

A History of the English Baptists



Including an Investigation of the History of Baptism in England
from the earliest period to which it can be traced to the close of the seventeenth century

By Joseph Ivimey 1811, London: Printed for the Author

JOSEPH IVIMEY (1773-1830)

The following is from The Baptist Encyclopedia, 1881:

Joseph Ivimey was born at Ringwood, Hampshire, England, May 22, 1773. When a youth he was convicted of sin, and a gospel hope first entered his heart through the stanza,—

"In the world of endless ruin
It shall never once be said,
There's a soul that perished suing
For the Saviour's promised aid."

This hope was soon after confirmed, so that he could regard the Saviour as his. He was baptized Sept. 16, 1790. He was ordained pastor of the Eagle Street church, Red Lion Square, London, Jan. 16, 1805. His labors were attended with great success. He was gifted with much energy, with an unusual power of gaining and keeping information, and with fearless faithfulness in proclaiming the whole truth of God. He had the happiness of baptizing his own father and mother. His father was seventy years of age at the time of his immersion, and only partook of the Lord's Supper once after he was received into the church.

Mr. Ivimey wrote a life of John Bunyan, which enjoyed considerable popularity, and "A History of the English Baptists," in four octavo volumes, the last two of which were published in 1830. This history is invaluable. It is only seldom for sale, and when it can be purchased it is held at a high price. He was also the author of other works.

Mr. Ivimey closed his useful life Feb. 8, 1834. A little before his departure he said,

"Not a wave of trouble rolls
Across my peaceful breast."

PREFACE

The Reformation was an important era in the history of this country. The fetters with which Popery had long shackled the minds of men were then knocked off, and the use of the bible led many to embrace those sentiments in doctrine and discipline, which accorded with the simplicity of Christ.

The subsequent history is an attempt to prove that the English Baptists held the genuine principles of the Reformation, and pursued them to their legitimate consequences. Believing that the bible alone contains the religion of Protestants, they rejected every thing in the worship of God which was not found in the sacred oracles. Without intending to offend those who differ from the English Baptists in their distinguishing tenet, we think it right to premise, that this work will also attempt to prove, that Infant baptism in England owes its origin to Popery;--that the ancient British Christians before the coming of Austin knew nothing of the practice;--and that many at least of the Wickliffites and Lollards, the first English reformers, rejected it as a popish innovation and maintained that "all traditions not found in the scriptures were superfluous and wicked."

It was these sentiments which led to the formation of societies dissenting from the Popish establishment before the Reformation, and dissenting from the Protestant establishment afterwards.

The English Baptists were the first persons who understood the important doctrine of Christian liberty, and who zealously opposed all persecution for the sake of conscience.

A large proportion of their churches were averse to all interference with political matters during the convulsive period of the civil wars. It is, however, to be lamented that some of them during that period confounded the power of the magistrate with the government of that kingdom which is not of this world.

The sufferings which have been endured by the English Baptists on account of their religious principles, give them a claim to the gratitude of every true lover of liberty and of his country. To them may be applied with peculiar propriety, what the historian Hume says of the Puritans in general: "By whom the precious spark of liberty was kindled and preserved."

It is not too much to say that their history has never been fairly given. Influenced by prejudice, many of our historians have either kept them out of sight, or have exhibited them to public ridicule and contempt.

For many of his materials the writer is indebted to Crosby's History of the English Baptists, in 4 vols. octavo, published about seventy years ago. This work is now become very scarce; and it is so badly written, that an abridgement and arrangement of its contents have long been thought desirable.

He has also endeavoured to collect those works published by themselves, from which may most certainly be drawn a fair statement of their principles. Though he has succeeded in his researches beyond his expectations, he is desirous of procuring additional particulars concerning them, that

the biographical part of the work, which he intends to publish in another volume, may be rendered as perfect as possible. He has prefixed the extract from Dr. Gill's work, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant baptism examined and disproved," in order to show that there is no evidence that Infant baptism is of apostolical origin; and also, that the testimonies of ancient writers are in favour of adult baptism.

The author takes this opportunity of acknowledging his obligations to many of his brethren for their readiness to assist him. He desires more particularly to return thanks for the use of the Manuscript of the late Rev. Joshua Thomas of Leominster; to the Rev. Mr. Frost of Dunmow in Essex, for the use of a valuable Manuscript of his progenitor, Mr. William Kiffin; and for the liberty of consulting the Manuscripts and other works deposited in Dr. Williams's library, Red-Cross Street, London.

As to the use which he has made of his materials, it must be left to his readers to decide. He is, however, prepared to say, that he has faithfully related the facts which have come to his knowledge, without a wish to promote any object but the cause of God and truth.

If his labours should be useful to the denomination to which he considers it an honour to belong, by exciting them to a zealous imitation of the virtues of their ancestors, he will receive an abundant compensation; to which will be added the high gratification of having done all in his power, that the names of some of those great men may be had in everlasting remembrance.

The Author

London, Jan. 1, 1811

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF INFANT BAPTISM EXAMINED AND DISPROVED

By John Gill

Of the Antiquity of Infant Baptism; When First Debated; and Concerning the Waldenses

The minister, in the dialogue, in order to stagger his neighbour about the principle of adult baptism he had espoused, suggests to him, that infant baptism did universally obtain in the church, even from the apostles' times; that undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that it constantly obtained in the truly primitive church; and that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, till the madmen of Munster set themselves against it; and affirms, that the ancient Waldenses being in the constant practice of adult baptism, is a mere imagination, a chimerical one, and to be rejected as a groundless figment, p. 7,9.

I. This writer intimates, that the practice of infant baptism universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. The truly primitive church, is the church in the times of Christ and his apostles. The first christian church was that at Jerusalem, which consisted of such as were made the disciples of Christ, and baptized; first made disciples by Christ, and then baptized by his apostles; for Jesus himself baptized none, only they baptized by his order. [John 4:1,2] This church afterwards greatly increased; three thousand persons, who were pricked to the heart under Peter's ministry, repented of their sins, and joyfully received the good news of pardon and salvation by Christ, were baptized, and added to it; these were adult persons; nor do we read of any one infant being baptized while this truly primitive church subsisted. The next christian church was that at Samaria; for that there was a church there is evident from Acts 9:31. This seems to have been founded by the ministry of Philip; the original members of it were men and women baptized by Philip, upon a profession of their faith in the things preached by him, concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ. [Acts 8:12] Nor is there the least intimation given that infant

baptism at all obtained in this church. Another truly primitive christian church, was the church at Philippi; the foundation of which was laid in the two families of Lydia and the gaoler, and which furnish out no proof of infant baptism obtaining here; for Lydia's household are called brethren, whom the apostles visited and comforted; and the gaoler's household were such as were capable of hearing the word, and who believed in Christ, and rejoiced in God as well as he. [Acts 16:14,15,32,33,35,40] So that it does not appear that infant baptism obtained in this church. The next christian church we read of, and which was a truly primitive one, is the church at Corinth, and consisted of persons who, hearing the apostle Paul preach the gospel, believed in Christ, whom he preached, and were baptized; [Acts 18:8] but there is no mention made of any infant being baptized, either now or hereafter, in this truly primitive church state. These are all the truly primitive churches, of whose baptism we have any account in the Acts of the apostles, excepting Cornelius, and his family and friends, who very probably founded a church at Caesarea; and the twelve disciples at Ephesus, who very likely joined to the church there, and who are both instances of adult baptism. [Acts 10:48 and 19:1-7] Let it be made appear, if it can, that any one infant was ever baptized in any of the above truly primitive churches, or in any other during the apostolic age, either at Antioch or Thessalonica, at Rome or at Colosse, or any other primitive church of those times. But though this cannot be made out from the writings of the new Testament, we are told,

II. That undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that infant baptism constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. Let us a little inquire into this matter.

1. The christian writers of the first century, besides the evangelists and apostles, are Barnabas, Hermas, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. As to the two first of these, Barnabas and Hermas, the learned Mr. Stennet [*Answer to Russen*, p. 142,143] has cited some passages out of them; and after him Mr. David Rees; [*Answer to Walker*, p. 157, etc.] for which reason, I forbear transcribing them; (A) which are

manifest proofs of adult baptism, and that as performed by immersion; they represent the persons baptized, the one [Barnabas Epist. c. 9. p. 235,236] as hoping in the cross of Christ, the other [Hermæ Pastor, l. 1. viz. 3. s.7. and l.3. s. 16] as having heard the word, and being willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and both as going down into the water, and coming up out of it. Clemens Romanus wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, still extant; **but there is not a syllable in it about infant baptism.** Ignatius wrote epistles to several churches, as well as to particular persons; but makes no mention of the practice of infant baptism in any of them: what he says of baptism, favours adult baptism; since he speaks of it as attended with faith, love, and patience: "Let your baptism (says he) remain as armour; faith as an helmet, love as a spear, and patience as whole armour." [Ignatii Epist. ad Polycarp. p. 11] Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which is yet in being; but there is not one word in it about infant baptism. **So that it is so far from being true, that there is undoubted evidence from the ancient fathers, that this practice universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church, that there is no evidence at all that it did obtain, in any respect, in the first century, or apostolic age; and which is the only period in which the truly primitive church of Christ can be said to subsist.** There is indeed a work called, *The Constitutions of the Apostles*, and sometimes the *Constitutions of Clemens*, because he is said to be the compiler of them; and another book of *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, out of which passages have been cited in favour of infant baptism; but these are manifestly of later date than they pretend to, and were never written by the persons whose names they bear, and are condemned as spurious by learned men, and are given up as such by Dr. Wall, in his *History of Infant Baptism*. [Part I. c. 23]

2. The christian writers of the second century, which are extant, are Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus at Antioch, Tatian, Minutius Felix, Irenæus, and Clemens of Alexandria; and of all these writers, there is not one that says any thing of infant baptism; there is but one pretended to, and that

is Irenaeus; and but a single passage out of him; and that depends upon a single word, the signification of which is doubtful at best; and besides the passage is only a translation of Irenaeus, and not expressed in his own original words; and the chapter from whence it is taken, is by some learned men judged to be spurious; since it advances a notion inconsistent with that ancient writer, and notoriously contrary to the books of the evangelists, making Christ to live to be fifty years old, yea, to live to a senior age: the passage produced in favour of infant baptism, is this: speaking of Christ, he says,

"Sanctifying every age, by that a likeness it had to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, *qui per cum renascuntur in Deum*, who by him are born again unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; and to little ones a little one, sanctifying those of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection."

[Irenaeus adv. Haeres, l. 2. c.39. p. 191]

Now, the question is about the word *renascunter*, whether it is to be rendered *born again*, which is the literal sense of the word; or *baptized*; the true sense of Irenaeus seems to be this, that Christ came to save all that are regenerated by his grace and Spirit; and none but they, according to his own words; [John 3:3,5] and that by assuming human nature, and passing through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and set an example to men of every age.

And this now is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of infant baptism, from the fathers of the first two centuries. It would be easy to produce passages out of the above writers, in favour of believer's baptism; I shall only cite one out of the first of them; the account that Justin Martyr gave to the Emperor Antoninus Pius of the christians of his day, though it has been cited by Mr. Stennet and Mr. Rees, I shall choose to transcribe it; because, as Dr. Wall says [*History of Infant Baptism*, Part I. c. 2], it is the

most ancient account of the way of baptizing next the scripture.

"And now, says Justin, we will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God; lest, omitting this, we should seem to act a bad part in this declaration. As many as are persuaded, and believe the things taught and said by us, to be true, and promise to live according to them, are instructed to pray, and to ask fasting, the forgiveness of their past sins of God, we praying and fasting together with them. After that, they are brought by us, where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration, as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water, in the name of the Father and the Lord God of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit."

There is a work, which bears the name of Justin, called *Answers to the Orthodox*, concerning some necessary questions; to which we are sometimes referred for a proof of infant baptism; but the book is spurious, and none of Justin's, as many learned men have observed, and as Dr. Wall allows; and is thought not to have been written before the fifth century. So stands the evidence for infant baptism from the ancient fathers of the first two centuries.

3. As to the third century, it will be allowed that it was spoken of in it; though as soon as it was mentioned it was opposed; and the very first man that mentions it speaks against it, namely, TERTULLIAN. The truth of the matter is, that infant baptism was moved for in the third century; got footing and establishment in the fourth and fifth; and so prevailed until the time of the reformation. Though throughout these several centuries there were testimonies bore to adult baptism; and at several times, certain persons rose up, and opposed infant baptism; which brings me,

III. To consider what our author affirms, that is cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, until the madmen of Munster set themselves

against it, [*Divine Right of Infant Baptism*, p. 7. Let us examine this matter, and,

1. It should be observed, that the disturbances in Germany, which our Pedobaptist writers so often refer to in this controversy about baptism, and so frequently reproach us with, were first begun in the wars of the Boors, by such as were Pedobaptists, and them only; first by the Papists, some few years before the reformation; and after that, both by Lutherans and Papists, on account of civil liberties; among whom, in process of time, some few of the people called Anabaptists mingled themselves; a people that scarce in any thing agree with us, neither in their civil nor religious principles, nor even in baptism itself; for if we can depend on those that wrote the history of them, and against them, they were for repeating adult baptism, not performed among them; yea, that which was administered among themselves, when they removed their communion to another society; nay, even in the same community, when an excommunicated person was received again; [Cloppenburg. *Gangraena*, p. 366; Spanhem, *Diatribes Hist. Sect.* 27] besides, if what is reported of them is true, as it may be, their baptism was performed by sprinkling, which we cannot allow to be true baptism; it is said, that when a community of them was satisfied with the person's faith and conversation, who proposed himself for baptism, the pastor took water into his hand, and sprinkled it on the head of him that was to be baptized, using these words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. [Budneus apud Meshov. *Hist. Anabapt.* l. 4. p. 96] And even the disturbances in Munster, a famous city in Westphalia, were first begun by Bernard Rotman, a Pedobaptist minister of the Lutheran persuasion, assisted by other ministers of the reformation, in opposition to the papists in the year 1532; and it was not till the year 1533, that John Matthias of Harlem, and John Bocolodus of Leyden came to this place; [Sleiden, *Comment.* l. 10. p. 267, 269; Spauhem, *Diatribes Hist. de Origine Anabaptist.* Sect. 18] who, with Knipperdolling and others, are, I suppose, the madmen of Munster, this writer means; and he may call them madmen, if he pleases; I shall not contend with him about it; they

were mad notions which they held, and mad actions they performed; and both disavowed by the people, who are now called Anabaptists; though it is not reasonable to suppose, that these were the only men concerned in that affair, or that the number of their followers should increase to such a degree in so small a time, as to make such a revolution in so large a city. However, **certain it is that it was not their principle about baptism that led them into such extravagant notions and actions.** But what I take notice of all this for, is chiefly to observe the date of the confusions and distractions in which these madmen were concerned, which were from the year 1533 to 1536.(B)

And our next inquiry therefore is, whether there was any debate about the practice of infant baptism before this time.

2. It will appear, that it was frequently debated, before these men set themselves against it, or acted the made part they did. In the years 1532 and 1528, there were public disputations at Berne in Switzerland, between the ministers of the church there and some Anabaptist teachers; [Spanhem. *ibid.* Sect. 13; Meshov. *Anabapt. Histor.* p. 3. p. 16,18] in the year 1529, 1527, and 1525, Oecolampadius had various disputes with people of this name at Basil in the same country; [Spanhem. Sect. 13; Meshovius, *ibid.* c. 2] in the year 1525, there was a dispute at Zurich in the same country about Pedobaptism, between Swinglius, one of the first reformers, and Dr. Balthasar Hubmeierus, [Spanhem. Sect. 11; Meshov. l. 2. c.4] who afterwards was burnt, and his wife drowned at Vienna, in the year 1528; of whom Moshovius, [Summa Coutrovera. l. 5. p. 356] though a Papist, gives this character:--that he was from his childhood brought up in learning; and for his singular erudition was honoured with a degree in divinity; was a very eloquent man, and read in the scriptures, and fathers of the church. Hoornbeck [Summa Controvers. l. 5. p. 356] calls him a famous and eloquent preacher, and says he was the first of the reformed preachers at Waldshut. There were several disputations with others in the same year at this place; upon which an edict was made by the senate at Zurich, forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined a silver mark, and of

being imprisoned, and even drowned, according to the nature of the offence. And in the year 1526, or 1527, according to Hoornbeck, Felix Mans, or Mentz, was drowned at Zurich; this man, Meshovius says [Meshov. l. 2. c. 1], whom he calls Felix Mantscher, was of a noble family; and both he and Conrad Grebel, whom he calls Cunrad Grebbe, who are said to give the first rise to Anabaptism at Zurich, were very learned men, and well skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. And the same writer affirms, that Anabaptism was set on foot at Wittenberg, in the year 1522, by Nicholas Pelaragus, or Stork, who had companions with him of very great learning, as Carolostadius, Philip Melancthon, and others; this, he says, was done, whilst Luther was lurking as an exile in the castle of Wartpurg in Thuringia; and that when he returned from thence to Wittenberg, he banished Carolostadius, Pelargus, More Didymus, and others [Mehosv. l. 1. c. 2,3], and only received Melancthon again. This carries the opposition to Pedobaptism, within five years of the Reformation, begun by Luther; and certain it is, there were many and great debates about infant baptism at the first of the Reformation, years before the affair of Munster; and evident it is, that some of the first reformers were inclined to have attempted a reformation in this ordinance, though they, for reasons best known to themselves, dropped it; and even Zwinglius himself, who was a bitter persecutor of the people called Anabaptists afterwards, was once of the same mind himself, and against Pedobaptism. But,

3. It will appear, that this was a matter of debate, and was opposed before the time of the reformation.

There was a set of people in Bohemia, near a hundred years before that, who appear to be of the same persuasion with the people called Anabaptists; for in a letter, written by Costelecus out of Bohemia to Erasmus, dated Oct. 10, 1519 [Inter Colomes. Collect. apud Wall's *History of Infant Baptism*, Part II. p. 200], among other things said of them, which agree with the said people, this is one: "such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in mere water;" the writer of the letter calls them Pyghards, so named, he says, from a certain refugee that came thither 97

years before the date of the letter. Pope Innocent the third, under whom was the Lateran Council, **A.D. 1215**, has, in the Decretals a letter, in answer to a letter from the bishop of Arles in Provence, which had represented to him [Opera Innocent. Tertii, Tom. II. p. 776. apud Wall, ibid. p. 178], that "some hereticks there had taught, that it was to no purpose to baptize children, since they could have no forgiveness of sins thereby, as having no faith, charity, &c." So that it is a clear point, that there were some that set themselves against infant baptism in the thirteenth century, three hundred years before the reformation; yea, in the twelfth century there were some that opposed Pedobaptism.

