader's consideration.

"I, SIEUR DU PETIT BOURG, first captain of the regiment of Groncy, who also commanded the same, having received direction from prince Thomas to join the Marquis of Pionessa, who was then at La Torre, and to receive his orders--when I was upon the eve of departure, the ambassador sent for me, and desired me to

speak to M. de Pionessa, and to use my endeavors to accommodate the troubles which had happened among those of the religion [of the Waldenses] in the valleys of Piedmont. In order to which I addressed myself to the marquis, earnestly entreating him that he would give way, and allow me to undertake an accommodation, which I supposed I might have been able to effect. But he repeatedly refused my request, in defiance of all the endeavors I could possibly use to persuade him. And instead of the least mitigation of matters, which could be produced by any consideration that I could lay before him, I was witness to many acts of violence and extreme cruelties exercised by the banditti and soldiers of Piedmont, **upon all sorts of persons, of every age, sex, and condition, whom I myself saw massacred, dismembered, hung up; females violated, and numerous other horrid atrocities committed.** And so far is it from being true that the whole was done by virtue of the orders that were issued by me, as falsely stated in a certain Narrative, printed in French and Italian, that I beheld the same with horror and regret. And whereas it is said in the same Narrative, that the Marquis of Pionessa commanded me to treat them peaceably without hostility, and in the best manner I possibly could, the event clearly demonstrated that the orders he gave were altogether of a contrary tendency, since it is most certain that without distinction of those who resisted, from those who made no resistance, they were used with all sorts of inhumanity--their houses burnt, their goods plundered, and when prisoners were brought before the Marquis of Pionessa, I was a witness to his issuing orders to give them no quarter at all, assigning as a reason, that his highness was resolved to have none of that religion in any of his dominions.

And as to what he protests in the same declaration, namely, that no hurt was done to any, except during the fight, nor the least outrage committed upon any unoffending and helpless persons, I do assert; and will maintain that such is not the truth, having seen with my own eyes several men killed in cold blood, and also women, aged persons, and children, miserably murdered.

And with regard to the manner in which they put themselves in possession of the valley of Angrogne, to pillage and entirely burn the same, it was done with great ease. For, excepting six or seven persons, who, seeing there would be no mercy shown them, made some show of resistance, the rest were dispersed without difficulty, the peasants consulting how to flee, rather than how to fight the enemy. In short, I absolutely deny and protest, as in the presence of God, that none of those cruelties were executed by my order; but, on the contrary, seeing that I could not procure a remedy, I was constrained to retire and quit the command of the regiment, not liking to be present at such wicked transactions. Done at Pignerol, November 27th, 1655. DU PETIT BOURG.

Now, whatever may be thought of this defense, or upon whomsoever the onus of guilt may devolve, it

seems a fair inference from these documents, that cruelties of the most enormous kind were at this time inflicted by the catholic party upon the Waldenses throughout the whole country of Piedmont,--upon a class of men whose sole crime was, that they dissented from the communion of the church of Rome, and refused to countenance her idolatry and superstition. And that their sufferings were of no ordinary cast, may be inferred from the single consideration, that they excited the commiseration of, and at the same time extorted remonstrances from, almost every protestant court in Europe, who raised large contributions to relieve their poverty, and sent their ministers to the court of Savoy, to intercede with the Duke for the amelioration of the condition of his subjects. In this benevolent work, it is a gratifying reflection, that our own country took the lead, as will more particularly be shown in the next section.

I shall close the present with an article of no inconsiderable interest in the history of the churches of Piedmont. While the fire of persecution was, as we have seen, so fiercely raging against the Waldenses, in the early part of the year 1655, two persons who sustained the pastoral office, in the valley of Lucerne, were seized and sent as prisoners to the city of Turin, probably with a multitude of others who escaped the edge of the enemy's sword. It is but doing justice to the catholic party to say of them, that they seldom evinced their delight in human blood to such an excess as to prefer it to that of converting a heretic to their faith. In general, they only gave it the preference to the alternative of allowing persons to think differently from themselves. Nor would it be fair to accuse them of remissness in their expedients and exertions to recover back again to the true church such as they supposed were gone astray. In that respect they could always display the wisdom of the serpent, though seldom, alas! the harmlessness of the dove. On the present occasion, the two pastors above referred to, whose names were **PETER GROS** and **FRANCIS AGUIT**, were unhappily entrapped by the monks of the inquisition, and they fell from their profession. The renunciation of their principles would ensure their liberation from prison. The chains were taken from their bodies, and they recovered their liberty--but in a short time the burden was transferred from the body to the mind, and their own consciences rendered them miserable. In this state of things, they applied for re-admission into the churches, and the following declaration of the state of their minds was publicly made by them, before a full assembly of their brethren, convened at Pinache, in the valley of Perouse, on the 28th and 29th August, 1655, for the purpose of taking their case into consideration.

Most honored Fathers and Brethren in the Lord.

We could have wished that a less mournful occasion had caused our present appearance in public, and that a more favorable opportunity had made us known to the world, by some notable action, the remembrance of which might have been as a blessing in the churches; but as our names can only be famous by the horrible scandal which we have brought upon the church of God, we now come forth out of the dark dungeons of our own shame and confusion, and present ourselves before men, to testify to all the world our conversion and repentance, and to give indubitable proofs of our grief, for that we have been so base as to forsake our former profession.

When we reflect upon those advantages with which, above others, the Lord was

pleased to bless us, in granting us a religious education and the knowledge of his saving grace, thus teaching us where true happiness is to be found; and finally to have been called to the highest employment that men can have in this world, viz. to be the heralds of God's justice, and the preachers of his truth, we cannot without horror speak of our offense, and are constrained to confess that our sin is rendered much more odious in that, having known our Master's will, we nevertheless withdrew our shoulders from his service, and have acted in opposition to his command. It was in these last calamities which have overrun our country, that we thus made shipwreck--after having lost our liberty and our goods--when the enemies of the truth, having resolved upon extirpating our religion in the valleys of Piedmont, exercised the most barbarous cruelties upon our countrymen. And we, having fallen into their hands after they had showed us how far their inhumanity could reach; to give us a proof of the utmost degree of it, they caused us to be thrown into prison, when they proceeded against us, and sentenced us to death as guilty of high treason, and the ringleaders of rebellion, incessantly setting before our eyes the torments and punishments to which we were condemned; and, to render us more flexible to the enticements of the Jesuits, who, without ceasing, solicited us to accept of a pardon which they would obtain for us on our embracing Popery, and abjuring our religion.

At their first onsets, we were confident that, so far from yielding to them, we had strength and fortitude enough to despise whatever superstition could present before our eyes as terrible or dreadful--and that the dark and dismal shades of death itself, with which they threatened us, were insufficient to extinguish that heavenly light which then shined in our souls. But to our extreme grief, we have learned how frail our nature is, and how deceitful the wisdom of the flesh, which, for the enjoyment of a frail and transitory life, prevailed upon us to forego those unspeakably good things which God hath prepared for his children and that everlasting joy of which those are made partakers who endure to the end. It was this fleshly wisdom, which, from a desire to preserve this house of clay, this earthly tabernacle, and to avoid a shameful death, and a punishment ignominious in the eyes of the world, that induced us to a shameful falling away, turning our backs upon him who is the fountain of life. We have lent our ears to this deceitful Delilah, and although there were not offered to us any reasons so strong as in the least degree, to obscure the truth that we did profess, yet **we freely acknowledge that the fear of death and the horror of torments, shook our courage, and beat down our strength**; and we have decayed and dried up like water, not resisting to blood, as the profession, not only of Christians, but more especially of Christian ministers, obliged us to do.

Having been persuaded by deceitful reasoning, that life is preferable to death--that we might be further profitable to the church, to our country, and to our families--that there was no glory in dying as rebels, and that one day we might get

out of captivity, and manifest to the world, that if the confession had been wanting in our mouths, yet the faith had not been wanting in our hearts. Thus we accepted of pardon on these miserable conditions, and have not hesitated to enter into the temple of idols, and employ our mouths and tongues in uttering blasphemies against the truth of heaven, in denying and abjuring the same; and our sacrilegious hands also in subscribing the act and events of this infamous apostasy, which has drawn many others into the same perdition. Our light has become darkness, and our salt has lost its savor--we have fallen from heaven to the earth--from the spirit to the flesh--and from life to death. We have made ourselves obnoxious to the curse which the Lord hath pronounced on those; by whom offenses come. And having made light of the threatenings of the Son of God against those who shall deny him before men, we have deserved to be denied by him before his heavenly Father. Finally, we have rendered ourselves unworthy of divine favors and mercy, and have drawn upon our guilty heads whatever is most dreadful in the wrath of God and his indignations--and have deserved to be rejected of the church as stumbling-blocks or rocks of offense, and that the faithful should even abhor our company.

But as we have learned in the school of the prophets, that the mercies of God are infinite, and that the Lord hath no pleasure in the destruction of his poor creatures, but calleth the sinner to repentance, that he may give him life, we presume to appear before his face, to humble ourselves in his holy presence, to bewail the greatness of our sin, and to make before him a free confession of our iniquity. O that our heads might melt into waters of bitterness, and our eyes were turned into fountains of tears, to express the grief wherewith our souls are pressed down. As our sin is of no ordinary measure, so it calls for extraordinary repentance: and as we acknowledge it to be one of the greatest that can be committed, so do we wish that our repentance should reach the lowest degree of humiliation, and that the acts of our contrition may be known to the world. If David, for lighter faults, was willing that his complaints and his deep sorrow and repentance should be left, as it were for a memorial in the church, well may we not be ashamed to publish among men the inconsolable regret which we feel for having offended God, and giving an occasion of scandal to the assemblies of the saints; and we deserve to have imprinted upon our foreheads a mark of perpetual infamy for our miserable fall, to make the memory thereof continue for ever. And if we can make it apparent that the sorrow it hath begotten in us is extreme, and that we now disclaim whatever fear formerly forced us to do contrary to the dictates of our consciences; we trust that he who forgave Peter when he denied Christ in the court of Caiaphas, will grant us the same grace, since we are come to ask forgiveness in all humility, with tears in our eyes, confession in our mouths, and contrition in our hearts; and that, as there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, so there may be joy in the congregation of the faithful when they shall behold our conversion to the Lord.

GREAT GOD! ALMIGHTY FATHER! dreadful in thine anger; in whose presence no sinner can subsist a moment; we prostrate ourselves at the feet of thy Majesty as poor miserable offenders, confessing that we have justly provoked thee to anger by our transgressions and iniquities, and drawn upon ourselves thy righteous judgments, in that we have forsaken thy heavenly truth, and bowed the knee before the idol! But how shall we now appear before thee, O thou Judge of the quick and dead, since by so doing, we have deserved to feel, not only in this life thy most severe rod and punishment, but that thou shouldest also cut us off from the number of the living, and cast us headlong into the lake of fire and brimstone, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. O God! rich in compassions and infinite in mercies! which thou multiplieth even in judgment; turn us and we shall be turned! be merciful to us, forgive us our offense! blot out our iniquity! and impute not our sin unto us! Open unto us the door of thy grace, that we may be partakers of this thy salvation. O Lord Jesus, Redeemer of souls, who camest into this world for the sake of poor sinners; look upon our affliction! Receive us to mercy! and grant that, our sins being washed away in thy most precious blood, we may draw near to the throne of thy grace with confidence to obtain mercy. Raise us up from our fall! strengthen us in our weakness! and although Satan hath sought to sift us, suffer not our faith [utterly] to fail! Work in us effectually both to will and to do according to thy good pleasure. It is thou who hast stretched out thine hand around us! It is thy strong hand which hath helped us! Thou hast taken us out of captivity both of body and soul, in which we lay languishing, and hast afforded us the liberty to call upon thy name! Thou hast heard our cries out of the deep, and hast given us fresh cause to rejoice in thy goodness, and to bless thy holy name; to whom be everlasting glory ascribed, at all times, and in all ages! AMEN.

And you faithful souls, who witness our contrite heart and broken spirit before the Lord; O commiserate our lamentable state! Learn by our example, how great is human frailty, and what a precipice we fall into whenever God withdraws his supporting hand from us! Consider, that as it hath been to us an extreme infelicity to have fallen into so great a sin, so have you an argument to rejoice in God, through whose grace you have been given to stand! Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation! Hold fast that which you have, that no man take your crown! Be faithful to the Lord Jesus even unto death, that so ye may obtain the crown of life! And, be assured that, aside from the profession of his truth, which you make to the exclusion of all other sorts of religion whatsoever, there is nothing but death, horror, and astonishment. This is a thing which we are enabled to assure you of from our own experience, because from the very first moment that we gave our consent to this unhappy apostasy, our consciences have given us no rest at all; and through their continual harassings and agitations, they have not suffered us to enjoy any of that comfort which a Christian soul experiences in

tribulation, until it pleased God to draw us out of the filthy quagmire of Babylon, and caused us to return to his ways. And do you, Christians, lend your helping hand; let your arms be opened to embrace us; do not count us unworthy of your holy communion, although we have been all occasion of offense. Suffer us to pour into your bosom a torrent of tears, to deplore our condition, and to assure you, in the anguish of our souls, that our grief is greater than we can express. Help us by your holy prayers to the Lord, and publish our repentance in all places, where you conceive our sin has been or shall be known, that so it may be evident to all the world that, from the very bottom of our souls, we grieve and are full of sorrow for it; and that in the presence of God and of his holy angels, as well as of those who now witness our contrition, we do abjure and detest the pretended sacrifice of the mass, the authority of the pope, and, in general, all the worship that is dependent on them. We recant whatsoever we have pronounced to the prejudice of evangelical truth, and promise, for the future, through divine assistance, to persevere in the profession of the reformed religion to the last moment of our lives, and rather to suffer death and torments, than to renounce that holy doctrine which is taught in our churches, and which we believe to be agreeable to the word of God; all which we protest and promise with our bended knees upon the earth, and our hands lifted up to the Eternal, our Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and as we desire his aid, to enable us to do this, even so may he help us, even our God. AMEN.



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 6**

### **HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES CONTINUED DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE HUMANE INTERFERENCE AND GENEROUS CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH NATION TOWARDS THEIR PERSECUTED BRETHREN IN PIEDMONT; INCLUDING THE INTERESTING LETTERS OF MILTON IN THEIR BEHALF, ADDRESSED TO THE PROTESTANT STATES OF EUROPE. A. D. 1655.**

Amongst those who have made a conspicuous figure on the theater of Europe, in modern times, there are few characters which historians have found it more difficult to delineate correctly than that of **OLIVER CROMWELL**. This extraordinary person held the reins of the English government, at the time the Waldenses were experiencing, in the valleys of Piedmont, the complicated sufferings which have been detailed in the preceding section. The strange combination of fraud and force, by means of which he grasped the supreme power of the state; the rigor, and, at times, the severity with which he exercised it; the facility with which he could violate, and even pour ridicule upon the constitutional principles of his country, trampling upon all the laws of the land, when they impeded his progress towards the attainment of any object on which he had set his mind, are certainly a tremendous weight to be placed in the scale against his inflexible opposition to popery, his exertions in reforming the ministry of the established church, and even his occasional ebullitions of zeal to promote the interests of the gospel. There is but too much reason to fear

that with him, as with many other princes and statesmen, religion was made wholly subservient to his worldly interests.

And yet it would be difficult to fix upon a period when our country was more prosperous at home, or sustained a higher character abroad, than during his protectorate. For, not to speak of the number of able and upright judges whom he introduced into Westminster Hall; nor of the impartial administration of justice throughout the land; nor yet of the attention which he showed to reform the national religion, by advancing men of learning and piety in the churches and discountenancing those of an opposite character; he certainly contrived to support his reputation both among his own subjects and with foreign nations, in a very extraordinary manner, even compelling those to fear who did not love him. His name was terrible throughout Europe, and "it was hard to discover," says Lord Clarendon, "which dreaded him most, France, Spain, or the Netherlands, in all which places his friendship was current at the value which he chose to set upon it. For, as they all sacrificed their honor and their interests to his pleasure, so there was nothing he could have demanded that either of them would have denied him." [It is related of Cardinal Mazarine, who at that time swayed the councils of the French cabinet, that he would change countenance at the very mention of his name; and it passed into a proverb in France, that "he was not so much afraid of the devil as of Oliver Cromwell." Upon the whole, says the late Mr. Fox, "the character of Cromwell must ever stand high in the list of those who raised themselves to supreme power by the force of their genius; and among such, even in respect of moral virtue, it would be found to be one of the least exceptionable, if it had not been tainted with that most odious and degrading of all human vices, hypocrisy." *History of James II*, p. 18.] The truth of this representation, and, in some measure, the pertinency of these reflections, will appear from the history on which we are now about to enter.

The council of Zurich, in Switzerland, were, by reason of their proximity to the valleys of Piedmont, the first who received intimation of the horrid massacre which had recently taken place there. The news reached them on the Lord's day, April 29;--and such was the impression which it made upon them, that the town council immediately assembled, and issued a proclamation for a day of fasting and humiliation throughout all their territories; at the same time recommending that collections should every where be made for relieving the wants of the poor sufferers. On the next day they drew up a letter addressed to the States General of Holland, of which the following is a copy.

#### MOST ILLUSTRIOUS LORDS, ETC.

Having this instant received the dismal news of the lamentable state of our brethren of the faith in Piedmont, as you may see by the copy of a letter now sent, we thought ourselves obliged by the sacred rights of faith, union, and communion,

to acquaint you therewith; being fully assured that you will be pleased, according to your wonted piety and Christian charity, thoroughly to consider and lay to heart this "affliction of Joseph." This persecution is smoothed over with a very fair pretext by the opposite party, but there is no one who loves the church of Christ, that will not easily be persuaded of the subtleties and treacheries to which their adversaries alternatively have recourse.

Moved by an ardent sympathy we earnestly beseech you, most mighty and illustrious lords, that you would lay to heart the case of these afflicted people and administer those means of relief which you may think conducive thereunto; not only by prayer to the Father of Mercies for them, and by granting them that pecuniary assistance which their miseries loudly called for, but also by pacifying their prince towards them; or at least, obtaining for them the liberty to emigrate, which we also shall, to the utmost of our power, endeavor to do. May the Sovereign Lord of all have mercy upon his church in every place; own their cause; and his Almighty arm avert their misery and adversities; to whose protection we heartily recommend you.

Given, in haste, 30th April, 1655.

The Consuls and Senators of the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland, viz. Zurich, Berne, Claris, Schaffhouse, and Appenzel.

About the 20th of May an account of the Duke of Savoy's proceedings against the Waldenses reached England; and, to use the words of Sir Samuel Morland, it no sooner came to the ears of the Protector, than "he arose like a lion out of his place," and by the most pathetic appeals to the protestant princes upon the continent, awoke the whole Christian world, exciting their hearts to pity and commiseration. The providence of God had so disposed events, that our great poet **MILTON** filled the office of Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell at this critical juncture. [The office which Milton filled under the Protectorate was much the same as that which, in our day, is called "SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS." See Dr. Symmons's *Life of Milton*, p. 319.] **Never was there a more decided enemy to persecution on account of religion than Milton. He appears to have been the first of our countrymen who understood the principles of toleration;** and his prose writings abound with the most enlightened and liberal sentiments. The sufferings of the Waldenses touched his heart, and drew from his pen the following exquisite sonnet.

#### ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones  
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;  
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones

Forget not: in thy book record their groans  
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold  
 Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that roll'd  
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans  
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they  
 To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
 O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway  
 The tripled tyrant; that from these may grow  
 A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way  
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

[Dr. Warton, in his edition of Milton's minor poems, remarks upon this Sonnet, that "Milton's mind, busied with this affecting subject, here broke forth in a strain of poetry, where his feelings were not fettered by ceremony or formality." He adds that "The Protestants availed themselves of an opportunity of exposing the horrors of Popery, by publishing many sets of prints of this unparalleled scene of religious butchery, which operated like Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. Sir S. Morland, Cromwell's agent for the valleys of Piedmont, published a minute account of this whole transaction, in *The History of the Valleys of Piedmont*, with numerous cuts, in folio, Lond. 1658." Among the latter, there is a print emblematical of the seventh and eight lines of this Sonnet. Morland relates that "A mother was hurled down a mighty rock, with a little infant in her arms; and three days after was found dead, with the little child alive, but fast clasped, between the arms of the dead mother, which were cold and stiff, insomuch that those who found them had much ado to get the young child out." Morland's *History*, p. 363. See Warton's edition of Milton's *Poems and Translations*, with Notes and Illustrations. 2d Ed. Lond. 1791.]

