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Bresse**

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**AUTHENTIC DETAILS OF THE
VALDENSES**

**MILNER'S CHURCH HISTORY OF THE VALDENSES, IN
PIEMONTE AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

WITH ABRIDGED TRANSLATIONS OF

"L'HISTOIRE DES VAUDOIS"

By J. Bresse

Illustrated by Etchings

"Vous etes de nos peres que nous ne connaissons pas."

Reply of a Vaudois peasant to an Englishman.

1827.

"The Waldenses are the middle link which connects the primitive Christians and fathers with the reformed, and by their means the proof is completely established; that salvation by the grace of Christ, felt in the heart and expressed in the life by the power of the Holy Ghost, has ever existed, from the time of the Apostles to this day, and that it is a doctrine marked by the cross, and distinct from all that religion of mere form or convenience, or of human invention, which calls itself Christian, but which wants the spirit of Christ."

CHARLES, LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY PERMISSION, WITH AN EARNEST HOPE, THAT THE CAUSE OF PURE CHRISTIANITY, AND THE DISTRESS OF HER PROFESSORS IN A DISTANT COUNTRY, MAY OBTAIN SOME ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM ONE MORE HUMBLE EFFORT TOWARDS THEIR SUPPORT.

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HISTORICAL DETAILS OF THE PAST SUFFERINGS OF THE VALDENSES, AND OF THE STATE OF THESE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS IN PIEDMONT AND OTHER COUNTRIES

After the late interesting publications of Allix, Jones, Gilly, Acland, and other writers, it may appear at the present time somewhat presumptuous, as well as unnecessary, to lay before the public any further details connected with the history of these excellent and primitive Christians; but as some of the Vaudois manuscripts and works are very scarce, and but little known in England, more particularly those of Peyran, Henri Arnaud, and Bresse, it may be desirable (even under the certainty of many repetitions) to give some short extracts from these curious documents, if only with the view and under the hope of keeping alive in the breasts of the people of this favoured isle that charitable zeal, which has again manifested itself, and is of such vital importance to the political and religious welfare of our noble though impoverished protestant brethren.

As the Valdenses most evidently are a part of the dispersed flock of the original Church of Christ, it becomes a matter of the highest interest to trace out their history from the earliest periods, and to observe how sedulously under the severest persecutions they have not only upheld their faith in its own purity and truth, but how gloriously they have continued to resist the growing corruptions of the Romish faith.

Scattered over the face of the earth, we find almost every where these primitive Christians under the various denominations given to them-of Cathari, or "the Pure," Paulicians, Petrobusians, Puritans, Leonists, Lollards, Henricians, Josephists, Patarines, Fraticelli, Insabati, Piphles, Toulousians, Albigenses, Lombardists, Bulgarians, Bohemian brethren, Barbets, Walloons, &c.

We not only find many colonies of these people in the eastern and western parts of Europe, but even in Africa and America, whither they emigrated to escape from oppression and massacre.

After the most cruel and wanton persecutions, we observe this oppressed people reduced in number by barbarous massacres, and at length driven out of their own purchased territories, because they would not submit to innovations and changes in their established religion; but in a few years we again find a remnant of them under their pastor, Henri Arnaud, led back into their native country almost in a miraculous manner to expel their savage oppressors, thousands of whom fled before this reduced but noble band of self-taught warriors.

Many refugees took up their abode in the Rhetian Alps, and a great number, after various edicts, were allowed to settle in the Duchy of Wirtemberg, where some of them were visited by the writer of these pages, for the express purpose of inquiring into their wants and privileges.

Before the days of Wickliffe, and other reformers, we can trace the Vaudois by their sufferings; they were branded and burnt as heretics, because they would not conform to the doctrines of men, and the edicts of the Roman pontiffs: their steady adherence to the principles of their own faith, and obedience to the will of their Creator, rendered them instrumental to the reformation, which afterwards took place, and by which, in this country, the pure religion of our ancestors was restored. It is even probable that this separated flock of true worshippers are to be the means, under heavenly guidance, of not only preserving, but also diffusing, the light of the gospel and its healing beams over the most remote parts of the earth.

251 A.D. It would appear that the title of Cathari, or "*the Pure*," was first given to the followers of Novation, a Romish pastor, who set the example of resisting the early corruptions of the Papal dominion, and that Puritan churches existed in Italy upwards of 200 years.

590 Nine Bishops rejected the communion of the Pope, as heretical, and this schism, we are told by another author, began even in the year 553.

604 On the death of Pope Gregory, Boniface III. styled himself "universal Bishop," and the worship of images became general; but long before this period, in the fourth century, Socrates the historian speaks of the Novations having churches at Constantinople, Nice, Nicomedia, and Coticæus in Phrygia, &c. as well as a church at Carthage, the doctrines and discipline of which, we find that Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, and Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, approved of.

660 Some persons have supposed that the Valdenses have derived their name from Petro Valdo, but Reinerius Sacco, an inquisitor who lived 80 years after Valdo of Lyons, admits that they flourished 500 years before the time of this celebrated reformer, i. e. about the year 660. Some of these Valdenses, like the Novations, we find called Puritans, or Gathari; when Paulinus, Bishop of Aquilæia, and other Italian Bishops, condemned the decrees of the second Council of Nice, which had confirmed image worship.

817 Claude, Bishop of Turin, (and of the Vallies of Piedmont inhabited by the Valdenses,) was zealous against this idolatrous practice, and bears witness that the gospel was preserved amongst these

mountaineers in its native purity and glorious light. Genebrand and Rorencio (Roman Catholic writers) have owned that the Patarines* and inhabitants of Piedmont preserved the opinions of Claude during the ninth and tenth centuries.

** Patarines, so called from Pataria, a place near Milan, where those Vaudois who took part with the Bishop of Milan against the Roman Pontiff, Nicholas II., held communion together. See the Sermon of Archbishop Wake, preached for the relief of the Vaudois, A.D. 1669, at St. James's Westminster.*

1026 Thus before 1026, and 500 years previous to our own reformation, says Dr. Allix, we discover a body of men called Patarines, Valdenses, or Cathari, whose belief was contrary to the doctrines of the See of Rome. In 1040, the Patarines were very numerous at Milan, (Voltaire speaks of them in his General History, 1100 chap. 69.) In 1100, the Valdenses became well known by the "Noble Leycon," and another work, entitled "Qual Cosa Sia l'Antichrist."