Mr. Fox, the Martyrologist, relates from the history of Robert Guisburne [*Acts and Monuments*, vol. i. p. 262], that two men, Gerhardus and Dulcinus in the reign of Henry the second, about the year of our Lord **1158**: who, he supposes, had received some light of knowledge of the Waldenses, brought thirty with them into England; who, by the king and the prelates, were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm; and after were slain by the pope. Rapin [*History of England*, vol. i. p. 233] calls them German hereticks, and places their coming into England, in the year 1166; but William of Newbury [Neubrigensis de Rebus Anglicanis, l. 2. c. 13. p. 155] calls them Publicans, and only mentions Gerhardus, as at the head of them, and whom he allows to be somewhat learned, but all the rest very illiterate, and says they came from Gascoigne; and being convened before a council, held at Oxford for that purpose; and being interrogated concerning articles of faith, said perverse things concerning the divine sacraments, detesting holy baptism, the eucharist and marriage: and his Annotator Picardus, out of a MS. of Radulph, the monk, shews that the hereticks, called Publicans, affirm, that we must not pray for the dead; that the suffrages of the saints were not to be asked; that they believe not purgatory; with many other things; and particularly, *asserunt isti Parvulos von baptisandos donec ad intelliigibilem perveniant Aetatem*. "They assert that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to the age of understanding." [Not. in ibid. p. 720-723]

In the year **1147**, St. Bernard wrote a letter to the Earl of St. Gyles, complaining of his harbouring Henry, a heretick; and among other things he is charged with by him, are these; "the infants of christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them; nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, though our Saviour compassionately cries out in their behalf, Suffer little children to come to me, &c." and about the same time, writing upon the Canticles in his 65th and 66th sermons, he takes notice of a sort of people, he calls Apostolici, and who, perhaps, were the followers of Henry; who, says he, laugh at us for baptizing infants [Wall, *ibid.* p. 165,176]; and among the tenets which he ascribes to them and attempts to confute, this is the first; "Infants are not to be baptized:" in opposition to which, he affirms, that infants are to be baptized in the faith of the church; and endeavours by instances to show, that the faith of one is profitable to others [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XII, c. 5. p. 338,339]; which he attempts from Matt. 11:2 and 15:28, 1 Tim. 2:15.

In the year **1146**, Peter Bruis, and Henry his follower, set themselves against infant baptism. Petrus Cluniacensis, or Peter the abbot of Clugny, wrote against them; and among other errors he imputes to them are these: "That infants are not baptized, or saved by the faith of another, but ought to be baptized, and saved by their own faith; or that baptism without their own faith does not save; and that those that are baptized in infancy, when grown up, should be baptized again; nor are they then rebaptized, but rather rightly baptized:" [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XII. c. 5. p. 332] and that these men did deny infant baptism, and pleaded for adult baptism, Mr. Stennet [*Answer to Russen*, p. 83,84] has proved from Cassander and Prateolus, both Pedobaptists: and Dr. Wall [*History of Infant Baptism*, Part II, p. 184] allows these two men to be Antipedobaptists; and says, "they were the first Antipedobaptist preachers that ever set up a church, or society of men, holding that opinion against infant baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;" and who also observes [Ibid. p. 179], that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting

infant baptism: moreover, in the year 1140, or a little before it, Evervinus, of the diocese of Cologne, wrote a letter to St. Bernard, in which he gives him an account of some hereticks lately discovered in that country, of whom he says, "they condemn the sacraments, except baptism only; and this only in those who are come to age; who, they say, are baptized by Christ himself, whoever be the minister of the sacraments: they do not believe infant baptism, alleging that place of the gospel, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." [Wall, *ibid.* p. 172] These seem also to be the disciples of Peter Bruis, who began to preach about the year 1126; so that it is out of all doubt, that this was a matter of debate, four hundred years before the madmen of Munster set themselves against it: and a hundred years before these, there were two men, Bruno, bishop of Angiers, and Berengarius, archdeacon of the same church, who began to spread their particular notions about the year 1035, which chiefly respected the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. What they said about the former, may be learned from the letter sent by Deodwinus, bishop of Liege, to Henry I. King of France; in which are the following words: [Apud Wall, *ibid.* p. 159]; -- "There is a report come out of France, and which goes through all Germany, that these two (Bruno and Berengarius) do maintain, that the Lord's body (the Host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body; and that they do disannul lawful marriages: and as far as in them lies, over throw the baptism of infants:" and from Guimundus, bishop of Aversa, who wrote against Berengarius, who says, "That he did not teach rightly concerning the baptism of infants, and concerning marriage." [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XI. c. 5. p. 116] Mr. Stennet relates from Dr. Allix, a passage concerning one Gundulphus and his followers in Italy; divers of whom, Gerard, bishop of Cambray and Arras, interrogated upon several heads in the year 1025: and among other things, that bishop mentions the following reason, which they gave against infant baptism; "because to an infant, that neither wills nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration or confession; the will, faith and confession of another seem not in the least to appertain." Dr. Wall, indeed, represents these men the

disciples of Gundulphus, as Quakers and Manichees in the point of baptism, holding that water baptism is of no use to any: but it must be affirmed, whatever their principles were, that their argument against infant baptism was very strong. So then, we have testimonies that Pedobaptism was opposed five hundred years before the affair of Munster. And if the Pelagians, Donatists, and Luciferians, so called from Lucifer Calaritanus, a very orthodox man, and a great opposer of the Arians, were against infant baptism, as several Pedobaptist writers affirm; this carries the opposition to it still higher; and indeed it may seem strange, that since it had not its establishment till the times of Austin, that there should be none to set themselves against it; and if there were none, how comes it to pass that such a canon should be made in the Milevitan council, under Pope Innocent the first, according to Carrauza [Summa Concil. p. 122,123]; and in the year 402, as say the Magdeburgensian Centuriators [Cent. V. c. 9. p. 468]; or be it in the council at Carthage, in the year 418, as says Dr. Wall [History, &c. Part II. p. 172,276], which runs thus; "Also, it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized; or says, they are indeed to be baptized for the remission of sins; and yet they derive no original sin from Adam to be expiated by the washing of regeneration; (from whence it follows, that the form of baptism for the forgiveness of sins in them, cannot be understood to be true, but false) let him be anathema:" but if there were none that opposed the baptism of new-born infants, why should the first part of this canon be made, and an anathema annexed to it? To say that it respected a notion of a single person in Cyprian's time, 150 years before this, that infants were not to be baptized until eight days old; and that it seems there were some people still of this opinion, wants proof. But however, certain it is, that Tertullian, [De Baptismo, c. 18] in the beginning of the third century, opposed the baptism of infants, and dissuaded from it, who is the first writer that makes mention of it: so it appears, that as soon as ever it was set on foot, it became matter of debate; and sooner than this it could not be: and this was thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster appeared in the world. But,

IV. Let us next consider the practice of the ancient Waldenses, with respect to adult baptism, which this author [of "The Divine Right of Infant Baptism] affirms to be a chimerical imagination, and groundless figment. It should be observed, that the people called Waldenses, or the Vaudois, inhabiting the vallies of Piedmont, have gone under different names, taken from their principal leaders and teachers; and so this of the Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, one of their barbs, r pastors; though some think this name is only a corruption of Vallenses, the inhabitants of the vallies: and certain it is, there were a people there before the times of Waldo, and even from the apostles' time, that held the pure evangelic truths, and bore a testimony to them in all ages, and throughout the dark times of popery, as many learned men have observed; and the sense of these people concerning baptism may be best understood [Dr. Allix's *Remarks on the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, p. 183,207,210,286. Morland's *History of the evangelical churches of the vallies of Piiedmont*. B. 1. c. 3. p. 8, &c. Et Bezae Ieoues apud ibid. Introduction to the History, p. 7],

1. By what their ancient barbs or pastors taught concerning it. Peter Bruis, and Henry his successor, were both, as Morland affirms [History, B. 1. ch. 8. p. 184], their ancient barbs and pastors; and from them these people were called Petrobrusians and Henricians; and we have seen already that these two men were Antipedobaptists, denied infant baptism, and pleaded for adult baptism. Arnoldus of Brixia, or Brescia, was another of their barbs, and is the first mentioned by Morland, from whom these people were called Arnoldists. Of this man Dr. Allix says, [Remarks, &c. p. 171,172] that besides being charged with some ill opinions, it was said of him, that he was not sound in his sentiments concerning the sacrament of the altar, and the baptism of infants; and Dr. Wall allows, [History of Infant Baptism, Part II, p. 179] that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant baptism. Lollardo was another of their barbs, who, as Morland says, was in great reputation with them for having conveyed the knowledge of their

doctrine into England, where his disciples were known by the name of Lollards; who were charged with holding, that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, if their parents be baptized before them. [Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, vol. i. p. 868] All which seem to arise from their denying of infant baptism, and the efficacy of it to take away sin.

2. By their ancient confessions of faith, and other writings which have been published. In one of these, bearing date A.D. 1120, the 12th and 13th articles run this: "We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace; accounting it good, that the faithful sometimes use the said signs, or visible forms, if it may be done. However, we believe and hold, that the abovesaid faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place, nor any means to use them. We acknowledge no other sacrament but baptism and the Lord's Supper." [Morland's History, &c. B. I. ch. 4. p. 34]

And in another ancient confession, without a date, the 7th article is: "We believe that in the sacrament of baptism, water is the visible and external sign, which represents unto us that which (by the invisible virtue of God operating) is within us; namely, the renovation of the Spirit, and the mortification of our members in Jesus Christ; by which also we are received into the holy congregation of the people of God, there protesting and declaring openly our faith, and amendment of life." [Morland's History, p. 38]

In a tract, written in the language of the ancient inhabitants of the vallies, in the year 1100, called the Noble Lesson, are these words; speaking of the apostles it is observed of them, "they spoke without fear of the doctrine of Christ; they preached to Jews and Greeks, working many miracles, and those that believed they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." [Ibid. ch. 6. p. 99,112]

And in a treatise concerning antichrist, which contains many sermons of the barbs, collected in the year 1120,

and so speaks the sense of their ancient pastors before this time, stands the following passage: "The third work of antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the holy Spirit unto the dead outward work (or faith) baptizing children in that faith, and teaching, that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his christianity, which is against the holy Spirit." [Ibid. ch. 7. p. 112,118]

There are indeed two confessions of theirs, which are said to speak of infant baptism; but these are of a late date, both of them in the sixteenth century; and the earliest is not a confession of the Waldenses or Vaudois in the vallies of Piedmont, but of the Mohemians, said to be presented to Ladislaus, king of Bohemia, A.D. 1508, and afterwards amplified and explained, and presented to Ferdinand king of Bohemia, A.D. 1435; and it should be observed, that those people say, that they were falsely called Waldenses; [Morland's History, ch. 4. p. 43] whereas it is certain there were a people in Bohemia that came out of the vallies, and sprung from the old Waldenses, and were truly so, who denied infant baptism, as that sort of them called Pyghards or Picards; who, near a hundred years before the reformation, as we have seen by the letter sent to Erasmus out of Bohemia, rebaptized persons that joined in communion with them; and Scultetus, [Apud Hoornbeck. *Summa Controvers.* l. 5. p. 387] in his annals on the year 1528, says, that the united brethren in Bohemia, and other godly persons of that time, were rebaptized; not that they patronized the errors of the Anabaptists, (meaning such that they were charged with, which had no relation to baptism) but because they could not see how they could otherwise separate themselves from an unclean world. The other confession is indeed made by the ministers and heads of the churches in the vallies, assembled in Angrogue, Sep. 12, 1532. [Morland, *ibid.* ch. 4. p. 39] Now it should be known, that this was made after that "Peter Masson and George Morell were sent into Germany in the year 1530, as Morland says, to treat with the chief ministers of Germany, viz. Ocolampadius, Bucer, and others, touching the reformation of their churches; but Peter Masson was

taken prisoner at Dijon." However, as Fox says, Morell escaped, and returned alone to Merindol with the books and letters he brought with him from the churches of Germany; and declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them, how many great errors they were in; into the 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." After which, this confession was drawn up, signed, and swore to: from hence we learn where they might get this notion, which was now become matter of great debate in Switzerland and Germany; and yet after all this, I am inclined to think that the words of the article in the said confession, are to be so understood as not to relate to infant baptism: they are these: "We have but two sacramental signs left us by Jesus Christ; the one is baptism, the other is the eucharist, which we receive, to shew that our perseverance in the faith is such as we promised when we were baptized, being little children." This phrase, *being little children*, as I think, means their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of their receiving the eucharist, to shew their perseverance in the faith they then had promised to persevere in: besides, if this is to 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. [Morland, *ibid.* c. 7. p. 173] Besides, in a brief confession of faith, published by the reformed churches of Piedmont, so late as A.D. 1655, they have these words in favour of adult baptism; "that God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits: and there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the church under the new testament; to wit, baptism and the Lord's supper; that God has ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and

renewed in holiness of life:" [Ibid. c. 4. p. 61,67] nor is there one word in it of infant baptism.

Upon the whole, it will be easily seen what little reason the writer of the dialogue under consideration had to say, that the ancient Waldenses, being in the constant practice of adult baptism, is a chimerical imagination, and a groundless fiction; since there is nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were in the practice of it until the sixteenth century; for what is urged against it, is since that time: and even at that time there were some that continued in the practice of it; for Ludovicus Vives, who wrote in the said century, having observed, that "formerly no person was brought to the holy baptistry till he was of adult age, and when he both understood what that mystical water meant, and desired to be washed in it, yea, desired it more than once," adds the following words; "I hear in some cities in Italy, the old custom is still in a great measure preserved." [*Audio in quibusdam Italiae Urbibus morem veterem magna ex parte adhuc conservari.* Comment. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, Lib. I. c. 27] Now, what people should he mean by some cities of Italy, unless the remainders of the Petrobrussians, or Waldenses, as Dr. Wall observes, who continued that practice in the vallies of Piedmont: **and it should be observed, that there were different sects that went by the name of Waldenses, and some of them of very bad principles; some of them were Manichees, and held other errors: and indeed it was usual for the papists in former times, to call all by this name that dissented from them; so that it need not be wondered at, if some, bearing this name, were for infant baptism, and others not.** The Vaudois in the vallies, are the people chiefly to be regarded; and it will not be denied, that of late years infant baptism has obtained among them: but that the ancient Waldenses practised it, wants proof.

But it will be necessary to say a little "concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, whether by immersion or by sprinkling."

The author of the dialogue under consideration affirms that there is not one single lexicographer or critic upon the Greek language, he has ever seen, but what agrees,

that though the word *baptizo* sometimes signifies to *dip*, yet it also naturally signifies to *wash*; and that washing, in any mode whatsoever, is the native signification of the word *baptismos*; that the words *baptize* and *baptism*, (as used in the new testament) do not, from their signification, make dipping or plunging the necessary mode of administering the ordinance.

As to the lexicographers and critics on the Greek language, they agree that the word *baptizo* signifies, in its first and primary sense, to *dip* or *plunge*, and only in a secondary and consequential sense, to *wash*, but never to *pour* or *sprinkle*, there being no proper washing, but what is by dipping; and for this we appeal to all the writers of this kind, and even to those this author mentions.

Scapula, the first of them, renders *baptizo* by *mergo*, *seu immergo*, *ut quae tingendi, aut abluendi gratia aquae immergimus*, "to dip or plunges into, as what for the sake of dying or washing we dip into water;" item *mergo*, *submergo*, *obruo aqua*, "also to plunge, plunge under, overwhelm in water;" item *abluo*, *lavo*, also to wash off, wash;" and *baptizomai*, he renders, by *mergor*, *submergor*, "to be plunged, plunged under;" and observes, that it is used metaphorically for *obruor*, to be overwhelmed; and *baptismos*, and *baptisma*, he says, is *mersio*, *lotio*, *ablutio*, *ipse immergendi*, *item lavandi*, *seu abluendi actus*, "plunging, washing, ablution." In all which, he makes dipping, or plunging, to be the first and preferable sense of the words.

Stephens gives the same sense of the words, and so Schrevelius, who renders *baptizo*, *mergo lavo*, baptize, plunge, wash. Pasor only renders it *baptizo*, baptize, without determining its sense. And Leigh, in his *Critica Sacra*, observes, that "the nature and proper signification of it is, "to dip into water, or to plunge under water;" and refers to John 3:22,23; Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38. And cites Casaubon, Bacanus, Bullinger, and Zanchy, as agreeing and testifying to this sense of it; and *baptisma*, he says, is "dipping into water, or washing with water." And these are the lexicographers and critics our author refers us to: to which I may add the lexicon, compiled by Budaeus, Constantine, and others, who render the word *baptizo*, by *immergo*,

mergo, intingo, lavacro tingo, abluo, maderfacio, lavo, mundo; plunge, plungs into, dip into, dip in a laver, wash off, make wet, wash, cleanse: and *baptismos*, they say, is *tingendi, hoc est mergendi*, *Actio, in quo significatu Tinctura dicitur*. "The action of tinging, that is, of plunging; in which signification it is called a tincture," or dying; and another by Hadrian Junius, who renders *baptizo*, by *immergo*, to plunge into; and *baptismos*, by *immersio, lotio, baptismus*, immersion, washing, baptism.