But this was a small portion of the interest which he took upon this affecting occasion. It devolved upon him by office to address the heads of the different protestant states in Europe, with the view of interesting them in the affairs of the Waldenses; and his letters deserve to be handed down to the remotest age of the world, as a noble instance of a benevolent and feeling mind, worthy of the author of *Paradise Lost*. I shall therefore, present the reader with the whole of them in this place, faithfully translated from the Latin originals. They are in themselves interesting; are intimately connected with the history of the Waldenses; and the Christian spirit that pervades them, redounds in the highest degree to the honor of the writer. Through what strange fatality it has come to pass, that an incident which reflects so much luster upon the character of Milton, as the writing of these state-papers certainly does, should have been allowed to pass into oblivion, while many things of minor importance find a place in every memoir of the poet, it would probably be difficult to give a more plausible reason for than the superior interest which most men take in the concerns of this present life, above those of the kingdom of heaven and of their immortal souls.

Before I introduce these interesting letters however to the reader's notice, I cannot

deny myself the pleasure of laying before him the character that has been given of them by two distinguished writers of modern date; both of them members of our Established Church, and consequently not to be suspected of any undue partiality for the character or principles of Milton. The first to whom I refer, is Dr. Thomas Newton, bishop of Bristol, who in his life of our great poet, prefixed to his edition of the *Paradise Lost*, tells us that "the blindness [of Milton] had not diminished, but rather increased the rigor of his mind; and his State-letters will remain as authentic memorials of those times, to be admired equally by critics and politicians; and those in particular about the sufferings of the poor Protestants [or Waldenses] in Piedmont, who can read without sensible emotion? This was a subject he had very much at heart, as he was an utter enemy to all sorts of persecution; and among his sonnets there is a most excellent one upon the same occasion." Thus far bishop Newton--the other writer to whom I alluded is Dr. Charles Symmons, the poet's last, and certainly ablest, biographer: who, referring to these letters, thus elegantly remarks: "The hand of the Latin Secretary most ably concurred with the spirit of the executive council; and during his continuance in office, which was prolonged to the Restoration, the State-papers in his department may be regarded as models in the class of diplomatic composition. They speak, indeed, the language of energy and wisdom; and are entitled equally to the applause of the scholar and the statesman. They must have impressed foreign states with a high opinion of that government for which they were written; and in the service of which so much ability was engaged. It may be observed, that the character of their immediate author is too great to be altogether lost in that of the ministerial organ; and that in many of them, Milton may be traced in distinct, though not in discordant existence from the power for whom he acts. The letters which he wrote in the protector's name, to mediate for the oppressed Protestants of Piedmont,\* whose sufferings had revived the horror of the catholic atrocities in Ireland, might be cited in testimony of what I affirm. These official instruments are faithful, no doubt, to the general purposes of him under whose authority they were produced; but they exhibit also much of the liberal and benevolent spirit of the Secretary: their mirror cannot be convicted of falsehood or perversion but with unquestionable flattery, it reflects the harsh features of the English usurper so softened into positive beauty as to conciliate our affection equally with our respect." [Dr. Symmons, in a note on this passage, remarks that "This active and powerful interposition of the Protector's was productive of its intended effect. The catholic tyrant desisted from the slaughter of his innocent subjects, and those miserable people had a breathing time from their calamities. I call them, as they are called in these official dispatches, by the generally known name of Protestants: but the dissenters from the Papal church, who occupied the valleys of Piedmont, had neither connection nor a common origin with those who were properly called Protestants, from one of the first acts of their association in Germany. **The Waldenses asserted a much more ancient pedigree; and assumed to be of the old Roman church before it was corrupted by the Papal innovations.**" See *Life of Milton*. 2d Edit. 1810; p. 309-319.]

One of the first of Cromwell's measures was to appoint a day of fasting and prayer, to seek the Lord in behalf of the melancholy condition of this afflicted people; a public declaration of their state was also issued, calling upon the inhabitants throughout the land to join in free and liberal contributions towards their succor and support, in which the protector himself set them a noble example, by commencing the subscription with a donation of TWO THOUSAND POUNDS from his own private purse. And that no time might be lost, in testifying his good will towards the Waldenses, on the 28d of May, **SIR SAMUEL MORLAND received orders to prepare for setting off with a message from the English government to the Duke of Savoy, beseeching the latter to recall the merciless edict of Gastaldo, and to restore the remnant of his poor distressed subjects to their homes and the enjoyment of their ancient liberties.**

On the 26th of May, Mr. Morland took his departure for the continent, being charged, on his way to Piedmont, with a letter from the protector to the French king, relating to the Waldenses, in whose recent murder, as the reader will have already noticed, some French troops had been employed. The following is a copy of the letter which, on the first of June, the English envoy delivered at La Fere, where the king and court of France were then residing.

Most Serene King!

The lamentable complaints which have been conveyed to us from those poor and afflicted people, who profess the reformed religion, and inhabit the valleys within the dominions of the Duke of Savoy; and who have of late been most cruelly massacred; together with the melancholy tidings we have received concerning the plundering and banishing of others, have extorted from us these letters to your majesty; and the rather, as we have been informed, how truly we know not, that this massacre has been carried on, partly by some troops of yours, which had joined themselves to other forces belonging to the Duke of Savoy.

We were very unwilling to give any credit to these things, because it cannot be thought consonant to the purposes and proceedings either of good princes or of your majesty's most prudent ancestors, who conceived it to be their interest, and not less conducive to the peace of Christendom, that their protestant subjects should live in safety, and enjoy protection under their government, for which they have always been grateful, and rendered eminent services to their sovereigns in times both of peace and war. Similar considerations have hitherto induced the Dukes of Savoy to treat their subjects with equal kindness. Now we doubt not but that your majesty has so much influence with the Duke of Savoy, that by your intercession, a peace may be procured for those poor people, with liberty to return to their native country. The performance of this would be an act worthy of your

majesty, and conformable to the example set you by your predecessors, while it would, at the same time, set the minds of your own subjects at rest, by assuring them that they need not fear a repetition of such evils among them; and also confirm your confederates and allies, who profess the same religion, in greater respect and affection for your majesty. With respect to ourselves, any favor of this kind which you shall grant to your own subjects, or which you may obtain for the subjects of others, will be not less acceptable to us; indeed it will be more so than any other profit or advantage, among the many which we promise ourselves from the friendship of your majesty.

OLIVER P. Westminster, May 25, 1655.

The king of France lost no time in returning a very complaisant and satisfactory answer to this letter, in which he assures the protector that the manner in which his troops had been employed by the Duke of Savoy or his ministers was very far from meeting with his approbation--that they had been sent by him into Italy, to assist the Duke of Modena against the invasion which the Spaniards had made upon his country--that he had already expostulated with the court of Savoy for having employed them in an affair of that nature without his authority or command--and that he had sent to the governor of his province of Dauphiny, requesting him to collect as many of the poor exiled Waldenses as he could, to treat them with gentleness, and afford them every protection they might stand in need of. He tells his highness that, knowing, as he now does, how much he is affected by the distress of these Waldenses, it gives him pleasure to think he has already anticipated his wishes, and that he shall continue to use his influence with the prince for their relief and comfort, and, indeed, that he had already proceeded so far as to pledge himself for their obedience and fidelity, in case the Duke of Savoy would re-establish them in his dominions, and that he had grounds to hope his mediation would not be rejected.

"As to what remains," continues his majesty, "you were perfectly right in believing that I had given no orders to my troops to execute such a business as this--nor was there the least ground to suppose that I should contribute to the chastisement of the subjects of the Duke of Savoy who professed the reformed religion, while I was giving so many proofs of my good will to those of my own subjects of the same profession, whose fidelity and zeal for my service I have great reason to applaud, since they omit no opportunity of evincing their loyalty, even beyond all that can be imagined, and in everything contributing to the prosperity and advantage of my affairs. So much in answer to your letter; but I cannot conclude without requesting you to be assured that, upon every occasion you shall find how much I esteem your person, and that, from the bottom of my heart, I pray the Divine Majesty that he would have you in his holy keeping,"  
Signed, LOUIS.

Having delivered the protector's letter to the king of France, and received the preceding reply to it, Sir Samuel Morland proceeded on his journey towards Savoy, and upon the 21st of June arrived at Rivoli, a city about two miles from Turin, where the duke, who seems to have been a minor, then was with his royal mother and the

court. Two days afterwards he obtained an audience, and introduced himself in an elaborate Latin oration, which he delivered in the presence of the duke, Madame Royal, and all the court, and in which he painted in strong colors the accounts that had been received in England concerning the dreadful atrocities that had been recently perpetrated upon the Waldenses by means of the soldiery--describing "the houses on fire, which," says he, "are yet smoking--the mangled carcasses, and ground defiled with blood--virgins violated, and, after being treated with brutal outrage, too indecent to be mentioned, left to breathe out their last--men an hundred years old, helpless through age and bed-ridden, burnt in their beds--infants dashed against the rocks," etc., etc. "Were all the tyrants," says he, "of all times and ages alive again, they might blush to find that, in comparison of these things, they had contrived nothing that deserved to be called barbarous and inhuman! The very angels are seized with horror at them! Men are amazed! Heaven itself seems to be astonished with the cries of dying men, and the very earth to blush, being discolored with the gore of so many innocent persons," etc. Having finished his harangue, Sir Samuel presented to the duke the following letter with which he had been charged by his master, the lord protector.

Most Serene Prince!

We have received letters from several places near your dominions, informing us that the subjects of your royal highness, professing the reformed religion, have of late, by your express order and command, been required, under pain of death and confiscation of their estates, to abandon their houses, possessions, and dwellings, within three days after the publication of that order, unless they would pledge themselves to relinquish their religious profession and become Catholics within twenty days. And that, when, with all becoming humility, they addressed themselves to your royal highness, petitioning for a revocation of that order, and a reception to former favor, with a continuance of such liberties as were granted them by your most serene predecessors, a part of your army fell upon them, most cruelly massacred many, imprisoned others, banishing the rest into desert places and mountains covered with snow, where some hundreds of families are reduced to such extremity, that it is to be feared they will all miserably perish in a short time with hunger and cold.

When intelligence was first brought us that a calamity so awful had befallen those most miserable people, it was impossible for us not to feel the deepest sorrow and compassion. For, as we are, not only by the ties of humanity, but also by religious fellowship and fraternal relation, united to them, we conceived we could neither satisfy our own minds, nor discharge our duty to God, nor the obligations of brotherly kindness and charity, as professors of the same faith, if, while deeply sympathizing with our afflicted brethren, we should fail to use every endeavor that was within our reach, to succor them under so many unexpected miseries.



We, in the first place, therefore, most earnestly desire and entreat your highness that you would reconsider the acts and ordinances of your most serene predecessors, and the indulgences which were by them granted from time immemorial, and ratified to their subjects of the valleys. In granting and confirming which, as, on the one hand, they unquestionably did that which in itself was well pleasing to God, who intends that the law and liberty of conscience shall remain wholly in his own power, so, on the other, it cannot be doubted but that they had a respect also to the merit of their subjects, whom they had always found faithful in war and obedient in time of peace. And as your serene highness has imitated the example of your predecessors, in all other things that have been so graciously and gloriously achieved by them, so **we beseech you again and again that you would abrogate this edict, and any other that has been issued for the disquieting of your subjects on account of their religion; that you would restore them to their native homes and the possession of their properties;** that you would confirm to them their ancient rights and liberties, cause reparation to be made to them for the injuries they have sustained, and adopt such means as may put an effectual stop to these vexatious proceedings. In doing this, your royal highness will perform what is acceptable to God, comfort and revive those miserable and distressed people, and give satisfaction to all your neighbors professing the reformed religion, and especially to yourself; who shall regard your favor and clemency towards them as the effect and fruit of our mediation, which we shall consider ourselves bound to requite by a return of every good office, while it will also be the means of not only laying a foundation for our good correspondence and friendship, but also of increasing it between this commonwealth and your dominions. And this we promise ourselves from your justice and clemency; whereunto we desire God to incline your heart and mind, and so we sincerely pray that he would confer on you and on your people peace and truth, and that he would prosper you in all your affairs.

Given at our palace at Westminster, May 25, 1655.

OLIVER P.

As soon as the duke and his mother had made themselves acquainted with the contents of this letter, Madame Royal addressed herself to the English minister, and told him that "as, on the one hand, she could not but extremely applaud the singular charity and goodness of his highness, the lord protector, towards their subjects, whose situation had been represented to him so exceedingly lamentable, as she perceived by his discourse had been done, so, on the other, she could not but extremely wonder that the malice of men should ever proceed so far as to clothe such paternal and tender chastisements of their most rebellious and insolent subjects, in characters so black and deformed, thereby to render them odious to all the neighboring princes and states, with whom they were so anxious to keep up a good understanding and friendship--especially with so great and powerful a prince as the

lord protector." She at the same time gave him to understand, that "she was persuaded, when he came to be more particularly informed of the truth of all that had passed, he would be so perfectly satisfied with the duke's proceedings, that he would not give the least countenance to his disobedient subjects. However, for his highness's sake, they would not only freely pardon their rebellious subjects for the very heinous crimes which they had committed, but would also grant them such privileges and favors as could not fail to give the protector full proof of the great respect which they entertained for his person and mediation."

These plausible professions, while they no doubt display the usual finesse of politicians, yet certainly evince no ordinary measure of respect for the head of the English government, and are much more complaisant than was the style in which the same lady had previously addressed Major Weis, the deputy from the Swiss Cantons. For when this latter gentleman delivered to the duke a letter from the six protestant Cantons of Switzerland under the same melancholy occasion, Madame Royal promptly replied, that they were not obliged to give an account of their actions to any prince in the world; nevertheless, out of the respect which they bore to his masters of the Cantons, they had given orders to the Marquis of Pionessa to acquaint him with the truth of all these affairs. The Marquis in consequence, waited upon Major Weis, and endeavored to justify all his proceedings, by casting the whole blame upon the Waldenses, repeatedly protesting that he never had the least design to force their consciences, and that all the reports which had been circulated respecting the massacre, and other cruelties were mere forgeries. To all which the major replied, that "with regard to the massacre, it was a thing so demonstrably evident, that it was impossible either to conceal or deny it. And as to the people's right of habitation in the places from whence they were ordered to depart, it was founded upon justice and equity, inasmuch as it had not only been conceded to them by Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, but also purchased of his royal highness for six thousand ducatoons, which were actually paid by them on that very account." The Marquis told him, that he did not at all deny the authenticity of the charters which the Waldenses held, but they were all conditional, and that the catholic religion ought to have been freely exercised in all those places, which they would never allow. In short, that their continual residence in all those places for the last ninety years, could be called no better than a ninety years' rebellion and disobedience. Such were the miserable pleas of this intolerant and bloody-thirsty man.

It is obvious from all that can be collected of the temper and influence of the Marquis of Pionessa, the bigoted attachment of the duke and his mother to the court of Rome, and the firm hold which the catholic clergy had then got of their minds, that there was not the smallest disposition in the court of Savoy, to mitigate their sufferings, or abate the rigorous proceedings which had hitherto been going on against the Waldenses; and that had it not been for the seasonable interference of the English envoy, the Swiss deputy would have made no impression whatever upon them. But

let us now revert to the further proceedings in England. Besides the letter to the King of France and that to the Duke of Savoy, which I have already given, the following were transmitted on the same occasion.

## THE LORD PROTECTOR TO THE KING OF SWEDEN

Most Serene King,

The report has, no doubt ere this, reached your dominions, of that most cruel edict which has been issued by the Duke of Savoy, by means of which he has utterly ruined his subjects of the Alps, professing the reformed religion; having given orders that they should be driven out of the places of their inheritance, unless, within twenty days, they relinquished their own and embraced the Roman religion. The consequence has been that, many have been slain, the remnant, plundered and exposed to certain destruction, are at this moment wandering up and down with their wives and little ones, through desolate mountains of never-wasting snow, ready to perish through hunger and cold--nor can we doubt that your majesty is greatly troubled at these things. For, though in lesser matters they differ among themselves, yet the hatred of our adversaries which is common to us all, sufficiently demonstrates that the protestant name and cause is one. Nor can any be ignorant, that your royal progenitors, the kings of Sweden, have always made common cause with those of the reformed religion bringing their armies into Germany to defend it, without regard to minute distinctions.

We have, therefore, thought it necessary to state to your majesty, what has come to our knowledge of the wretched and miserable condition of these poor distressed people, and to give you to understand the grief and sorrow with which we are afflicted on their behalf, as we have also done to our other friends and allies of the same profession; and that we have also conveyed our sentiments in the strongest manner we could to the Duke of Savoy, on the behalf of those poor innocent people. We are also persuaded that your majesty, detesting such inhuman and barbarous massacres, and in conformity to your well-known zeal and love of religion, has already, or immediately will, interpose your mediation, and intercede with the Duke of Savoy to revoke that cruel edict, and recall to their habitations and estates the little remnant of those poor men that are yet left unbutchered.

And, certainly, if there be any bond of union, if any love or fellowship in religion is to be either believed or cultivated, such a multitude of our guiltless brethren, members of the same body of Christ, cannot suffer without the whole body suffering, and having a mutual sympathy with them. And, indeed, it is unnecessary to remind your majesty, that the principles from whence these

cruelties and massacres have proceeded, equally threaten us all. As your wisdom and zeal, therefore, will direct you to such counsels as shall be most conducive to the relief and comfort of those miserable and disconsolate men, we have not written this to admonish your majesty, but merely to convey to you the sense we entertain of their sufferings, and our readiness to communicate with you in whatever may tend to their succor, and for the support of the protestant interest in the world. In the mean time we heartily recommend your majesty unto God Almighty. Your majesty' good friend.

OLIVER P.

Given at our palace at Westminster, May 25, 1655.

## THE LORD PROTECTOR OF ENGLAND TO THE KING OF DENMARK.

Most Serene King,

We presume your majesty must have heard, ere this, by how severe and merciless an edict, Emanuel, duke of Savoy, has, for the cause of religion, driven out of their native country his subjects who inhabited the valleys of the Alps--a harmless people, who for many ages have been retaining the purity of their religious profession; and that very many of them being slain, he has exposed the rest naked and destitute, to all kinds of mischiefs and miseries in desolate places; nor can we doubt that, as became so great a patron and defender of the reformed religion, you have been deeply affected with sorrow on this account. For certainly, agreeably to the laws of Christianity, if our brethren are suffering calamities and misery, we all ought to sympathize with them; and, indeed, if we have been correctly informed of your prudence and piety, no man can be more apprehensive than your majesty, of the danger which this example portends to the whole protestant profession.

We are, therefore, induced to write you freely, wishing you to understand that we entertain the same sorrow for the calamity of our most innocent brethren, and the same opinion and judgment concerning the whole of this matter, which we trust you do. We have also written letters to the Duke of Savoy, in which we have implored him to commiserate these unhappy people, by listening to their petitions, and not permitting that cruel edict to continue in force. And if your majesty and the other princes of the reformed religion will do the same, (which it is very probable you have already done) we may hope that the mind of the most serene duke may be softened, and, at any rate, that he will at the earnest solicitation of so many neighboring princes, lay aside his displeasure. But if, instead of doing that, he chooses rather to persist in his purpose, we declare that, assisted by your majesty, and the rest of our allies of the reformed religion, we are prepared to have recourse to such measures as may, to the utmost of our power, relieve the distress, and provide for the safety and the liberty of so many poor afflicted

people. In the mean time we pray God to bless and prosper your majesty.

Your majesty's good friend, OLIVER P.

Given at our palace at Westminster, the --- day of May, Anno Dom. 1655.

## TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

High and Mighty Lords!

You have, no doubt, ere this been apprised, by means of various expresses and advices from the neighboring states, of the recent edict of the Duke of Savoy against his subjects of the valleys of Lucerne, Angrogne, and other parts of his dominions, who have long professed the orthodox faith--by which edict, they were enjoined to quit their dwellings, stripped of all their possessions, unless in twenty days they embraced the Roman religion. You are not ignorant of the rigor with which, by virtue of that edict, they have proceeded against men both inoffensive and helpless, and (which most nearly touches us) those who are our brethren in Christ, multitudes of them having been murdered by a party of soldiers sent against them, the rest plundered and driven out of their houses, inasmuch that they are forced to wander about with their wives and children, in desolate mountains, exposed to the continual miseries of cold and hunger. Of your distress, and the sense you entertain of our brethren's calamity, we can form some apprehension from our own feelings. For, united as we are by the bond of religious friendship, we cannot but be affected by so heavy an oppression of our brethren. Your lordships have given abundant proof of your kindness towards the professors of the reformed religion wherever scattered and oppressed, in the most difficult and adverse times of the churches; and for our own part, we had rather be found wanting in any thing, than in our zeal and affection towards our brethren who are suffering for the cause of religion, preferring, as we do, the peace and prosperity of the churches to our own ease and safety.