1140 A little before this year, Everrinus (of Stamfield, diocese of Cologne) addressed a letter to the famous St. Bernard, in which is the following passage:—"There have lately been some heretics amongst us, but they were seized by the people in their zeal and burnt to death, these people in Germany are called Cathari; in Flanders, Piphles; and in France, Tisserands." Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a small body of these Valdenses, called Puritans and Paulicians, came from Germany, and 1159 were persecuted in England. Some being burnt at Oxford, Gerard their teacher answered for them, that they were Christians, but Henry the Second ordered them in 1166 to be branded with an hot iron, and whipped through the streets. Thirteen Valdensian families had certainly emigrated to England about this period.

1178 Gretzer the Jesuit (who published the book of Reinerius) admits that the Toulousians and Albigenses condemned in 1178 were no other 1181 than the Valdenses. In the decree of Pope Lucius III. against them, they are called Catharists, Josephists, and Heretics. Another decree was made against them in 1194, by Ildefonsus, King of Arragon: and Bale, in his old Chronicle of London, mentions "one 1210 burnt to death tainted with the faith of the Valdenses."

1215 Council of Lateran against Heretics.

1230 to 1350 Supressio in France

1240 Some further territory in Piedmont was about this time purchased and paid for by the Valdenses, to the amount of 6000 ducatoons.

1259 The Patarine Church of Albi (in France) whence these Vaudois were called Albigenses, consisted of 500 members, that of Concorezzo more than 1500, and of Bagnolo 200. The Bishop of Vercelli complained much of these people, whom he denominated Cathari and Patarines. The English, at the time they had possession of Guienne (in 1210), began to help the Valdenses, who stood forth to defend their faith, headed by Walter and Raymond Lollard.

1322 According to Clark's Martyrology (page 111), we find Walter was burnt at Cologne in 1322: which was two years before the birth of Wickliffe. A cotemporary historian says, that "in a few years half the people of England became Lollards." And Newton, in his Dissertation on the Prophecies, (1 vol. 4to. page 631,) says, "part of the Waldenses took refuge in Britain." Even Theo. Beza says, "as for the Valdenses, I may be permitted to call them the seed of the primitive and pure Christian church."

1400 In 1400 began the first severe persecution against the Vaudois, on account of their faith, which may be found related by Bresse, together with their subsequent misfortunes, down to the era of the treaty of Pignerolo in 1655, the most interesting details of which history are translated and abridged in another part of this work.

1685 The Duke of Savoy, at the instigation of Louis XIVth, revoked his promises, and the following year condemned 14,000 Vaudois to the prisons of Turin, the rest either fled or became Catholics. By the intercessions of the Protestant countries, these miserable prisoners were released, but their numbers by hardships and cruelty were reduced to 3000, who took refuge in Switzerland and 1687 elsewhere, in 1687; from whence a part of them effected that intrepid return into their own Vallies, so well described by their Colonel and Pastor, Henri Arnaud, in "La Rentree Glorieuse" of 1689.

1698 Eight years after they were again exiled to the number of 3000, in consequence of an article in the treaty between France and Savoyin 1698: these were the same who with the veteran Arnaud amongst them, took refuge in Germany, and were solemnly received as subjects to the Duke of Wirtemberg, with the promise of the free exercise of their religion for ever.

1797 The pension from England, which had been granted by Cromwell, and confirmed by Queen Anne, was this year discontinued.

1799 A body of Vaudois from Wirtemberg emigrated to America, and joined those 1600, who, in Arnaud's time, had settled near Philadelphia.

1800 Piedmont fell under the yoke of France.

1814 The King of Sardinia restored to his throne, refused to grant any privileges to the Vaudois beyond those they enjoyed before the French revolution.

1825 Present state of the Vaudois, as described in the Letters now published, &c.

ABRIDGED TRANSLATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE VAUDOIS

PREFACE.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing: And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth, but whether there be prophecies they shall fail, whether there be tongues, they shall cease, whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away. And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."

But the greatest of these is charity! What words are these which I have just quoted? Christians, of all countries, of all sects, and of all communions! do you recognize in them the religion of your hearts? You do, or you are but hypocrites, and no true friends to the gospel.

O ye senseless fanatics! who have dared for ages, to divide, inflame, and overturn the world; to arm son against father, and brother against sister, for the sake of opinions, not necessary to their happiness, or at best of little importance. Ye persecutors, who beneath the veil of a religion, whose essence is charity, have believed that homage was to be rendered to your Creator, by immolating human victims on his altars, and committing the most horrible atrocities. Ye, who make religion consist in vain ceremonies, and the gospel a rampart for the defence of your base interests, come forward before the tribunal of charity, and if it be yet possible, let this admirable sentence penetrate your hearts. "Now abideth faith, hope, and charity; these three, but the greatest of these is charity!" Try every action of your life by this sentence of the apostle. And as the pilot has ever before his eyes the compass to direct his course through the ocean, let this sublime picture of charity be the invariable rule of your actions and opinions, and the very soul of your whole conduct. Far from me be those useless distinctions of sects and parties, by which some would excuse the sin of intolerance, and the fury of fanaticism: for me, there exist neither Protestants, nor Catholics, nor Lutherans, nor Calvinists, nor Moravians, nor Anabaptists; I own to no other title, than that of Christian; no other religion than that of Christianity. Every man who practices its duties is my brother, whatever may be his particular opinions. It would be easy to demonstrate that this reasoning is derived immediately, from the fundamental maxims of the gospel; and the evils which a contrary belief have occasioned, prove that it is of the greatest importance. No true Christian can deny this, since it is confirmed by every line of his code. But who is a true Christian? He who lives in charity; / he who practises it as did St. Paul. This is the true touchstone of our religion. He who shrinks from this test bears it not, is not a Christian. "He is nothing," to use the words of the Apostle.

It is upon these principles that I beg all that I have advanced in the history of the Vaudois may be judged. If I have expressed myself warmly against their enemies, it is only when they have violated the first duties of Christianity; then I neither wish or ought to spare them, for truth, in the judgment of an honest man, is one and immutable. He ought to purchase it, to use the words of the gospel, to publish and defend it, at the price of all he has in the world. I have nothing to do with Catholicism, but with the excesses which Catholics have committed. If I have anathematized the ministers of the Inquisition, it is because so execrable an establishment does not exist under heaven. The sun may well have withdrawn his light in horror, when he first illuminated the dark and bloody walls of this abominable tribunal! And they dare to assert that it is established for the propagation of the Christian faith. What a horrible blasphemy is this! We may ask of the most ardent partizans of the Propaganda,* whether Jesus had recourse to an Inquisition? if the Apostles used such a means of extending their doctrine, or proving the faith of their brethren? Did the first preachers use tortures to force men to adopt their creed? Did not Jesus, himself say to those who remained with him, when others fled—"And ye! will ye also go away?"** Is this the expression of a persecutor? or can the infernal rules of the Inquisition be founded upon the feelings which dictated this question?