As for other critics on the Greek language, who assert, that the proper signification of the word *baptizo*, is to dip, or plunge; they are so numerous, that it would be tedious to reckon them up: I shall only mention a few of them, and their words. Calvin says, "*Ipsum baptizandi Verbum mergere significat, & mergendi Ritum veteri Ecclesie observatum fuisse constat*. The word, baptize, signifies to plunge; and it is plain that the rite of plunging was observed in the ancient church." Beza, who must be allowed to be a learned critic in the Greek language, says on Mark 7:4, "*Neque vero to baptizein, significat lavare, nisi a consequenti, nam proprie declarat tingendi Causa immergere*. Neither does the word *baptizo* signify to wash, unless consequentially; for it properly signifies, to plunge into, for the sake of tinging," or dying; and "on Matt. 3:11, he says, *significat autem to baptizein, tingere, quum para to baptein, dicatur, & quum tingenda mergantur*. The word *baptizo*, signifies to dip (as dyers in the Vatt) seeing it comes from *bapto*, to dip, and seeing things, that are to be dyed, are dipped." Casaubon, another great critic on the Greek language, has these words on Matt. 3:6, "*Hic enim fuit baptizandi Ritus ut in Aquas immergerentur, quod vel ipso Vox baptizein, declarat salis--unde intelligimus non esse ab re, quod jam pridem nonnulli dispatarant de toto Corpore immergendo in Ceremonia baptismi; vocem enim baptizein, urgebant*. For this was the rite of baptizing, that persons should be plunged into water, which the word *baptizo* sufficiently declares; hence, we understand, that it was not foreign from the matter, which some, sometime ago, disputed, concerning plunging the whole body in the ceremony of baptism; for they urged the signification of the word, *baptizo*." And, that this is the proper

signification of the word, he observes, in his notes on Acts 1:5 and 2:4.

To which I shall only add one more critic, and that is Grotius; who, on Matt. 3:6, thus writes; "*Mersatione autem non perfusione agi solitum hunc Ritum indicat & Vocis proprietas, & Loca ad eum Ritum delecta, (John 3:23; Acts 8:38) & Allusiones multae Apostolorum quae ad Aspersione referri non possunt, (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12).*" That this rite used to be performed by plunging, and not by pouring, both the propriety of the word, and the places chosen for this rite show, (John 3:23; Acts 8:38) and the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referring to sprinkling, (Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12)." I might have here subjoined some instances of the use of the word in Greek authors, by which it appears to have the sense of dipping and plunging, and not of pouring or sprinkling; but this has been largely done by Dr. Gale and others.(D)

Wherefore, upon the whole, let the reader judge which is the most proper and significative rite, used in the administration of the ordinance of baptism; whether immersion, which is the proper and primary sense of the word baptism, and is confirmed to be the rite used, by the places in which baptism was administered; and by several scriptural instances and examples of it, as well as by allusive expressions; and which fitly represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ: or, sprinkling, which the word baptism never signifies, and is not confirmed by any of the said ways; nor does it represent any thing for which baptism is administered. Let it be therefore seriously considered, what a daring thing it is to introduce into this ordinance subjects which Christ never appointed, and a mode of administering it, never used by him or his apostles. In matters of worship, God is a jealous God. The case of Nadab and Abihu ought to be remembered by us, who offered strange fire which the Lord commanded not. In things relating to religious worship, as this ordinance of baptism is a part of divine worship, we ought to have a direction from God, either a precept or a precedent: and we ought to keep to the rule, both as to matter and manner, and not dare to innovate in either, lest it should be said to us,

Who hath required this at your hands? and become chargeable with will-worship, and with teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

CHAPTER I

A.D. 45 - 1180

They supposed, that the gospel was introduced at a very early period into this country, which, at the commencement of the Christian era, was, like other heathen nations, full of the habitations of cruelty. Our forefathers were, as historians may be credited, gross idolaters, and were accustomed to offer up their prisoners taken in war, as sacrifices to their gods. It is said, they made a statue, or image of a man of a prodigious size, whose limbs consisted of twigs of wood, after the manner of basketwork; this they filled with living men, and setting it on fire, burned them to death!

Different opinions respecting the time when the gospel was first preached in Britain, and also by whom the introduction of the salvation was at first proclaimed. Bishop Newton says, "There is some probability that the gospel was preached in Britain by the apostle; there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and there is absolute certainty that Christianity was planted here in the times of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem."

It is also related, that "Pomponia Graecina, wife of Pautius, and Claudia Ruffina, a British lady, are supposed to be of the same family as were in Caesar's household, mentioned by Paul, Phil. 3:22." Pautius was in Britain, A.D. 45: it is probable, that they have returned with him; and it has been thought, from this statement of Tacitus, that this lady was the first Christian in Britain. Claudia is celebrated by Martial for her admirable beauty and learning, in the following epigram;

How did Britons how was Claudia [2 Tim. 4:21] born!

How did Britons how do arts adorn!

How do charms a Grecian soul commend,

Rome may for the dame contend." [Rapin, vol. i, p. 14]

by an ancient British author, says, that 'Claudia sent Paul's writings, which he calls spiritual manna, unto her
Britain; to feed their souls with the bread of life: and also, the writings of Martial, to instruct their minds with
the best fitting to produce moral virtues:" which Speed thinks was the occasion of this line in Martial's works—

And now (they say) our verses learn to sing." [p. 73]

The most ancient and authentic British historian, who wrote about A.D. 564, in his book called De Vict. Aurelli
affirms, that the Britons received the gospel under Tiberius, the emperor under whom Christ suffered; and that
apostles were sent from the apostles into this nation, who were the first planters of the gospel, and which, he
says, continued with them until the cruel persecution of Dioclesian the emperor, about A.D. 290.

As Ecclesiastical History, says, "It is generally agreed, that about the year 167, many pagan temples in Britain had
been altered, and that they were converted into Christian churches; particularly that dedicated to Diana in London,
near it formerly consecrated to Apollo, in the city now called Westminster." [Ecclesiastical History, Book 1. p.

It is corroborated by Fox, the English martyrologist, who says, "Out of an ancient book of the antiquities of
Britain we find the epistle of Eleutherius, written to Lucius king of Britain, A.D. 169, who had written to Eleutherius for
laws to govern by: in answer to which, Eleutherius says, 'You have received, through God's mercy, in the realm
the law and faith of Christ; you have with you both the parts of the scripture; out of them, by God's grace, with
the law of your realm, take ye a law, and by that law, by God's sufferance, rule your kingdom of Britain.'" [Fuller, v. i.

He then mentions this epistle of Eleutherius, in such language as proves him to have understood the genuine
of the gospel [Fuller, v. i. p. 25]; and speaks highly respecting king Lucius; of whom there is a curious piece of
writing on a brass plate in the church of St. Peter's, Cornhill. This plate is included in an antique frame of oak, and
runs thus:

Knowe to all men that in the yeare of our Lorde God 179, Lucius the first Christian king of this Land, then called
Britain, founded the first church in London: that is to say, the church of St. Peter upon Cornehill: and hee founded there an
episcopal's See, and made that Church the Metropolitane and chiefe Church of this Kingdome, and so it endured the
100 yeares and more unto the coming of St. Austin the apostle of England. The which was sent into this land by St.
Augustine Doctor of the Church in the time of King Ethelbert: And then was the Archbishop's See and Pall removed from
the Church of St. Peter upon Cornehill unto Dorobernica, that now is called Canterburie, and there it remaineth to

l Millet a Monke which came into this land with St. Austin, Hee was made first Bishop of London, and his See
Paul's Church, and this Lucius King was the first founder of St. Peter's Church upon Cornhill, and hee
g in this Land after Brute 1245, Yeares. And in the yeare of our Lorde God 124, Lucius was crowned King, and
f his reigne were 77 yeares and hee was buried (after some Chronicles) at London: and after some Chronicles
ied at Glocester, in that place where the Order of St. Francis standeth now."

conversion of Lucius till the time of the persecution under Dioclesian, the ecclesiastical history of Britain is
nown. That the Christian religion, however, made great progress during that interval of eight years, seems
m Tertullian, Origen, Bede, and Gildas.

ianity was established by Constantine the great, it appears that Christians multiplied exceedingly, and that the
ded with churches. This celebrated emperor being a native of Britain, as was also, according to Bishop
and some others, Helene, his mother, it is highly probable that he showed particular favour to his countrymen,
them his protection. Speed says, "Constantine the great was born and brought up here in Britain by queen
ost virtuous and religious lady; unto whose days the succession of Christianity did here continue as by the
of many saints in the reign of Dioclesian, is apparent." [p. 77]

at there were British bishops at the council of Nice, A.D. 325. But though this cannot be fully proved, it is not at
since twenty-two years after, there were certainly three British bishops at the council of Arles, who are
have been those of London, York, and Caer-leon in Wales. There were also some at the council of Arminum in
poor, that their charges were borne by their brethren. Du Pin says, "The bishops of France and Britain chose
r their own expences than accept of the emperor's allowance, which they thought it beneath them to do."
story of England, p. 29]

ear 448, the Saxons began to settle in Britain; and for more than a century were perpetually harassing the
they forced them to retire from their country, and settle in Wales. Their cruelties are described in a very
anner by Bede and Gildas, the latter of whom says, "From the east to the west nothing was to be seen but
rnt and destroyed to their very foundations. The inhabitants were extirpated by the sword, and buried under the
r own houses. The altars were daily profaned by the blood of those slain thereon." [Rapin, p. 44] It is very
ble, that after this statement, he should blame the Britons for suffering their neighbours to live so long in
low was it possible that they could, with any prospect of success, attempt to convert them, by whom they were
eated, and who were endeavouring to exterminate them?

ere driven into Wales, whither their invaders could not follow them, religion began again to flourish. Two large
re formed; one at Bangor in the north, the other at Caer-leon in the south. From the following account, it should
ese institutions resembled that now formed by the Baptist missionaries at Serampore, where one fund is
from which the wants of all, however differently engaged, are supplied.

forms us, that "In Bangor was a college containing 2100 Christians, who dedicated themselves to the Lord to the ministry as they became capable, to whom was attributed the name of the monks of Bangor. Yet did they hold with the popish monks of that or the following age? for they were not reduced to any ecclesiastical order, but the most part laymen, who laboured with their hands, married and followed their callings: only some of them, as the Lord fitted and inclined to his more immediate service, devoted themselves to the study of the scriptures, and daily exercises, in order, to the work of the ministry, who sent out many useful instruments." [Danvers, History of Wales, 336]

was religion in Wales, when Austin the monk was sent into England by Gregory the seventh, bishop of Rome, with a sign of converting the Saxons, or English and bringing them into conformity to the church of Rome. To this, "Gregory ordered him not to pull down the idol temples, but convert them into Christian churches. The king's injunction was this; that the natives, by frequenting the same temples they had been always accustomed to, be less shocked at their entrance into Christianity: and therefore his Holiness directed that the idols should be destroyed, and those places of worship sprinkled with holy water." [Biog. Brit. Art. Augustin]

the year 596, when Ethelbert was king of Kent. At his court, Augustin opened his mission, which was attended with success, that the king, and his queen Bertha, and a great number of his subjects, very soon made a public profession of Christianity. The king was so zealous a convert, that he bequeathed his own palace to the church, and retired to it, that Austin might be more at his ease at Canterbury. Notwithstanding all these favours, and the princely style in which he lived, this pious apostle could enjoy no content while the British clergy lived independent of his authority, and in a state of subjection to the bishop of Rome.

ly, therefore, of the desire which Austin had to diffuse the knowledge of the gospel in general, we find he was very zealous for his own authority, and extremely desirous to subject the British Christians in the remote parts of the island to the metropolitan jurisdiction, and to the doctrine and discipline of the church of Rome. This circumstance is the more remarkable, as the British bishops of that age had more enlarged views of things; accordingly they disclaimed all dependence on the church of Rome, and nobly asserted their independence.

of a conference which Austin held with some of the Christians of the college of Bangor, is thus related by Bede:

of Ethelberte he assembled and gathered the byshoppes, and doctours of Britayne that were before disparkled. This Assemble was called long after, Austin's Oke; which is expounded to be Austeyn's strengthe, and is in the north of the Angles and of the west Saxons. In this place he charged the sayd bishoppes, that they should with him preach the gospel to the Anglis; and also that they should amonge themselves amend certain errours, then used in the church: and that they should keepe their Easter tide, wher against the byshoppes of Britayne held opinion til Austany shewed

cle by a blind Anglis or Saxon. After the which myracle shewed, the sayd byshoppes replied to the will of that cause. But for all this, there was of them that said, that they might not leave the custome which they so continued, without assente of all such as had used the same. Then he gathered a synode, to the which came seven of Brytons with the wysest men of that famous abbey of Bangor. But first, they took counsel of an holy man, should be obediente to Austanye or not. And he said, if ye find him humble, or meke, as to Christes disciple that then they should asent to him, which mekenes they shoude perceave in him, if he at their coming into the counsell, arose agayne them. When the sayde bishops entered the sayd synode, Austain sat styl in the chaire, and said: whereupon they were wroth and disdayned him and would not obey his requestes.

yd, Sins ye wol not asent to my hestes generally assent ye to me specially in iii things.

that ye kepe Ester in due fourme and time as it is ordayned. The second, THAT YE GIVE CHRISTENDOME TO THE BRITISH. And the thyrde is, that ye preache unto the Anglis the worde of God as aforetimes I have exhorted you. In other deale, I shall suffer you to amend and reform within yourselves: but they would not thereof.

ayne sayd unto them, and warned them by manner of inspyration, That since they wold not receave peace of Austain, they shoulde of other receave warre and wretche: the which was after put in experience by Ethelfridus King of Northumberland." [Fabian's Chron. part v. p. 115,116]

In his English Historical Library, after exposing some pious frauds, says, "Bede's account of the remonstrance of the monks of Bangor, against the pretensions of this legate Augustine, challenging a supremacy for his master, is of great value. The critique of Bishop Stillingfleet on it deserves attention. "There is (he says) all the appearance of ingenuity and craftiness that can be expected; and he [Bede] was a person of too great judgment and sagacity to be easily imposed upon by a modern invention, or a new formed schedule."

It is confirmed by other ancient writers. Geoffrey of Monmouth tells us, that "in the country of the Britons Christianity flourished, which never decayed even from the apostles' time; amongst whom, says he, was the preaching of sincere doctrine, and living faith, and such form of worship as was delivered to the churches by the apostles; and that they even to death withstood the Romish rites and ceremonies; and that as long as the British churches in the country, they kept themselves sound in the faith, and pure in the worship, order, and discipline of Christ, as it was delivered to them from the apostles and evangelists." [Danvers, p. 334]

In his Ecclesiastical History [Book ii, p. 69], has translated some verses of the ancient bard, Taliessin, recorded in the History of Wales; which show how much they opposed Romish innovations.

the priest unborn,

that cleanly weed his corne
his flock among;
that shepherd, I say,
that watch his fold always,
his vice doth belong.
That man that doth not keep,
that shew his wolves his sheep,
his sword weapon strong."

opinion, that Austin died before the dreadful massacre of the Britons took place, but not till after he had baptized
him in the river Swale, at the mouth of the Medway, on a Christmas day. Others think this was performed by

Fabian gives of the destruction of the Britons and of the monastery of Bangor is confirmed by Humphrey
learned Welch antiquary in his Breviary of Britain. "In Denbighshire (says he) near the castle of Holt, is seen the
reliques of the monastery of Bangor, while the glory of the Britons flourished: in the same were 2,000 monks
ordered and learned, divided into seven parts, daily serving God; amongst whom those that were simple and
by their handy labour, provided meat and drink and apparel for the learned and such as applied themselves to
; and if any thing was remaining, they divided it among the poor. That place sent forth many hundred of
well learned men; amongst whom it also vomited forth to the world Pelagius. And afterward by the envy and
Austin, that arrogant monk, and the most cruel execution of his minister Ethelfrid, those worthy men were
the whole house from the very foundation, together with the library more precious than gold, was razed down,
shed by fire and sword: and hence it is manifest, that this bloody massacre of those glorious witnesses for Christ
from their Christian courage and zeal against those antichristian impositions of the Romish church." [Danvers, p.

that after this the Romish pontiff obtained the sovereign dominion in ecclesiastical affairs, as we find that Ina,
kings of the West Saxons, in the seventh century passed a law--"That every family possessed of goods to the
ten pence, should pay one penny a year to blessed St. Peter, and the church of Rome. He also prescribed a
deferring the baptism of infants beyond thirty days, and a much greater when any died unbaptized." [Toulmin's
Faunt, p. 6] This tax continued to be paid for several centuries, and was known by the name of Peter's pence.

few, but valuable fragments of the ancient Britons, we discover much of the genuine simplicity of Christianity.
scriptures the only rule of their faith and practice, they easily discovered the antichristian spirit of Austin, and

those ceremonies which he strove to introduce. It is not at all wonderful, therefore, that they should refuse to lend countenance to such an opinion.

by Dr. Gill, that infant baptism, for the purpose of taking away original sin, had been enforced by anathemas in a council about two centuries before; and it is also known that Gregory the great, who sent Austin into England, says as follows: "Let all young children be baptized as they ought to be, according to the tradition of the fathers." [p. 130]

A decree being expressed in such general terms, infants not being particularly mentioned, we account for the opinion which Austin himself had on the subject soon after he came to Britain. Among other interrogatories proposed to him the following respecting children; "Lest they should be prevented by death, after how many days ought they to be baptized?" To which Gregory replied, "If present necessity, arising from fear of death, doth so require, we do not think it necessary to baptize the same hour in which it is born." It is hardly conceivable that this question could have been asked had the practice of infant baptism been of apostolic origin, or if the English had not made some objections against it. This is further corroborated by a circumstance mentioned by Hogo Grotius in his Commentary on Matt. xix. 14. He says, "All evidence (says he) that Infant baptism was not usually practised in the Greek church during many centuries, is only Constantine the great, the son of Helene, who was a zealous Christian, was not baptized till he was of an age; but that also Gregory Nazianzen, who was the son of a Christian bishop, and brought up for a long time by his parents, was not baptized till he came to years." If it be admitted that Infant baptism was then unknown in Britain, the child's not being baptized in his infancy is easily accounted for: but upon no other principle can we account for this than that of his godly parents, which Fox says they were.