We have, on this account, written to the Duke of Savoy, entreating him to entertain a more favorable regard towards those harmless men, his suppliants and subjects; to restore to them their houses and property, and grant them their ancient religious liberties, as we have also done to the king of France, requesting him to intercede with the said duke in their behalf. We have also written to other princes and states of the protestant profession, as well as yourselves, conceiving this to be a common cause, that they would unite with us in this intercession. For if an example so evil as that is, should come to be followed, which seems to be the intention of those who contrive it, we need not apprise you of the danger to which the protestant faith must be thereby reduced. And if the duke can be persuaded and prevailed upon by our joint entreaties, it will surely be a happy and satisfactory remuneration of all the labor we have taken therein. But if, on the other hand, he shall continue firmly resolved utterly to destroy, and drive to a

state of distraction, **those men, among whom our religion was either planted by the first preachers of the gospel, and so maintained in its purity from age to age, or else reformed and restored to its primitive purity more early than among many other nations:** we hereby declare ourselves ready to advise, in common with you, and the rest of our brethren and allies of the reformed religion, by what means we may most conveniently provide for the preservation and comfort of those distressed people.

OLIVER P.

Palace of Westminster, May 25, 1655.

## THE LORD PROTECTOR TO THE SWISS CANTONS

Most Notable Lords!

The calamity which has lately befallen those people in the Alps, who are of the same religious profession as ourselves, must necessarily have come to your knowledge before it did to ours. They were required by an edict of the Duke of Savoy, under whose dominion they were, to forsake their native country, unless they would in three days, give assurance that they would embrace the Roman religion. Nor was that all, for they were immediately afterwards assaulted by force of arms; numbers of them put to death, and others driven into banishment, who are now wandering in a state of wretchedness, with their wives and children, over desert mountains covered with snow, without house or shelter, in want and nakedness, ready to perish with cold and hunger. Nor can we doubt but that, as soon as the report of these things came to your ears, a calamity such as this must have affected you, as sensibly as it did ourselves; and perhaps more so, inasmuch as the proximity of your situation must have made your apprehensions of their misery more lively; for we very well know your singular zeal for the orthodox faith, as well as your great constancy in retaining, and your fortitude in defending the profession of it.

Seeing then that, by the endearing ties of religious fellowship, we are brethren, or rather one body with these afflicted men--of which body no one member call suffer, but all the fellow-members must suffer with it; we thought proper to write to you, and signify how much we considered it to be the common interest of us all to assist and comfort our exiled and disconsolate brethren, by such means as shall be thought proper and suitable, and thereby make provision both for removing the present evils, preventing their accumulation, and the danger to which we are exposed by the example and effects of this act. We have consequently written letters to the Duke of Savoy, entreating him to deal more gently with his faithful subjects, and restore them to their property and native countries. We trust that he will be prevailed upon by our, or rather by the joint entreaties of us all, and that he

will cheerfully grant what we so anxiously desire. But should it turn out that he is differently minded, we are ready to advise with you about such means as may be most conducive to the redress and relief of these poor innocent men, our dear brethren in Christ, who groan under so many injuries and oppressions; and which may preserve them from a most certain and unmerited destruction, and whose safety and preservation, from your well known piety, we are persuaded, lies very near your hearts.

OLIVER P.

Westminster, May 25, 1655.

OLIVER, PROTECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF ENGLAND, TO THE MOST SERENE PRINCE OF TRANSYLVANIA.

Most Serene Prince!

Your letters of the 16th November, 1654, have communicated to us the pleasing intelligence of the extraordinary good will and affection which you bear towards us; and your ambassador, who delivered those letters to us, has more fully declared the desire which you have to contract an alliance and friendship with us.

For our own part, we certainly do not a little rejoice in the opportunity which is now afforded us of publicly avowing the cordial esteem which we have for your highness, and how much we value your person. But after all that public rumor had conveyed to us of your meritorious exertions and indefatigable labors undertaken in behalf of the Christian republic; and learning, as we now do, by letters from yourself, imparting to us, in the most friendly manner, what you have further in contemplation to do for promoting the Christian interest, we could not but consider it as all abundant occasion of joy and satisfaction, to hear that God had raised up to himself, in those remote regions, so powerful and renowned a minister of his glory and providence: and that this great minister of heaven, so famed for his courage and success, should wish to be associated with us in the common defense of the Protestant religion, which is at this time so wickedly assailed in word and deed. Nor can we doubt that God, who has inspired us both, though separated from each other by many intervening climates, with similar desires and purpose of defending the orthodox religion, will be our guide, and point us to the ways and means by which we may successfully promote our own interests and that of the other reformed countries, provided we watch the opportunities of so doing which God shall put into our hands, and be not wanting to ourselves in embracing them.

In the mean time, we cannot but with extreme and heart-rending sorrow put your highness in mind, how unmercifully the Duke of Savoy has persecuted his own

subjects, professing the orthodox faith, in certain valleys at the feet of the Alps; whom he has, by a most severe edict, not only compelled, at least such of them as refuse to turn Catholics, to forsake their native habitations, goods, and estates; but has also fallen upon them with his army, inhumanely put several to the sword, barbarously tormenting others to death, and driving the greater part of them to the mountains, there to perish through cold and hunger, exposing their houses to the fury, and their goods to the plunder, of his executioners. These things, as they have already been reported to your highness, so we readily persuade ourselves, that such cruelty cannot but be grievously displeasing to your ears, and that you will not be found wanting to afford your relief and succor to those wretched sufferers, if, indeed, any of them survive their multiplied slaughters and calamities.

For our part, we have written to the Duke of Savoy, beseeching him to remove the fierceness of his anger from his subjects. We have also written to the King of France that he would do the same; and, finally, we have addressed the princes of the reformed religion with the view of making them acquainted with our sentiments respecting this fierce and savage piece of cruelty, which though it has commenced with those poor and helpless people, threatens eventually all that profess the same religion; and, consequently, imposes upon all the greater necessity of providing for themselves in general, and consulting the common safety; which is the course we shall always follow as God shall be pleased to direct us. We beg your highness to be assured of this, as well as of our sincere affection for your serenity, which induces us to wish all possible prosperity and success to your affairs, and a happy issue of all your enterprises and endeavors, in asserting the liberty of the gospel and its worshippers. WhiteHall, May, 1655.

## OLIVER, PROTECTOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND, TO THE MOST NOBLE, THE CONSULS AND SENATORS OF GENEVA

We should ere this have communicated to your lordships our excessive sorrow for the severe and unheard of calamities which have befallen the Protestants inhabiting the valleys of Piedmont, whom the Duke of Savoy persecutes with so much cruelty, had we not made it our business that you should, at the same time, understand that we are not only affected by the enormity of their sufferings, but are exerting our utmost efforts to relieve and comfort them under their distresses. For this purpose we have taken measures to have a general collection throughout the whole of this republic, which, upon good grounds, we expect will be such as shall demonstrate the affection of this nation towards their brethren laboring under the burden of such inhuman proceedings; and that as the communion of religion is the same between both people, so the sense of their calamities is no less the same. In the mean time, while the collections of the money are going forwards, which it may require some time to finish, and as the wants and necessities of those distressed people will not well admit of delay, we have thought it proper to



remit you beforehand two thousand pounds sterling with all possible speed, to be distributed among such as shall be considered most necessitous, and that more particularly require present succor and relief.

And as we are not ignorant how deeply the miseries and wrongs of those very harmless people have affected yourselves, and that you will not grudge any labor or pains which may contribute to their relief, we make no scruple to commit the distribution of this sum of money to your care, and to give you this further trouble, that according to your wonted piety and prudence, you would take care that the said money be distributed equally to the most necessitous, to the end that, though the sum be small, there may, nevertheless, be something to refresh and revive the most indigent and needy, till we can afford them a more plentiful supply.

And thus, not doubting but that you will take in good part the trouble imposed upon you, we beseech Almighty God to stir up the hearts of all his people professing the orthodox faith, to resolve upon the common defense of themselves, and their mutual assistance of each other against their inveterate and most implacable enemies; in doing which we should rejoice that our helping hand might be any way serviceable to the church. Farewell. June 8, 1655.

P.S. 1,500 pounds of the aforesaid £2,000 will be remitted by Gerard Hench, from Paris, and the other £500 will be taken care of by letters from the Lord Stoup.

These letters abundantly prove the firm hold which the case of the Waldenses had taken on the mind of the English government, and the lively interest which the latter so honorably took in their affairs. I cannot, however, dismiss this part of the subject without laying before the reader one letter more, not only because it is intimately connected with the narrative, but because it exhibits a pleasing specimen of the liberal and enlightened policy of the Protector's counsels. It was written in the following year, and addressed to the King of Sweden, who was, at that moment, threatening the States of Holland with a war.

OLIVER, PROTECTOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND, ETC. TO THE MOST SERENE PRINCE, CHARLES GUSTAVUS, KING OF THE SWEDES, GOTHES, AND VANDALS, ETC.,

Most Serene King, our Dearest friend and Confederate.

As we are fully assured of your majesty's concurrence both in thoughts and counsels for the defense of the protestant faith against its enemies, which never was more dangerously assailed than at present; though we cannot but rejoice at your successful enterprises and the daily tidings of your victories, yet we cannot,

on the other hand, but be as deeply concerned at one thing which disturbs and interrupts our joy; we refer to the sad news which is intermingled with so much welcome tidings, that the ancient friendship between your majesty and the States of the United Provinces presents a gloomy aspect, and that the mischief is exasperated to that pitch, particularly in the Baltic Sea, as seems to forebode an unhappy rupture! We acknowledge ourselves ignorant of the causes; but we too easily foresee that the events, which God avert, will be fatal to the interests of the Protestants. And, therefore, both out of regard to that most intimate alliance now subsisting between us and your majesty, and also from that affection and love to the reformed religion, by which we ought all of us chiefly to be swayed, we consider it our duty, as we have most earnestly exhorted the States of the United Provinces, to peace and moderation, so now to persuade your majesty to the same. The Protestants have enemies everywhere enough and to spare, inflamed with inexorable revenge: nor were they ever known to have conspired more perniciously to our destruction--witness the valleys of Piedmont still reeking with the blood and slaughter of the miserable--witness Austria, lately embroiled with the emperor's edicts and proscriptions--witness Switzerland. But it is needless to expatiate at large in recalling the bitter lamentations and recollections of so many calamities. Who so ignorant as not to know that the counsels of the Spaniards and of the Roman pontiff, for these two years past, have filled all these places with conflagrations, murders, and persecutions of the orthodox? But, if to these mischiefs there should happen the still greater evil of dissension among the Protestants themselves, who are brethren, and more especially between two powerful states, on whose courage, wealth, and fortitude, so far as human strength may be relied on, the support and hope of all the reformed churches depend, the protestant religion must necessarily be in great jeopardy, if not upon the brink of destruction. On the other hand, if the whole protestant name would but preserve perpetual peace among themselves, cultivating that brotherly union which becomes their profession, there would be no occasion to fear what all the artifices and power of our enemies could do to hurt us, which our fraternal concord and harmony alone would easily repel and frustrate. And, therefore, we most earnestly request and beseech your majesty to foster in your bosom propitious thoughts of peace, and a disposition of mind to repair the breaches of your ancient friendship with the United Provinces, if in any part it may have accidentally suffered the decays of mistakes and misconstructions.

If there be any thing on which our labor, our fidelity and diligence may be useful towards effecting a compromise, we tender and shall cheerfully devote all to your service. And may the God of heaven favor and prosper your noble and pious resolutions, which, together with all felicity and a course of perpetual victory, we cordially wish to your majesty.

Your majesty's most affectionate, OLIVER, Protector, etc. etc.

From our palace, Westminster, August, 1656.

It has been already noticed that, upon the very first annunciation of the distresses of the Waldenses, **the protector issued a proclamation for a day of national humiliation throughout all England and Wales**; commanding, at the same time, that **collections should be made in all the churches and chapels for their relief**; and a committee, consisting of about forty of the first of the nobility, gentry, and clergy, was formed for conducting it, Sir Thomas Viner, and Sir Christopher Pack, aldermen of London, being appointed treasurers. In no long time the sum total of the collections amounted to THIRTY EIGHT THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE POUNDS, TEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE, [of this amount the cities of London and Westminster contributed the sum 416 of 9,384 11s, 6d, exclusive of the 2,000 given by the protector] which if we take into account the relative value of money between that and the present time, must certainly give us a very favorable impression of the liberality of our forefathers. Nor is it less gratifying to witness such a proof of the humane and benevolent spirit which, as Protestants, our countrymen evinced on an occasion that so justly called for it.

For the satisfaction of the community at large, the protector and his council ordered a narrative to be published, explanatory of their proceedings, with a very minute and circumstantial account of the sums contributed, specifying the counties, the number of parishes in each, with the precise amount of their contributions as well as of the application that was made of the same, through the medium of Sir Samuel Morland, who, to carry into effect the liberality of the English people, was ordered to take up his residence at Geneva, a city contiguous to the valleys of Piedmont, where he continued about three years.

The whole of the document referred to is interesting--but, occupying as it does, twelve pages in folio, its entire insertion in this place is impracticable. I shall, however, gratify the reader with the introductory paragraph.

"His highness, the lord protector, having received intelligence about the month of May, 1655, that many hundreds of the poor Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, (otherwise known by the name of Waldenses) within the territories of the Duke of Savoy, were most cruelly massacred by a Popish party; and having upon his spirit a deep sense of their calamities, which were occasioned by their faithful adherence to the profession of the reformed religion, was pleased, not only to mediate, by most pathetic letters, in their behalf, to the King of France and Duke of Savoy, but did also graciously invite the people of this nation to seek the Lord by prayer and humiliation, in reference to their then sad condition and future relief; and from a confidence that the good people of this nation would be sensibly touched "with the afflictions of Joseph," and in that day of their brethren's trouble manifest a sensible resentment of, and sympathy with the sufferings of their

fellowmembers, professors of the same faith; did forthwith publish a DECLARATION, expressing his earnest desire that the people might be stirred up to a free and liberal contribution towards their succor and support: for the management of which collection, certain instructions were also agreed upon and annexed to the said declaration: and for the more effectually promoting of the work, his highness appointed a committee, consisting of persons of known honor, fidelity, and integrity, to consider and advise, from time to time, how the money that should be thereupon raised, might be employed most advantageously, for the certain supply of those poor distressed members of Christ, corresponding with the real intentions of the givers; amongst whom likewise there were two select persons of very considerable estate and reputation, appointed to be treasurers for the receiving in of the said monies, whose names, together with the number and names of the aforesaid committee, for the reader's better satisfaction, are here inserted," etc.

It must afford pleasure to every benevolent mind to reflect upon the interest that was now taken in the fate of the Waldenses by all the protestant states of Europe; at the same time that it gives us a satisfactory pledge of the high estimation in which that particular class of Christians was universally held. The Elector Palatine of the Rhine, the Elector of Brandenburg, the Duke of Wirtemburgh, and almost every protestant prince and state upon the continent, wrote letters to the Duke of Savoy, declaring their abhorrence of that sanguinary massacre, and interceding for his persecuted subjects. Sir Samuel Morland has preserved faithful copies of most of these letters; but none of them is more pointed or deserving of the reader's attention than that of THE LANDGRAVE OF HESSE, and as it is concise, I here subjoin it.

Sir!

Having lately received the news of that cruel massacre, committed upon the Protestants, who are commonly known by the name of Waldenses, inhabiting your valleys of Angrogne and Pragela, in Piedmont, I could not easily be brought at first to give credit to such a dismal story, as not being once able to imagine, that even their adversaries had been so audacious as to exercise such barbarous cruelties upon poor innocent people, who lived peaceably under the government of your highness, and in entire obedience, without giving the least offense to any; and who, for so long a time together, have obtained protection and security from both you and your ancestors. And, indeed, I so much the less imagined this, from the persuasion I had, that their enemies had learned, by the experience of so many ages, that persecutions and butcheries are not the means to suppress our religion, but rather to preserve and spread the same abroad. But this news having been written and confirmed to me from so many places, and that with circumstances so wholly deplorable, as that I could no longer remain in doubt, it has seized me with horror; and, consequently, being moved with pity and

compassion towards so many thousands of souls in such extreme distress, who have been most cruelly robbed and spoiled of their lives and estates, by the cruelty of their furious and sworn enemies, and this without distinction either of sex or age, I have thought it my duty, as a Christian prince, interested in the preservation of those of my religion, to write this present letter to your highness, and to beseech you not only to command and allow that the remainder of those poor innocent people who have escaped the violence of their persecutors, be established in their lands, goods, and possessions, which are yet left them after this great desolation, but also that they may find the effects of this powerful protection; and that you will be pleased, for that purpose henceforward to favor them, by patiently hearing their complaints, and taking cognizance of them yourself, as a good and righteous prince, from whom they ought to expect all the effects of justice, clemency, and bounty: whereas those who term themselves "of the congregation for the propagation of the faith, and for the extirpation of heretics," are their declared enemies; and instead of turning souls to righteousness by "the sword of the word," have employed the temporal sword, the fire, and the rope, and all the barbarous cruelties which outrageous men could possibly invent for (tormenting) the bodies of those poor creatures, and to destroy them from off the face of the earth. I most earnestly beseech your highness to grant the aforesaid request, and to be assured of my inviolable affection for your interest and service, and that I shall account it an happiness to have an opportunity of giving you real testimonies of the same; as being, etc. WILLIAM, Landgrave of Hesse Cassel July 23, 1655.

The annals of Europe scarcely afforded an instance of such a state of cordial harmony and mutual consent, among the different states and nations in any affair of religion as, at this juncture, appeared in behalf of the poor Waldenses. Their case was clearly understood, and generally and deeply felt. It was purely a case of persecution for conscience' sake; and taking all the circumstances into account, it was an instance of such atrocious and brutal outrage, as the world had rarely seen paralleled. It came home to the breasts of all the Protestants in Europe, and they took a lively interest in it. Men's expectations were raised to a very high pitch and their attention fixed upon the protestant princes, anxiously waiting to see whether they would tamely put up with such an open and diabolical attack upon their general cause, for such they regarded this; or whether by a joint cooperation of power and influence they would at once relieve and re-establish their distressed friends.

At this eventful moment **the Swiss Cantons, who certainly lay the most contiguous to the valleys of Piedmont, finding that they were ably supported by all the protestant states of Europe, undertook to mediate with the Duke of Savoy in behalf of the exiled Waldenses, and sent four of their leading men as commissioners to the court of the latter,** authorized with powers to negotiate a treaty of accommodation; and the rest of the European princes had such confidence

in them, that they unanimously agreed to relinquish the affair into their hands. The names of these commissioners were, Solomon Hirtzel, Charles von Bonstetten, Benedict Socin, and James Stockar.

It would be uninteresting and tiresome to the reader, to trace minutely the progress of this negotiation. And **it but too plainly appears from the result, that the Swiss commissioners were by no means a match for the jesuitical casuistry of the court of Savoy.** A treaty, however, was at length agreed upon and ratified between the parties; but "when it came to be published to the world," says Sir S. Morland, "and accurately examined by wise and sober men, it was found to resemble a leper arrayed in rich clothing and gay attire! It was a treaty as full of grievances as poor Lazarus was of sores! The greater part of the articles of which it consisted clashing with the people's interests and ancient privileges, and the remainder made up of expressions which looked as many ways as the mariner's compass. In short, it cannot be more fitly compared to any thing than to Ezekiel's roll, which, though it were as sweet as honey in the people's mouths, yet there was written within nothing but lamentation, and mourning, and woe." And such it proved in the issue, for no sooner had the Swiss commissioners taken their departure for their own country, than an infinite number of difficulties and grievances came crawling out of the said treaty, like so many hornets out of a hollow tree, and they continued to sting the poor Waldenses to death.