* *The College of Propaganda fide, in Rome, is synonymous with the Italian Inquisition.*

** *John, chap. vi. ver. 67.*

Nay! is there in the whole of the sacred Scriptures, one single line or word which can excuse persecution for the sake of religion? If there is, let it be produced, and I will on the instant make full reparation to this host of executioners and fanatics. But if the precepts of Christianity tend to recommend to us the love of God and of our brethren, it follows that the Inquisitors and their adherents, have been Christians in name only, and that their conduct has tended to the discredit of true religion and greatly injured the cause of Christ; for light and darkness are not more different than a true Christian, and a bigoted fanatic. I have more than once remarked, in the course of my history, that we should rather accuse the Inquisition, than the House of Savoy of the atrocities committed on the Vaudois. If the latter deserves censure, it is for want of courage to oppose the perfidious and criminal instigations of this bloody tribunal. The frightful tyranny of Rome, at that time, may be considered as an excuse; and our history will show to what excesses the anti-christian policy of that proud court was led. And as the picture of such cruelty is disgusting, it will be pleasing to turn from it to the mildness which reigns in the present government....

It is for the Vaudois youth that I have undertaken this work, though I trust that those of more mature age may find it both interesting and instructive: it will recall to their minds anecdotes of their ancestors, which their fathers have often repeated to them; and their deepest feelings must be excited at the recollection of their forefathers, who have fallen beneath the axe of fanaticism for the sake of the gospel. The families of Mondons, Arnauds, Legers, Janavels, and many others still existing will read with emotion the exploits of their virtuous ancestors; their children will pronounce with reverence these names which have been an honour to our country; they will learn to repeat the most remarkable passages of our history. Enjoying from their earliest years the light of the gospel, their zeal will be inflamed by the sublime sentiments such examples inspire; and their first ambitious desires will be to imitate them. How well Shall I be rewarded for my labour, if such be the effect of this work; the most ardent wish of my heart will have been accomplished, and I shall not have lived in vain.

Here let me repeat what I have said in my prospectus. The history of the Vaudois occupies, perhaps, the most interesting point of time in Christian history. Confined amidst the mountains of Piedmont, adjoining Dauphiné, they have there preserved the Christian doctrine and worship in evangelical purity and simplicity, whilst the most profound darkness covered the rest of Europe. It is from the Apostles or their immediate successors, that they have received the gospel, and from that time their faith has never changed; it is now the same as it was before the reformation. The existence of these few thousand Vaudois is therefore most interesting to all Christian nations. Many authors have written before me, but their works are scarce, and their style often nearly unintelligible, from their antiquity; nor do any of their works contain a complete history. Those to whom I have alluded in my prospectus, are Perrin, Gilles, Leger, Arnaud, and Boyer.

Perrin wrote the "Histoire des Vaudois et Albigeois," printed at Geneva, 1618, 2 vols. 12mo. The work only carries down the annals of the Vaudois to 1601, and it is now extremely rare; it contains many valuable documents, which would be sought for in vain elsewhere, as the author was allowed to examine the manuscripts of the Synod of the Vallies. He was a minister of the church at Lyons.

P. Gilles, pastor of the Vaudois church at La Tour, is the author of "Histoire Ecclesiastique des églises réformées recueillies en quelques vallées du Piémont autrefois appelées églises Vaudoises," chez de Tournes, 1648, 1 vol. 4to.; this comprises the period from 1160 to 1643; containing interesting annals of the persecutions in the author's time; but the style is still less agreeable than that of Perrin.

Jean Leger's history is entitled "Histoire générale des églises évangéliques de Piémont ou Vaudoises," printed at Leyden, 1669, 1 vol. folio, goes as far as A.D. 1664; it is full of learning and piety, giving many facts to be found no where else; and the interest is increased from the circumstance of his having himself taken an important part in the events he describes. Still he enters into those tiresome details, for which the taste of that age is so much to be blamed.

The work of Henri Arnaud is the "Histoire de la rentrée glorieuse de nos ancêtres dans leur patrie," in 1 vol. 8vo. without date. The event he relates occurred three years after the expulsion of the Vaudois, that is in 1690. This is a most precious and interesting little work, for the author himself was at the head of his countrymen, and the vivacity and force of his narrative render it very attractive to the lovers of truth, though it must be confessed that his style, as he says himself, in his dedication to Queen Anne, is wanting in that polish which is so much admired in these times. This work was originally composed in two parts, of which the latter must have contained an account of the war between Piedmont and France, in which the Vaudois were actively engaged; this last part was unhappily never printed, and the manuscript remains undiscovered; any information respecting it would be very important to the completion of the third part of my work. Henri Arnaud died in Wirtemberg, where this manuscript probably would be found.

The last of the Vaudois histories is by Boyer, under the title of Abrégé de l'Histoire des Vaudois, 1 vol. 12mo., La Haye, 1691; it goes down to 1690, and though written with judgment, is defective in many points, both in the historical parts, and with regard to the doctrine and manners of the Vaudois.

** The author here states his obligations to Mons. Certon of Rotterdam, pastor of the reformed church, and to some others, from whom he had received manuscripts. He then gives some other particulars, not interesting to the general reader, and proceeds as above.—T.*

I pass over other histories of the Vaudois, in English and Dutch, as well as other references to them in more general works, as for instance, Gekendorf in his history of the reformation, Ruchat Basnage, &c. &c. as they are probably derived from the above sources, and are only more or less carefully compiled....

Though I must not repeat here the evidences of the antiquity of the Vaudois, I cannot refrain from remarking that it is from the vallies of the Vaudois that the first sparks of that reformation have arisen, which has drawn back a great part of Europe to the purity of the gospel. It is extremely probable, that Calvin himself was of Vaudois origin, for there are still several families of this name in the vallies, from whence we believe his to have emigrated to Picardy. It is certain, that in the preface which this great reformer prefixed to the first French bible ever published; he acknowledges himself bound by the ties of kindred to the translator, one of our most celebrated "barbes," or pastors, named Olivetan, which makes it probable that Calvin had obtained from the Vaudois the doctrine which he afterwards preached at Geneva, and elsewhere. It is equally certain, that long before the reformation there were many persons who followed the doctrine of the Vaudois in Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, &c.; indeed the Valtiois of this last country, as well as those of Alsace, sent their youth into our vallies to be educated as pastors. It is known also that the celebrated Lollard who laboured with such zeal to diffuse the Vaudois doctrines in England, was not only a native of our vallies, but preached in them for a length of time with great success.* We may also assert that it is by means of the Vaudois that the reformation was introduced in the United Provinces.