To obtain as much light as possible on this very interesting subject, we subjoin the following statement of Dr. H. Hall, a celebrated writer on Nonconformity, who in a work entitled, "God's concern for his glory in the British isles," has paid considerable attention to this subject. He relates, from Gildas, "That Christ shewing his bright light to all the world, by his precepts, in the latter end of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when his religion was propagated without hindrance." On this statement of Gildas, the Doctor remarks,

"That, of the publication of the gospel in Britain, which has been the most prevailing opinion, we must allow him to have the better advantages for knowing this with certainty than we have at this distance. According to this account, Christianity was preached in it within five years of our Saviour's crucifixion, which was very early, perhaps too early, if circumstances considered, for a place that lay so remote. All ancient writers, however, agree, that Christianity was introduced into this land very soon, considering its distance from Judea.

It is, that after Christianity obtained here, a great part of the inhabitants still continued pagans, and yet our holy religion made a progress. As it got ground, the temples of their ancient idols were some of them destroyed, and others of them dedicated to the true and living God. We have no account of such severities here in the primitive times against the worship of a crucified Jesus, as in other countries. That which was the last of the ten persecutions under the Roman

seems to have been the first that affected this island. But in the general calamity, in the reign of Dioclesian and about 303, the Christians here were very great sufferers. It is said, that Maximian almost rooted out the Christian in Britain, and that they who suffered martyrdom were almost beyond number. Gildas tells us, that their churches were burnt down, and all the books of holy scriptures that could be found, were burnt in the streets; and the chosen priests of our Lord, together with the innocent sheep, murdered. St. Alban of Verulam, and Julius of Carlisle upon Usk in Shropshire, and many others, sealed the truth with their blood.

When the storm was over, which did not last much above a year, the Christians here, as well as in other parts, fled out into the woods and dens and caves, where they had hid themselves, and rebuilt their demolished churches, and flourished to a great degree, both in peace and unity. They were much favoured by Constantius, the father of Constantine, who continued a great part of his life here in Britain, and would suffer no man to die for his religion in his dominions. It was here also that Constantine himself, who was a native of this island, first declared himself a Christian, or inclined that way, which it is thought he would have publicly done, had not a good part of his army been of that religion; and upon his advancement to the throne, it is not to be wondered at, if more splendour attended Christianity as it was here professed, than had been before. But I have not, upon the strictest inquiry I have been able to make, hitherto been able to discern any ground to apprehend, that from the beginning, churches or places of worship were so nobly adorned, or church architecture so modelled in this island, as some time after; or that the prelatical form of government was any part of that which was at first declared in this island.

The island (as the Doctor) was also sadly infested with the Picts and Scots, which after various struggles, when no more could be had from the Romans, was the occasion of calling in the Saxons to their assistance. These Saxons, whom Bede calls 'A nation odious to God and man,' came hither to be a scourge to the Britons, about the year of Christ 450. They were at first received as guests, and treated as stipendiaries, in opposition to the barbarians; but at length found themselves strong enough to set up for masters, laid the whole country waste, drove the old British Christians into the mountains of Wales, and occasioned such confusion and desolation, as Gildas, who wrote a few years after, thought fit to be enough lamented. That writer describes their cruelties, and the judgment of heaven upon a sinful people, and how they were the instruments of inflicting, in such a manner, as must needs affect all that read his account. He says, 'that they, with the beating of the drums, and all the townsmen, pastors, priests and people, with naked swords that they held in all sides, and crackling flames, were together whirled to the ground.' And our historians say, that they scarcely left any trace of Christianity where they prevailed. And yet pure religion was not even then extirpated from the island.

When Bede wrote his history about the year 731, gives us a great deal of light, though allowance must be made for his being an Englishman, and not very friendly to the British churches, and for his having a monastic tincture. Christianity, in a new form, with great improvements as to outward pomp, was during this period received from Rome, through the hands of Augustine the monk, about the year 598. But there was a purer Christianity in the island before, that was much freer from superstitions and corruptions than that which was now introduced under the same name. There were great contests between the old stamp, and those of the new. The former lived in Wales and Scotland, and the latter in the heart of the island. That there were considerable debates on foot of this island, between Conformists and Nonconformists, in ancient and modern times; and the one sort were apt to carry it with a high hand, and the other forced to be satisfied with the plainness of their own integrity then as well as now. The Conformists then were, in all things, for the methods of

f Rome; and the Nonconformists were for the ways and methods of the ancient Christians, and disowned
They were called too, the Schismatics of Britain and Ireland; because they would not receive the Romish
nor submit to the authority by which they were imposed.

601, Austin called a synod, to which the bishops or doctors of the next province of the Britons were summoned,
the abbot of Bangor gave him a free answer to his demand of conformity to Rome. He told him 'that the ancient
of this island were obedient and subject to the church of God, and to the pope of Rome, and every godly
love every one in his degree, in perfect charity; and to help every one of them by word and deed, which were
of God: And other obedience than this he knew not to be due to him whom he called the pope, etc.' Many of the
, not long after, lost their lives in return for this freedom and resolution." [Dr. Calamy, "God's concern for his
British isles"]

ed the great contest respecting Easter, Dr. Calamy thus proceeds; "It ought not to be forgotten that the
between these old Conformists and Nonconformists did not lie only in the time of keeping Easter: They differed
baptism. For that was one of the three things which Austin insisted on in his conversation with the British
that they should for the future administer baptism after the manner of the church of Rome, which is an argument
to do so before."

It should seem, that this candid statement would make an impression on the minds of his readers, that these
ish Nonconformists were also Baptists, the doctor proceeds to make some comments upon it "Wherein the
says he, "between the old Britons and the Romans properly lay about baptism, is not so evident. Pits frankly
not know what it was. Nor does Bede explain it, nor any of our ancient writers that I have conversed with.
thought they differed about the subjects of baptism; and that whereas the Romans baptized infants, the Britons
infant baptism; and an argument has been drawn from thence by the Anti-pedobaptists. But an answer is
t by Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism, where he says that 'Pelagius being a native of Britain, his
never heard of any Christian, catholic, or sectary, that denied infant baptism, is a good evidence that his
did not do it.' It seems more likely that this difference should have been about the mode of baptism; and the
of Austin, as Bede relates the matter, seem to look that way. For he would have them administer baptism, for the
the manner of the church of Rome. Now I know nothing so remarkable (continues Dr. Calamy,) in the manner
in the church of Rome at that time, as the trine immersion. That this was customary in that church is asserted by
Strabo; and though we have no positive evidence that I know of, that a single immersion, or aspersion, or
water, was used among the ancient Britons in their baptism; yet till something else is mentioned, with a surer
of probability, I am inclined to believe this was the matter of that part of the difference."

ing statement by Dr. Calamy, and his reflections upon it, require some animadversion.

edges, that there is no positive evidence that the Britons used single immersion, aspersion, or pouring, in their
t takes it for granted that one of these must have been the mode, in order to justify the alteration proposed by

why does he speak of aspersion, and of pouring? We know from incontrovertible evidence, that they used Austin baptized in a river; "where," says Mr. Fox, "note by the way, gentle reader, at that time there could be no " Immersion, therefore, being the mode then used, it should seem, according to the foregoing hypothesis, that issue between Austin and the Britons was, whether baptism should be performed by a single or a trine This hypothesis, however, is inadmissible, being as improbable as it is unsupported. But let it be admitted that proposal was to baptize infants, after the manner of the church of Rome, instead of baptizing adults on a profession then the proposition will, on the one hand, be suitable for the pope's legate to make, as an indispensable a union with the catholic church, which could not exist without it; and, on the other hand, it will appear to be an great, that primitive Christians could not submit to it, without a sacrifice of principle and of conscience, to death itself was preferable.

appears obvious from the very face of Austin's request to the British Christians that he was urging them to adopt m. He requested three things, the second of which was "that ye give Christendom to children." That request made no sense had the British Christians been in the custom of baptizing infants by any mode whatsoever. D.W.

jection which Dr. Calamy makes to this is, a partial quotation from Dr. Wall. But if the whole of what the latter en stated, it would have appeared that this objection had no weight. The words of Pelagius, as translated by Dr. That men do slander him, as if he denied the sacrament of baptism to infants, and did promise the kingdom of ay persons without the redemption of Christ, which he had never heard, no not even any impious heretic or ! By these words, it is true, Dr. Wall understands Pelagius to mean, "that he had never heard of any Christian, ectary, that denied infant baptism." But does Pelagius mean this? I think not. His meaning seems to have been, never heard, no, not even any impious heretic or sectary say, that the kingdom of heaven could be obtained redemption of Christ. The suspicion of his denying infant baptism seems to have arisen from his denying for the church of Rome had appointed infant baptism, to wash away original sin, and had decreed that without it oe saved.

rehension of Pelagius by Dr. Wall is the only thing which has been made use of to disprove the opinion of the t the ancient British christians were of similar sentiments with themselves.

proposal to the British christians was, that they should give christendom to children after the manner of the me, I should understand it to mean that they should christen children, as the church of Rome did. But the r the manner of the church of Rome," are not in the copy of Fabian at the London institution: the proposition of ere said to have been, that they should give christendom to children. Dr. Wall indeed says that the proposition as ed it is in a copy of Fabian at Oxford; and he also represents Mr. Wills as saying that Fabian professes in his ave copied it from Bede, though the doctor adds that he had not seen it. There is, however, an internal evidence, osition respected the subjects of baptism, and that the words, "after the manner of the church of Rome," were e historian, or by some one of his copiers, and did not constitute a part of the original proposition. For if the osition had only respected a mode of baptism, why should any thing have been said concerning the subjects of

en sufficient to have proposed to give christendom after the manner of the church of Rome, without saying
out giving it to children. Whereas if the difference between the church of Rome and the British churches
e subjects of baptism, and the proposition was that christendom should be given to children, it was natural for
t to add that this was after the manner of the church of Rome.

; till something better be offered to disprove our inference from the above-mentioned premises, that these
ristians knew nothing of infant baptism, we shall continue to consider them, as being in sentiment and practice,
ponents call us—Antipedobaptists.

CHAPTER II

A.D. 1180 - 1540

The darkness which succeeded the introduction of popery was so prevalent, that, excepting the valleys of Piedmont, which were the residence of the Waldensian churches, it soon spread over the whole of Europe, and rendered invisible every trace of the simplicity of the gospel of Christ.

THE WALDENSIAN CHRISTIANS are celebrated in history for their opposition to the antichristian usurpations of the church of Rome. The learned archbishop Usher, in his book entitled *The succession and state of the Christian Churches* [p. 242], traces its succession through them, in distinction from and in opposition to the papacy. They underwent the most dreadful persecutions; and every means which malice and cruelty could invent was used to exterminate them and their principles from the earth. The crusade against them consisted of five hundred thousand men. More than three hundred gentlemen's seats were razed and many walled towns destroyed.

The persecutions, however, which they suffered were far from accomplishing the design of their enemies. The archbishop says, that "as the persecution about Stephen by that dispersion proved much for the furtherance of the gospel in other parts of the world, so was it here: for those that were not so fit for the war went up and down with more freedom into most parts of Europe. Insomuch that Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II, confessed, that neither the decrees of popes, nor armies of Christians, could extirpate them."

The archbishop farther informs us, on the authority of Matthew Paris of Westminster, that "the Berengarian or Waldensian heresy had, about the year 1180, generally infected all France, Italy, and England." Guitmond, a popish writer of that time, also says, that "not only the weaker sort in the country villages, but the nobility and gentry in the chief towns and cities, were infected therewith; and therefore Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, who held this see both in the reigns of William the conqueror and of his son William Rufus, wrote against them in the year 1087." The archbishop adds, from Poplinus's history of France, that "the Waldenses of Aquitaine did, about the year 1100, during the reigns of Henry I and Stephen, kings of England, spread themselves and their doctrines all over Europe," and mentions England in particular. [Danvers on baptism, p. 175-178]

We learn from Fox, on the authority of Robert Gulsborne, that in the time of Henry II, about the year 1158, two eminent Waldensian preachers and barbs, Gerhardus and Dulcinus, came into England to propagate the gospel; and archbishop Usher, from Thomas Walden, says, that "several Waldenses that came out of France were apprehended, and by the king's command were marked in the forehead with a key or hot iron." "Which sect, (says William of Newbury, in his history of England,) were called the Publicani, whose original was from Gascoyne; and who, being as numerous as the sand of the sea, did sorely infest both France, Italy, Spain, and England."

Rapin, in relating the transactions of the councils of Henry II, gives the following account of these people, on the authority of the above-mentioned historian. "Henry ordered a council to meet at Oxford in 1166, to examine the tenets of certain heretics, called Publicani. Very probably they were disciples of the Waldenses, who began then to appear. When they were asked in the council, who they were; they answered, they were Christians, and followers of the apostles. After that, being questioned upon the creed, their replies were very orthodox as to the trinity and incarnation. But, (adds Rapin,) if the historian is to be depended on, they rejected baptism, the eucharist, marriage, and the communion of saints. They shewed a great deal of modesty and meekness in their whole behaviour. When they were threatened with death, in order to oblige them to renounce their tenets, they only said, Blessed are they that suffer for righteousness sake." [History of England, vol. i. p. 350]

There is no difficulty in understanding what were their sentiments on these heretical points. When a monk says they rejected the eucharist, it is to be understood that they rejected the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation; when he says that they rejected marriage, he means that they denied it to be a sacrament, and maintained it to be a civil institution; when he says that they rejected the communion of saints, nothing more is to be understood than that they refused to hold communion with the corrupt church of Rome; and when he says that they rejected baptism, what are we to understand but that they rejected the baptism of infants? These were the errors for which they were branded with a hot iron in their foreheads, by those who had "the mark of the beast, both in their foreheads and in their hands."

Paul Stransky, de Republica Bohemorum, p. 272, (as quoted by David Cranz in his History of the United Brethren, translated by La Trobe, p. 16,) says, "the Waldenses, in 1176, arrived in Bohemia, and settled at Satz and Laun on the river Eger. These joined those Bohemians, who were still tenacious of the rites of the Greek church. They showed them the defects of their religious exercises; and introduced among them a purer knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith, according to the word of God. By this means the upright were confirmed in the faith, and such as were fallen asleep, again awakened."

"These ancient Christians," says Cranz, after having made the above quotation, "(who, besides the several names of reproach given them, were at length denominated Waldenses, from one of the their most eminent teachers PETER WALDUS who is said to have emigrated with the rest from France into Bohemia, and there to have died) date their origin from the beginning of the fourth century; when one Leo, at the great revolution in religion under Constantine the Great, opposed the innovations of Sylvester, bishop of Rome. Nay, Rieger goes farther still, taking them for the remains of the people of the Vallies, who, when the apostle Paul, as is said, made a journey over the Alps into Spain, were converted to Christ."

"The testimony of their enemies themselves (continues Cranz) seems to corroborate this conjecture. Sancho Reinerus, an apostate, and persecutor of the Waldenses in the thirteenth century, writes, 'Amongst all sects, none is more pernicious than that of the Poor of Lyons (which is another denomination of the Waldenses) for three reasons: 1. Because it is the most ancient. Some aver their existence from the days of Sylvester; others, from the very time of the Apostles. 2. Because it is so universal; for there is hardly a country into which this sect has not crept. 3. Because all others render themselves detestable by their blasphemies; but this has

a great appearance of godliness, they living a righteous life before men, believing right concerning God, confessing all the articles of the creed, only hating the pope of Rome, etc."

"This, (says Cranz) continued above two hundred years, till 1391, when, being discovered through the imprudence of two of their preachers, they were cruelly persecuted, and, for the most part, dispersed abroad in the adjacent countries. Yet many witnesses of the truth remained in Bohemia; who, not only in private, but in the churches and schools, and in the very court-chapel at Prague, testified against the corruption in doctrine and practice, which now broke in more and more like a torrent; to which they were farther greatly encouraged by the writings of Wickliffe, brought from England by the young noblesse who studied there."

Roger de Hovedon, in his Annals, says, that in the year 1182, "Henry II was very favourable to the Waldensian sect in England; for whereas they burnt them in many places of Flanders, Italy, and France, in great numbers, he would not suffer any such thing here; and being in his own and his queen's right possessed of Aquitain, Poictou, Guien, Gascoyne, Normandy, etc. the principal places inhabited by the Waldenses and Albigenses, and they being his subjects, they had free egress into his territories here."

During the reigns of Richard I and king John, which were times of great trouble, we read of no opposition made against them. Richard was long absent in the holy war. John had great contests with the pope, who laid his kingdom under an interdict, and forbad all public worship for the space of six years, only admitting of private baptism to infants. This, with the opposition made to him by the barons, found him so much employment, that these Christians had no molestation, but had great opportunities for disseminating their principles; while the king by his arms defended the Waldenses and Albigenses in Aquitain and Gascoyne, who were so much oppressed by the crusading army of the pope.

In the reign of Henry III, archbishop Usher says, from Matthew Paris, "the orders of the Friars Minorites came into England to suppress this Waldensian heresy." And in the reign of Edward III, about the year 1315, Fuller informs us, in his ecclesiastical history, that "WALTER LOLLARD, that German preacher, or, (as Perrin calls him in his history of the Waldenses,) one of their barbs, came into England, a man in great renown among them; and who was so eminent in England that, as in France they were called Berengarians from Berengarius, and Petrobrusians from Peter Bruis, and in Italy and Flanders, Arnoldists, from the famous Arnold of Brescia; so did the Waldensian Christians for many generations after bear the name of this worthy man, being called Lollards."