An effort was certainly made by those that were in exile, to avail themselves of the conditions of this treaty, of which, as it was intended for their benefit, they were disposed at first to think very favorably. But a little experience convinced them that it was not in reality what their friends wished for them. On the 29th of March, 1656, a general meeting of the churches of the valleys of Piedmont took place, at which they drew up a paper entitled, "THE GRIEVANCES OF THE TREATY MADE AT PIGNEROL." It is truly an affecting document, and that the reader may form some judgment of it, I shall subjoin the first paragraph. They complain that in the preamble to the treaty, they are recognized as rebels, and disobedient persons who had taken arms against his royal highness, their natural prince and sovereign, and thereby, as persons who were guilty and deserving of his indignation; they are described as asking pardon for those outrages which, it was pretended, they had committed; and thus, say they, "we are plainly involved in the crime of rebellion, against which we do now, and always have protested; having never done any one act that can justly subject us to that imputation--no, not even when the whole state was in an uproar--nor even when they came to destroy us, as they did last year; for although we had very great cause of suspicion, as is but too manifest from the event, having granted for the most part to the squadron of Savoy their winter-quarters, yet no sooner had the Marquis of Pionessa charged us, in the name of his royal highness, to receive his forces, than, without making the least resistance, we permitted them to enter and do whatever they chose." This is the first of fifteen

articles of grievance which they enumerate.

This melancholy catalogue of their grievances was drawn up with the view of making an appeal concerning them to the King of France, and imploring his interposition to have them redressed. Accordingly, having specified these defects in the articles, they subjoin a list of thirteen other particulars, which had been refused to their deputies, on which they humbly pray that due reflection may be made. Among other matters, they plead, that "having been always faithful to the service of his royal highness their sovereign, and yet cruelly massacred, burned, and pillaged, contrary to his intention, he would be pleased to give orders that justice might be done upon those that had been the chief authors and agents against them--that his royal highness would be pleased to repeal the Order of Gastaldo, as being contrary to all their ancient concessions, and likewise all the orders which the marquis of Pionessa had caused to be published during the late contest, and to command that every one might be restored to his own property and possessions--that they might no longer be subject to the quartering of soldiers upon them, a thing with which they had been harassed ever since the year 1624, and which had been made a pretext for the readier method of destroying them; but that in lieu of it, they might be allowed, in common with others, to contribute their proportion in money--that no more (catholic) missionaries might be sent into the valleys, because partly by their rapes, and partly by seditions and false reports, these missionaries had always been fomenters of all the disorders that came to pass--that, in short, they might not be subject to the *council de propaganda fide*, nor to any of its members, nor to the inquisition; but that every thing might be re-established in the condition it was before the late troubles, with liberty of conscience, and the free exercise of their religion, with license to their ministers to go and visit the sick wherever they lived, as well as the liberty of preaching the gospel, etc., etc. and the whole terminates with the following affecting appeal:

"We hope from the equity and clemency of his royal highness, that he will the more readily grant us these privileges, as there is nothing in them but what we have quietly enjoyed under the happy government of his most serene predecessors of glorious memory, according to their concessions, and nothing but what may tend to satisfy us in the clearing of those points, which as experience hath showed us, have been wrested to a wrong sense, and to represent the true meaning and the equity of the particulars therein contained, that so we may, once for all, take away from the disturbers of our peace all occasion of troubling the public tranquillity, and be enabled, in peace and security, to render to God that which belongs to God, and to Caesar what is Caesar's; as we do protest before God and his holy angels, that we ever have had, and will ever have the same for our aim. And to the end that those things, before expressed, may stand firm and inviolable, we humbly supplicate his most Christian majesty, that he will be pleased to procure unto us this favor from our prince, that all may be put into the

form of a transaction, and confirmed, not only by the chamber of Turin, but also in that of Chambery, and that many original copies may be drawn, and delivered into the hands of those to whom it shall appertain."

This affecting document was delivered into the hands of Monsieur de Bais, the French minister, and by him transmitted to his royal master, who, upon receipt of it, expressed great concern for the deplorable condition of the poor Waldenses, but his kind intentions towards them were entirely frustrated by some malignant spirits near the throne. "But, so it happened," says Sir Samuel Morland, "that from this time forward, the leading men in the court of Savoy, have used their best endeavors to lay heavier loads on their backs, than ever they had hitherto done. For in their orders of April 20th, and October 6, 1656, and August 24, 1657, they summoned the poor people to pay their taxes for the year 1655, contrary to the treaty, while they exempted the Catholics from the said taxes; and when they appealed to the Duke, October 6, 1657, on the hardship of their case, they were, among other things, absolutely prohibited the exercise of their public worship in San Giovanni."

**It would be endless to repeat all the edicts, orders, and injunctions that were issued against them after the cruel patent in 1655, with all their consequent grievances:** and it is painful to dwell upon so melancholy a subject. Our countryman, Sir Samuel Morland, remained among them until the summer of 1658, at which time he thus affectingly closes his narrative. "It is my misfortune that I am compelled to leave these people where I found them, among the potsherds, with sackcloth and ashes spread under them, and lifting up their voice with weeping, in the words of Job--'Have pity on us, have pity on us, O ye our friends, for the hand of God hath touched us.'--To this very day they labor under most heavy burdens, which are laid upon them by their rigid task-masters of the church of Rome--forbidding them all kind of traffic for their subsistence--robbing them of their goods and estates--banishing the pastors of their flocks, that the wolves may the more readily devour the sheep--violating the young women and maidens--murdering the most innocent as they peaceably pass along the highways--by cruel mockings and revilings--by continual threats of another massacre, sevenfold more bloody, if possible, than the former. To all which, I must add that, notwithstanding the liberal supplies that have been sent them from England and other places, yet so great is the number of these hungry creatures, and so grievous are the oppressions of their popish enemies, who lie in wait to bereave them of whatever is given them, snatching at almost every morsel that goes into their mouths, that even to this day, some of them are almost ready to eat their own flesh for want of bread. Their miseries are more grievous than words can express--they have no 'grapes in their vineyards--no cattle in their fields--no herds in their stalls--no corn in their granaries--no meal in their barrel--no oil in their cruise.' The stock that was gathered for them by the people of this and other countries is fast consuming, and when that is spent, they must inevitably perish, unless God, 'who turns the hearts of princes as the rivers of water,' incline the heart



of their prince to take pity on his poor, harmless, and faithful subjects" [Morland's *Churches of Piedmont*, p. 682-708].

# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 7**

### **HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES CONTINUED; INCLUDING A NARRATIVE OF THE SANGUINARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE CATHOLICS AGAINST THEM IN POLAND. A.D. 1658**

The return of Sir Samuel Morland from his mission to the court of Turin, gave him an opportunity of laying before the English government a minute and circumstantial explanation of the state of the Waldenses in Piedmont, at the time of his departure in 1658. The substance of this account the reader has already seen, in the close of the last section, and its truth and accuracy are further ascertained by a letter, bearing date 30th of November, 1657, from the four Swiss commissioners who, two years before, had been engaged in negotiating the treaty of Pignerol. This letter is addressed to Monsieur de Servient, ambassador of the French king, who was present at the ratification of the treaty, and, as it would seem, had taken a considerable interest therein. **The Swiss commissioners complain that the conditions of the treaty were grossly violated by the adversaries of the Waldenses; that interpretations were put upon various clauses contained in it, the reverse of what they were intended to bear; and, in short, that the situation in which these poor people were now placed, called loudly for the cognizance and interference of the court of France,** which stood pledged to see the conditions of the treaty punctually fulfilled. They, in particular, notice the lawless proceedings of the military towards the Waldenses, in plundering them of their fruits, which they carried away without the least ceremony, committing robberies in their houses, and spoiling them of their goods--that "they were laden with reproaches and injuries, beaten and wounded; the

virtue of their females attempted, with numerous other outrages, altogether inexcusable." "That several persons who had been sent to settle among them in the capacity of pastors and teachers, from their sister churches in Dauphiny, had been seized and banished out of the country, on the ground that they were not natives, and that therefore the conditions of the treaty did not extend to them--and that, in particular, one of their pastors who had exercised the holy ministry among them for thirty years, together with one Mr. Arnold, a physician, had been turned out and banished, so that by these and similar means many churches and congregations were at once deprived of the food of their souls and comfort of their bodies. After enumerating a long catalogue of similar grievances, they say, "Now as these things have happened to our friends and associates in religion, so palpably contrary to our expectation, our hearts are so much the more sensibly affected by it, both because we were present in the name of our lords and superiors at the negotiating of the treaty, and because we are personally interested therein." They, therefore, supplicate his excellency to interpose his mediation for the good of their friends, and for his own interest and honor's sake; and to insist that the spirit and meaning of the treaty be in future fully and absolutely observed.

The subject was also taken up by the English government, as appears by the following letters, both of which bear date May 26, 1658.

HIS HIGHNESS THE LORD PROTECTOR TO THE KING OF FRANCE

Most Serene and Most Potent King!

Your majesty may remember, that while the treaty was going on about remedying the alliance between us--an alliance that has now happily commenced, as the many advantages resulting to both nations and the numerous inconveniences which arise from it to our common enemies, abundantly show--the dreadful slaughter of the Waldenses took place; and that, with the utmost affection and humanity, we recommended the case of those afflicted and destitute people to your clemency and protection.

We are far from thinking that your majesty has been wanting in the exercise of your influence and authority with the Duke of Savoy to promote so pious and humane an object: and as for our part, we, and many other princes and states, have not failed to interpose by embassies, letters, and entreaties. After a most inhuman slaughter of persons of both sexes, and of every age, a peace was, at last, concluded, or rather a more concealed course of hostility, under the disguise of peace.\* The conditions of the treaty were agreed upon in your town of Pignerol--hard ones indeed--but such as those poor people, after having undergone every species of outrage and cruelty, would cheerfully acquiesce in,

hard and unjust as they are, were they only observed, but they are not observed. For, by a false interpretation of every article, and by one subterfuge or other, their real meaning is eluded, and faith violated. Multitudes are ejected from their ancient possessions, many prohibited the exercise of their religion; new payments are exacted; a new fort is built for the purpose of placing a yoke upon them, out of which the soldiers sally forth, plundering and putting to death all they meet. Besides which, new forces are of late privately prepared against them, and those who profess the Romish religion among them are directed to withdraw for a time; so that everything seems again to portend the slaughtering of those miserable creatures who escaped the former butchery--a thing which I entreat and beseech your majesty that you will not suffer to be done; nor permit, I do not say any prince--for such enormous cruelty cannot enter into the heart of any prince, much less can it befall the tender age of that prince, or the mind of his mother,--what those most savage murderers, to exercise such a license of outrageous tyranny: Men who, while they profess themselves the servants of Christ, and followers of him who came into the world to save sinners, at the same time abuse his merciful name and meek precepts, to perpetrate the most cruel massacres on innocent persons. Oh that your majesty, who are able, and advanced as you are to such exalted dignity; who are worthy of the power you possess would rescue so many of your poor petitioners out of the hands of bloody men, who having been lately drunk with blood, are again thirsting after it, exulting when they are enabled to fix the invidious charge of cruelty upon princes themselves; but let not your majesty allow the borders of your kingdom to be defiled by such cruelty. Recollect, that those very people threw themselves under the protection of King Henry, your grandfather, a firm friend of the Protestants, when the Duke of l'Esdiguieres, passing through their country, which affords the most convenient entrance into Italy, prosecuted his victory against the duke of Savoy, who retreated beyond the Alps. The instrument of their submission remains among the public records of your realm to this day; in which, among other things, it is excepted and provided, that the people of the valleys should not, at any future time, be transferred to the jurisdiction of any other prince, but upon the same conditions on which they were received into the protection of your majesty's victorious grandfather.\*\* The same protection they once more implore, and submissively entreat from his grandchild. Their anxious wish is, that, in some way of exchange, if it can be effected, they may become your subjects, rather than remain his under whom they now are. But if that cannot be effected, that they may, at any rate, obtain from you patronage, protection, and refuge. There are also reasons of state which should induce your majesty not to abandon the Waldenses--but I am not willing that so great a king should be stimulated to the relief of men whose circumstances are so pitiable, by any other reasons than the obligations of fidelity given by your ancestors and your own piety, added to your royal benignity and the greatness of your own mind. Thus the honor and renown of an act so truly glorious will be wholly your own, and thereby your majesty, as long as you live, may expect to find prosperity and

blessings from the Father of mercies himself, and from his Son Christ the King, whose name and doctrine you will be the means of vindicating from detestable villainy. Given at our court at Westminster, May 26, 1658.

[\* It may not be improper in this place to correct a very inaccurate statement of this matter which appears in Neal's *History of the Puritans*, volume 4, chapter 3, under the year 1655. Referring to the interference of the Protector with the Duke of Savoy, it is said, upon the authority of Bishop Burnet, "Upon this the persecution immediately ceased; the duke recalled his army out of the valleys, and restored their goods; the poor people returned to their houses, and recovered all their ancient rights and privileges." How far this representation corresponds with the truth of things, let the impartial reader judge after carefully perusing the preceding pages, and the representation that Milton has given of the real state of matters, in this and the following letter.]

[\*\* In this last sentence Milton seems to throw some light upon a subject which has been more than once hinted at in the preceding pages.]

## THE PROTECTOR TO THE EVANGELICAL CANTONS OF SWITZERLAND.

Most Illustrious and Most Magnificent Lords!

Although it is impossible for us to contemplate the monstrous cruelties which have been inflicted upon your poor distressed neighbors of the valleys without astonishment; or the grievous and intolerable things to which they have been subjected by their prince, on account of their religion; we thought it needless to write to you, to whom those things must be better known than to us. We have seen copies of the letters which your ambassadors, who were parties and witnesses to the peace lately made at Pignerol, wrote to the Duke of Savoy, and the president of his council at Turin; in which they particularly show that **all the articles of the peace have been broken, and that they have been made use of for the purpose of deceiving, rather than of affording protection to these miserable people.** But must they patiently bear this violation of the articles, which began the instant peace was concluded, and has been persevered in to the present moment, and which grows more intolerable every day? Are they to submit basely, and give themselves up to be trodden under foot and utterly ruined? The same calamity hangs over their heads, and another massacre similar to that which wasted and destroyed them, with their wives and children in so shocking a manner about three years ago, which, should it take place, must inevitably extirpate them. What can these poor distressed creatures do, who have no door opened for petitioning, no space for breathing, nor any place of security to which they can flee? They have to do with wild beasts, or rather with furies, in whom the

recollection of former slaughters has effected no repentance, nor any compassion towards their own countrymen, no sense of humanity, no satiety with the shedding of blood! In plain terms, these things are not to be endured, whether we regard the safety of our brethren of the valleys--those most ancient professors of the orthodox faith; or of religion itself. As to our part, remote as we are in situation from them, we have done every thing that was in our power, nor shall we cease to perform whatever is yet possible for them. But as to you who are so near, not only to the miseries and lamentations of our brethren, but exposed also to the fury of the same enemies, we beseech you, by every thing that is sacred, to consider, and that without delay, what it behooves you to do at this moment--consult your own prudence, your piety, and even your fortitude, what assistance or relief you can or ought to extend to your neighbors and brethren, who, otherwise, are ready to perish. It is the very same cause of religion, for which the same enemies would have destroyed you also--yea, on account of which they would, in the preceding year, during the civil war among your confederates, have effected your destruction. Next to the help of God, it seems to devolve on you, to provide that the most ancient stock of pure religion, may not be destroyed in this remnant of its ancient faithful professors, whose safety, reduced as it now is to the extremity of hazard, if you neglect, beware that the next lot do not speedily fall upon yourselves!

While in this free and fraternal manner we thus exhort you, we, in the mean time, do not faint or grow weary. Whatever was in our power, at this remote distance, we have done. We have contributed our utmost endeavors, and shall continue so to do, both for procuring the safety of those that are in danger, and relieving the necessities of those that want. May God grant to both of us such tranquillity and peace at home, and so prosperous a state of affairs and of opportunities, that we may employ all our power, strength, and means for the defense of the church, against the rage and fury of its enemies. Westminster, May 26, 1658.

The letter addressed to the King of France, was transmitted to Lord Lockhart, who then filled the office of English ambassador at the French court, to whom the Protector, at the same time, wrote, giving him instructions to present the letter to his majesty, and pointing out eight principal topics of grievance which he was to adduce in his conversation with that monarch, and to use his utmost endeavors to make his majesty sensible of them, and to persuade him to give immediate and positive instructions to his ambassador, then resident at the Duke's court, to act vigorously in behalf of the oppressed Waldenses. He was also to urge the obligations the French king lay under, to fulfill the engagement of his royal predecessor Henry IV with the ancestors of these very people, and to press the King of France to make an exchange with the Duke of Savoy for the valleys of Piedmont, resigning some part of his own dominions to the latter in lieu thereof.

In the same year, 1658, and at the moment that the English government was making such laudable exertions to relieve the Waldenses in Piedmont, the news arrived of another dreadful scene of cruelty and distress exercised towards a branch of the same people, inhabiting a distant quarter. The three following papers, which, like the whole of the melancholy subject to which they relate, have since sunk into the most profound oblivion, were printed BY AUTHORITY, at the time; and as they sufficiently explain themselves, it is needless to introduce them by any formal preamble. There can be little doubt that the first of them was the composition of Milton: and the original now before me, which is printed in BLACK LETTER, has the Protector's arms prefixed to it.

**A DECLARATION OF HIS HIGHNESS, FOR A COLLECTION TOWARDS THE  
RELIEF OF DIVERS PROTESTANT CHURCHES DRIVEN OUT OF POLAND;  
AND OF TWENTY PROTESTANT FAMILIES DRIVEN OUT OF THE CONFINES  
OF BOHEMIA.**

HIS HIGHNESS, the lord protector, having received a petition from several churches of Christ, professing the reformed religion, lately seated at Lesna, and other places in Poland, representing their sad and deplorable condition, through the persecution and cruelty of their antichristian enemies in those parts, in the time of the war in Poland, by whom they have not only been driven from their habitation and spoiled of their goods, upon the account of religion only, but forced to fly into Silesia, for the preservation of their lives, and for the liberty of their consciences, where a considerable number of them continue in great want and misery--the truth whereof hath been witnessed, as well by deputies sent unto his highness from the said churches, authorized by an instrument under the hands of the pastors of five of those churches, as also by the testimony of several protestant princes, who, out of a deep sense of the calamity of those distressed exiles, have afforded them shelter until it shall please the Lord otherwise to provide for them: And his highness having, in like manner, received a petition from twenty protestant families heretofore seated in the confines of Bohemia, where Misnia belongs unto it, representing their distressed and lamentable condition, **through the persecution of the jesuits and inquisitors of the house of Austria, by whom they have been driven out of their habitations, and spoiled of their goods**, upon the sole account of their religion; who now, for the safety of their lives, and for the liberties of their consciences, are retired into the marquisate of Culembach, where they find a present shelter in this their very sad and calamitous condition, which hath been witnessed both by their deputies sent unto his highness, authorized by an instrument under the hands of the chief of those families, as also by a public certificate from thence. And it being the earnest desire of the said afflicted churches and families, as well by their several petitions, as by their deputies, that his highness, out of compassion to their sufferings, would be pleased to recommend their lamentable condition to their brethren in

these nations, in whom they hope to find bowels of mercy, yearning towards those who, professing the same faith with them, are now under so great extremities and misery for the cause of the gospel, and testimony of the Lord Jesus.

His highness being greatly afflicted with the miserable and calamitous condition of the said churches and families, and not doubting but the people of these nations, whom the Lord hath graciously and wonderfully preserved from that antichristian bondage and tyranny, will have a fellow-feeling of the afflictions of their brethren, hath, with the advice of his privy council, thought fit to recommend their case to the charity of those whose hearts the Lord shall stir up in these nations, to afford them some seasonable relief, whose liberality in this kind hath been testified in their large contributions to the relief of the poor Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, to the refreshing of their bowels (touching the faithful distribution whereof, an account is ordered by his highness to be printed for general satisfaction.) And to the end the said collections may be carefully made, and the money thereupon collected be disposed of to the relief of the said poor churches, and their members, and the families aforesaid, and to no other uses; his highness doth hereby require and command the ministers and churchwardens of the respective parishes within England and Wales, and town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the next Lord's day after this declaration shall come unto their hands, to publish the same, and on the Lord's day following to make a collection of the charitable contribution of the people in their parishes, and that within three days after, they pay over the sum or sums so collected unto the high sheriff of the respective counties, to be by him paid into the hands of Sir Thomas Viner and Sir Christopher Pack, knights, aldermen of the city of London, who are appointed treasurers for this service, and who shall transmit the monies so to be by them received for the relief of the said poor distressed churches and their members, and the aforesaid twenty families, in such manner and proportions as the committee formerly appointed for the disposing of the monies for the relief of the said poor Protestants in Piedmont, shall, with respect to their several numbers and sufferings, think fit and direct, and to the end that none of the monies collected for so pious and charitable an end may miscarry, the ministers and churchwardens aforesaid are enjoined, upon payment of the said money to the respective sheriffs as aforesaid, to send up unto the said Sir Thomas Viner, a note in writing under their hands, of the sum so collected, the parish and county where such collection was made, and the person to whom the same was paid, to the end care may be taken, and the same may be duly returned and employed to the use intended.