** The Lollard tower in London takes its name from one of the disciples of Lollard, who in the age of intolerance was confined there.*

The Vaudois of Provence, Languedoc, and Dauphiné also, originally sprang from our val-lies, and when their

numbers had increased greatly at Lyons, they were persecuted by the Archbishop of that city, Jean de Belle Maison, about 1180, and retired into Picardy, under Peter Valdo, where they received the name of Picards. Here Philip Augustus, king of France, resolving to extirpate them, caused 300 gentlemen's houses to be razed to the ground, because the owners had embraced the tenets of the Vaudois. Forced again to leave their newly found country, these Picards, or Vaudois of Lyons, (also called poor of Lyons,) retired principally into the United Provinces of Holland, and there spread the knowledge of the truth. It was in the Low Countries that the Vaudois first took the name of Walloons, and that the first confession de foi (articles of belief) was drawn up by the celebrated martyr Guido Brez. This confession was first printed in 1561, addressed to Philip II. of Spain, in 1562; it was confirmed by the synod of Anvers, 1585, and finally adopted by that of Dordt. The above is sufficient to prove that the Vaudois church is the parent of all those which have arisen in Protestant Europe, and particularly of the churches of the United Provinces, as well Dutch as Walloon. Why do the Roman Catholics and the Protestants mutually hate each other? Why do they look upon each other with harshness and severity? It is, because instead of going to the source of their religion, the gospel itself, they content themselves with examining those streams, of which the waters have been rendered impure, by the admixture of human opinions: it is because they appeal to the confessions of faith of the heads of their sect or party, instead of seeking what really constitutes the essence of the Christian faith, and what ought to be the rule of our faith and practice, by means of the specific declarations of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It is because they generally adopt self-interest for their guide, instead of shielding themselves under that universal spirit of charity, without which there can be no real Christianity, and because they entirely forget that religion does not consist in words, but in virtue.

The nature of my employments, and the interest of the great cause which I serve, have often called forth my reflections on the evils it has been my task to describe; and however earnestly I have searched for remedies, as well as for the discovery of their origin, my meditations have continually brought me back to the same point. Let it be remembered that it is a Vaudois who speaks, a Vaudois, who, like his countrymen, absolutely recognizes no other religion than that of Christianity, and who believes that the unhappy distinctions of Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Calvinists, &c. &c., have done a thousand times more harm to the cause of the gospel, than all the manouvres of the wicked and unbelieving.

The thing is evident as to natural religion, for in examining history, we find that in no case has any one ever attempted to prescribe rules of belief to others, but that each receives what nature hath taught him, and nothing more.

Nor is there more obscurity in the point, as to revealed religion; not that religion of which opposing sects have given such different descriptions, but that which is to be found in the beautiful lessons of Jesus and his apostles. It is from these alone, we must judge of Christianity. And every one who is willing to undertake this important examination, without prejudices, will allow that nothing is more simple, more easy, than Christianity; and that the great truths which form its basis, are clear enough to be within the reach of the most confined understandings.

We must therefore conclude that many of the opinions which have so long sown discord, and still continue to produce dissensions among Christians, are by no means founded on points essential to Christianity; nay, the traces of several of them are scarcely to be found in the sacred writings.

What then are the fundamental articles of our faith, of which the belief is necessary to the character of a true Christian? Read the discourses of Jesus and the apostles to their converts, and you will have a full answer to the question. (See the quotations at the end of the Preface.) These articles of belief are but few in number, and if every Christian had religiously observed them, we should not see so many sects attacking one another, or the disciples of the mildest of masters, hate, persecute, and massacre each other, in the most barbarous manner. Such are the dreadful consequences a trifling error may produce in such a case. Such is the essence of the Christian faith, and the opinions which have been added to it, are not only useless, but dangerous. Every Christian must render an account of his belief to God alone, and it is his duty to found that belief solely of the express declarations of the gospel, without attending to the subtleties with which men have endeavoured to obscure them. The most crafty theologian cannot find one single line in the holy scriptures, which could give to any person or council upon earth, a right to impose a formula of belief on others. This pretended right which the court of Rome, and after it, so many reformed churches have wished to exercise, is no other than a manifest usurpation, and not only of the rights of man, but of God himself, who is our only judge, since to him alone we must all give an account of our faith. The gospel is the sole immutable rule of faith, and the Supreme Being has left to each person its explication, according to his talents and advantages; since it was not his object, as some have supposed, merely to propose to us such and such truths for our belief, but to render us more mild, humane, modest, and virtuous; and consequently more happy. It is for this reason that St. Paul does not hesitate to place charity, which he calls the union of all virtues, above faith, which is but a single act of the mind, without any merit whatever, unless it influences our sentiments and our conduct. "And now abideth" (says the apostle) "faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."

Such have ever been, and still are the principles of the Christians of our vailles; the gospel is their sole and immutable judge; they have paid no attention to the sects which have arisen around them; nor has any one of them attempted to impose upon is brother his own belief, as the rule of his faith. The words heresy and orthodoxy are almost unknown to them; nor do they know what a dogma is, for they find not this word in the holy scriptures, and their first rule is to adhere closely to them both in words and deeds.

It is true that the Vaudois have departed more or less from their former simplicity, since the reformation; they have been forced to use the books of the reformed, and to send their youth to be educated in foreign colleges. They use, for example, the catechism of Osterwald, because there is no means of printing others, in the country; but I hope once more to bring to light the catechism which our ancestors used in the twelfth century, the original of which is in the library of Cambridge. By substituting it for that of Osterwald, we should return to the usages of our ancestors. To complete the desired change, it would only be necessary to establish a small college or seminary in the vallies, for the education of those who are intended for the church. I have now only to intreat that it may not be taken amiss if I have laid so little stress on the

Reformation. As a Vaudois I cannot consider it of that importance, which it is of in the eyes of the reformed, but I consider it as a revolution of the greatest interest, both from its civil and religious effects, and that whatever were the intentions of some of the reformers, they merit the title of benefactors of the human race. We owe to them in great part, the progress of science, reason, and philosophy, as well as the first foundations of civil and political liberty, so nearly allied to religious independence. Without them the whole of Europe might still have groaned beneath the Papal yoke. But though they merit our gratitude, let not that gratitude degenerate into idolatry, or allow of their opinions being placed on an equality with the gospel. Luther, Calvin, Wickliffe, Zwingle, O'Ecolampadius, &c. were but men capable of being deceived like ourselves. Let us listen to their lessons, but remember that our sole legislator is Jesus, and that we are wanting in respect and gratitude to him, if we take any other title than that of Christians. Whoever thou mayest be, reader, into whose hands this book may fall, let me recommend to you the interests of the most consoling of all doctrines, of that doctrine by which we are told that true religion is this,—"to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world." Allow me to exhort you to search for the knowledge of this divine religion, only in the sacred writings, which ought alone to be the rule and invariable compass of our course. Thus you will bring back all the Christian sects to the standard of the gospel, and inflame all hearts with that charity and philanthropy which form the essence of Christianity. Thus you will render this simple but useful maxim more dear to all mortals;—To do unto others as we would they should do unto us.