As this is an historical fact of great importance for discovering the origin of those sentiments which at length produced a reformation in the kingdom, and an emancipation from the church of Rome, it is very desirable TO ASCERTAIN THE OPINION OF THESE ZEALOUS CHRISTIANS ON THE QUESTION OF INFANT BAPTISM, since it will furnish us with a clue by which to judge of the principles of those who were afterwards such eminent asserters of Christian liberty.

If the reader will turn to what is said by Dr. Gill on this subject, in the extracts prefixed to this work, he will find the opinion of William of Newbury (as recited by Rapin) confirmed, respecting their denial of baptism; that is, of infant baptism.

In addition to these proofs may be mentioned what is said by Chessanion, in his History of the Albigenses, who (he says) were of the same sentiments. "Some writers, (says he,) affirm that the Albigenses approved not the baptism of infants; others that they entirely slighted this holy sacrament, as if it were of no use either to great or small. The same may be said of the Waldenses, though some affirm that they have always baptized their children. This difference of authors kept me some time in suspense before I could come to be resolved on which side the truth lay. At last considering what St. Bernard saith of this matter in his sixty-sixth homily on the second chapter of the Song of Songs, and the reasons he brings to refute this error, and also what he wrote ad Hildefonsum Comitem sancti Aegidii, I cannot deny but the Albigenses for the greatest part were of this opinion. And that which confirms me yet more in this belief is, that in the history of the city of Treves there were some who denied that the sacrament of baptism was available to the salvation of infants: and one Catherine Saube, who was burnt at Montpelier, in the year 1417, for being of the mind of the Albigenses in not believing the traditions of the Romish church, was of the same mind respecting infant baptism; as it is recorded in the register of the town-house of the said city of Montpelier, of which we shall speak at the end of the fourth book. The truth is, (continues Chessanion) they did not reject the sacrament, and say it was useless, but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, nor capable of giving evidence of their faith. That which induced them, as I suppose, to entertain this opinion is, what our Lord says, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned." [Stennett's Answer to Russen, pp. 79,184]

This statement is in part at least corroborated by Dr. Wall in his History of infant baptism; and, as he was desirous of establishing the contrary opinion, his concessions in our favour are certainly of weight. Speaking of the Petrobrussians, whom he calls a sect of the Waldenses, he says, "withdrawing themselves, about the year 1100, from the communion of the church of Rome, which was then very corrupt, they did reckon Infant Baptism as one of the corruptions, and accordingly renounced it, and practised only adult baptism.' [Part II, chap. 10, p. 527]

Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History, speaking of Peter de Bruis, who was a celebrated itinerant preacher, and who was burnt to death by an enraged populace at St. Giles's, in the year 1130, says, "It is certain that one of his tenets was, that no persons whatever were to be baptized before they were come to the full use of reason." [Vol. III, p. 116]

The testimony of Mr. Brandt respecting the antiquity of these churches and of their sentiments respecting baptism is of importance to our argument. He says that "the errors and crafty inventions of popery, had never been able to find a passage to those people; since being shut up in their vallies, separate from the rest of the world, and conversing chiefly among themselves, they had retained a great deal of the simplicity and purity of the Apostolical doctrine. That this antiquity of the doctrine of the Waldenses, is acknowledged even by their greatest enemies.—Some of them likewise rejected infant baptism." [Brandt's Hist. Ref. vol. I. Book I. p. 12]

To corroborate this last clause many things are produced by Dr. Allix in his remarks on the ancient churches of Piedmont. "The followers of Gundulphus in Italy were many of them examined by Gerhard bishop of Cambray and Arras upon several heads in the year 1025. It seems as if these people were surfeited with the vicious and debauched lives of the Romish Clergy, and did rather chuse to go without any baptism, rather than have it administered by such lewd hands, or that they had agreed to have it performed privately in their own way. Let things have been as it would it is plain they were utterly against infant baptism." The citation, in part of their answer, as taken by Dr. Allix out of Gerhard's preface to Reginaldus, is this, "But if any shall say, that some sacrament lies hid in baptism, the force of that is taken off by these three causes; the first is, because the reprobate life of ministers can afford no saving remedy to the persons to be baptized. The second, because whatsoever sins are renounced at the font, are afterwards taken up again in life and practice. The third, because a strange faith, and a strange confession do not seem to belong to, or be of any advantage to a little child, who neither wills nor runs, who knows nothing of faith, and is altogether ignorant of his own good and salvation, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, and from whom no confession of faith can be expected."

The doctor adds the following quotation from an Inquisitor. "They condemn the sacraments of the church because of the undue and irreverent manner wherein they are celebrated by the priests, and because they set them to sale, as also, because of the wicked and scandalous lives of many ministers." In the next paragraph the same Inquisitor lets us know the ground of this error (as he calls it) about infant baptism. "Some of them are in error concerning baptism, holding that infants cannot be saved by it, Mark xvi. 16, whosoever shall believe, and be baptized shall be saved. But an infant does not believe, therefore is not saved."

In a little time after this lived the noted Arnoldus Brixiensis, a follower of Berengarius, who eminently opposed the Romish corruptions. And amongst some notions imputed to him, it is observed, "There was yet a more heinous thing laid to his charge, which was this; that he was unsound in his judgment about the sacrament of the altar and infant baptism." [Dr. Allix, p. 293,123,172]

This excellent man was condemned, hanged, and his body burnt at Rome, and the ashes cast into the Tiber. But there is a letter of Everinus to St. Bernard a little before the year 1146, wherein he speaks clearly of a sect which approved of adult baptism upon believing, and strenuously opposed infant baptism. The words of the letter are, "They make void the priesthood of the church and condemn the sacraments besides baptism only, and this only in those who were come to age, who they say are baptized by Christ himself, whosoever be the ministers of the sacraments. They do not believe infant baptism, alleging that the place of the gospel, whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved." [Dr. Allix, p. 143,145,147]

The same learned gentleman gives us an extract taken by Claudius Caissord in the year 1548, out of an old MS. of Rainerius a fryer, wrote by him 296 years before, against the Waldenses wherein he has these words, "They say, that when first a man is baptized then he is received into this sect. Some of them hold, that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe." [Ibid., p. 188,191]

There seems to me to be reason to believe that the Lollards in England were of similar sentiments on this subject. Walter Lollard from whom they sprung, was a Waldensian barb; and I have never seen any satisfactory proof that infant baptism was practised among these Christians at this early period of their history. These, it is likely, were the first public opposers of the corruptions of the church of Rome in England, after the fatal massacre of the ancient British Christians under the direction of the pope's legate, Austin, who has been flattered with the epithet of the English Apostle, and canonized as a Saint by the church of Rome.

But to return to the Britons. It might be presumed that some of their descendants, either in Wales, or upon the borders of it, that is to say, in Herefordshire and the adjoining counties, would for some ages maintain the same principles with themselves. This presumption accords with fact; for the most early and most eminent Christians in England, after the conquest, are said to have been born in this part of the island. These were Bradwardine, Brute, Sir John Oldcastle, Tyndal, Penry, and others, whose histories we shall briefly relate in the course of our work. For this information we are indebted to A History of the Welsh Baptists, published by Mr. Joshua Thomas of Leominster, from which we shall extract interesting particulars on this subject.

In this account of the Baptist church of Olchon, and Chapel-y-ffin, Mr. Thomas says, "Olchon is a deep narrow valley, under the black mountain, in the parish of Cludock, and properly in Herefordshire; yet on the borders of the three counties of Hereford, Monmouth, and Brecknock; and likewise on the borders of the three dioceses of Hereford, Llandaff, and St. David's. The inhabitants of that and most of the adjoining parishes were Cambro-britons, or properly Cymry, vulgarly called Welsh or Welch, till of late years; and even now, many in those parts talk the British language, and most of the natives understand it. The ministry of the Baptists now there is in that language.

"I am inclined to believe (continues Mr. Thomas) that through all the darkness of popery, there were individuals here and there among the ancient Britons, who had saving knowledge of Christ; though they had not sufficient courage to appear publicly against the growing corruptions of the Romish church. It is my opinion that the first open struggle of Protestant light against Popish darkness, among our countrymen, began at or near Olchon; and that long before the appellation of Protestant was known even in Germany. My conjectures spring from the following particulars,—

"Dr. Thomas Bradwardine was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury: he was a very learned and celebrated person in the former part of the fourteenth century. Dr. Fuller in his Church History, book iii. p. 98, says, that this worthy man was born at Bradwardine, and appears to have had his name from that place, as in former centuries it was very common for persons to take their names from the place of their birth, occupation, or habitation. Bradwardine is the name of a parish in Herefordshire, a few miles from Olchon. The word carries it in an internal evidence of its British original; but I will not pretend to guess to what particular circumstance it owed its origin. Bishop Godwin, contrary to Fuller, says that Dr. Bradwardine was born at Hartfield in Sussex. But before the latter had written his account of the worthies of England, he had received better information, for he there says that Camden, Bale, Pits, and Godwin, all differed respecting the place of Bradwardine's birth. These differences he endeavours to

reconcile by saying that there was an ancient family at Bradwardine in Herefordshire, which removed thence, and had settled for three generations in Sussex, near Chichester; and that the above Thomas was born in or near that city. Hence he names him among his worthies of Herefordshire and of Sussex. He names a Thomas Bradwardine among the gentry of Herefordshire in 1433; so that it seems there were some of the family then at Bradwardine. Dr. Bradwardine was very famous for his profound and extensive erudition, and genuine piety. His common title was Doctor Profundus, the profound Doctor. Of all his writings, that which he wrote against the Pelagians is the most celebrated. Its title is, *De Causa Dei*, Of the cause of God. Dr. Gill, in his *Cause of God and truth*, refers to Bradwardine more than once, and calls him a second Austin. This commendation is great; but he did not make a formal opposition to popery as such. Though he was much abroad, yet possibly he might be of some service to his distant relations about Bradwardine and towards Olchon, by writing or otherwise. How far he was useful that way we know not. He died about 1348 or 9. Rabin, speaking of this eminent person, says, that 'what rendered him still more esteemed for his learning was his humility, and his zeal to instruct the people committed to his care.'

"Very probably (continues Mr. Thomas) the famous Wickliffe received much of his light in the gospel from Bradwardine. When the latter died, he was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Dr. Simon Islip, in 1349. Islip had so great a regard for Wickliffe, that he made him rector of Canterbury College then at Oxford. The rector preached and kept his place with great reputation till 1306, when Archbishop Islip died. Then Wickliffe was turned out of his rectory. After that he openly opposed popery, and had powerful friends to defend him against all the rage of the pope and clergy."—Thus far Mr. Thomas.

It is very probable that Bradwardine, Islip, and Wickliffe, received their sentiments from the followers of Lollard; and that on this account the followers of Wickliffe are indiscriminately denominated Wickliffites and Lollards. Bishop Newton, having mentioned the Lollards, says, "There was a man more worthy to have given name to the sect, the deservedly famous John Wickliffe, the honour of his own and the admiration of all succeeding times."

This extraordinary man, who has been justly called the morning star of the Reformation, began to be famous about the year 1361; and though he was greatly persecuted by several popes, and by the clergy in England, yet the providence of God so protected him from their malice, that he died peaceably at his own house at Lutterworth, Dec. 31, 1384. By the command of the pope his bones were taken out of the grave and burnt, and his ashes cast into a brook adjoining, called the Swift, in 1428.

The doctrines of Wickliffe spread very wonderfully through the land, if the testimony of Knyhton, a contemporary historian, who appears to have been his inveterate enemy may be believed. "Such (says he) was the success of his teaching, preaching, and writings, that more than half the people of England became his followers, and embraced his doctrines." Their character is thus given by Reinhar, a popish writer. "The disciples of Wickliffe are men of a serious modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labour, and despise wealth, being fully content with bare necessities. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, or amused with the trifling gaieties of life; yet

you find them always employed, either in learning or teaching. They are concise and devout in their prayers, blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear; speak little; and in their public preaching lay the principal stress on charity."

It was not long after the death of Wickliffe, that his disciples began to form distinct societies. Rapin says, that "in the year 1389, the Wickliffites or Lollards began to separate from the church of Rome, and appoint priests from amongst themselves to perform divine service after their way. Though some were from time to time persecuted by the bishops, yet these persecutions were not rigorous. Their aim seemed to be only to hinder them from pleading prescription. Besides, a petition presented to the king by a former parliament to revoke the power granted the bishops to imprison hereticks restrained the most forward." [History of England, vol. i, p. 480]

It is probable that the liberty granted to these early dissenters from the church of England, as then established, depended in a great measure on the disposition of the monarch, and on his ability to check the cruel dispositions of the pope and the clergy. It appears evident from the history of the English church, that whenever the clergy have been left to follow their own inclinations, they have used their crosier, not in defending the flock, but in giving the followers of Christ cause to say, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

The sufferings of these people from this period till the Reformation were very great. The Lollards' tower still stands as a monument of their miseries, and of the cruelty of their implacable enemies. This tower is at Lambeth palace, and was fitted up for this purpose by Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury, who came to this see in 1414. It is said that he expended two hundred and eighty pounds to make this prison for the Lollards. The vast staples and rings to which they were fastened, before they were brought out to the stake, are still to be seen in a large lumber-room at the top of the palace, and ought to make protestants look back with gratitude upon the hour which terminated so bloody a period.

That the sentiments of Wycliffe and his followers were opposed to infant baptism, may be ascertained from several sources of information. It is well known that after the death of the pious queen Anne, wife of Richard II., and sister of Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia, the books of Wickliffe were carried into Bohemia by her attendants, as they also were about the same time by Jerome of Prague, and other persons, in consequence whereof his sentiments spread in that country, where lived the celebrated John Huss, who, together with Jerome of Prague, fell a martyr to the fury of the papists at Constance, about a hundred years before the time of Luther. A letter describing the sentiments of the Hussites, written from Bohemia to Erasmus, dated Oct. 10, 1519, states as follows. "They renounce all the rites and ceremonies of our church;—they ridicule our doctrine and practices in both sacraments;—they deny orders (the hierarchy) and elect officers from among the laity;—they receive no other rule than the bible;—they admit none into their communion till they be dipped in water, or baptized;—and they reckon one another without distinction of rank to be called brothers and sisters." [Colomesius's Collection of Letters to men of note]

If this was the case with respect to the followers of Wickliffe in Bohemia, what should hinder us from believing that the followers of Wickliffe in England held similar sentiments respecting the discipline of the church of Christ, and that they also maintained that none ought to be admitted into their communion until they were dipped in water, or baptized?

That this was the case appears from the laws made against them in the reign of Henry IV.; for among the articles by which the inquisitors were to examine them, one was, "WHETHER AN INFANT DYING UNBAPTIZED CAN BE SAVED?" This the Lollards constantly asserted in opposition to the church of Rome, which decreed that no infant could be saved without it. Fox says, that one of the errors they were charged with was, "that they spoke against the opinion of such as think children are damned who depart before baptism, and that Christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents are baptized before them." [Fox's Acts and Mon. vol. i. p. 752]

Fox thinks they were slandered in this matter because says he, "It is so contrary to the manifest word that it is not thought any to be so ignorant of the gospel that ever did or would affirm the same." But that these people opposed the baptism of infants, is corroborated by the Dutch Martyrology, or bloody Theatre, which says from Walsingham, "that one Sir Lewis Clifford, who had been a friend of Wickliffe, did discover to the Archbishop of Canterbury, that the Lollards would not baptize their new-born children." [Danver's Treatise of Baptism, p. 2, 303].

Respecting Wycliffe's sentiments on this subject, many writers have positively asserted that he opposed this practice. Dr. Hurd in his History of all Religions says, "It is pretty clear from the writings of many learned men, that Dr. John Wickliffe, the first English reformer, either considered infant baptism unlawful, or at best not necessary." The author of a History of Religion, published in London in 1764, in four volumes octavo, says, "It is clear from many authors that Wickliffe rejected infant baptism, and that on this doctrine his followers agreed with the modern Baptists." Thomas Walden and Joseph Vicecomes [Catholic authorities who persecuted Wycliffe's followers], who had access to his writings, have charged him with denying pedobaptism, and they brought their charge at a time when it might have been easily contradicted, if it had not been true. The first of these charges him with holding the following opinions about baptism. "That baptism doth not confer, but only signifies grace which was given before; that those are fools and presumptuous who affirm such infants not to be saved as die without baptism; also that he denied that all sins are abolished in baptism, and asserted that the baptism of water profited not without the baptism of the Spirit." [Walden, tom. ii. c. 98, 108]

Walsingham says, "It was in the year 1381, that that damnable heretic, John Wickliffe, reassumed the curses opinions of Berengarius;" of which it is certain that denying infant baptism was one. He also says "that his followers did deny baptism to infants, because they concluded them, as they were the children of believers, to be holy, and not to stand in need of baptism to take away original sin." Thomas Walden, before mentioned, calls Wickliffe "one of the seven heads that came out of the bottomless pith, for denying infant baptism, that heresie of the Lollards, of whom he was so great a ringleader." [Danver's Treatise, p. 2, 287]

A council was held at Blackfriars, June 11, 1382, to condemn Wickliffe and his sect; at which time, while his enemies were in convocation, that terrible earthquake happened which is mentioned in the chronicles of St. Alban's, and of which Wycliffe also takes notice in his writings. This greatly alarmed his persecutors, but did not prevent their framing many articles of accusation. The eleventh article was, that the children of believers might be saved without baptism.

A denial that baptism had virtue in itself to procure the salvation of the infant, and that the want of it would insure damnation, was rudely shaking the foundation on which infant baptism was then built. He is accused, however, of going still farther, and of asserting, "that none were members of the church visible who did not appear to be members of the church invisible; and that none had a right to church membership who did not make a public profession, and profess obedience to Christ. It is unnecessary to add, that infants, being unable to make this public profession, would not be considered by him as members of the visible church, or as possessing a right to participate of any of its ordinances.

Having mentioned some of the followers of Wickliffe, it seems desirable that we should more particularly notice a few of them, as persons who by English protestants ought to be had in everlasting remembrance.