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**BY THE COMMITTEE FOR THE AFFAIRS OF THE POOR PROTESTANTS IN**



## THE VALLEYS OF PIEDMONT.

The all wise and holy God, whose ways of providence are always righteous, though often secret and unsearchable, hath made it the constant lot and portion of his people in this world, to follow the Lord in bearing the cross and suffering persecutions, thereby holding forth and verifying that irreconcilable enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, which was visible betimes in the bloodshed of righteous Abel, whom Cain (though his brother) slew, being of the wicked one, yea, and for this cause, for that his own works were evil, and his brother's good. Thus they that are born after the flesh, persecute them that are born after the Spirit to this day, and so will do while the world lasteth. In which cause and quarrel the Lord hath very many glorious ends. But **scarcely have any sort of the church's enemies more clearly followed the pernicious ways of Cain herein, than hath the antichristian faction of Rome done, that Mother of Harlots and Abominations, whose garments are dyed red with the blood of saints**, which they have always cruelly shed, and made themselves drunk with, even with the blood of those holy followers of the Lamb, chiefly who would not receive Antichrist's mark, nor worship his image, nor drink of the golden cup of his fornications, but rather come out from them, and witness against them, though they did it in sackcloth, and were slain for it.

Among those chosen and faithful witnesses, the Lord seemeth very signally to have raised up those Christians, who, though dispersed in divers countries, have been commonly known **by the name of Waldenses, who, for some centuries of years, have lived among their enemies as lambs among wolves, to bear their testimony for the truth of Christ, against the apostasies and blasphemies of Rome**, for which they have been killed all the day long, and appointed as sheep for the slaughter. Nevertheless, the Lord, the great Shepherd of the sheep, hath made their blood thus shed, to become a constant seed of faithful and valiant witnesses for him; which is, indeed, the more marvelous in our eyes, that this bush hath so long burned and is not yet consumed.

This little flock and remnant which the Lord hath left and reserved, are scattered partly in the valleys of **Piedmont**, of whose tragical sufferings we have not long since heard, and have drawn forth our bowels to them, whereof a very faithful account is given to the world, both for the satisfaction of brethren and friends, and for stopping the mouths of all calumnies.

The other part of this poor, yet precious remnant, have been dispersed in the kingdoms of **Bohemia and Poland**, whose sufferings, together with the Lord's signal providences about them, have been very eminent and remarkable, as hath been made appear unto us by three godly persons, delegated by those

persecuted churches, which are now the sad monuments of their enemies' rage, and of the Lord's sparing mercies.

These have made their addresses to his highness the lord protector, by petition, declaring the deplorable estate wherein this persecuted remnant now lieth, and with loud cries importuning the Christian bowels and bounty of this nation, which cannot but be moved to mourn over them, and to show mercy to them. And, indeed, upon a due sense and consideration of this lamentable subject, even common humanity, but much more Christian charity, should provoke us to a fellow-feeling of their present distressed condition. These sometime flourishing churches, were, by degrees worn, out by the constant underminings and open outrages of the antichristian party, being first driven out of Bohemia into Poland, then after their taking root and spreading in Poland into a numerous company, were forced out of the chief cities there, and now, at last **by the jesuited and enraged Polish army, persecuted in their few hiding places, with fire and sword.**

**Their ministers were tortured to death by most exquisite and unheard of barbarism, by cutting out of the tongues of some, pulling out the eyes and cruelly mangling the bodies of others; nor did their rage and brutish cruelty reach only to ministers, but to others, yea even to women and young children, whose heads they cut off, and laid them at their dead mothers' breasts.**

Nay, their rage brake out not only upon the living (not one of whom they spared that fell into their hands) but also upon the dead, **plucking the bodies of honorable persons, and others out of the graves, tearing them to pieces, and exposing them to public scorn.**

But the chief eyesore and object of their fury was the city of Lesna, which, after plundering and murdering all whom they found therein, they burned to ashes, and laid in rubbish; only the Lord in his mercy having alarmed the city of their enemies' approaching march, the greatest part of the inhabitants (being three famous churches) saved themselves by flight, and are now wandering up and down in Silesia, the marquisate of Brandenburg, Lusatia, and Hungary, poor, destitute, afflicted, and naked.

His highness and the council having referred unto this committee the testimonials and petitions sent by the said churches, we finding upon examination thereof, their case to be thus deplorable, which is more at large stated and declared in their own narrative, have caused the said narrative to be translated, and herewith published, thereby to stir up the Lord's people in these nations to put on bowels of

mercies towards these their exiled and afflicted brethren, refreshing their hearts by your love, and the tokens of it in a cheerful and liberal supply which will not only preserve this holy seed from perishing, that hath a blessing in it, but also uphold among them the purity of religion and power of the gospel.

The rather considering the present freedom from these bloody outrages, we, the people of these nations, do by the blessing of the Lord enjoy, the continuance whereof we may the more comfortably hope for, by how much our compassions are more freely extended to those in misery. And if a cup of cold water given to one disciple, as such, shall not lose its reward, how much more when a bountiful relief is given to more than five thousand disciples?

Which we should be the more forward to advance, because they acknowledge **they have received much confirmation in the religion for which they suffer by light received from our countryman John Wickliff, that famous witness of Christ against Antichrist, even in the darkest times of popery.**

And we doubt not but that God who hath lately opened your bowels to so large and eminent a contribution towards the persecuted Protestants of Piedmont, (for which many thanksgivings have been made to God in your behalf) will again draw out your hearts upon this like sad occasion, to the like bountiful liberality, it being our duty to cast our bread upon the waters, and to give a portion to six and also to seven, not being weary of well-doing, because in due time we shall reap if we faint not. Considering also how honorable it is to act grace, and to lay out ourselves upon such occasions, we recommend it again as the work of God accompanied with his own voice, calling aloud upon us to enlarge ourselves in this ministration, and withal to pour out our hearts in faith and prayer, that the Lord would yet please to raise up Sion upon the ruins of Babylon, hastening his work, and blessing means to it.

---JOHN TREVOR, CHRISTOPHER PACK, WILLIAM PUREFOY, EDWARD CRESSET, THOMAS VYNER, JOSEPH CARYL, JOHN OWEN, WILLIAM JENKYN, PHILIP NYE, WILLIAM COOPER, EDMOND CALAMY.

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## **THE FURY OF ANTICHRIST AGAINST THE PROTESTANTS, OR REFORMED CHURCH OF THE BOHEMIAN CONFESSION IN POLAND, SET DOWN IN A BRIEF, BUT FAITHFUL NARRATIVE, AND ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER.**

The spouse of Jesus Christ, she who in the cradle was besprinkled with the blood

of a proto-martyr, hath always brought into the world men like Abel or Stephen, that so there might never be wanting to cry from the earth unto God, and that the wounds of that rose which lies among the thorns of persecution might not be concealed. Every age, and every year in each age, and every month and day in each year, hath produced new inundations of blood unto this day; and yet the little flock of the Lord hath always increased under persecutions, one while here, another there, shifting their seats and habitations. While it pleased God, by the means of Wickliff, to kindle the light of the gospel in Great Britain, John Huss asserted the truth of Jesus Christ in the midst of the thick darkness of popery in Bohemia, many thousands being stirred up by God to receive it, who, despising all the cruelty of tyrants, received it with joy, until, by God's assistance, they took root in the kingdom, and grew up into flourishing churches. In a short time after, antichrist breathing out his fury, the truth was banished out of Bohemia, and the confessors being driven out, transplanted the gospel into Poland; where, being favorably entertained by King Sigismund, they, in a short time, increased to so great a number, that being little inferior to the Papists, they were able to boast of an equal authority and privileges with them. Hence it came to pass that the kings at their coronations were wont not only to promise, but solemnly to swear protection to such as disagreed from the Roman religion, and, therefore, they proceeded not to open persecutions, save only in those cities where the Jesuits had seated themselves in power, to wit, Cracovia, Posen, Lubin, Vilna, etc. where, by their disciples, and by stirring up the common people to fury, the churches of the reformed professors were a good while ago demolished and divers ministers cruelly massacred. Nevertheless the malice of their enemies being no whit allayed, they were many ways afflicted, first indirectly, afterwards by pretenses under color of law, until those churches being worn out by degrees, and overthrown, were not many years ago reduced to a very inconsiderable number, especially when, as in the reign of the late king, their enemies being confident they might do any thing, brought things to this pass at length, that there were no more than twenty-one congregations remaining in the greater Poland, and those also ready to perish. **But among these twenty-one remaining churches, the chief, and, as it were, the mother of them all, was that of LESNA**, which was divided into three congregations, the Bohemian, the Polonian, and the German; each of which had had their own pastors, but the communicants jointly were about two thousand: therefore, it was that this joint church in the first place, exposed to the enemy's malice, and of late designed to the slaughter, as well **by reason of its being very much frequented and grown famous, as also because of the synod there usually celebrated, as likewise a famous University and printing-house, and books frequently published to the world.** When, therefore, in the year 1655, the Swedish army out of Pomerania drew near to the borders of Poland, and the nobility were summoned to arms, according to the custom of the country, it came to pass that the Papists brake forth into many furious expressions, crying out, that the heretics had invited the enemy, and,

therefore, they were first of all to be put to the sword and extirpated; which reports, though falsely scattered abroad, (for the Searcher of hearts and reins knoweth, that we never so much as dreamt of it) yet they easily found credit among the sworn enemies of the gospel, who sought nothing more than our ruin. Hereupon they who first consulted to agree with the Swedish army, being terrified by its power, concluded about the surrender of all great Poland into the King's protection, and namely, the royal cities of Posen, Calissen, Meseric, etc. to which also Lesna was expressly added. In a little time after, they endeavored to cast off the Swedish yoke, and turned their arms not against the Swedes, but first against our evangelical professors, as conspiring with the Swedes upon the account of religion, and none of them scrupled to take revenge upon them. They first of all set upon those of Lesna, with the resolution of putting all to the sword, and destroying that heretical city by fire, and they had effected both, unless God had, by sending some persons before, who, by signifying the coming of the enemy, and with what intent they came, had possessed the citizens with a panic fear, so that leaving all their estates, they every man fled; and thus within the space of one hour, a most populous city, abounding with all manner of wealth, was left without inhabitants, who, in a miserable condition, wandered then into the neighboring woods and marshes into Silesia. But the Polish nobility, with their army, entering the city, did what they pleased, slaying a great number of decrepit old people, and sick persons, that were not able to save themselves by flight; then the city itself was first plundered; and afterwards so destroyed by fire, for three days together, that no part of it remained besides rubbish and ashes. In what manner they would have handled the citizens, especially their pastors, they showed by their heroic actions performed in other places, by **the most savage slaughtering of divers ministers of the church, and other faithful members of Christ of both sexes**: for of all that they laid hold on, they gave not one man quarter, but **very cruelly put them to death with most exquisite tortures**. They endeavored to force **Mr. Samuel Cards, pastor of the church of Czuertzinen, to renounce his religion, after they had taken him, and miserably handled him with all manner of cruelty; but he stoutly resisting, they first put out his eyes, and led him about for a spectacle, then they pulled off his fingers' end with pincers; but he not yet condescending to their mad fury, they found out a new kind of torment, poured molten lead into his mouth, and, at length, while he was yet half alive, they clapt his neck between folding doors, and violently pulling them together severed his head from his body**. They took **John Jacobides**, pastor of the church of Dembnick, and **Alexander Wartens**, his colleague, and another that was in company with them, as they passed through the town of Lubin, and hurrying them up and down for divers hours, and grievously handling them after the manner of tyrants, they last of all, **cutting their throats with a razor**, threw them headlong, while they were yet breathing, into a great pit, which had been before-hand prepared for their martyrs, and stifled them by casting down dung and dirt upon them. They a great while pursued **Andrew**

**Oxlitius**, a young man designed for the ministry, whom, after long seeking, they at last found in the open field, and in the end having taken him, they cut off his head with a scythe, chopping it into small pieces, and the dead carcass also they slashed in a barbarous manner. The same fate befell **Adam Milota**, a citizen of Lesna; but they more grievously handled an old man above seventy, whose name was **Simon Priten**, and many others, whose names it were too tedious to relate. Of that **barbarous execution which they did upon the weaker sex**, there were, besides other examples, horrid trophies of cruelty erected in the said city of Lesna; a pious matron there, who was the mother of three children, not being able quick enough to leave the city, and being slain in the open street, **they cut off her hands and feet, and cutting off her children's heads, they laid two of them at her breasts**, and the third by her side. In like manner, **another woman having her hands and feet cut off, and her tongue cut out, being enclosed and bound in a sack, lived the space of two days, making most miserable lamentation**. Grief forbids us to add more, for they behaved themselves so furiously towards us, that there remains not an example of any one man saved of all those that happened to fall into their hands. It is notoriously known how that fury of theirs **tyrannized also over the dead**; some they dragged out of their graves and cut into pieces, as at Zichlin; others they exposed naked for a public spectacle, as at Lesna; of which outrageous action we had an example, even in the dead body of the most serene Landgrave of Hussia, which was drawn out of the grave, who was heretofore slain in a most barbarous and tyrannical manner at Koscian, but buried by our friends at Lesna. The like was acted also upon the body of the most noble Arciszevius, heretofore the valiant admiral of the Hollanders in Brazil, which was likewise dragged out of the grave, and being stripped of the grave clothes, was found after the firing of Lesna. There are divers other examples, which the Christian reader may find in the book entitled *Lesnas Excidium*, faithfully written, and lately set forth in print; but they are such examples only as are commonly known, for who is able to relate all things in particular? as burning men alive, drowning others with stones tied about their necks, etc.

Now Lesna being destroyed, the fury of the enemy proceeded to the persecution of others; they, **in a short time, utterly demolished all our congregations**, not only driving away the pastors, but also either burning or leaving most of the temples desolate, as at Karmin, Dembnick, Skochy, Czriuczin, etc. yea and the auditories themselves were either slain (as in the town of Skochy, where there was a very flourishing church of the Bohemian exiles, **sixty persons, both men and women, were cruelly put to death**) or else they were scattered abroad, so that there remained not one place wherein the worship of God may be celebrated. Lo, this is the most miserable state and condition of our churches; moreover our countrymen, to the number of five thousand, besides youths and children, being dispersed in banishment (which hath now befallen most of us the second time) especially throughout Silesia, as also through the Marck, Lusatia, Hungary, etc.

find no comfort, but much misery, and are there exposed to the hatred and envy of men. We that are pastors dare not openly minister to our auditories with the word and sacraments, but only in private meetings, or in woods among fenny places, God only seeing us, who is witness of these calamities, and our comfort in extremities. Indeed, being thus destitute of all things we lead a wretched life in banishment, being afflicted, with hunger and nakedness, and are become, next to the most miserable Waldenses, the greatest spectacle of calamity to the Christian world, for so it hath seemed good to that sovereign wisdom that governs all things, that we should be the inheritors of the cross and persecutions of those men from whom we have derived the original of our doctrine and external succession: for truly we are the remaining progeny even of the Waldenses, with whom being raised from the ashes of blessed Huss, and with whom combining into the same holy fellowship of the faith and afflictions of Christ, we have for two whole ages and more, been perpetually subject to the like storms of calamities, until at length we fell into this calamity, greater than ever was known in the memory of our fathers, and which threatens us with utter destruction, unless God prevent it. The truth is, this business constrains us to amazement and tears, greater than can be expressed in words, to set forth our affliction and sorrow. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, we desire that this affliction of Joseph may be recommended, especially to all that are of the household of faith. Let them not suffer those to perish whom the same Spirit of Christ hath joined with them in so near a relation; we beseech them in the name of Christ, that they would rather make haste to relieve those who are ready to perish, we being assured that we suffer this persecution upon no other account, than for the confession of the truth, from those enemies who have acted such things as these against us in times past, and are now at length, by God's permission, pouring out their fury upon us.

Signed in the name of the said churches, by their delegates, and now exiles for the cause of Christ: ADAM SAMUEL HARTMAN, Pastor of the church of Lesna, in Poland, and Rector of the famous University there. PAUL CYRIL, a late member of the University of Lysna.

Of the amount contributed in consequence of this second appeal to the benevolence of our countrymen, I am unable to give the reader any specific information. The posture of public affairs, in our own country, now became extremely critical; and the same year (1658) in which these laudable efforts were made in behalf of the Waldenses, both of Poland and Piedmont, proved fatal to the life, and of course, to the influence of the protector. The parliament was refractory, and, in the spring of the year, he dissolved them. Public discontents ran high, and a pamphlet made its appearance entitled "Killing no murder"--the object of which was to prove that his assassination would be the discharge of a public duty. His fears are said to have been excited; a slow fever ensued, and on the 3rd of September he died. Of the

contributions made in 1655, thirty thousand pounds had been distributed among the sufferers in the Valleys of Piedmont, but the confusion which succeeded on the death of the protector occasioned the balance, which was nearly ten thousand pounds, to be withheld for a time, but it was afterwards remitted them. [DWC]



# **THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, from the birth of Christ to the 18th Century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albigenses**

**By William Jones**

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## **CHAPTER SIX -- SECTION 8**

### **THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES CONCLUDED.**

The writer of the Apocalypse informs us that, while in the isle of Patmos, he had a vision of a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns--and that there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies--and it was also given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; that all that dwell upon the earth should worship him, except those whose names were written in the slain Lamb's book of life, from the foundation of the world. Revelation 13. That this prophetic description was designed to point out the monstrous antichristian proceedings of Papal Rome, is now scarcely doubted by any, except the members of that apostate church: and with how much propriety such an application of it is made, may be very safely left to the determination of those who shall have impartially perused the foregoing narrative. If we calmly review the conduct of the court of Rome towards the Waldenses, and mark the savage ferocity with which they had now, for several successive centuries, invariably pursued them; how, when exiled from one country, they were followed into another, and that nothing short of their total extirpation could satisfy the relentless cruelty of their adversaries, we can scarcely forbear applying to them the affecting language of the Psalmist, "For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are, accounted as sheep for the slaughter," Psalm 44:23.

We have seen that, whether in France, or Spain, or in our own country; in Bohemia, Calabria, or Poland; throughout Germany or the Netherlands; in Italy or the Valleys

of Piedmont; one common fate awaited them, and that they never failed, sooner or later, to experience, namely, "to be slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held," Revelation 6:9.

But the crisis of their affairs was now arrived;--the witnesses who had so long, and so nobly prophesied in sackcloth, before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings, were about to finish their testimony; which having done, it remained for the "beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit to make war against them, and overcome them, and kill them," Revelation 11:3-7.

A glance at the manner in which this was effected will occupy the present section, and discharge my engagements to the public; so far at least as regards this undertaking.

**The number of the Waldenses that fell in the massacre of Piedmont, in 1655, is estimated by contemporary writers at more than six thousand.** [*History of the Persecution of the Valleys of Piedmont*, p. 4.] In consequence, however, of the humane interference of our own and other protestant states, the residue, as hath been already stated, availed themselves of the treaty that was signed by the Duke of Savoy, on the 9th of August, 1655, to return to their dwellings. But their enemies were by no means satisfied with the measure of calamity which they had dealt out towards them. In the year 1668, they again came forward with fire and sword, and the atrocities of 1655 were once more in preparation to be reacted. Having found by experience that to stand in an attitude of self-defense was the only way left them of saving themselves, the Waldenses were now constrained to take up arms, which they did, and defended themselves so bravely, that about the end of that year they at least kept their enemies at bay! But the Swiss cantons, ever alive to their affairs, on this occasion again sent ambassadors to the court of Turin, to mediate between the parties, and in February, 1664, a patent was granted by the Duke of Savoy, in all respects confirming that given in 1655; but though his royal highness now personally engaged to see the treaty carried into effect, it was no better executed than the former. The Waldenses, however, persevered, and though subject to innumerable contumelies and very injurious treatment, which the rancor of the council for propagating the faith was continually inflicting upon them, they bore up until the year 1672, when an event transpired that afforded them an opportunity, in a very signal manner, of evincing their loyalty, and of rendering essential services to their sovereign and their country.