By this means you will destroy all factions, because each member of a state will be happy, that all those who are not enemies of the government, should thus enjoy the same privileges. By this means you will contribute to restore to Christianity all its splendour and its power; you will be the benefactors of your family, of your country, of the world. The wicked man, the bigot, and the false devotee, will hate, nay, even persecute you; but you have only to retire beneath the shadow of your own conscience, to render all their machinations abortive. The calm satisfaction which this will afford you, will amply make amends for the momentary pangs which calumny and injustice may excite in your breasts, and if ever mankind shall recognise true merit, it is to you alone they will erect statues.

Utrecht, 4th October, 1794.

NOTES TO PREFACE.

The principal passages where the fundamental truths of Christianity are expressed with the greatest clearness, are the following.

Gospel of St. John, chap. iii. ver. 36.; iv. 25, 26, 29, 39, 42; vi. 69; x. 24, 26; xx. 30, 31; xi. 27. Gospel of St. Luke, chap. xxiv. Acts of the Apostles, chap. ii. 22; iii. 18; iv. 10,12; v. 29, 32; viii. 5, 12, 37; ix. 20, 22; x. 42,43; xi. 14; xv. 7, 19; xvii. 1, 9; xviii. 4, 6, 27,28; xxvi. 22.

There can be no other fundamentally essential articles of the Christian faith, or any of which the belief is necessary to the being a good Christian, except those of which Jesus and his apostles required the belief from the persons they received into the bosom of Christianity. All that has been added since, is nothing more than alloy, as impure in itself, as pernicious in its effects.

This Preface has been translated literally, with the omission of one or two passages, of little interest to those ignorant of the author's family and connections.

HISTORY OF THE VAUDOIS.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I. DESCRIPTION OF THE VAUDOIS VALLEYS

The valleys which the Vaudois have raised into celebrity, lie to the west of Piemont, between the province of Pignerol and Briançon, and adjoining on the other side to the ancient Marquisate of Susa, and that of the Saluces, The capital, La Tour, being about thirty-six miles from Turin, and fourteen from Pignerol. The extent of the valleys is about twelve Italian miles, making a square of about twenty-four French leagues. The valleys are three in number, Luzern, Perouse, and St. Martin. The former (in which the chief town is now Catholic,) is the most beautiful and extensive, and contains the five parishes of Rora, St. Jean, La Tour, Villar, and Bobbi,

through the three last of which runs the rapid Pelice, which has its source near the Pra Alp, and throws itself into the Po.

The Valley of Perouse is about twelve miles long, chiefly mountainous. It is traversed by the river Cluson, and the villages* on the Italian side of that river, (Pinache, Rivoire, Great and Little Doublon, and Villard,) as well as its chief town Perouse, are entirely inhabited by Roman Catholics. The Vaudois at this time possess only Pramol, Pomaret, and St. Germain.

** All those villages were once Vaudois.*

Between the valleys Luzerne and Perouse, is the parish Prarustin, comprehending Roche Platte, and St. Barthélemi, which belong to neither of them.

The Valley of St. Martin is scarcely wider than the bed of the torrent Germanasque, which runs through it, and extends from the Valley of Perouse to that of Queiras in Dauphiné; it contains the parishes of Pral, Manneille, and Ville Sèche, of which the former is so elevated, as to be covered with snow during nine months in the year. The other parishes contain each several small villages, and Perrier, which is the capital of the whole valley, is now inhabited by Catholics alone. This valley, which was the scene of the heroic defence of Arnaud's band, is environed by lofty mountains, and rugged rocks, forming the most formidable natural defences; indeed the only passage into it for wheels,* is by a bridge, not far from Perouse, and this pass is so narrow that a few men might defend it against a large force.

The authors of poems and romances, in giving their enchanting descriptions of pastoral life, have excited a deep feeling of regret in sensitive minds, that the originals of their pictures are no where to be found. But I can console these friends of virtue, by shewing them where they may find what they have sought in vain in other parts of the world. And this happy asylum of innocence is no other than the valley of St. Martin. I have known there shepherdesses in every sense of the word, as amiable and interesting as the heroines of these romances. And if the delightful author of Estelle and Galatée had lived among them as I have done, he might have added many a lively tint to his portraits, the more charming as it would have been copied from nature and truth. But let it not be thought that my shepherdesses resemble the smart wives and daughters of our citizens then, indeed, they would have little interest in my eyes. Imagine virtue without pretensions or vanity, grace without frivolity, and amiability devoid of coquetry, and these set off by that true modesty which their simple habits inspire, and you have a true picture of my Vaudois heroines.

** The translator saw no wheeled carriage in this valley, and doubts if one of any description could now be used there.*

*** He writes at Utrecht.*

Had I been born a poet, they should have formed the subject of my lays. The churches in the Valley of St. Martin, as well as those of the other valleys, were formerly much more numerous. In the whole we have now but thirteen parish churches, though in the ancient records, examined by Leger, mention is made of ten other parishes to which pastors were attached; these are now annexed to the thirteen. In the valley of Cluson or Pragela, which adjoins those of St. Martin, and Perouse, were no less than six flourishing Vaudois churches, as late as 1727, when in consequence of the exchange of territory between France and the House of Savoy, all those who remained faithful to their religion, were forced into exile.* The Vaudois were also very numerous in the valleys of Queiras, Mathias, and Meane, until entirely extirpated there by Duke Charles Emmanuel in 1603. As they were in the Marquisate of Sa-luces, in 1633, where they had many churches.

** Many hundreds went to Holland.*

Five villages, and the town of Luzerne, formerly attached to the parish church of St. Jean, have also been taken from them, in the valley of Luzerne; indeed, it is known that the Vaudois had churches in 1560, in Turin, Pignerol, and Quiers.

Notwithstanding that the Vaudois have been established in some of the places I have stated above, from time immemorial, and have had great possessions in others: they are now entirely confined within the three valleys mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, and there exists an edict rendering them incapable of purchasing beyond these limits. It is to be hoped that their fidelity and attachment to their sovereign, will be rewarded by a restoration to the rights which his other subjects enjoy, and that the goodness of the reigning prince, will lead him to consider it a duty, to reinstate them as soon as circumstances permit, in the full possession of those privileges which the claims of nature and society so loudly demand.