In the history of Welsh Baptists already mentioned, there is an account of one of these named Walter Brute. Mr. Thomas says, "I suppose he lived in or near Olchon," and mentions several reasons which make this appear probable. "It is recorded (says he) that he was a gentleman of rank, learning, and parts, though reckoned a layman by the popish clergy. Trevnant or rather Trefnant, bishop of Hereford, charges Mr. Brute with seducing the people as much as he could from day to day, and with teaching openly and privately as well the nobles as the commons. Mr. William Swinderby, and Mr. Stephen Ball, were preachers of note, then, intimate friends of Brute, and all of Wickliffe's doctrine.

"By a copy of a commission of Richard II, about 1392, it appears that Mr. Swinderby and his friends had fled into Wales, out of the diocese of Hereford. It is very probable that they had retired among the mountains about Olchon and Chapel-y-ffin, and that they there instructed our countrymen as they had opportunity, where they could soon be out of the county and diocese of Hereford. So many counties and dioceses meeting on those hills, gave some help in the time of persecution. They could shift from one county and diocese to another, as they saw occasion; so finding shelter in those deep vallies, and on those lofty hills, and craggy rocks.

"Mr. Fox, in his martyrology, has given us a large account of Mr. Brute and his religious sentiments, taken from the register of the bishop of Hereford. Our countrymen did confute popish errors in many articles, and reformed much concerning baptism. He held that faith should precede baptism, and that baptism was not essential to salvation; yet still admitted that the faith of godly parents was sufficient for their infants. Mr. Thomas Davye, however, in his treatise on baptism, says, Mr. Fox indeed, speaking of the opinion of W. Brute, as to the sacrament of baptism and of infants dying without it, seems to extenuate the matter, because he himself was for infant baptism! Mr. Davye further says, that Swinderby was one of Brute's followers, and supposes that Mr. Brute was more a Baptist than was represented by Mr. Fox.

"Our worthy countrymen, Mr. C. Edwards (adds Mr. Thomas) entitles Mr. Brute Cymro godidog; that is, an excellent Cambro Briton, a learned layman of the diocese of Hereford; and says that he instructed his countrymen and admonished them, explaining the scriptures, and showing the difference between true religion and popish foppery exorcisms, and such things.

"Richard II directed a letter to the nobility and gentry of the county of Hereford, and to the mayor of the city. Among the gentlemen then named, Thomas Oldcastle is one. The letter charges all to persecute W. Brute, charged with preaching heresy in the diocese and places adjacent, and also with keeping conventicles. It seems from this, that Brute, Swinderby, and others, preached in different places on the borders of Wales; and Mr. Fox has recorded, out of the register, that they preached at Whitney and Leinwardine in Herefordshire.

"Mr. Brute was a reputable writer. Mr. Fox has mentioned his works on several subjects of divinity, in his Acts and Monuments. We are also told that Fox set forth the works of Tyndal, Frith, and Barnes, in 1573; and that it was wished the same diligence had been used in searching after and collecting the works of Wickliffe, Brute, and others. These wrote near a hundred years before printing began in England.

"There is no certain account that I can find (continues Mr. Thomas) where, how, nor when Mr. Brute died, whether he suffered martyrdom or not. But we may look upon him as the first public reformer among our countrymen. On his trial, as recorded by Fox, he declared that he was a Briton by father and mother, and rejoiced that he was a descendant from the ancient Britons, who had been so valiant for the truth and against popery, in former times. The last account Fox gives of him is in 1393. In the work of Mr. Davye, above referred to, it is said, that Mr. Swinderby, the friend of Brute, was burnt alive for his profession in Smithfield, in 1401."

Another reason assigned by Mr. Thomas, for concluding that Brute and his friends preached in and about Olchon is, that Sir John Oldcastle, who was so zealous for Wickliffe's doctrine, was a native, and resident of this part of the country. "His birth place and patrimony (says he) bear his name to this day. Oldcastle is a small parish adjoining to Cludock in Monmouthshire. The valiant king Henry V was also born at Monmouth; and having a great regard for his countrymen, introduced him into his household. Sir John Oldcastle married Lord Cobham's daughter, and at his father-in-law's death was created Lord Cobham. The noble Briton though in the king's court, was full of zeal against popery, and was reckoned the chief man through the kingdom in supporting, defending, and encouraging the Lollards, who were the Protestants and Dissenters of these times. For these things the popish clergy were full of bitterness and rage against him, as they knew very well that he was much in favour at court. However, after many consultations, they found means, like Daniel's enemies, to prevail with the king to have him apprehended and brought to trial as an enemy to Holy Church."

It is said of this excellent nobleman, that it was publicly known that he had been at great expense in collecting and transcribing the works of Wickliffe, which he dispersed among the common people without any reserve. It was publicly known also that he maintained a great number of the disciples of Wickliffe as itinerant preachers in many parts of the country, particularly in the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, and Hereford.

When the archbishop, at the head of a large body of the dignified clergy, waited on the king, he had before him with as much acrimony as decency would admit, the offence of his servant Lord Cobham, and begged his majesty would suffer them, for Christ's sake, to put him to death. The king told the archbishop that he had ever been averse to shedding of blood in the cause of religion: such violence he thought more destructive of truth than of error. He therefore enjoined the convocation to postpone the affair a few days; in which time he would himself reason with Lord Cobham, whose behaviour he by no means approved; and if this were ineffectual, he would then leave him to the censure of the church.

With this answer the primate was satisfied; and the king sending for Lord Cobham, endeavoured by all the arguments in his power to set before him, the high offence of separating from the church, and pathetically exhorted him to retract his error. Lord Cobham's answer is upon record "I ever was (said he) a dutiful subject to your majesty, and I hope ever shall be. Next to God, I profess obedience to my king. But as for the spiritual dominion of the pope, I never could see on what foundation it is claimed, nor can I pay him any obedience. As sure as God's word is true, to me it appears fully evident that he is the great antichrist foretold in holy writ."

This answer of Lord Cobham so exceedingly shocked the king, that, turning away in visible displeasure, he from that time withdrew from him every mark of his favour. Deserted by the king, the archbishop soon found means to get him committed to the tower; and on Sep. 23, 1413, he was cited to appear before the consistory; but not appearing, he was declared contumacious, and excommunicated without further ceremony. But though committed to the tower, and condemned to die, yet by some means he made his escape; and taking advantage of a dark night he eluded pursuit, and arrived safe in Wales, where he found an asylum, and was secured by some of the chiefs of that country from the rage of his enemies.

It is supposed that all this was under the connivance, and with the approbation of the King, who was not willing to put him to death. "We are told (says Mr. Thomas) by a Monmouthshire author, that Sir John lay concealed among his tenants and friends at or about Oldcastle, above four years; till at last, Lord Powys, a covetous and bigotted papist, for a considerable sum of money, apprehended him."

He was then taken to London; and the King being at that time out of the Kingdom, the Romish clergy made all speed to dispatch him by a most inhuman death. He was hanged up by an iron chain round the waist, and burnt, or rather roasted, to death, over a slow fire.

The translator of Rapin says in a note, "As this was the first noble blood that was shed in England by popish cruelty, so perhaps none ever suffered a more cruel martyrdom." The historian says, "Thus died Sir John Oldcastle, baron of Cobham, with wonderful constancy, perfectly answerable to the firmness wherewith he had all along maintained the doctrine of Wickliffe which he professed." There is a painting of this wonderful man preserved in Dr. William's library, in Red Cross street, London.

"This nobleman (says Mr. Thomas) was another instructor of the good people in and about Olchon. In the four years which he spent amongst them, it may be concluded that he did all

the service he could to promote the truth for which he suffered." His martyrdom was in 1417, two years after that of the celebrated John Huss, who likewise was a worthy disciple of Wickliffe, and a hundred years before Luther began the reformation in Germany.

From some things contained in the confession of faith which Lord Cobham presented to the King, it is evident that he had fully imbibed the sentiment of Wickliffe, that all traditions not taught in the scripture are superfluous and wicked." This confession he thus concluded: "Finally, my faith is, that God will ask no more of a christian in his life than to obey the precepts of his blessed law. If any prelate of the church requires more of any other kind of obedience, he contemneth Christ, exalteth himself above God, and is plainly antichrist.'

Thus did Lord Cobham and his friends appear on the side of Christ, when "all the world wondered after the beast;" and when England was immersed in error, they heroically defended the truth. These were Dissenters long before the church of England, in its present form, was by law established. These shone as morning stars in our hemisphere, before the day of the Reformation. These were they who followed the Redeemer whithersoever he went; who overcame all their enemies through the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and who loved not their lives unto the death!

It is to be lamented that we have not a particular account of the afflictions which the Lollards in general suffered at this time; yet it is not to be doubted that the hand of persecution fell with superior weight on the lower order of people, when even nobility was not a preservative from the rage of the clergy. There is a remark in Robinson's dissertation on public preaching, prefixed to Claude's Essay, which refers to a period forty years after this, and proves that the demon of persecution was at that time neither dead nor chained. "I have (says he) before me a manuscript register of Gray, bishop of Ely, which proves that in the year 1457, there was a congregation of this sort in this village, Chesterton, where I live, who privately assembled for divine worship, and had preachers of their own who taught them the very doctrines we now preach. Six of them were accused of heresy before the tyrant of the district, and condemned to adjure heresy, and to do penance half naked, in the public market-places of Ely, and Cambridge, and in the churchyard of Great Swaffham. It was pity the poor souls were forced to abjure the twelfth article of their accusation, in which they were said to have affirmed, All priests and people in orders are incarnate devils."

During the reign of Henry VIII, some alterations were made in the constitution of the church. In the year 1536, the articles were published, commonly called King Henry's Creed, and entitled, "Articles devised by the Kynges Highnes Majestie to stablyshe christen quietnes and unitie among us, and to avoyde contentious opinions, which articles he also approved by the consent and determination of the whole clergie of the realme." "In the translation whereof (says Fox) he altereth nothing from the old trade, heretofore received from Rome."

What is said about baptism is truly papistical, and evidently points at some who opposed infant baptism. "Item, That infants must needs be christened because they be born in original sin, which sin must needs be remitted, which cannot be done but by the sacrament of baptism, whereby they receive the Holy Ghost, which exerciseth his grace and efficacy in them, and cleanseth and purifieth them from sin by his most secret virtue and operation. Item, that

children of men once baptized, can nor ought to be baptized again. Item, That they ought to repute and take all the Anabaptists and the Pelagians' opinions contrary to the premises, and every other man's opinions on this behalf, for detestable heresies, and to be utterly condemned."

The second article runs after this manner. "That baptism was a sacrament instituted by Christ; that it was necessary to salvation; and that infants were to be baptized for the pardon of original sin."

In the next year we find a proclamation issued against heresies and heretics, which recites, "That of late many strangers born out of this land are arrived and come into this realm, which albeit they were baptized in their infancy or childhood, according to the universal church of Christ; yet notwithstanding, in contempt of the holy sacrament of baptism so given and received, they have of their own presumption lately rebaptized themselves." [Ibid.]

From these articles and proclamations it is easy to discern, that there were many persons in the kingdom who, objecting to infant baptism, were baptized on a profession of faith. The methods taken to prevent their increase were ineffectual; "for in October 1538, there was a commission, (says Burnet,) sent to Cranmer, Stokesly, Sampson, and some others, to inquire after Anabaptists; to proceed against them; to restore the penitent; to burn their books; and to deliver the obstinate to the secular arm. But I have not, (says the bishop,) seen what proceedings there were upon this." [Burnet's Hist. Ref. vol. 3. p. 159]

From a passage in Brandt's History of the Reformation it appears that the Baptists in England were obliged to leave the country. He says, "In the year 1539 there were put to death at Delft [Holland], one and thirty Anabaptists, that fled from England, the men beheaded and the women drowned." In the next year Mr. Barnes was burnt in Smithfield, and in his speech to the people at the stake he declared he was not an Anabaptist as he had been charged with, by saying, "Which sect I detest and abhor; and in this place there hath been burned some of them, whom I never favoured nor maintained." [Fox's Martyr, vol. 1. p. 610]

On Nov. 16, the King put forth a proclamation, in which he condemned all the books of the Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and appointed those to be punished that vended them. And in December, he sent a letter to the justices in England, in which, after many other things, they are commanded to take care that all the injunctions, laws, and proclamations, against the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists, be duly executed.

In this year also there was an act of grace passed, from the benefit of which, besides other particular exceptions, all Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and all those that affirmed there was a fate upon men by which the day of their death was unalterably determined, were excluded. By this it appears, that the king asserted that supremacy which his creatures had assigned to him; and that he not only condemned those who thought his opponent Luther to be right, and the King wrong, on the subject of the Lord's supper, but also set his throne above the throne of God, "in whose hand our breath is," and who has "determined our days;" and who has declared "that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

That the Lollards had been cruelly treated in his reign previously to this period, is evident from the history of those times. In the year 1511 Joseph Brown was burned. In 1512, William and James Seely, and Joseph Brewster, shared the same fate. In 1514, Joseph Hunn was murdered in the Lollard's tower, and in 1519, Joseph Tawksby and many others ended their lives at the stake. In 1525 seven Baptists who came over from Holland, were apprehended and imprisoned. Some of whom were afterwards burned at Smithfield. In 1535, twenty-two Baptists were apprehended and put to death. In 1539, sixteen men and fifteen women were banished to Delpt in Holland, for opposing infant baptism. At this place they were taken by the papists and put to death. In the same year two Anabaptists were burned beyond Southwark, in the way to Newington, and a little before them, five Ditch Anabaptists were burned at Smithfield.

From a speech delivered by the king at the parliament, Dec. 24, 1545, as recited by Lord Herbert, it should seem that the epithet Anabaptist was a term of reproach, applicable to all those who were struggling to promote a reformation in the church and state, just as the epithet Puritan afterwards, and that of Methodist at present, have been indiscriminately applied to all who are zealous for promoting evangelical principles. "What love and charity (says Henry) is there among you, when one calls another heretic and Anabaptist; and he calls him again Papist, Hypocrite, and Pharisee? He adds, Be these tokens of charity among you? I see and hear daily that you of the clergy preach one against another; teach one contrary to another; inveigh one against another, without charity or discretion. Some be too stiff in their old mumpsimus; other be too busy in their new sumpsimus." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 42]

The papists, however, being the stronger party, prevailed on the king to prosecute with unrelenting cruelty all who opposed their system. The next year, Claxton was imprisoned for denying the real presence in the sacrament, and would have been burnt, but for his recantation. But a pious and excellent lady, Anne Askew, who was frequently at court, and a great favourite of queen Catharine Parr, after suffering the most excruciating tortures on the rack, was burned at the stake about June 1546.

Bishop Latimer, in a sermon preached before king Edward VI, alluding to the events of the reign of Henry VIII, says, "The Anabaptists that were burnt here in divers parts of England, as I heard of credible men, (I saw them not myself,) went to their death even intrepid as ye will say, without any fear in the world, cheerfully. Also I should have told you here of a certain sect of heretics that speak against this order and doctrine, [the king's supremacy:] they will have no magistrates, no judges on earth. Then I have to tell you what I heard of late, by the relation of a credible person and worshipful man, of a town of this realm of England that hath above five hundred heretics of this erroneous opinion in it, as he said." [Ibid. p. 62]

I cannot but think that these Anabaptists were Wickliffites; and when it is considered how zealous this good bishop was in supporting the supremacy of the king as the head of the church, is there not reason to suspect, that they were accused of objecting to magistrates and judges, merely because they asserted what all dissenters now assert? That the civil magistrate ought not to interfere in matters of conscience; and that while it is our duty to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's," it is equally our duty to give "unto God the things that are God's?"

This popish protestant king died, Jan. 28, 1547, leaving in a very unfinished state, the reformation, which had been begun without his intending it. But the fetters of popery were broken; the scriptures in the mother tongue were sanctioned by parliament; and in 1540, it was enjoined by royal proclamation, that every parish should place one of the copies of the bible, which was called Cranmer's bible, in their churches, under the penalty of forty shillings a month; and though this was suppressed by the king about two years afterwards, though the influence of the popish bishops, yet as the people used to crowd to the churches after their hours of labour to hear it read, there is no doubt but the information which by these means was diffused throughout the land, laid the foundation for that glorious superstructure of Christian liberty, which by the patient sufferings of the zealous Puritans in the succeeding reigns was brought nearly to perfection. The blessings resulting to all classes of people, and particularly to protestant dissenters, from their struggles with ecclesiastical and civil despotism, we now enjoy; and we sincerely pray that they may be transmitted to our descendants unimpaired and improved.

CHAPTER III

A.D. 1540 - 1602

King Edward VI came to the throne at the age of nine years and six months; "a prince (says Neal) for learning and piety, for acquaintance with the world, and application to business, the very wonder of his age."

The majority of the bishops and inferior clergy were on the side of popery; but the government was in the hands of the chief reformers, who began immediately to relax the horrors of the late reign. Persecution ceased, the prison doors were set open, and several who had been forced to quit the kingdom for religion returned home.

The reforming divines, being delivered from that awe with which the imperiousness of the late king had inspired them, began to preach openly against the abuses of popery; and the people in the many places, inflamed by their addresses, pulled down the images in the churches without authority.