In the year last mentioned, a war broke out between the Duke of Savoy and the Genoese. The army of the former was commanded by the Marquis of Pionessa, son of the nobleman of that name who nearly thirty years before had taken so active a part in the massacre of the Waldenses. Under his management the war with Genoa proved most unpropitious, inasmuch that the affairs of the Duke of Savoy were brought to

the brink of ruin, and, as Bishop Burnet assures us [Burnet's *Letters from Italy* - Supplement to ditto, Letter 3, p. 158. Edit. 1688], the duke was so displeased with his conduct that he never would forgive him, but a little before his death actually enjoined it upon his mother never to employ him again! It was in this critical juncture of their national affairs that the Waldenses forgetting all that was past, voluntarily came forward to enroll themselves in their sovereign's cause, and entered into the war with such zeal and courage that they soon retrieved the fallen fortunes of their country and brought the war to a speedy and successful termination. Their loyal and disinterested behavior on this occasion, sensibly affected the mind of their prince, who testified his approbation of their conduct in a letter, of which the following is a copy:

To our most faithful subjects, the communities of the Valleys of Lucerne, Perouse, San Martin, and of the districts of Perrustin, Saint Bartholomew, and Rocheplatte. The Duke Of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont, etc., etc. Most Dear and Faithful,

Forasmuch as we have been well pleased with the zeal and readiness with which you have provided men who have served us to our entire satisfaction, in the affair we had against the Genoese; we have thought fit to testify unto you by these presents our approbation thereof, and to assure you, that we shall keep it in particular remembrance, to make you sensible on all occasions of the effects of our royal protection, whereof the Count Beccaria shall give you more ample information, whom we have commanded to express to you our sentiments more at large, and also to take a list of the officers and soldiers, as well of those that are dead as of those that remain prisoners, that we may report the same unto us, to the end that we may pay due regard thereunto. In the meantime these presents shall serve you for an assured testimony of our satisfaction and good will; and we pray God to preserve you from evil. Signed C. Emanuel, Buonfiglio.

The following is a copy of the duke's letter to Count Beccaria.

Trusty and Well-Beloved, The men whom the communities of Lucerne, etc., have provided, have served us so faithfully, that, being desirous of testifying unto them our satisfaction therewith, we have sent you a letter herein enclosed, which we have written to them, to the end that you may deliver it to them, and also express more fully the goodwill that we bear to them on that account; and that you may assure them, that whensoever anything shall happen that may tend to their advantage we will particularly remember their affection. And on this occasion you shall take a list of the officers and soldiers, as well of those that are dead as of those that are prisoners, and make a report of the same unto us, that we may pay a suitable regard to such; and referring to you for what may be said further in token of the satisfaction we have received, no less by their zeal and readiness,

than by the good services which their officers and soldiers have rendered us; we pray our Lord to preserve you. Signed C. EMANUEL. Turin, November 5, 1672.  
To Monsieur Count Beccaria, Counselor of State.

In scrupulous conformity with the tenor of these letters the duke continued, to the time of his death, which happened in 1675, to favor the Waldenses with tokens of his kindness; and, even after his decease, the duchess, his widow, followed his example, treating them with great gentleness and goodness; and, in the year 1679, she pledged herself, in a letter to the Swiss Cantons, dated 28th January, to maintain the Waldenses in the undisturbed exercise of their religious privileges, VICTOR AMADEUS II was a minor at the time of his father's death, though he inherited the title of Duke of Savoy. The government of Piedmont was, consequently, during this interval of ten years, vested in the hands of his mother, the widow of the late Charles Emanuel II who acted as regent until the year 1685, when Victor Amadeus arrived at maturity; and it appears to have been a season of tranquillity to the churches throughout the Valleys. It is a remarkable circumstance that both father and son were poisoned! The former, indeed, fell a sacrifice to this base and treacherous act, but the youth of the son carried him through it. [Bishop Burnet's *Supplementary Letters from Italy*, p. 161.] **It was the misfortune of this young prince, however, to become connected by marriage with Louis XIV, king of France, one of the most detestable and sanguinary tyrants that ever sat upon a throne; and who, as we shall presently see, compelled him, in defiance of his own inclination and judgment, to extirpate the Waldenses from his dominions.** "There is nothing more visible," says Bishop Burnet, writing at the very time, "than that the Dukes of Savoy have sunk extremely in this age, from the figure which they made in the last; and how much soever they have raised their titular dignity in having the title of Royal Highness given them, they have lost as much in the figure which they made in the affairs of Europe.--The truth is, the vanity of this title and the expensive humor which their late marriages with France has spread among them, have ruined them; for instead of keeping good troops and strong places, all the revenue goes to keeping up the magnificence of the court, which is certainly very splendid" [Bishop Burnet's *Supplementary Letters from Italy*, p. 162].

Of the justice and pertinency of these observations the reader will find abundant proof in the sequel. During the reign of Louis XIII the Protestants had multiplied in **FRANCE** to such an extent, that, at the period of his death, A.D. 1643, they were computed to exceed two millions. **Their religious privileges had been guaranteed to them by the well-known edict of Nantz.** Louis XIV was only five years of age when his father died, and of course, the queen mother was appointed sole regent during his minority. When the young king came of age, in 1652, the edict of Nantz was again confirmed. But his prime minister, Cardinal Mazarine, with his confessors and clergy, were continually impressing his mind with the expediency of revoking that edict: and when the management of affairs devolved upon his own hands, in

1661, he resolved to effect the destruction of the Protestants. In prosecution of this design he began by excluding the Calvinists from his household, and from all places of profit and trust. He next caused several laws to be passed in favor of the catholic religion. Then rigorous methods were adopted to compel the Calvinists to change their religion--their places of worship were shut up--and **at length, October 22, 1685, he revoked the edict of Nantz, and banished them from the kingdom.** The cruelties that were inflicted upon them at that time, if possible, surpass in atrocity any thing that is to be found in the persecutions of the first Christians by the Heathens. "They cast some," says Monsieur Claude, "into large fires, and took them out when they were half roasted. They hanged others with ropes under their arms, and plunged them several times into wells, till they promised to renounce their religion. They tied them like criminals on the rack, and by means of a funnel, poured wine into their mouths, till, being intoxicated, they declared, that they consented to turn Catholics. Some they cut and slashed with pen-knives, others they took up by the nose with red hot tongs, and led them up and down the rooms till they promised to turn Catholics." **These cruel proceedings caused eight hundred thousand persons to quit the kingdom.**

The tranquillity of the Waldenses in Piedmont was now first invaded by a proclamation issued by the governor of the Valleys, about the end of the year 1655, ordering that no stranger should come and continue in the Valleys above three days without his permission, on pain of being severely punished. This seemed mysterious, but it was soon unraveled by the intelligence which presently arrived of the dreadful proceedings against the French Protestants; for they immediately saw that it was intended to prevent them from giving an asylum to any of the unhappy exiles; yet they little apprehended the dreadful tempest that was gathering around themselves.

**On the 31st of January 1686, they were amazed at the publication of an order from the Duke of Savoy, forbidding his subjects the exercise of the protestant religion upon pain of death:** the confiscation of their goods; the demolition of their churches; and the banishment of their pastors. **All infants born from that time, were to be baptized and brought up in the Roman Catholic religion, under the penalty of their fathers being condemned to the galleys!** Their consternation was now extreme. Hitherto the treaty which secured to them the free exercise of their religion had been guaranteed by the kings of France; but they were now given to understand that the Duke of Savoy, in all these intolerant measures, was only fulfilling the wishes of that monarch; and, to crown the whole, the latter had marched an army to the confines of Piedmont to see the order of the duke properly executed. In this truly affecting condition, their first step was, by submission and entreaty, to soften the heart of their sovereign. Four different applications were addressed to him, beseeching him to revoke this cruel order: the only advantage they reaped was a suspension of the impending calamity until their enemies were better prepared to execute it with effect.

Their old and tried friends the Swiss Cantons, being informed of this state of things, convened a Diet at Baden, in the month of February, 1686, at which it was resolved to send ambassadors to the Duke of Savoy to intercede for the Waldenses; and early in the following month they arrived at Turin, where they delivered in their propositions relating to the revocation of the order of the 31st of January. They showed his highness that they were interested in the affair, not only as the brethren of the Waldenses, but also in virtue of the treaties of 1655, and 1664, which were the fruits of their mediation, and which this new order annulled. The court of Turin admitted the plea; but contented themselves with telling the ambassadors, that the engagement which the duke had recently entered into with the King of France opposed the success of their negotiation. The Swiss ambassadors gave in a memorial, and urged a variety of pleas; in all which they were supported by letters from many protestant princes in behalf of the Waldenses. They pleaded that the predecessors of his royal highness had pledged themselves to many of the potentates of Europe, and particularly to the Cantons of Switzerland, to observe the privileges which had been granted to the protestant inhabitants of the Valleys and argued that such formal and authenticated engagements ought to stand good; for that the immunities which had been secured to them by letters patent, were not to be regarded merely in the light of matters of momentary toleration, but as perpetual grants and irrevocable laws: that having been granted at the intercession of many sovereign princes, they must, according to the laws of nations, be regarded as monuments of the public faith: and that the promise of princes ought to be maintained sacred and inviolable. They also endeavored to show, by arguments deduced from maxims of state policy, that the Duke of Savoy acted against his own interest in these cruel proceedings; and that even from a regard to those he should continue the Waldenses in their ancient privileges--that the laws of justice and motives of clemency should prevent him from subjecting his country to fire and sword and desolation; for that he was about to ruin a harmless and innocent people, who had done nothing that could deservedly entitled them to the effects of this inhuman order. But neither the reasoning of the ambassadors, nor their own pressing solicitations, nor the letters of intercession which had been presented in their behalf from many other protestant princes, could avail any thing with the court of Turin.

The Marquis of Saint Thomas, to whom they delivered their memorial, and who was one of the duke's ministers of state for foreign affairs returned an answer in a few days, stating that his royal highness was sorry that he was not in a capacity to grant what they desired in their own and in the name of their masters,--that he had far stronger reasons for enforcing this edict than they had given him to revoke it; and that he could not so much as mitigate it; that the great wheels moved and carried the little ones along with them--that having for his neighbor a prince equally powerful and jealous of his honor, he was obliged to carry himself with great circumspection, and to act according to the exigencies of the times, just as in Switzerland they were

sometimes compelled by the turn of their affairs, to take certain resolutions contrary to the good intentions they might otherwise have. In short, the duke was too far engaged--the troops which he had raised, at a great expense, were already in motion--that the edict could not be revoked without wounding his royal highness's reputation--that he was forced to see it executed for very cogent reasons, on which the ambassadors might make their own reflections. He added that the grants of 1655 and 1664, were a mere toleration, and that the Waldenses had no positive right to exercise their religious profession--that sovereigns do no injustice in refusing to allow more than one religion in a country, and that the Swiss Cantons themselves justified the conduct of his royal highness, by not enduring Roman Catholics among them. Besides, the concessions granted to the Waldenses had been legally examined, and it was agreed, that the concessions and favors which a prince grants to his subjects, he is at liberty to revoke at pleasure--that his royal highness prohibited nothing to the Waldenses but the exercise of their religious profession, but that he in no respects intended to force their consciences!

The ambassadors in reply told the Marquis of St. Thomas, that however strong his royal highness's reasons were to consent to his edict of January last, they could not annul those that necessarily engaged him to observe the promises given before this edict. That some considerations of state ought not to dispense a prince from performing his word, especially if he entered into this engagement by the mediation of another sovereign; and that whereas the patents and concessions granted to the inhabitants of the valleys had been acquired by the intercession of several kings, princes, and states, and, in particular, of their excellencies the protestant Cantons, and confirmed by his royal highness, he could allege nothing sufficient to discharge him from the obligation of seeing them punctually observed; and the rather, because these patents have been enrolled by the parliament of Savoy; and that the enrolling of the year 1620 alone, had cost the churches of the Valleys six thousand crowns.

They urged that the concessions granted by the predecessors of his royal highness to the inhabitants of the valleys, did acquire them an incontestable right, which they could not lose but by an enormous crime, and by a rebellion against their lawful sovereign, and, that far from being guilty of any want of their duty, they could produce a letter of his royal highness's, of the 2d of September, 1684, which is an authentic and glorious proof of the fidelity and inviolable adherence which they had always shown to their prince's interest. That if, after the publication of the last edict, some particular persons amongst them had taken up arms, they had not done it to make use of them against their sovereign, but only to defend themselves against those that, abusing his authority, had undertaken to attack and insult them; and that in case there had been some disorders committed, those that were the authors ought to be punished; but that it ought not to be imputed to the whole body of the churches of the Valleys, that were in no respects guilty of it. They insisted that the prince was equally obliged to execute the promises he had made to his subjects, as

those which regarded persons who are in no manner under his submission. That such obligations were grounded upon public faith and honor, which ought to rule in all treaties of sovereigns, without distinction; that if it were allowable to fail in what they had solemnly promised to their people, it would be impossible to terminate differences that should arise between them, or to appease the troubles that might happen in their state; and that two parties making war on one another, would never end their quarrels, but be the total ruin of one of them.

They added to this, that sovereigns had reason to employ their utmost endeavors to unite their subjects in the same religion; but that to effect it, they ought not to violate treaties which had been formerly made with them. That all that was allowed them in such a case, was, to employ instruction and exhortation, and all the winning ways of sweetness, that are calculated to make truth enter into the minds of their people, to enlighten their understandings, and to move them to embrace, with good will, the true religion; but that which deserved a particular consideration in this contest is, that the inhabitants of the Valleys did not hold, by the concessions of their princes, the liberty to exercise in public their religion; because it was established in this country above eight centuries ago; and that they enjoyed this right long before they were the subjects of his royal highness's ancestors; inasmuch that having never been of the same religion as their prince, it could not be said that they had abandoned it, nor he oblige them to return to it.

These reasons, and many others which were adduced, were so strong, that the ambassadors hoped they would have some effect on his royal highness's mind; and that the Marquis of St. Thomas would be pleased to make them known to him, and employ the credit which he had with him, to obtain the revoking of an edict which, without doubt, he had thought to be just, and which he would not have published, if he had been persuaded that it was contrary to what a just and equitable sovereign owes to his faithful subjects.

But they did not merely content themselves in representing the right of the Piedmontese churches, and supporting it by solid reasons; for they employed several days in soliciting all the ministers of his royal highness, and all persons they judged capable of contributing to the success of their embassy: above all they stuck close to the Marquis of St. Thomas, as one upon whom depended all the good and all the evil they could expect in this affair; and if we judge of things by appearance, the pains they took to dispose him to be favorable to them were not altogether unsuccessful. For he protested upon oath, that he had laid before his royal highness the contents of the reply which he had been charged to present to him; that he had done all he could to make him sensible of the reasons they made use of to obtain the revoking of the edict; but that the juncture of affairs was the reason why he could not persuade his royal highness to grant them their requests. "Nevertheless," added he, "whereas the prince's troops are not yet upon the march, the inhabitants of the valleys may make



a show as if they were willing to execute the edict, because that such a conduct is not contrary to the maxims of your religion, and by these means they will disarm the prince, and they may find afterwards some means to prevent the evils they are threatened with."

"Our doctrine, answered the ambassadors, does in no respect countenance the dissembling of our faith, or oblige us to profess before men the truth whereof our hearts are not persuaded. But this is not our business at present; the question is to know whether his royal highness could lawfully revoke the concessions granted to the churches of the Valleys. For as they are engagements into which he has entered by the mediation of several sovereigns, and amongst others, by that of the Swiss Cantons, our sovereign lords, it is evident that nothing can warrant him in breaking them."

In answer to all these pleas, the ministers of the prince gave the ambassadors to understand, that the council of state having examined them, judged they were not strong enough to hinder the prince from publishing his edict against his subjects of the Valleys: and that supposing the edict should really cause some inconvenience to his royal highness, he would nevertheless not desist from it, for fear a change of this nature should be injurious to his authority; and that endeavoring to preserve some of his subjects, he might run the hazard to lose them all. And though the ministers wished to be thought firm in their sentiments, and to show they were not convinced of the justice of the demands the ambassadors made, it was well known that they defended the edict against their own opinion; for one of them frankly confessed, that his royal highness's counselors had not properly examined the concessions of the years 1655 and 1664, and that if they had made the necessary reflections on them, they would never have advised the prince to revoke them; but he assured them, that the evil was now without remedy, and that all the solicitations of the ambassadors, to oblige the prince to change his will, would be in vain; indeed, one of the ministers frankly confessed, that the prince was not master of this affair, and that they executed at Turin those orders that were given at Versailles. This honest confession convinced the ambassadors that all their solicitations would produce no effect; therefore, seeing it would be impossible for them to obtain the revocation of the edict, they thought fit, according to the chief head of their instructions, to demand that which related to the second article of the orders which they had received from their sovereigns, viz. to procure the inhabitants of the Valleys the means of retreating somewhere else, and of disposing of their goods as they should think fit.

But as their instruction was, to make no proposals to the court of Turin, on this point, except with the consent of the inhabitants of the Valleys, they told the marquis of St. Thomas that having, for several reasons, entertained no correspondence with them, they were willing to take a journey into the Valleys, to inform themselves exactly of the disposition of the people, and when acquainted with their intentions, to

make some overtures of a new negotiation. But they gave him to understand, at the same time, they would by no means undertake the journey, except with his royal highness's full consent.

The Marquis of St. Thomas, having acquainted his royal highness with the design of the ambassadors, sent them word that he approved of their intentions, and that he would give orders to the governor of Lucerne to do them all the honor, and to show them all the respect, that was due to their character.

When the ambassadors arrived in the Valleys, they acquainted all the communities with their arrival, who dispatched immediately two deputies and two ministers to them, to whom they represented, that they had employed their utmost endeavors to cause the edict of the 31st day of January to be revoked, but that all their pleading had been unsuccessful: that it had been given them to understand, that his royal highness was so much engaged with one of the most powerful monarchs in the world, that it was impossible for him to break it: and that he was resolved to use all his endeavors to unite his subjects in the same religion, as he had promised to do.

There were, therefore, no hopes left of obtaining the revocation of the orders that had been given against them. That their sovereign lords had commanded them, in case his royal highness should persist in his resolution to execute his edict, that they should demand his permission to give them leave to retreat out of his territories, and to dispose of their goods; but that they were unwilling to enter into any negotiation upon this article, without being first informed of their intentions about it. That, therefore, they should assemble to deliberate seriously about so important an affair, and acquaint them afterwards what they desired of them in the present juncture.

The deputies and ministers having conferred together about this proposition, before they resolved upon any thing, they entreated the ambassadors to assist them with their best advice and prudent counsel; but the ambassadors declined to advise them in so intricate a business, telling them they were better acquainted with their own forces; with the situation of the places where they intended to entrench themselves; with their ammunition and provisions, than they were; and that, therefore, they themselves could adopt the best measures about it.

The ministers and deputies finding that they could not agree amongst themselves, and that, besides, it was a business which could not be decided but by their Commonalties; told the ambassadors, that the case in question being of the greatest importance, they could take no resolutions about it without having first assembled all their commonalties to consult upon it, and they promised to bring to them at Turin their last resolutions, provided they could get passports for them.