The population of the three valleys may amount to 16,000 or 17,000 souls,* which would give about 3000 for the number capable of bearing arms; it does not appear, however, that in the various persecutions our ancestors had ever more than 1500 men in the field, the rest being necessary for the defence of their own territory. By these feeble means has the God of armies effected the wonderful events which I am about to relate; and so extraordinary are they, that they might well appear incredible, did not the most authentic proofs exist of them.

** Vide population in 1820, about 22,000.*

CHAPTER II. NAME OF THE VAUDOIS

As to the name of the Vaudois, it might be sufficient to answer from the authority of that judicious critic, Theodore* Bèze,** and Coug-nard,*** advocate of the parliament of Normandy. That the Vaudois have received their name from the valleys they inhabit. The names of Waldense or Valdense in Italian, and Valdensis in Latin, are thus derived from the same root, vale, valle, and vallis, a valley, as Vaudois is derived

from vaux, the word for valley, in their ancient patois.****

** Beza, the editor of the famous bible of Geneva, and friend of Milton.*

*** Portraits des hommes illustres, p. 985.*

**** Traite touchant la Papesse Jeanne, p. 8.*

***** The Vaudois language seems as ancient at least as the Provençal, and very similar: it would be interesting to trace their origins and distinctions. Vide French work on the Provençal poets and troubadours, and Sismond's languages du midi de l'Europe.*

In the same way the inhabitants of the plain of the Po are called Piemontese or Piedmontese, Pedemontani, and those of the mountains, generally Montagnards. This word Vaudois, which they first acquired from their geographical situation, they have preserved as a token of their religion in all countries, as the Vaudois of Provence, and of Bohemia, and the Walloons of the Low Countries. Since the Reformation the names of Lutheran, Calvinist, and Reformed, have served to distinguish all those who rejected the papal doctrines, and the inhabitants of our valleys, the only people who have never been affected by these opinions, have alone retained their original name of Vaudois. I must, however, observe, that it is against their own wish that they have ever received it; the name of Christian was too precious in their eyes to have been willingly, on their part, exchanged for any other. As we find in the letter which they addressed to OEladislaus, king of Bohemia, they style themselves "the little flock of Christians, falsely called Vaudois." It has been pretended and even by those who have written our history, such as Perrin, and Gilles, that the name is derived from Peter Valdo, which can by no means be the case, as it is allowed on all hands, that this famous reformer of Lyons was not known before 1175, while we have ancient MSS. in the Vaudois language, dated 1120, and 1100, in the former of which are stated the differences between their church and that of Rome, and in the latter the word Vaudois is used as synonymous with virtuous Christian.

In the MS. dated 1100, and entitled La Noble Leçon, (of which there exist two original copies, in ancient Gothic letters, one at Cambridge, and the other at Geneva,) is this passage.

*Que sel se troba alcun bon que vollia amar
Dio et temar Jesu Krist
Que non vollia maudire, ni jura, ni mentir,
Ni avoutrar, ni ancire, ni peure de l'autry
Ni venjarse de li sio ennemie *
Illi dison quel es Vaudes e degne de morir.*

** Ennemio murir, another reading.*

Whoever is a good man, and wishes to love God, and fear Jesus Christ, who will neither speak ill of his neighbour, nor swear, nor lie; who will neither commit adultery, nor kill, nor steal, nor avenge himself of his enemy; of him they say, he is a Vaudois, and worthy to die (of death.)

The opinion of Theodore Bèze is given in these words. Some have believed that the Vaudois had for founder, (of this sect,) a merchant of Lyons, called Jean, surnamed Valdo, in which they are mistaken, since this John was so surnamed from being one of the first among the Vaudois.

But not to give more importance to these things than they are worthy of, let it be remarked, that it is not in the name that they bear that the Vaudois take a pride. We as well as our ancestors, esteem ourselves happy and render thanks to God in that he has pre-served in our valleys the evangelical doctrine in all its purity, without any mixture of human opinions. We rejoice that the Supreme Being has deigned to choose our country, to preserve there the torch of truth, and that it has been the beacon to which other nations have come to seek the light that has enlightened them.* We are proud of never having been reformed; but that it is at our school that the reformers have been instructed, as they themselves avow. We rejoice finally in this that our valleys are the mother church of all Reformed and Protestant Churches. These are our titles; these are our testimonies.

Every one knows that Luther and Calvin commenced their labours in 1517 and 1536, while we have a confession of faith dated 1120.**

** The Vaudois' state seal bears a candle, with rays, surrounded by clouds; motto, Lux in Tenebris.-T.*

*** The noble Leçon, quoted above; vide extract at the end of Bresse.*

It is almost needless to add the testimony of our enemies; Pope Pius II. known by the name of Aneas Sylvius before his election, and author of a history of Bohemia, printed by Anthony Bons, in which he says, they (the Bohemian heretics) have embraced the impious doctrine of the Vaudois, of that pestilential faction long ago condemned, whose doctrines are, that the Bishop of Rome is not superior to others; that there is no purgatory; that prayers for the dead are useless; that worship should not be rendered to the images of God, and the saints, &c. &c. To this testimony I must add that of Claude de Seyssel, bishop of Marseilles, and afterwards of Turin, celebrated in the reigns of Louis XI., Charles VIII., Louis XII., and Francis I., in whose reign it was thought no one could be so likely to bring back the Vaudois to the Roman Catholic faith, and he was in consequence made Bishop of Turin. The following, taken from a book written by him, expressly against them, shows all that he could find to complain of in their doctrine. They (says he of the Vaudois) will receive only that which is written in the Old and New Testaments; nay, they say that the Roman pontiffs, and other bishops, have degraded the sacred text, by their doctrine and false comments; they deny the power of absolution, celebrate no saints' days, and pretend that they alone possess the true evangelic and apostolic doctrine; they despise the indulgences of the church, detest images, teach the words of the evangelists and apostles in the vulgar tongue, and affirm that there is no power which can forbid the right of contracting

marriages, and say that mass was not celebrated in the time of the apostles, &c.