The famous Genevan reformer, Calvin, appears to have felt deeply interested in the reformation that was going forward in England, and set his heart (says Heylin) upon promoting one wherein "the scripture might be made the rule of faith and worship," and offered his assistance to archbishop Cranmer for that purpose. [History of Presbytery, p. 13] He also wrote to the Protector, Lord Seymour, Oct. 29, 1548, encouraging him to go on, notwithstanding the wars, as Hezekiah did, with his reformation. In this he laments the violence of some who professed the gospel, and complains that he heard there were but few gospel sermons preached in England, and that the preachers recited their discourse coldly. Many of the reformers wished to expunge everything from the church which was of popish origin. But Cranmer and Ridley, wishing to prevent discontents, consulted with flesh and blood, and resolved to retain the vests and ceremonies. From this period the papists concluded, and that with strong confidence, that the English church would return back again to Rome. Bishop Bonner said publicly, "Having tasted of our broth, they will ere long eat of our beef." [Advance of the church of England towards Rome, p. 18]

In the year 1549, bishop Burnet says, "there were many Anabaptists in several parts of England. They were generally Germans, whom the revolutions had forced to change their seats. They held that infant baptism was no baptism, and so were rebaptized." [Hist. Ref. Abridg. p. 85] On Apr. 12, a complaint was brought to the council, that with the strangers who were come into England, some of that persuasion were come over, who were disseminating their principles, and making proselytes. "These people, (says Neal,) besides the principle of adult baptism, held several wild opinions about the trinity, and virgin Mary, and the person of Christ." We cannot, however, rely with implicit confidence on all that is said concerning any sect of Christians by their adversaries, since it is well known that many sects have been

charged with holding sentiments which they never held, and that caricature representations have been given of their real sentiments.

The account Burnet gives of these persons is as follows. "Upon Luther's first preaching in Germany, there arose many, who building on some of his principles, carried things much farther than he did. The chief foundation laid down by him was that the scripture was the only rule of Christians." [Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 110] If this was the principle they held, it is probable that it was not so much their theological sentiments, as their firmness in resisting all imposition in matters of religion, which exposed them to such violent resentments.

In the articles which were framed in 1547, by a committee of divines appointed to examine and reform the offices of the church, it was enacted, that "in the administration of baptism a cross was to be made on the child's forehead and breast, and the devil exorcised to go out and enter no more into him. Also that the child was to be dipped three times in the font, on the right and left sides, and on the breast, if not weak. A white garment was to be put on it in token of innocence, and it was to be anointed on the head, with a short prayer for the unction of the Holy Ghost." [Neal, vol. i. p. 64]

Is it to be wondered at, if these absurd notions, so popish and antisciptural, should have a tendency to encrease the number of Baptists, who had both reason and scripture to plead for their sentiments? But such daring innovators, who presumed to rend the seamless coat of Christ, and refused to worship the idol of uniformity which the reformers had set up, were not to be tolerated in a Christian commonwealth.

We find therefore, that in the year 1549, a commission was given to the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Ely, Worcester, Chichester, Lincoln, and Rochester, Sir William Petre, Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. May, and some others, any three being a quorum, to examine and search after all Anabaptists, heretics, and contemners of the common prayer. They were to endeavour to reclaim them, and after penance to give them absolution; but if they continued obstinate, they were to excommunicate, imprison, and deliver them over to the secular arm. This was little better than a protestant inquisition. People had generally thought that all the statutes for burning heretics had been repealed; but it was now said, that heretics were to be burned by the common law of England, and that the statutes were only for directing the manner of conviction, so that the repealing them did not take away that which was grounded on a writ of common law." [Neal, vol. i. p. 60] Before the commissioners were brought several tradesmen, one of whom, a butcher of the name of Thombe, abjured his principles, of which one was, *that the baptism of infants was not profitable, because it went before faith*. He was commanded, notwithstanding his abjuration, to carry a faggot at St. Paul's, when there should be a sermon setting forth his heresy. [Strypes *Life of Cranmer*, p. 181]

The most awful instance of persecution in this year was the burning of JOAN BOUCHER of Kent. Burnet says, "She denied that Christ was truly incarnate of the virgin, whose flesh being sinful, he could take none of it; but the Word, by consent of the inward man in the virgin, took flesh of her. These were her words. The commissioners took much pains about her, and had many conferences with her; but she was so extravagantly conceited of her own notions that she rejected with scorn all they said: whereupon she was adjudged an obstinate heretic, and so left to the secular power."

To the other charges preferred against this good woman by her enemies, who would endeavour to blacken her as much as possible in order to justify their own conduct, it is to be added that she was a Baptist; and perhaps this was the sin which was not to be forgiven. "When the compassionate young king could not be prevailed upon to sign the warrant for her execution, Cranmer, with his superior learning, was employed to persuade him. He argued from the practice of the Jewish church in stoning blasphemers, which rather silenced his highness than satisfied him: for when at last he yielded to the importunity of the archbishop, he told him with tears in his eyes, that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer it before God. This struck the archbishop with surprise; but yet he at last suffered the sentence to be executed." [Burnet's *Hist. of Ref.* vol. ii. p. 112]

The extraordinary efforts used to bring Joan Boucher to retract her sentiments, prove her to have been a person of note, whose opinions carried more weight and respect than it can be supposed the chimeras of a frantic woman, as she has been sometimes represented, would have done. The account which Mr. Strype gives of her is truly honourable. "She was (he says) a great disperser of Tyndal's new testament, translated by him into English, and printed at Colen, and was a great reader of scripture herself. Which book also she dispersed in the court, and so became known to certain women of quality, and was particularly acquainted with Mrs. Anne Askew. She used for the greater secrecy to tie the books with strings under her apparel, and so pass with them into the court." [Strype's *Eccles. Mem.* vol. ii. p. 214] By this it appears that she hazarded her life in dangerous times to bring others to the knowledge of the word of God. To be employed in such a work, and to die in such a cause, is the highest character that could be given to any of the disciples of Christ.

There are some remarks upon this circumstance in Fox's Latin book of Martyrs, which are omitted in the English from a regard, as is supposed, to the reputation of the Martyrs who suffered in the next reign. But Mr. Pierce has given us the following translation in his answer to Nichols, p. 33. "In king Edward's reign, some were put to death for heresy. One of these was Joan Boucher, or Joan of Kent. Now, says Mr. Fox, when the protestant bishops had resolved to put her to death, a friend of Mr. John Rogers, the divinity-reader in St. Paul's church, came to him, earnestly desiring him to use his interest with the Archbishop, that the poor woman's life might be spared, and other means used to prevent the spreading of her opinion, which might

be done in time: saying too, that though while she lived, she infected few with her opinion, yet she might bring many to think well of it, by suffering death for it. He pleaded therefore that it was better she should be kept in some prison, without an opportunity of propagating her notion among weak people, and so she would do no harm to others, and might live to repent herself. Rogers on the other hand pleaded, she ought to be put to death. Well then saith his friend, if you are resolved to put an end to her life together with her opinion, chuse some other kind of death, more agreeable to the gentleness and mercy prescribed in the gospel; there being no need, that such tormenting deaths should be taken up, in imitation of the Papists. Rogers answered, that burning alive was no cruel death but easy enough. His friend then hearing these words, which expressed so little regard to poor creatures suffering, answered him with great vehemence, and striking Roger's hand, which before he held fast, said to him, Well, perhaps, it may so happen, that you yourselves shall have your hands full of this mild burning. And so it came to pass; Mr. Rogers was the first man who was burned in Queen Mary's reign. I am apt to think (adds Mr. Pierce) that Mr. Roger's friend was no other than Fox himself." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 61]

The name of TYNDALE having been mentioned, it may not be improper to give a short account of his labours and sufferings in the cause of God. He went young to Oxford, and had part of his education there, and part at Cambridge. After leaving the university, he settled for a time in Gloucestershire; but was obliged to leave his native country on account of persecution. On the continent he translated the new testament into English, and printed it in 1526. This edition was bought up by Sir Thomas More and bishop Tonstall. With the money procured from this source, it was republished in 1530: but as this also contained some reflections on the English bishops and clergy, they commanded that it should be purchased and burnt. In 1532, Tyndale and his associates translated and printed the whole bible; but while he was preparing a second edition, he was apprehended and burnt for heresy in Flanders. [Note: For a fuller and more precise report on William Tyndale and his translation efforts and the timing of the various editions of his Bibles, see *Annals of the English Bible* by Christopher Anderson. This can be located at the Way of Life web site under the Electronic Baptist History Library. Anderson, who meticulously researched his subject, published his book 34 years after Ivimey published his history of English Baptists. D.W. Cloud]

He was a great reformer. It is generally supposed he was born on the borders of Wales. Mr. Thomas thinks this to be very probable, as "Mr. Llewelyn Tyndal and his son Hezekiah were reputable members of the Baptist church at Llanwenarth near Abergavenny, about the year 1700, as appeared by the old church book, and there were some of the same family in those parts still remaining." It is probable, therefore, that Tyndale might derive his superior light from some of the Wickliffites about Hereford and the adjoining counties, where we have already proved that much scriptural truth was for ages deposited. To this great man we are under great

obligations for our emancipation from the fetters of popery, as it is not likely these would ever have been broken off, but by the hammer of God's Word.

The sentiments of this celebrated man on the subject of baptism may be collected from the following extract from his works. After reprobating severely the conduct of the Romish clergy for using a latin form of words, he says, "the washing without the word helpeth not; but threw the word it purifieth and cleanseth us, as thou readeest Eph. 6. How Christ cleanseth the congregation in the fountain of water threw the word: the word is the promise which God hath made. Now as a preacher, in preaching the word of God saveth the hearers that believe so doeth the washing in that it preacheth and representeth to us the promise that God hath made unto us in Christ, the washing preacheth unto us that we are cleansed with Christ's blood shedding which was an offering and a satisfaction for the sin of all that repent and believe consenting and submitting themselves unto the will of God. The plunging into the water signifieth that we die and are buried with Christ as concerning the old life of sin which is Ada. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in anew life full of the Holy Ghost which shall teach us, and guide us, and work the will of God in us; as thou seest Rom. 6." [The obedience of all degrees proved by God's worde imprinted by Wyllyam Copland at London 1561] [Note from the Publisher of this electronic edition of Ivimey: We have modernized the spelling of Tyndale's words to facilitate ease of understanding for current readers.]

Whether Tyndale baptized persons on a profession of faith or not, it is certain that his sentiments would naturally lead him to the practice; as what is said of the subject of this ordinance in this quotation, can in no sense apply to infants; who cannot be said to "repent and believe, consenting and submitting themselves unto the will of God." As it relates to the manner in which baptism was at that time administered, his statement is so plain that it requires no comment.

To return to events which took place in England during the reign of Edward VI, we learn from Burnet, that about the end of December 1550, after many cavils in the parliament, an act passed for the king's general pardon, from the benefits of which the Anabaptists were excluded. "Last of all (says he came the king's general pardon; out of which those in the tower and other prisons on account of the state, as also all Anabaptists, were excepted." This is a plain intimation that the Baptists were so numerous as to claim the attention of government, and so obnoxious as to be placed on a level with those who were imprisoned as enemies to the state.

In the same year a visitation of the diocese of London was made by Ridley, the new bishop. Among other questions put to the inferior clergy was the following: "Whether any Anabaptists, or others, used private conventicles, with different opinions and forms from those established." There were also questions about baptism and marriage. Burnet says, "these articles are in bishop Sparrow's collection." [Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 143-158]

An event which took place in the next year shows that the Baptists were still offensive to those in power. On April 6, 1551, GEORGE VAN-PARE, a Dutchman, was condemned, and on the twenty-fifth of the same month was burnt at Smithfield. Speaking of this person, Neal remarks, "He was a man of strict and virtuous life, and very devout: he suffered with great constancy of mind, kissing the stake and faggots that were to burn him." Burnet says, that "the eminent character which he had for piety and devotion, and the fortitude and constancy that he manifested at the stake, tended more to expose Cranmer than any event which had happened. It was now said by the papists, that men of harmless lives might be put to death for heresy by the confession of the reformers themselves. In all the books published in queen Mary's days, these instances were always produced; and when Cranmer himself was brought to the stake, the people called it a just retaliation." [Neal, vol. i. p. 61]

Mr. Strype says that on Sept. 27, 1552, a letter was sent to the Archbishop, to examine a sect newly sprung up in Kent. He says it appears not what this sect was; he supposes they may be the family of love, or David George's sect; but these conjectures of his have no good foundation. "I am persuaded, says Mr. Pierce, this sect was no other than some good honest dissenters, who having been grieved to see so much of popery retained attempted a further reformation themselves, which would be a very displeasing thing to our bishops who expect all men to wait their leisure." [Answer to Nichol. p. 56] Mr. Strype in his life of Cranmer p. 208, says expressly that these persons were Anabaptists. In all probability many of these came to Joan Boucher's end, as no argument could convince the divines of this age of the absurdity and wickedness of putting men to death for conscience sake.

Burnet seems to think that the sufferings of these persons was on account of their erroneous opinions respecting the person of Christ; and says that "the other sort of Anabaptists, who only denied infant baptism, had no severities used against them; but that several books were written against them, to justify infant baptism; and the practice of the church so early begun, and so universally spread, was thought a good plea, especially being grounded on such arguments in scripture, as did demonstrate, at least the lawfulness of it." [Burnet Abridg. part ii. p. 87] However this might be, we are hereby furnished with an important piece of information, proving, that there were persons among them who were able to defend their principles, and who were not afraid to do so, though they thereby exposed themselves to imprisonment and death.

The next year it was resolved in council to reform the doctrine of the church. Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Ridley were appointed to this work, who framed forty-two articles upon the chief points of the Christian faith. These were entitled, "Articles agreed upon by the bishops and other learned men, in the convocation held in London, in the year 1552, for the avoiding diversity of opinions, and establishing consent touching true religion: Published by the king's authority." Neal does not notice the alteration in the twenty eighth article, which now stood as follows. "The

custom of the church for baptizing young children, is both to be commended, and by all means to be retained in the church." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 54] It is worthy of observation, that infant baptism was not retained because it was commanded by Christ, or practised by the apostles and first Christians, but as the custom of the church.

The excellent young king was a friend to toleration. John a Lasco, who was the pastor of a foreign church, published a work which was dedicated to Sigismund, king of Poland, 1555; in which it is said, that "King Edward desired that the rites and ceremonies used under popery, should be purged out by degrees; and that strangers should have churches *to observe all things according to apostolical observation only*; that by these means the English churches might be excited to embrace apostolical purity with the unanimous consent of the states of the kingdom." He adds, that "the king was at the head of this project, and that Cranmer promoted it; but that some great persons stood in the way." Martin Bucer, a German divine, and professor of divinity in Cambridge, a person in high estimation with the young king, drew up a plan and presented it to his majesty, in which he wrote largely on ecclesiastical discipline. The king having read it, set himself to write a general discourse about reformation, but did not live to finish it. His death, which happened in 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign, put an end to all his noble designs for perfecting the reformation. Dr. Leighton says, when speaking of his premature death, "This king, a gracious plant whereof the soil was not worthy, like another Josiah, setting himself with all his might to promote the reformation, abhorred and forbid that any mass should be permitted to his sister. Further, he was desirous not to leave a hoof of the Romish beast in his Kingdom, as he was taught by some of the sincerer sort. But as he wanted instruments to effect this good, so he was mightily opposed in all his good designs by the prelatists, which caused him in his godly jealousy, in the very anguish of his soul, to pour out his soul in tears." [An appeal to the parliament, &c.] Neal says, "He was an incomparable prince, of most promising expectations; and in the judgment of most impartial persons, the very phoenix of his age. It was more than whispered that he was poisoned." [Neal, vol. i. p. 81]

During the reign of the sanguinary MARY, who succeeded him, it is not to be doubted that the Baptists came in for their full share of suffering, and that many of the martyrs were of that denomination, which was then numerous, although their sentiments have not been handed down to us upon that subject.

In the first year of her reign, 1553, we have an account of the examination of Mr. Woodman before the bishop of Winchester, in the church of St. Mary Overy's, in which the bishop said, "Hold him a book: if he refuse to swear, he is an Anabaptist, and shall be excommunicated." Also in the examination of Mr. Philpot before the lords of the council, Nov. 5, 1555, Rich said to him, "All heretics boast of the Spirit

of God, and every one would have a church by himself, as Joan of Kent and the Anabaptists."

Spanhemius, in his account of David George of Delpt in Holland, who was driven from his own country by persecution, and died in London, and was honourably interred in St. Lawrence's church, informs us, that three years afterwards, it was discovered that he was an Anabaptist; upon which his followers were sought after; a certain number of divines and lawyers were appointed to examine them; his opinions were condemned by an ordinance; his picture was carried about and burnt; and his corps taken up and burnt likewise. [Crosby vol. i. p. 63,64] It is probable that David George was a member of a church of foreign Baptists that was formed in London in the former reign.

Brandt assures us that "in the year 1553, the low country exiles, who in the time of Edward VI had gathered a congregation at London (which upon his death was scattered by Queen Mary) after a dreadful northern journey in which they suffered much from the Lutherans, found at Wismar two distinct communities of Anabaptists." [*Hist. Refor.* vol. i. book. iv]

These persecutions appear to have inspired the Baptists with additional fortitude in avowing their attachment to their despised tenets; for in 1557, we find that many were imprisoned, being charged with holding the following opinions.--(1.) That infant baptism is anti-scriptural--(2.) That it is commanded by the pope--(3.) That Christ commanded teaching to go before baptism. These are sentiments which the Baptists still profess, and which they conceive have never been disproved. There was also a complaint exhibited against such as favoured the gospel at Ipswich, to the Queen's Council held at Beccles in Suffolk May 18, 1556, and among the crimes enumerated we find that four women were accused of refusing to have their children dipped in the Fonts at St. Peter's church. One of these is said to be a midwife, and it is particularly requested that "none might be suffered to be midwives but such as are catholic, because of evil council as such times require a number of women assembled." [Fox, vol. iii. p. 791]

This cruel and bigotted princess died Nov. 17, 1558. Her death put a close to a succession of cruelties which none have fully described, many hundreds having suffered death for religion; and there being but one instance in which a reprieve was granted to a person condemned for heresy. "Her reign (says Neal) was in every respect calamitous to the nation, and ought to be transmitted down to posterity in letters of blood."

QUEEN ELIZABETH succeeded her sister. In her reign there was much persecution. She was, however, preferable to Mary, though she seems to have been more than half a papist, and exercised a despotic sway over the lives of her subjects. The same severities which Mary exercised towards dissenters from the establishment when it was popish, were used towards them by Elizabeth when it became protestant.