The ambassadors returned to Turin, and informed the Marquis of St. Thomas of the success of their journey, who assured them that this negotiation was very agreeable to the court. They then demanded a safe conduct, that some of the inhabitants of the Valleys might have liberty to come and bring the deliberations that should be taken in this assembly: but it was refused under two pretenses; one was, that the Duke of Savoy would not permit that any Waldenses should appear at his court; the other was, that he designed to do nothing in this affair but only for the sake of the ambassadors. They were forced, therefore, to send the secretary of the embassy into the Valleys and fetch these deliberations. This secretary found the communities assembled at Angrogne, the 28th of March, very much unresolved what course to take; for, on one side, they saw the lamentable consequences of war; on the other side, the dangers and almost insurmountable difficulties in the execution of their retreat. Besides, although they might depart without danger, they could not contemplate, but with extreme regret, the hardship of being forced to abandon their goods and native country to go into a foreign land to lead a miserable, disconsolate, and wandering sort of life. At last they resolved to send a memorial to the ambassadors, stating the dangers and difficulties that obstructed their departure, and wrote a letter to them signed by nine ministers and eight laymen, in which, after having entreated them to reflect on these obstacles, they declared, that they would refer the whole to their prudence and conduct. Upon receiving this letter the ambassadors made it their business to obtain permission for the Waldenses to retire out of the estates of Piedmont, and to make sales of their goods; but the Duke of Savoy, to whom this proposition was referred, answered, that before he would return any reply thereto, he expected that the communities of the Valleys should send deputies to him with full power to make those submissions that were due to him, and to beg leave to depart out of his territories, as a peculiar favor that they should implore of their prince. The ambassadors had reason to be surprised at this preamble. They had denied them the safe conduct that they had demanded for the coming of the deputies of the Valleys to Turin. They had assured them several times, that if they should grant to the Waldenses leave to retreat, it was only upon the account and at the intercession of the ambassadors: nevertheless, they would by no means have it said, that the ambassadors desired permission for them to depart, on their own behalf; but, on the contrary, that it was the Waldenses themselves that made this request. This alteration was not without cause, and it was not for nothing that they now adopted measures altogether different from the former. The council of the propagation who managed this affair, had without doubt respect to these two several points; one was, that they would not have the ambassadors named in the permission of departure, to the end that they should have the less right to demand the execution of those things that should be promised to the Waldenses; the other, that the Waldenses themselves desiring this permission as a favor, they might be at liberty to impose on them what conditions they pleased; and lastly, that the Waldenses making those submissions that the duke required of them, must needs be in the state of supplicants, and would by consequence, be forced to lay down their

arms; otherwise they could not be in the condition of petitioners. But however it were, the ambassadors, willing to take away every pretext from the enemies of the Waldenses, took a safe conduct to bring up the deputies whom they had demanded: they sent this safe conduct into the Valleys by the secretary of the embassy, who caused the communities to be assembled to nominate their deputies. But as, on the one hand, there were many who never engaged in the design of departing: and that, on the other, the new marches of their enemies appeared suspicious, the communities were not all of one mind, nor the orders they gave to their respective deputies conformable one with another. For the tenor of some was to beg leave to depart and to sell their goods: while others required the maintenance of the exercise of their religion and their other rights. These deputies being arrived at Turin, the ambassadors thought it not convenient for them to appear at court thus divided; but sent them back into the Valleys to endeavor a union between themselves, and labored in the mean time to obtain a truce for them.

Their enemies heard, with great satisfaction, that the communities were divided among themselves upon the point of departing; they were so well persuaded that this division would be an infallible means to destroy them, that they caused it to be carried on and fomented, by perfidious persons whom they had gained for that purpose. It is also to be presumed, that they never had proposed the expedient of departing, but with a prospect that it might be the occasion of the disunion of the Waldenses. To take advantage therefore, of the various dispositions of the communities, their enemies changed their minds once more. They had lately declared, that they expected, in the first place, that the Waldenses should themselves desire permission to depart, and should make their submissions thereon. The Waldenses had not made this request nor these submissions: several of the communities were not of the opinion to retire: the ambassadors did not solicit any longer a permission to depart, but a truce, as appears by a letter which they wrote to the Marquis of St. Thomas, the 8th of April, 1686. In the meantime, notwithstanding all this, to accomplish absolutely the division of the Waldenses, and consequently to ruin them with the greater ease, they published, unknown to the ambassadors, an edict, dated the 9th of the same month of April, granting to the Waldenses an amnesty, and permission to retire out of the state of Piedmont.

This edict was published in the Valleys the 11th of April, the same day on which the ambassadors wrote a letter to the same effect to some of the communities to know their resolution. In the meantime they gave in a very pressing memorial to the Marquis of St. Thomas, to obtain some assurance that the troops should not enter into the Valleys, and to gain for the Waldenses certain conditions more favorable than those of the edict: but the court of Turin assured them that there was nothing to be expected for the Waldenses, till they had laid down their arms, of which the ambassadors gave advice to the deputies of the Valleys who had been at Turin, by a letter dated the 13th, which they wrote to them on that subject. On the 14th the

communities held a general assembly at Rocheplatte, when, having examined the terms and conditions of the edict, they were of opinion, that their enemies thought of nothing less than in reality to permit the departure which they pretended to grant to them, and that this edict was nothing but a snare that they had laid to entangle them, and to destroy them with more ease: they resolved therefore not to accept of it, but to follow the example of their ancestors, and to refer the event of it to Providence. In fact, this edict, which was designed altogether to divide them, wrought a quite contrary effect, and served much to unite them in the same judgment.

The principal reasons that hindered them from accepting this edict, were, first, that as it ordains the entire execution of the order of the 31st of January, which condemned all the churches to be demolished, they must of necessity demolish all their churches within eight days, because the edict declares expressly, that if everything contained in it be not executed within the space of eight days, they are deprived of and forfeit those favors that are stipulated in it. It must follow then, that for the execution of the edict, either that the Waldenses themselves should demolish their churches, or that their enemies should do it. The Waldenses could not resolve to demolish them themselves, and therefore they would have sent for troops, which, under the pretext of this demolishing, would have infallibly oppressed the Waldenses. Secondly, if they designed to permit them to retire without disturbance, why did they not defer the execution of the order of the 31st of January, till after their departure? Why should they oblige them to demolish their churches within the eight days that were given them to prepare themselves to abandon forever their native country, were it not to render their retreat impossible? Thirdly, this edict further requires, that they should lay down their arms, and that they should open their country to monks, missionaries, and Catholics. Now it is plain that if they had thrown away their arms, and opened their country before their departure, they would have been exposed to the mercy of their enemies, and to the fury of troops who would not have failed to enter into their country, to oppose the retreat of the Waldenses, and to torment them till such time as they had changed their religion, as had been practiced elsewhere: but their fear was so much the more justifiable on this occasion, in regard that they gave them no assurance that their troops should not enter into the Valleys. Fourthly, the Waldenses were also obliged to retire in three separate brigades, and to rendezvous in those places where, the troops being encamped, they must consequently surrender themselves to the discretion of the soldiers; and deliver themselves up to be butchered. Fifthly, the permission which the same edict gives to the Waldenses to sell their goods, was altogether useless to them. For besides that the sale could not be made to Catholics, till after their departure, and by the management of commissioners, they were bound, out of the price of the said goods, to indemnify the monks, the missionaries, the ancient, the modern, and the future Catholics, for whatever damages they should pretend to, which they would have enhanced above the value of their goods. Sixthly, the edict also ordered, that besides those that should go out of the Valleys of their own accord, the prince should reserve

to himself a power to banish whom he should think fit for securing the repose of those that remain, which supposes not only that the conditions of the edict were so disadvantageous, that there would be many Waldenses who would not accept them, nor depart out of their station; but also that their departure ought not to be looked upon as a favor, but as a punishment that they intended to inflict on several Waldenses; since they reserved to themselves a power to banish those who should have a mind to stay. Seventhly, the ambassadors were not named in the edict, and the Waldenses had no security for the execution of those things that were therein contained. They had good reasons then very much to mistrust these proceedings, since the sad experience that they had on several occasions how ill their enemies kept their word, especially in this juncture, when they had broken the most inviolable laws, were but too just a ground for their suspicions. Lastly, since the Duke of Savoy had declared that he was not the master of this affair, because of the engagements which he had entered into with the king of France, it was not to be presumed that the latter monarch, on whom this matter depended, would take any milder measures, in respect of the Waldenses, than those he had taken with regard to his own subjects.

The Waldenses had also several other reasons grounded on the impossibility of their departure in so short a time, and upon other obstacles.

The communities sent their resolution to the ambassadors, who used all the exertions imaginable to procure for the Waldenses conditions more certain, and more advantageous than those that are contained in the edict; but neither their reasons nor their solicitations produced any effect. They were always told, that as long as the Waldenses were in arms, they could not agree to anything, nor so much as promise any thing positively. On the other hand, the Waldenses being persuaded that they would not disarm them but to destroy them without trouble and without resistance, could by no means yield to it, and persisted in their resolution to defend themselves, if they came to attack them.

A circumstance transpired at this time that served much to confirm them in this resolution. Two or three days after the publication of the edict, several inhabitants of the Valleys went to the superintendent, to declare to him, that they and their families intended to quit Piedmont conformably to the edict, and to desire of him safe conducts, which he refused them under the pretense that they ought to stay till they went out with the rest.

Moreover, because there were several that resisted his solicitations to change their religion, he caused them to be put in prison, where some of them languished and at last died, and others remained there above nine months viz. till the time when all the other prisoners were discharged. There needed no other proof to make it appear that their design was to destroy the Waldenses, who would not change their religion.

However, the communities of the Valleys having received a letter from the ambassadors, called another assembly at Rocheplatte, the 19th of April: they persisted in their resolution not to comply with the edict, but to defend themselves. It was then ordered in that assembly, that all the ministers should preach, and administer the sacrament the following Sunday. The Valley of St. Martin entered into this deliberation with the rest, but put it not into execution. Some of that Valley changed their minds without acquainting the other Valleys of it. And the elders of the church of Villeseche wrote to the ambassadors, who were yet at Turin upon the point of their departing, a letter dated the 20th of April, wherein they declared to them, that they would execute the edict, and entreated them, for that reason to procure for them a safe conduct, and time to provide for their retreat. One of the ambassadors took the pains to go to the camp to demand a safe conduct; but they denied it, under pretense that they had not desired it in time. It was always too soon or too late, and the time was never convenient to grant safe conducts. In the meantime the Duke of Savoy arrived at the camp some days after the publication of the edict, hoping probably he might strike terror into the Waldenses by his presence, and force them to accept of the conditions that he had imposed on them. He had made a review of his troops, and of those of France that were encamped on the plain at the foot of the Alps; his own army was composed of his family, all the cavalry and infantry, and the militia of Mondovi, of Barjes, of Bagnols, with a great number of foreigners. And the army of France consisted of several regiments of horse and dragoons, of seven or eight battalions of foot that had passed the, mountains, and a part of the garrisons of Pignerol and Casal. The duke had also made the necessary preparations for attacking the Waldenses, as soon as the truce that was granted them should expire, having appointed his own army to storm the Valley of Lucerne and the community of Angrogne; and the army of France to attack the Valleys of St. Martin and Perouse. The Waldenses, on the other hand, had taken some pains to defend themselves. They possessed only a part of the Valley of Lucerne; for the tower that gave name to this Valley, and many other considerable places, were in the enemy's hand. The community of Angrogne, from which some call the valley by the same name, by reason of its large extent, was not wholly occupied by the Waldenses. In the Valley of Perouse they took up only certain posts in the places that depend on the state of Piedmont; for this valley is divided by the river Cluson between the King of France and the Duke of Savoy; but they were in possession of all the Valley of St. Martin, being the strongest of all by its situation. They had fortified themselves in every one of those Valleys with several entrenchments of earth and dry stones. They were about two thousand five hundred men bearing arms; they appointed captains and officers of the chiefest among themselves, for they had no foreigners, and they waited the approach of the enemy with great resolution. But as on the one hand they had neither regular troops, nor captains, nor experienced officers; and that, on the other, there were several Waldenses who had been corrupted, or that had relented during the negotiation; it is not to be wondered at if they took not all the necessary precautions that were in their power. One of the greatest faults they committed was,

their striving to maintain all their posts: for if they had abandoned the most advanced, and had retired within the entrenchments they had made in the mountains, it is not likely they would have been beaten out of them.

On the 22d of April, being the day appointed for the attack, the French army commanded by Catinat, governor of Casal, marched two hours before day, by torch-light, against the Valleys of Perouse and St. Martin, having for sometime followed the river Cluson on the king's territories. Catinat sent out a detachment of infantry, commanded by Velleveille, lieutenant-colonel in Limosin, who having passed the river over a bridge, entered into the Valley of Perouse on the side of Piedmont. He seized on St. Germain, a village that the Waldenses had abandoned, and proceeded to attack an entrenchment that they had made hard by, in which there were two hundred men. The Waldenses quitted this post after some resistance, and took possession of another more advantageous. In the meantime a new detachment of horse and of yellow dragoons having again passed the river, came to relieve the foot who had begun the engagement. They used their utmost efforts to gain the entrenchments of the Waldenses, of which they thought easily to become masters, since they were six to one; but they found so stout a resistance, that after having lost many of their soldiers, they were forced to entrench themselves at a pistol shot distance; continual firings were kept up on both sides for more than ten hours together; but at length the Waldenses went out of their entrenchments with their swords in their hands, surprised the French, who little expected so bold an action, and drove them even into the plain on the other side of the Cluson, where opportunely they found a bridge that kept them from being drowned. There were, on this occasion, more than five hundred Frenchmen killed and wounded, and among the rest several officers of note, though the Waldenses had but two men killed and some few wounded.

While things passed thus in Perouse, the body of the king's army repassed the Cluson to the fort of Perouse on the side of France, where Catinat formed a detachment of horse commanded by Melac, who having passed the river by two bridges, fetched a compass about to gain the high grounds that separate the Valley of St. Martin from Dauphiny. The rest of the army having likewise passed the river, went to encamp with Catinat at Bolards part of the night, and the next day attacked the Valley of St. Martin at a village called Rioclaret. But as those who had the command in that valley did not think that they would molest them, after they had shown their inclination to accept of the amnesty, especially as the day appointed for their departure out of that valley was not fixed; the Waldenses were not in a condition to defend themselves nor to make any resistance, but consented to lay down their arms, and implore the pity and compassion of the conqueror. **But the French being enraged with what had passed before St. Germain, were not content merely to burn, ravish, and pillage, but they massacred without distinction of age or sex, with unparalleled fury all that could not escape their**



**barbarous cruelty.** Catinat having ravaged all the country of Rioclaret after a most horrid manner, left some troops in the Valley of St. Martin, traversed with the body of his army the mountains that separate this valley from that of Perouse, and encamped without any opposition, in the community of Pramol in the Valley of Perouse; **the soldiers notwithstanding put to the edge of the sword all that fell into their hands, without respect to women or children, to the aged or the sick.** In the meantime the detachment that Melac commanded, having encamped one night on the eminences of the Valley of St. Martin, entered through divers passages into that valley, unknown to any but the inhabitants of the country. Wherever he passed he left the marks of an unheard of cruelty, and joined the main body of the army that was encamped at Pramol. I shall not here give an account of the atrocities that were exercised on these and many other occasions: it will be sufficient to relate, in the sequel, some instances whereby one may judge of the rest. It is necessary to interrupt the relation of the actions of the French in the Valley of Perouse, because there happened things in the Valleys of Lucerne and Angrogne that ought to be previously known.

The army of the duke of Savoy having rendezvoused at the plain of St. John the 22d of April, was, the next day, divided into several bodies, to attack different entrenchments that the Waldenses had made in the Valleys of Lucerne and Angrogne. The Waldenses not being able to resist the enemy's cannon in the posts that were too open, where the horse might also draw up, were forced, after some resistance, to abandon a part of these entrenchments, and to withdraw into a fort that was more advantageous above Angrogne, where they found themselves to be nearly five hundred men. The enemy having burnt all the houses that they found in their way, came to storm this fort of the Waldenses, who received them so warmly with their muskets and stones, and defended themselves so vigorously against this great body, that they kept their post all that day without the loss of more than five men; the enemy lost above three hundred, though they were covered with an entrenchment beyond pistol shot. The Waldenses fearing that they should not be able to keep this fort any longer, by reason that the troops increased, passed into another an hundred paces beyond it, in a more convenient place, where they waited with great resolution the army that advanced to attack them; when the next day, being the 24th of April, they were informed that the Valley of St. Martin had surrendered, and that the French were coming on their rear; for from that valley there is an easy passage to those of Lucerne and Angrogne. This news obliged the Waldenses to treat with Don Gabriel of Savoy, uncle to, and general of the armies of, the Duke of Savoy, and with the rest of the general officers, who having understood the mind of his royal highness, promised positively on his part and on their own, that the Waldenses should be absolutely pardoned, and that they should be admitted to the terms of the order of the 9th of April, provided they would deliver themselves up to his clemency: but the Waldenses making some difficulty to confide in this promise, Don Gabriel, who had notice of it, sent them a note written and signed with his own hand in the

name of his royal highness, to this effect, "Lay down your arms immediately, and submit yourselves to his royal highness's clemency; in so doing, assure yourselves that he will pardon you, and that your persons and those of your wives and children shall not be touched." An assurance of this nature might give full satisfaction to the Waldenses for the security of their lives and liberties. For, besides that this promise was made in the name and on the part of the duke; on the other hand, though it had been made only by Don Gabriel and the general officers, it ought not to be less inviolable. The Waldenses, therefore, laid down their arms, relying on his promise, and the greatest part of them went and surrendered themselves to their enemies believing that they should be quickly released. But all those that yielded themselves into their hands, were made prisoners, and carried to the city of Lucerne, under pretense of leading them to his royal highness to make their submissions, Their enemies also seized all the posts that the Waldenses possessed in the community of Angrogne; **they were not content to plunder, to pillage, and to burn the houses of these poor people, but they also caused a great number of the Waldenses of every age and sex to be put to the sword; they ravished abundance of women and virgins, and, in fine, committed actions so barbarous and brutal, that they are enough to strike horror into the minds of all that have any shame or sense of humanity left.** There were, nevertheless, many Waldenses, who after this compromise dispersed themselves up and down, not being willing to deliver themselves into the hands of their enemies, till they had heard what became of the first that did so. But seeing, on the one hand, that the army exercised all manner of outrage wherever it came, and, on the other, that all those that had surrendered themselves were detained, they hid themselves in the woods, and sent a petition to Don Gabriel, to entreat the release of their brethren whom they kept in hold contrary to their word and to cause a cessation of hostilities which the armies executed after so barbarous a manner. Don Gabriel returned no answer to this request; but certain officers replied, that they carried the Waldenses to Lucerne, for no other cause but to ask forgiveness of his royal highness, and that afterwards they should be released. In the meantime Don Gabriel caused the highest places of the Valley of Angrogne to be gained by part of his army, who finding no more opposition, came as far as the tower, being the most considerable fort of the Waldenses, in which they had the greatest part of their cattle. The Marquis de Parella, who commanded this body of the army, gave the Waldenses to understand, that a peace being concluded by the capitulation of Angrogne, he offered to them the enjoyment of the fruits of the said peace. He assured them to this effect, on the word and honor of a gentleman, that if they would deliver themselves into his hands, their persons, and those of their wives and children, should be preserved harmless; that they might carry away with them whatever they chose, without fear of having any thing taken away from them; that they had nothing to do but to come to Lucerne to make their submissions to his royal highness; and that, upon this condition, those that were willing to turn Catholics, might return with all safety to their houses and goods, and those that would go out of the estates of Piedmont, should have liberty to depart conformably to the order of the

9th of April. The Waldenses that were in the field and in the tower surrendered themselves upon the credit of these promises, but they were no better performed than the other: for their enemies were no sooner entered within the bounds of the tower, than not only all that belonged to the Waldenses was given up to the plunder of the soldiers and of the banditti of Mondovi, their mortal enemies, who enriched themselves with their spoils; but those poor people, the greatest part of whom consisted of old men, sick persons, and of women and children, were made prisoners, with some ministers who were among them, and all hurried along so violently, that those who, through age or infirmity, could not march as fast as the soldiers would have them, had their throats cut, or were flung headlong down precipices.