CHAPTER III. ANTIQUITY OF THE VAUDOIS FAITH

We find in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, written from Corinth, chapter xv. verse 24, that it was the intention of the apostle to go into Spain, and to pass through Italy on his way. Now if St. Paul afterwards performed this journey, he must necessarily have passed through the valleys, as they lay on his road to Spain at that time, and he would have preached the gospel in them, as he did wherever he went. From this, it is fair to conjecture that the Vaudois have received their doctrine from St. Paul himself; and if this is thought too bold an assertion, we have reason to suppose that his doctrine may have reached them during his lifetime, as it seems to have been propagated by his followers throughout Italy, before he left Rome; for in concluding his epistle from Rome, to the Hebrews, he says, "Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all saints, they of Italy salute you." He does not say they of Rome, as the number of Christians rapidly augmented in the capital, and they were nearly all dispersed by the persecutions under Nero and Domitian, it is extremely probable that some parties of this host of fugitives should have taken refuge among our mountains, in the time of the immediate successors of the apostles.

But to descend to a period of greater certainty, it is allowed by all that the whole of Italy embraced Christianity in the time of Constantine,* and therefore the Vaudois doctrines may be considered the same as those of the Universal Church, by which we do not find any superstitious rites or customs to have been adopted till the sixth century; nor are the dangerous and revolting dogmas of the court of Rome, and its flagitious practices to be traced before the end of the eighth. All that belongs to the doctrine and practice of the modern Roman communion was until then unknown, as is clearly proved by the testimony of Juellus Daitlè, Dumoulin, &c., and indirectly by the partizans of Rome, Baronius, Euphrius, Platina, &c.

These innovations, and particularly the adoration of images,** were loudly condemned by the churches of England, France, Germany, and the east.

** St. Augustine relates, that Constantine sent a band of troops, after his victory over Maxentius, to destroy the statue of Jupiter Peninus, in the temple of Mont S. Bernard, (now the site of the modern convent,) and gave them his golden thunderbolt as a reward.—T.*

*** Established by Pope Adrian I.; vide Storia dei Pontefeci.*

Which condemnation was confirmed by the council convoked by Charlemagne,* at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, in 794. The Bishops of Italy also proclaimed their discontent in a letter which they addressed, by means of Photius, to the patriarchs of the Greek churches. Baronius, who gives this letter, subjoins the following answer of the Patriarchs.** "We have received a synodal epistle from Italy, in which the inhabitants lay to the charge of their bishop an infinity of crimes and perverseness; among other things, the tyranny he wishes to exercise over them, and they call us, with tears, to the defence of the church." Here again let it be remarked, that as long as the superior church retained its purity, the Vaudois did not secede from it. It was the court of Rome that began with innovations, not they. Of this so many proofs press upon me, that I scarcely know which to choose. At the end of the eighth, or beginning of the ninth century, flourished Claude, bishop of Turin, whose diocese embraced not only our valleys, but Dauphiné and Provence.***

** Vide Histoire de Charlemagne, by*

*** It should here be remarked, that the Vaudois recognize for orthodox the decisions of the four first great councils of the Church, Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedone, the last of which was held in 451; and that they recommended the reading of the fathers of the first five centuries.*

**** Piémont making then part of France, it did not pass under the sway of the house of Savoy till the twelfth century.*

He opposed himself so strenuously to the innovations of the court of Rome, that his doctrine has been since called calvinistic by his enemies.* Illyricus makes the following mention of him in his Catalogue Test. Veritatis, lib. 9. "Claude, Bishop of Turin, lived in the time of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, of whom he was the intimate friend, even before he became Bishop; he strenuously opposed, (both by preaching and writing,) the adoration of images, of relicts, and the cross, invocations to the saints, pilgrimages, the precedence of the Pope, &c. He treated the Pope himself with great severity, loudly condemning the profit which he made by the poor superstitious people, whom he drew to Rome on pilgrimages."

In the fragments that remain of this courageous Bishop, which are cited by Leger, Part I. p. 137, he combats with great vigour, the abuses above mentioned, and proves that it was not his wish to establish any new sect, but to preserve the doctrines of the apostles in their original purity.** We cannot, therefore, doubt his having used his utmost exertions in his own diocese, of which our valleys formed a part.

** Genebrand Chronic, Liv. 3.*

*** The title of the Bishop's work, of which fragments are cited by Leger, is Apologeticum rescriptum Claudii Episcopi adversus Theodemirum Abbatem. And after a careful*

examination of these fragments, and some of the Vaudois MSS. I am inclined to think that the latter are no more than a development of the former; for there is the same connection of ideas, and the arguments are placed in the same order; so that the writings of Claude seem to have been the text on which the Vaudois amplified, which is natural, as the Bishop addressed men of education and learning, and had not occasion to use so many arguments and explanations as the Vaudois writers had, who wrote for the illiterate and the multitude.—Note by Peyran.

Indeed we have the fullest evidence that the Vaudois preserved the purity of their faith during the ninth and tenth centuries. To prove this fact, it will be sufficient to give a single quotation from the missionary Marco Aurelio Rorengo, Grand Prior of St. Roch, at Turin, whose work is entitled *Narratione delle Introduzione delle heresie nelle valli de Piemonte*, Turin, 1632.* Speaking of the doctrine of Claude, which this author is pleased to call heresy, he says—"This doctrine continued in the valleys all the ninth and tenth centuries;" and again, "that during the tenth century no change took place, but the old heresies were continued." In order to feel the full force of the above citation, we must call to mind that Rorengo** had been for ten years a missionary, directly sent out to the Vaudois, with orders to search into the origin of their doctrine; and that writing with the approbation of the clergy of Turin, he was little likely to favour the Vaudois.

** He also wrote *Memorie Historiche*, Turin, 1645.*

*** Rorengo says in another place, that it is impossible to say with certainty at what period this sect took root in the valleys.—p. 60 of *Nar. del Introd.**

In the eleventh century, Lambertus, a Catholic and friend of Gregory VII. writes thus: "The court of Rome has so completely stifled all charity and Christian simplicity, that almost all good and just men believe that the reign of Antichrist, of which St. John speaks, is already commenced." John the Fifth, who reigned before this period, has been called by cotemporary writers, the most wicked of men. In these unhappy times the Vaudois did not venture to preach any where but in the woods and highest mountains, except in their most remote villages, such as Macel and Pral, &c. In the eleventh century, Berenger, so celebrated for his knowledge and virtues, was condemned by two councils, convoked by Pope Leo IX., and was forced to retract what he had written against transubstantiation, &c. by Pope Nicholas. He lost no time, however, in protesting against this forced recantation, and persevered in his doctrine till his death, in 1091. Now the belief of Berenger, (says an ancient author,) the same as that of the Vaudois, was so well preserved in the valleys, that to call a man a Berengerian was the same as calling him a Vaudois. Peter de Bruys,* a priest of Toulon, whose doctrine was precisely similar, succeeded Berenger, and preached in Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiné, particularly at Gap and Embrun, a few hours distance only from the Vaudois valleys; his disciples were called Petrobrusians, and he was martyred at S. Gilles, 1124.