Protestants were persecuted by both;--by Mary, for refusing to subscribe to the absurd notions of transubstantiation and purgatory; by Elizabeth, for remonstrating against archbishops, and lord bishops; against the maintenance of the priesthood by tithes; against the kingdom of Christ being a kingdom of this world; against an unpreaching ministry; against the square cap and surplice; and against rites and ceremonies and ecclesiastical canons of human invention and imposition. Some of the dissenters objected to all these; others to only a part.

The zeal of the bishops during this period was principally directed towards the support of ceremonies. To refuse a compliance with the injunctions of the queen respecting these popish inventions, was considered reason sufficient to deprive the most eminent divines of their station in the church, of their liberty, and of their life; at a time too when there were but few ministers of the gospel in England, and the people were perishing for lack of knowledge.

The spirit of the times may be judged of by the following circumstance. The plague being in London and several parts of the country in the summer of 1562, a little stop was thereby put to the zeal for uniformity, yet none were preferred in the church who scrupled the habits. In proof of this we may produce the examples of two of the worthiest and most learned divines of the age. The first of these was the venerable Miles Coverdale, formerly bishop of Exeter. This excellent man had been long employed in assisting Tyndale in the translation of the bible. He was born in Yorkshire, was educated at Cambridge, and proceeded doctor in the university of Tubingen. Returning to England in the time of king Edward, he was made bishop of Exeter, 1551. Upon the accession of Queen Mary, he was imprisoned, and would have been burnt; but by the intercession of the king of Denmark, he was sent over into that country. When Elizabeth came to the throne, he returned to England, and assisted at the consecration of her first archbishop of Canterbury: yet because he would not comply with the ceremonies and habits, he was neglected, and had no preferment. "This reverend man (says Mr. Strype) being now old and poor, Grindal, bishop of London, gave him the small living of St. Magnus at the Bridge-foot, where he preached quietly about two years. But not coming up to the uniformity required, he was persecuted thence, and obliged to relinquish his parish a little before his death, which took place May 20, 1567, at the age of eighty-one years. He was a celebrated preacher, admired and followed by all the puritans." [*Life of Parker*, p. 149]

The other was that venerable man, Mr. John Fox the martyrologist, a grave, learned, and laborious divine, and an exile for religion. While banished from his native country, he employed his time in writing the "Acts and Monuments" of that church which would hardly receive him into her bosom, and in collecting materials relative to the martyrdom of those who suffered for religion in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary. This he published first in Latin for the benefit of foreigners, and then in English for the use of his own countrymen, in 1561. This book gave a most severe blow to popery. It was dedicated to the queen, and was in such high reputation that

it was ordered to be placed in the churches, where it raised in the people an invincible horror and detestation of that religion which had shed so much innocent blood.

The queen professed a particular regard for Mr. Fox, and used to call him father: but as he refused to subscribe to her articles and ceremonies, he had no promotion for a considerable time. At length, through the influence of a friend, he procured a prebend in the cathedral of Sarum. This good old man would not submit to such impositions. When he was called upon to subscribe, he took his Greek testament from his pocket, and said, "To this will I subscribe." When they offered him the canons, he refused, saying, "I have nothing in the church but a prebend at Salisbury; and, if you take it away from me, much good may it do you." In a letter to his friend Dr. Humphreys, he thus pleasantly reproached the ingratitude of the times in which he lived. "I still wear the same clothes, and remain in the same sordid condition, that England received me in when I first came home out of Germany; nor do I change my degree or order, which is that of the mendicants, or if you please of the friars preachers." [Wilson's *Hist. of Dissenting Churches*, vol. i. p. 10]

That no favour would be shown to the Baptists in such times as these, is what might naturally be expected. The share they had in the cruelties inflicted on dissenters will appear in a few instances which the historians of those times have preserved. Mr. Fuller says, "Now began the Anabaptists wonderfully to encrease in the land; and as we are sorry that any countrymen should be seduced by that opinion, so we are glad that the English as yet were free from that infection: for on Easter day was disclosed a congregation of Dutch Anabaptists, without Aldgate in London; whereof seven-and-twenty were taken and imprisoned; and four, bearing faggots at Paul's cross, solemnly recanted their dangerous opinions. Next month, one Dutchman and ten women were condemned; of whom one woman was persuaded to renounce her error; eight were banished the land; and two more were so obstinate that command was issued out for their burning in Smithfield." [*Church Hist. Cent. 16*, p. 164]

What this writer says of the English being previously free from this infection, shows how little he was acquainted with the history of the church, as the numerous instances we have mentioned abundantly prove. The account, however, which is here given, is an evidence of the stedfastness of these people in holding their opinions, as but five were influenced by threats and promises to recant; and one of these, a woman, not till after she had been condemned to be executed. This sentence two of the men cheerfully suffered, rather than deny Him who has said, "Whosoever loveth his own life more than me is not worthy of me; and whosoever loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it."

The form of abjuration made by these Walloon Baptists is a curious document, as it proves to what lengths the prelatists wished persons professing these sentiments to go. It was taken before Dr. De Laune, in 1575, in the eighteenth year of Elizabeth, in the Dutch church, Austin frairs, London, of which the doctor was minister. It is as follows: "Whereas we being seduced by the devil, the spirit of error, and by false

teachers, have fallen into the most damnable errors; that Christ took not flesh of the substance of the virgin Mary, that the infants of the faithful ought not to be baptized, that a christian may not be a magistrate, or bear the sword and office of authority, and that it is not lawful for a christian man to take an oath. Now by the grace of God, and the assistance of good and learned ministers of Christ's church, we understand the same to be most damnable and detestable heresies; and do ask God, before his church, mercy for the said former errors; and do forsake, recant, and renounce them; and we abjure them from the bottom of our hearts, protesting we certainly believe the contrary. And further, we confess that the whole doctrine established and published in the church of England, and also that which is received by the Dutch church in London, is found true according to God's word. Whereunto in all things we submit ourselves, and will be most gladly members of the said Dutch church; from henceforth utterly abandoning and forsaking all and every Anabaptistical error." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 69]

From this account we learn what were the errors they were charged with, and nothing but a formal recantation of which would preserve them from either banishment or death. To prevent those from being executed who were condemned, Fuller says, that a grave divine sent a melting letter to the queen, begging they might not be burnt. "This was written, (he adds) in elegant latin by Mr. John Fox, from whose hand I transcribed it. He was very loth that Smithfield, formerly consecrated with martyr's ashes, should now be profaned with heretics, and desirous that the papists might enjoy their own monopoly of cruelty in burning condemned persons."

The following is the translation of this letter, which does credit to the heart of the writer.--"Most serene and happy princess, most illustrious queen, the honour of our country, and honour of our age. As nothing hath ever been farther from my thoughts and expectation than ever to trouble your most excellent majesty by my troublesome interruption; so it grieves me very much that I must break that silence which has hitherto been the result of my mind. But so it now happens, by I know not what infelicity, that the present time obliges me, contrary to my hope and opinion, to that which of all things in the world I least desired; and though hitherto I have been troublesome to nobody, I am now, contrary to my inclination, constrained to be importunate, even with my princess; not in any matter or cause of my own, but through the calamity brought upon others; and by how much the more sharp and lamentable that is, by so much the more I am spurred on to deprecate it.

"I understand there are some here in England, not English but come hither from Holland, I suppose both men and women, who having been tried according to law, and having publicly declared their repentance, are happily reclaimed. Many others are condemned to exile; a right sentence in my opinion. But I hear there are one or two of these who are appointed to the most severe of punishments, viz. *burning*, except your clemency prevent. Now in this one affair I conceive there are two things to be considered; the one is the wickedness of their errors, the other, the sharpness of

their punishment. As to their errors, indeed, no man of sense can deny that they are most absurd, and I wonder that such monstrous opinions could come into the mind of any Christian; but such is the state of human weakness, if we are left never so little awhile destitute of the divine light, whither is it we do not fall? And we have great reason to give God thanks that I hear not of any Englishman that is inclined to this madness. As to these fanatical sects, therefore, it is certain they are by no means to be countenanced in a commonwealth, but in my opinion ought to be suppressed by proper correction. But to *roast alive* the bodies of poor wretches, that offend rather through blindness of judgment than perverseness of will, in fire and flames, raging with pitch and brimstone, is a hard-hearted thing, and more agreeable to the practice of the Romanists than the custom of the gospellers; yea, is evidently of the same kind, as if it had flowed from the Romish priests, from the first author of such cruelty, Innocent the third. Oh, that none had ever brought such a Phalarian bull into the meek church of Christ! I do not speak such things because I am pleased with their wickedness, or favour the errors of any man; but seeing that I myself am a man, I must therefore favour the life of man; not that he should err, but that he should repent. Nay, my pity extends not only to the life of man, but also to the beasts.

"For so it is perhaps a folly in my; but I speak the truth, that I can hardly pass by a slaughter-house where cattle are killing, but my mind shrinks back with a secret sense of their pains. And truly I greatly admire the clemency of God in this, who had such respect to the mean brute creatures formerly prepared for sacrifices, that they must not be committed to the flames before their blood had been poured out at the foot of the altar. Whence we may gather, that in inflicting of punishments, though just, we must not be over rigorous, but temper the sharpness of rigour with clemency. Wherefore, if I may be so bold with the majesty of so great a princess, I humbly beg of your royal highness, for the sake of Christ, who was consecrated to suffer for the lives of many, this favour at my request, which even the divine clemency would engage you to; that if it may be, (and what cannot your authority do in these cases?) these miserable wretches may be spared; at least that a stop may be put to the horror, by changing the punishment into some other kind. There are excommunications, and close imprisonments; there are bonds; there is perpetual banishment, burning of the hand and whipping, or even slavery itself. This one thing I most earnestly beg, that the flames of Smithfield, so long ago extinguished by your happy government, may not be again revived. But if I may not obtain this, I pray with the greatest earnestness that out of your great pity you would grant us a month or two in which we may try whether the Lord will give them grace to turn from their dangerous errors, lest with the destruction of their bodies their souls be in danger of eternal ruin."

This melting pathetic letter had but little effect upon the high and bigotted spirit of Elizabeth. She answered, "That if after a month's reprieve, and conference with divines, they would not recant their errors, they should certainly suffer." This they refused to do, and hereupon the writ *De haeretico comburendo*, which for seventeen

years had only hung up *in terrorem*, was now put in execution; and these two Baptists, John Wielmaker and Henry Tor Woort, were burnt in Smithfield, July 22.

In the year 1589, Dr. Some, a man of great note, and a violent churchman, published a treatise against some of the puritans, Greenwood, Barrow, Penry, and others. In this he attempts to show what agreement there was between them and the English Anabaptists. The opinions he charges the Anabaptists with, when, as Crosby says, they are stripped of the dress which he had put upon them, are as follow--"That the ministers of the gospel ought to be maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people--that the civil power has no right to make and impose ecclesiastical laws--that the high commission court was an anti-christian usurpation--that those who are qualified to teach ought not to be hindered by the civil power--that though the Lord's prayer be a rule and foundation of prayer, yet it is not to be used as a form and that no forms of prayer ought to be imposed on the church--that the baptism administered by the church of Rome is invalid--that a true constitution and discipline are essential to a true church, and that the worship of God in the church of England is in many things defective."--The doctor touches but briefly, says Crosby, on their opinion of baptizing believers only, and brings up the rear of his accusations with saying, "they esteem it blasphemy for any man to arrogate to himself the title of Doctor of Divinity" that is, as he explains it, to be called Rabbi, or master of other men's faith. [Crosby, vol. i. p. 77]

Who does not see in these articles the genuine principles of the new testament, and the true ground upon which as protestant dissenters we ought to take our stand? The right of the magistrate to interfere in religious matters being denied, religious establishments, which are founded upon the assumption of that principle, must be necessarily dissented from, and, if the principle can be proved to be false, must fall with it.

The Baptists of the present day have no reason to be ashamed of these sentiments of their predecessors, who at a time when the principles of dissent were so imperfectly understood, had such clear ideas on the subject, and sealed the truth with their blood.

From Dr. Some we learn also that at the time when he wrote, 1589, "There were several Anabaptistical conventicles in London and other places." It seems then the Baptists had at this early period formed distinct churches of persons of their own sentiments, both in London, and in different parts of the country. He adds, "Some persons of these sentiments have been bred at our universities." That is to say, some of the zealous puritanical divines had pursued their principles to their legitimate consequences, and had rejected infant baptism, with the other ceremonies of the church. The doctor, to expose the Baptists, relates a story of one whom he calls T.L., "who at a conventicle in London took upon him to expound the scriptures, conceive long prayers on a sudden, and to excommunicate two persons who were formerly of that brotherhood, but had now left them." Who this T.L. was we know not; but it clearly appears that he was the pastor of the church, and that in their name, he

declared that some persons who had left them were no longer of their communion. His explaining the scriptures and praying without the use of a form, will not now be considered as either unaccountable or heretical. We are much obliged to Dr. Some for enabling us to trace the history of our churches in England, since the Reformation, to a period almost as early as that of the presbyterian churches, the first of which in England was founded at Wandsworth in the year 1572.

The persons against whom Dr. Some wrote were men of respectable talents, and their names shine with distinguished lustre in the annals of the puritans. They were eminent divines, and illustrious martyrs in the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ. Barrow and Greenwood, after being kept in prison for many months, and there exposed to all the severities of cold, hunger, and nakedness, were, on the last day of March 1592, brought to Tyburn in a cart, and exposed under the gallows a long time, to see whether the terrors of death would affright them; but remaining constant, they were taken back to Newgate, and on April 6, they were carried a second time to Tyburn and executed. At the place of execution they gave such testimonies of their unfeigned piety towards God, and loyalty to the queen, and prayed so earnestly for her long and prosperous reign, that when Dr. Reynolds, who attended them, reported their behaviour to her majesty, she is said to have expressed her sorrow that she had yielded to their death.

The persecution of those who separated from the church of England, was from this time to end of the queen's reign very severe.

Many of them on this account left the kingdom; and those who remained in it were perpetually harassed and tormented by fines and imprisonment. That the Baptists were deeply involved in the suffering of these times, may be gathered from the supplication of the justices of the peace for the county of Norfolk. A complaint had been made to them of the long and illegal imprisonment of a puritan, the Rev. Robert Wright, and hereupon their worships were pleased to address Aylmer, bishop of London, on his behalf. This so offended his lordship, that he drew up twelve articles of impeachment against the justices themselves, and caused them to be summoned before the queen and council to answer for their misdemeanors.

These high proceedings of the bishop disgusted both the clergy and the whole country; and the justices, notwithstanding his late citation of them before the council, wrote to their honours, praying them to interpose in behalf of divers godly ministers. The words of this supplication, says Neal, are worth remembering, because they discover the cruelty of the commissioners; who made no distinction between the vilest of criminals and conscientious ministers.--"The faithful ministers of the word (say they) are marshalled with the worst malefactors; presented, indicted, arraigned, and condemned, for matters, as we presume, of very slender moment, some for leaving the holidays unbidden; some for singing the psalm *Nune Dimittis* in the morning; some for turning the questions in baptism concerning faith, from the infants to the godfathers, which is but you for thou; some for leaving out the cross in baptism;

some for leaving out the ring in marriage. A most pitiful thing it is to see the back of the law turned to the adversary [the papists] and the edge with all its sharpness laid upon the sound and true-hearted subject.

"We regard order to be the rule of the Spirit of God, and desire uniformity in all the duties of the church, according to the proportion of faith: but if these weak ceremonies are so indifferent as to be left to the discretion of ministers, we think it (under correction) very hard to have them go under so hard handling, to the utter discredit of their whole ministry, and the profession of the truth.

"We serve her majesty and the country [as justices of the peace] according to law. We reverence the law, and lawmaker: when the law speaks, we keep silence: when it commandeth, we obey. By law we proceed against all offenders: we touch none that the law spareth, and spare none that the law toucheth. We allow not of papists; of the family of Love; of Anabaptists, or Brownists. No, we punish all these. Yet we are christened with the odious name of puritans; a term compounded of the heresies above mentioned, which we disclaim. The papists pretend to be immaculate: the family of Love cannot sin, they being deified, as they say, in God. But we groan under the burden of our sins, and confess them to God; and at the same time we labour to keep ourselves and our profession unblamable. This is our puritanism; a name given to such magistrates and ministers, and others, as have a strict eye upon their juggling.

"We think ourselves bound in duty to unfold these matters to your lordships; and if you shall please to call us to the proof of them, it is the thing we most desire."

When such severities were practised against men who ventured to alter a *pronoun* in the baptismal service, for the relief of burdened consciences, it is certain that those called Anabaptists, who rejected the rite itself, would not escape chastisement. Even the justices of Norfolk say, "we punish these." It is remarkable, that while they mention some things that made other sects odious, they say nothing to the discredit of the Baptists. May we not infer that their only error was a denial of infant baptism? But for this crime they were considered as unfit to reside in a Christian country among Christian people, and therefore the queen published a royal proclamation commanding all Anabaptists and other heretics to leave the kingdom, whether they were natives or foreigners, under the penalties of imprisonment and loss of goods. Consequently all Baptists were obliged either to conceal their sentiments, or fly into those countries where they might without molestation worship God according to the dictates of conscience. Many of them went over to Holland; so that there were perhaps fewer dissenters in England of all denominations at this time than at any period since the reformation. The terrors of the Star chamber, and the High commission court, or as it has been more properly called, the English inquisition, operated so powerfully as almost to exterminate all those who had the simplicity and godly sincerity to oppose that church, which with bold effrontery had declared, "The church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in matters of faith;"

to which might have been added,--and a disposition to punish those who will not implicitly receive her dogmas.

Things were in this state at that time of the queen's death, which took place March 24, 1602, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign. Neal says, "As to her religion, she affected a middle way between popery and puritanism, though she was more inclined to the former. She understood not the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and is therefore justly charged with persecuting principles. More sanguinary laws were made in her reign than in those of any of her predecessors. Her hands were stained with the blood of papists and puritans: the former were executed for denying her supremacy, and the latter for sedition and non-conformity."