In the Valley of Perouse, the French committed almost the same outrages that the duke's troops had done at Angrogne and at the tower in the Valley of Lucerne. They were encamped in a quarter of the community of Pramol, called La Rua, distant about half an hour's march from another quarter, called Peumian, where a party of the communities of Pramol, St. Germain, Perustin, and Rocheplatte were retreated, to the number of fifteen hundred persons, men, women, and children. The French might easily make a descent from their quarters to St. Germain, and carry away the two hundred Waldenses who had so valiantly defended themselves before, and were retreated within their entrenchments: but they being informed of the loss of the Valley of St. Martin, and of the enemy's march, quitted this entrenchment, fearing lest they should be surprised in it, and went into Peumian with their brethren. Here they were consulting how they might defend themselves against the French who prepared to attack them, when certain inhabitants of the Valleys, who had revolted to the enemy, came and assured them that the Valleys of Angrogne and Lucerne had already submitted to their prince's discretion, who had pardoned them, and referred them to the terms of the order of the 9th of April. They told them also, that he only wanted them to put an end to a war, the weight whereof they were not able to sustain alone, and to procure for themselves an advantageous peace. This news having in part broke the measures of the Waldenses, they sent deputies and a drummer to treat with the general of the French army, who desired nothing more than a proposition of peace. He told them that his royal highness's intention was to pardon them, and promised them positively on the part of the prince and on his own behalf, the lives and liberties of the Waldenses, with a permission to return with all security to their houses and goods, provided they would readily lay down their arms: and whereas the deputies represented to him that they feared lest the French, being exasperated with what had passed at St. Germain, should revenge themselves on the Waldenses when they were disarmed; he made great protestations to them, and confirmed them with oaths, that although the whole army should pass by their houses, yet they should not kill so much as a chicken. This proposition being made, Catinat detained with him one of the deputies, and sent back the others to give notice to the Waldenses, and to oblige all them that were dispersed to meet together the next day, being the 25th of April, at Peumian, to the end that every one might

return to his house after they were informed of the peace. While the Waldenses were gathering together their scattered families at Peumian, Catinat gave an account of this capitulation to Don Gabriel, who sent a courier to him in the evening, and he passing through Peumian assured the Waldenses that he brought peace; and the next day, on his return, told them that the peace was concluded. They were so well persuaded of it, that they had laid down their arms the day before, observing the conditions of the treaty, and confiding wholly in Catinat's promises. In these circumstances they were expecting the news at Peumian, when there arrived one of the king's officers from the garrison of the fort of Perouse, with several dragoons with him. This officer, who was very well known to the Waldenses, repeated to them the assurances of peace, and caused the men to be put in one quarter, and the women and children in another. The French troops being arrived at the same time, told the men that they had orders to lead them to their own houses, and caused them to march four by four. These poor people being forced to leave their wives and their daughters exposed to the discretion of the soldiers, were conducted, not to their houses, as they had been told, but to Don Gabriel, who was encamped on the mountain of Vachiere, and he gave orders for them to be conveyed to Lucerne as prisoners of war! In the meantime the females were subjected to all the abominable treatment that the rage and lust of brutish soldiers could invent. Not satisfied with plundering them of their property, these barbarians violated the persons of both married women and maidens, in a manner that modesty forbids our relating; and several were put to death merely for resisting in defense of their honor. Mons. Catinat was not present when these atrocities were perpetrated at Peumian. He left the management of this affair to certain of his officers, no doubt that he might be out of the way of hearing the complaints which the Waldenses would have made to him, and not choosing to be a spectator of these barbarous proceedings. It is certain, however, that besides those that were put to death, and others that escaped by flying to the woods and mountains, from the persecution of these monsters, numbers were dragged to prison after a most inhuman manner.

The Valley of Perouse being now reduced like the rest by the capitulation of Peumian, a detachment of the French army quitted it and proceeded to join Don Gabriel at laVachiere. And now, having completed their work, the conquered Waldenses were collected from all parts of Piedmont, and lodged in the different prisons or castles under pretense of leading them to his royal highness to ask his pardon and obtain their liberation. But this furnished their unfeeling adversaries with a fresh opportunity of displaying their inhumanity. The utmost precaution was taken to separate the different branches of the same family! The husband was carefully parted from his wife, and the parent from his child--thus depriving them of those means of succor and consolation which the ties of consanguinity naturally inspire. By this piece of refined cruelty they no doubt hoped to find the victims of their perfidy and malice the less able to withstand temptation, or endure the evils they had in store for them. Those that could ill bear the wretchedness of a close confinement, were to be

consumed with the corroding anxiety and regret which must result from being separated from their dearest earthly connections. There were, indeed, a great number of children, whom they did not send to prison, but dispersed them throughout Piedmont in private houses: but this was a piece of Jesuitical craftiness, for they hoped by that means to get them the more readily instructed in the principles of the Catholic religion.

But I must not prosecute this melancholy narrative more in detail, though **what has now been laid before the reader can only be considered as a sample of the harvest. Dreadful as were the proceedings which took place in the massacre in 1655, as detailed in a former section of this work, they do not appear by any means to have surpassed in enormity the cruelties inflicted upon the Waldenses in 1686.** [A pretty circumstantial relation of these things is to be found in several publications which appeared at the time, and particularly in two tracts now before me, from which the materials of this section are drawn. The first is entitled, "The History of the Persecution of the Valleys of Piedmont, containing, an account of what passed in the dispersion of the churches, in the year 1686." Printed in 4to. London, 1688. (See pp. 31-35.) The other is entitled, "The State of Savoy, in which a full and distant account is given of the Persecution of the Protestants, by means of the French counsels." 4to. London, 1691. To this last mentioned work I am indebted for the valuable documents which the reader will find in the Appendix. Both the publications are so rare that I have not been able to meet with a second copy of either of them.]

Those who deny the existence of the devil and his agency in prompting the human race to destroy one another, if they would account for the infernal cruelties that are related to have been now inflicted by the Catholics on the poor Waldenses, simply on the principle of human depravity, must necessarily entertain a much worse opinion of human nature than the writer of these pages has yet been able to bring himself to adopt. He can, indeed, admit much that militates against the dignity of human nature in its lapsed state; but he can only account for the monstrous cruelties that were perpetrated on a class of his fellow-creatures, the most harmless and inoffensive that ever inhabited the earth, on the principle of the active agency of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience"--he who was "a murderer from the beginning"--that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan--the grand adversary of God and man. The present was his hour and the power of darkness; but to return from this digression. **The armies of France and Savoy, having inhumanely butchered a multitude of the Waldenses, committed more than twelve thousand of them to prison, and dispersed two thousand of their children among the Catholics;** concluding that their work was accomplished, they caused all their property to be confiscated. And thus were the Valleys of Piedmont depopulated of their ancient inhabitants, and the light of the glorious gospel extinguished in a country where, for many preceding centuries, it had shone with resplendent luster.

In the month of September, 1686, the Swiss Cantons convened a general assembly at Aran, to deliberate on the condition of those who were either imprisoned or in a state of exile in Piedmont; and they came to the resolution of sending deputies to demand from the duke the release of all that were confined, and the privilege of quitting the country. The latter, probably by this time, glutted with human carnage, signed a treaty, in consequence of which the prisons were set open, and leave given to such as had survived, to depart peaceably through that part of Savoy which borders upon Berne and the territory of Geneva. But **a bare recital of the miseries which the prisoners had suffered during their confinement, is sufficient to sicken the heart. More than ten thousand persons were distributed among fourteen prisons or castles in Piedmont. They were fed for months upon bread and water--the former, in which were often found lime, glass, and filth of various kinds, was so bad as scarcely to deserve the name; while the latter, in many instances brought from stagnant pools, was scarcely fit for the use of cattle. Their lodging was upon bricks or filthy straw.** The prisons were so thronged that, during the heat of the summer months, they became intolerable, and deaths were daily taking place. Want of cleanliness necessarily engendered diseases among them--they became annoyed with vermin, which prevented their sleep either by night or day. Many women in child-bearing were lost for want of the care and comforts necessary to such a situation, and their infants shared the same fate.

Such was the state of these afflicted and persecuted creatures, when the Duke of Savoy's proclamation was issued for releasing them. It was now the month of October; the ground was covered with snow and ice; the victims of cruelty were almost universally emaciated through poverty and disease, and very unfit for the projected journey. **The proclamation was made at the castle of Mondovi, for example: and at five o'clock the same evening they were to begin a march of four or five leagues! Before the morning more than a hundred and fifty of them sunk under the burden of their maladies and fatigues, and died.** The same thing happened to the prisoners at Fossan. A company of them halted one night at the foot of Mount Cenis; when they were about to march the next morning, they pointed the officer who conducted them to a terrible tempest upon the top of the mountain, beseeching him to allow them to stay till it had passed away. The inhuman officer, deaf to the voice of pity, insisted on their marching; the consequence of which was, that eighty-six of their number died, and were buried in that horrible tempest of snow. Some merchants that afterwards crossed the mountains, saw the bodies of these miserable people extended on the snow, the mothers clasping their children in their arms!

It is but an act of justice, however, to add that, in some few instances, the officers who conducted the different troops of Waldenses out of the country, treated them with more humanity. Their own historians admit the fact, and it ought to be

recorded, that some took a particular care of them: and certainly the picture that is drawn of their deplorable condition, is such as was well calculated to melt the most unfeeling heart to tenderness. The greater part of them were almost naked and without shoes; and they all bore such striking marks of suffering and wretchedness that the very sight of them was enough to pierce the heart. Those who survived the journey, arrived at Geneva about the middle of December, but in such an exhausted state, that several expired between the two gates of the city, "finding the end of their lives in the beginning of their liberty." Others were so benumbed with cold that they had not power to speak; many staggered from faintness and disease, while others having lost the use of their limbs were unable to lift up their hands to receive the assistance that was tendered them.

At Geneva they experienced that kind and hospitable reception which was due to them as their fellow-creatures, and more especially as their persecuted Christian brethren. They clothed the naked, fed the hungry, succored the afflicted, and healed the sick. But what pen can describe the affecting scene which now took place, while they halted at Geneva for rest and refreshment, before they proceeded forward into Switzerland! Those who arrived first, naturally went out to meet those that came after, anxiously inquiring for their relations and friends, of whom they had heard nothing since the fatal catastrophe in the Valleys of Piedmont. The father inquired after his child, and the child after its parent--the husband sought his wife, and the latter her partner in life. Every one endeavored to gain some intelligence of his friend or neighbor; but as three-fourths of them had died in prison or on the road, it exhibited a melancholy spectacle to see so many dissolved in tears at the distressing accounts they received. Their principal earthly comfort now arose from the hospitable kindness of the people of Geneva, who flocked around them and evinced such solicitude to conduct them to their own homes, that the magistrates of the city were obliged, in order to prevent confusion and disorder, to issue an injunction, prohibiting any from going out of the city. There was a noble emulation who should entertain the most sick, or those that were most afflicted. They received them not merely as strangers in distress, but as Christian brethren, who brought peace and spiritual blessings into their families. All that needed clothing, were either supplied by those that lodged them, or by the Italian Bank, the directors of which, from first to last, evinced all the marks of tender compassion, and of disinterested kindness.

But it was not only at Geneva that the Waldenses met with this kind and hospitable treatment. The Cantons of Switzerland opened to them their country, and not their country only, but their hearts and affections also. The conduct of the Swiss, indeed, was so noble and disinterested throughout the whole of this distressing period, that it would be unjust to their memory to pass it over with a slight mention.

[It would seem that the Valleys of Piedmont were not the only spot in which the disciples of Christ were, at this period, the subject of persecution. The following

passage in Dr. Burnet's Second Letter, written from Switzerland, in 1685, lately struck my attention in glancing over that entertaining performance. "In April, 1685, about five hundred persons, of different sexes and ages, passed through Coire (a town in Switzerland) who gave this account of themselves. They were inhabitants of a valley in **TIROL**, belonging mostly to the archbishopric of Saltzburgh--a remnant of the old Waldenses. They worshipped neither images nor saints; and they believed the sacrament (of the Lord's supper) was only a commemoration of the death of Christ; and in many other points they had their opinions different from those of the church of Rome. They knew nothing of either Lutherans or Calvinists; and the Grisons, though their neighbors, had never heard of this nearness of theirs to the Protestant religion. The Archbishop of Saltzburgh hearing of them, sent some persons into the country to examine them, and to exhort them to return to mass, and to threaten them with all possible severity if they continued obstinate. Perceiving a terrible storm ready to break upon them, they resolved to abandon their houses and all that they had, rather than sin against their consciences: and the whole inhabitants of the Valley, old and young, to the number of two thousand, divided themselves into several bodies; some intended to go to Brandenburg, others to the Palatinate, and about five hundred took the road to Coire, intending to disperse themselves in Switzerland. The Swiss ministers told me they were much edified by their simplicity and modesty; for, a collection being made for them, they desired only a little bread to carry them on their way." Burnet's *Letters*, p. 87-89 Amst. 1686.]

Perhaps the best way of evincing my own impartiality will be to lay before the reader the testimony of Dr. Barnet, who in his *Letters from Italy*, written, as it were, at the very moment, and from the very scene of action, thus proceeds:

"There is one thing for which the Swiss, and those of the Canton of Berne in particular, cannot be sufficiently commended. Ever since the persecution commenced in France (alluding to the revocation of the edict of Nantz) they have opened a sanctuary to such as retired thither in so generous and Christian a manner, that it merits all the honorable remembrance that can be made of it. The ministers and others that had been condemned, not only found here a kind reception, but all the support that could be expected, and, indeed, much more than could reasonably have been expected. They assigned to the French ministers a salary of five crowns per month, if single, and increased it to such as have wives and families, so that some have been allowed more than ten crowns a month.--And in this last total and deplorable dispersion of the churches, the whole country has been animated with such a spirit of love and compassion, that every man's house and purse has been opened to the refugees, who have passed thither in such numbers that sometimes there have been more than two thousand in Lausanne alone, and of these there were, at one time, nearly two hundred ministers; and they all met with a kindness and frankness of heart that looked more like the primitive age revived, than the degenerate age in which we live" [Dr.



Burnet's *Letters from Italy*, Letter 1, p. 57-58].

Here, however, I think I may pause and draw this narrative towards a conclusion, which I shall do by offering a few obvious reflections on the whole of this interesting history. And the first thing that suggests itself is, that, however we may be inclined to blame the conduct of the Duke of Savoy, that of Louis XIV who compelled him to these sanguinary proceedings, is entitled to our chief condemnation. Referring to this final extirpation of the Waldenses from Piedmont, our countryman, Dr. Burnet, who was then making the tour of the Continent, has the following remarks, in a letter, which he dates from Turin, to a friend in this country: "I will not engage," says he, "in a relation of this last affair of the Valleys of Piedmont; for I could not find particulars enough to give you that so distinctly as you might probably desire it. It was all over long before I came to Turin; but this I found, that all the court were ashamed of the matter; and they took pains with strangers, not without some affectation, to convince them that the duke was, with great difficulty, forced into it--that he was long pressed to it, by repeated entreaties, from the court of France--that he excused himself from complying therewith, representing to the court of France the constant fidelity of the Waldenses ever since the last edict of pacification, and their great industry, so that they were the most profitable subjects that the duke had, and that the body of men which they had given his father in the last war with Genoa, had done great service, for it had saved the whole army. But all these excuses were unavailable; for, the court of France having broken its own faith which had been pledged to heretics, and therein manifested how true a respect it paid to the council of Constance, now wished to engage other princes to follow this new pattern of fidelity which it had set the world. So the duke was not only pressed to extirpate the heretics of those Valleys, but he was also threatened that if he would not do it, the king would send his own troops to extirpate heresy, for he would not only not suffer it in his own kingdom, but he would even drive it out of his neighborhood. He who told me all this, knowing of what country I was, added, that probably the French monarch might very soon send similar messages to some others of his neighbors. [Dr. Burnet's *Letters from Italy* - Supplementary Letters, p. 162; written in 1687, and printed the following year.]

If Louis XIV had any such favors in contemplation for our own country, as those that are hinted at in the conclusion of the foregoing paragraph, Britons have reason to be thankful to God, whose overruling providence frustrated such sanguinary projects:-- and had the race of the Stuarts continued to fill the British throne, it is more than probable that the horrible scenes of Piedmont had, indeed, been reacted among our forefathers in this happy land. But the glorious revolution which gave us a protestant monarch, took place in 1688, the very year after Dr. Burnet wrote his Supplementary Letters, from which the foregoing extract is taken; and happily saved us from all danger of the tyrant's rage. And here, with a few reflections, I close the history of the Waldenses. Enough I presume, and more than enough, has appeared in the preceding pages to satisfy any unprejudiced reader, that the extermination of the

churches of the Waldenses in Piedmont was the act of the King of France; or, if the shadow of a doubt should exist upon that subject, it must for ever be removed by a careful perusal of the Duke of Savoy's letter to the Duke of Orleans, which will be found in the Appendix to this volume. In fact, the whole of the correspondence between the court of Turin and that of France, which I have there given, affords such incontestable proof of the overwhelming despotism of Louis XIV towards the Duke of Savoy, that the indignation which at first sight one is tempted to indulge against the latter, is converted into pity and compassion for him; and horrible as were the transactions committed under his reign, every liberal mind will regard him as a sovereign "more sinned against than sinning." But let a reflecting mind contemplate these events as instigated by the counsels of France and perpetrated by the power of her arms; let them be connected in idea with the cruelties inflicted upon the Protestants in France, in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantz, which took place only a few years before; and if he believe "there is a God who judgeth in the earth" he will find little difficulty in tracing the hand of distributive justice in the series of calamities which have now, for nearly thirty years, afflicted that unhappy country. These are topics that Christians are but too apt to overlook, but they are of serious import and deserve consideration.

**But what shall we say of the court of Rome, the great moving spring in all this machinery of complicated villainy: that "holy mother church," which kept the conscience of Louis XIV and of the other crowned heads who, from time to time, obsequiously lent their aid to massacre the Waldenses?** I trust I may be permitted, without arrogance, on this occasion, to adopt the language of an unknown writer, who reviewed the first edition of this history. "The narrative which we have been perusing," said this liberal and enlightened critic, "leaves on the mind impressions of the utmost detestation for the spiritual tyranny exercised by the court of Rome. Providence never made use of so terrible a scourge to chastise mankind. No power ever outraged the interests of society, the principles of justice, and the claims of humanity, to the same extent. Never did the world behold such blasphemy, profligacy, and wantonness, as in the proceedings of this spiritual domination. It held the human mind in chains, visited with exemplary punishment every inroad on the domains of ignorance, and sunk nations into a state of stupidity and imbecility. Its prescriptions, massacres, and murders, and all the various forms which its cruelties assumed; the miseries which it heaped on the objects of its vengeance; its merciless treatment of them, and the grasp of its iron sway, seemed at one time to leave no room to hope for the liberation of the human race; and surely nothing can appear more hideous than this power in its true colors: it leaves the mind full of horror, at its cruelties" [*Monthly Review*, June, 1814, p. 204]. In all this I have the happiness to agree; and though I have rarely ventured to express myself in terms so forcible as this writer has done, I have no hesitation of saying in the words of an apostle--"THIS WITNESS IS TRUE."

But I desist: and now take leave of the subject with presenting to the reader one extract more from the learned Dr. Allix.

**"Never," says this excellent writer, "did the church of Rome give a more incontestable evidence of her own antichristian spirit, than by her insatiable thirst after the blood of those Christians, who, six hundred years ago, renounced her communion: and to allay which she has made the blood of these poor innocent creatures every where to run down like rivers; exterminating by fire and sword, those who were not terrified by her anathemas.** During this long interval the Waldenses have ever been in the condition of sheep led to the slaughter, by their continual and uninterrupted martyrdoms maintaining and adorning the religion of Christ our Savior, which the church of Rome having forsaken, now sought to accommodate to her corrupt and worldly interests; and to the design she had formed of making it a stalking horse to the pomp, lordliness, and tyranny of her pope and clergy.

"Whatever reflections the members of the church of Rome may indulge relative to the circumstance of God's having apparently relinquished these poor churches to the fury of their cannibal adversaries, I am fully persuaded that those who have made the conduct of divine Providence towards the primitive church their study, will not be stumbled at this apparent desertion of the Waldenses, and their being abandoned to the outrageous cruelty of their persecutors, nor regard the ostensible triumphs of that apostate church as any indication of the weakness of the truth professed by the Waldenses. For notwithstanding the extreme rigor of their persecutions, we find that God hath tenderly preserved them till the Reformation; and though he has often exposed them to the rage and barbarous usage of their persecutors, yet has he, from time to time, afforded them such deliverances as have enabled them to continue until this day. Their persecutions, like those of the apostolic churches, have only served to procure martyrs to the truth of the glorious gospel, and to disperse throughout every land the knowledge and savor of that which the Romish party, treading in the steps of the ancient synagogue, so cruelly persecuted.

"Let the Bishop of Meaux then, if he please, insultingly tell the Protestants to go and look for their ancestors among the Waldenses, and hunt for them in the caverns of the Alps. His declamation shall never make us forego one jot of that tender veneration and respect which we have so justly conceived for this nursery and seed-plot of the martyrs, and for those valiant troops who have so generously lavished their blood in defense of the truth against all the efforts, all the machinations, and all the violence of the Roman Catholic party. The judgment that St. Hilarius expresses in his writings against Auxentius, ought to be sufficient to arm us against all the cavils of those who would insinuate that it is impossible the church should lose its purity, or that this purity should be preserved by

churches reduced to caverns and mountains.

"Of one thing I must carefully warn you,' says he, 'beware of Antichrist! It is ill done of you to fall in love with walls. It is ill done of you to reverence the church of God in buildings and stately edifices; it is wrong to rest in these things. Can you doubt that it is on these Antichrist will fix his throne? Give me mountains, forests, pits, and prisons, as being far safer places; for it was in these that the prophets prophesied BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD'" [Dr. Allix's *History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 293-296]. [DWC]