** His disciples after his death, published a book, declarative of his reasons for opposing the Roman Catholic Church; a copy of which, in ancient Gothic characters, is extant in the library of Cambridge.*

Henry de Bruys, and Arnaud de Bresse now took up the cause, and extended the Vaudois doctrines in Lombardy. Of the disciples of the former, St. Bernard, who wrote in 1120, bears this testimony, "that they prided themselves in being the true successors of the apostles, and conservators of their doctrine."

Arnaud de Bresse fell a victim to the cruelty of the Roman clergy in 1155, being first crucified and then burnt. He was succeeded by his zealous disciple Esperon. Rorengo in the work above cited, says, that we must by the names of Vaudois, Esperonites, Henricians, Petrobrusians, Arnaudites, and Apostolicals, understand one and the same sect, which is a sufficient proof of the identity of the doctrine of the Vaudois, and that of these zealous preachers. The celebrated Peter Valdo, a rich inhabitant of Lyons, openly professed the Vaudois doctrine in 1175. He abandoned all his possessions, gave himself up entirely to the promulgation of the gospel, had the bible translated into the vulgar tongue, and instructed the people publicly in the streets, commencing with the thesis, that we must obey God rather than man. He refused submission to the Pope and his bishops; exposed the scandalous lives of the monks; and refuted the doctrine of the mass, purgatory, adoration of images, and prayers for the dead. At the instance of Pope Alexander III., Valdo was driven from Lyons, with most of his disciples. A great part of them retired either to Lombardy, or (as an ancient writer observes,) into Cisalpine Gaul, and among the Alps, where they found a perfectly secure retreat, (*tutissimum refugium.*) That is among the valleys of Pragela, Meane, Saluces, &c., and we must pay great attention to this expression, since it appears natural that these valleys should be their surest place of refuge, being already peopled with Vaudois, who professed the same doctrines. Other disciples of Valdo withdrew to Picardy, Germany, Bohemia, and the Low Countries. I must here remark, that even those who in contradiction to the above chain of evidence, assert that the Vaudois derive their name and doctrine from Peter Valdo, must allow them to have been established in the valleys at least fifty years before the ancient counts of Savoy obtained the sovereignty of their country; for it appears in the history of the house of Savoy, that the first who began to make conquests in our country, was Thomas, son of Humbert, who had previously accompanied Louis, son of Philip Augustus, king of France, in his expedition against the Vaudois and the Albigenses of Provence. Hence we have every possible right to the possession of our country, in which we were established before our sovereigns.

CHAPTER IV. ANTIQUITY AND PURITY OF

THE VAUDOIS DOCTRINE, PROVED BY

THEIR OWN WRITINGS

As the Vaudois have been accused of being Manicheans, Arians, and Cathares,* we shall be but doing our ancestors justice to appeal to their own writings. In the preface to the French Bible, which they printed at Neuchatel, in 1535, the Vaudois render thanks to God that having received the treasure of the gospel from the apostles or their immediate successors, they had always preserved to themselves the enjoyment of this blessing. In proof of which it appears by the noble Leïçon, dated 1100, that they had rejected and continued to reject all traditions, nor had ever received other doctrines than those contained in the Holy Scriptures.

** From Cathari, white, pure.*

The treatise on Antichrist, dated 1120, proves the same point; as does that against the invocation of saints, which must have been written in the sixth century, since it calls this error a doctrine then in the bud, and we know that it took its rise at that period. So in all the confessions of faith given at divers times, the Vaudois profess to have received their tenets from father to son, from the time of the apostles. Rorengo himself has preserved one of their petitions to the Duke of Savoy, dated 1599, in which they say, that it is not within a few hundred years only that they have had knowledge of the truth, and that no one could be ignorant of their having taught the same tenets for 500 or 600 years, that is, when they openly declared against the abuses of Rome, under their Bishop, Claude. The Vaudois of the valleys Mathias and Meane* made the same declaration, (nearly in the same words,) when they were forced in 1603 to quit their country, for refusing to obey the order of Charles Emanuel, to abandon their faith. Finally in all their memorials, petitions, and letters, they have never failed to repeat the same thing, praying to be left in the enjoyment of that religion, which they had professed time immemorial even before the Dukes of Savoy were princes of Piémont. The authenticity of these petitions, &c. is unquestionable, since they have been printed, together with the answers to them, by order of the court of Turin, and are more than 100 in number.

*** The Vaudois of these valleys formed one body with those of Luzerne, Perouse, and St. Martin.*

Section II. Evidence of Protestant Writers

To the internal evidence of the writings of the Vaudois themselves, we must now add that which is to be found in the works of Protestant authors, and first in those of the celebrated Theodore Bèze, who thus speaks of them* "These are the people who have always preserved the true religion, without allowing any temptation to pervert them. The Vaudois," says he, in another place, "are so called from their residence among the valleys and fastnesses of the Alps, and may well be considered as the remains of the purest primitive Christian church. Nor has it been possible to draw them within the pale of the Roman communion, notwithstanding the horrible persecutions exercised against them. At this time they have churches flourishing, as well in doctrine as in examples of a truly innocent life. I speak particularly of those of the Alpine valleys, of whom some are subjects of the king of France, and others of the Duke of Savoy."

** The expressions are sempre, al solito, da equi tempo, immemoriale, conforme all* antico soli to, conforme a loro antiché franchizie. The collection is printed at Turin, 1678.*

*** Portraits des hommes illustres.*

Ileidanus* asserts, "that from the most remote antiquity they have opposed the Roman Pontiff, and have always held the purest doctrine."

** Historia Caroli Quinti Imp. lib. xvi. p. 534.*

Esron Rudiger affirms that the Vaudois existed at least 240 years before John Huss, which agrees nearly with Bishop Claude. L'Histoire ecclesiastique des Eglises réformées de France, printed in 1558, confirms the above assertions. Amyraut, Drelincourt, Basnage, Ruchat, Jurieu, Werenfels, and many other writers of the reformed church, give the same opinion.

Section III. Testimony of Roman Catholic Authors.

Among the principal evidences in favour of the Vaudois, I must here refer to the large collection of edicts respecting them, published by the court of Turin. It is deemed unnecessary to recapitulate their dates. The Monk Belvedere, chief of a mission, sent to convert the Vaudois in 1630, in his answer to the College of Propaganda fide,* excuses himself for not having converted a single person, because "the valleys of Angrogna have always, and at every period, been inhabited by heretics."—Again, Reynerus Sacco, expressly appointed by the court of Rome, Inquisitor against the Vaudois, goes still farther than Belvedere; and in a book he published against them, calls them Leonists, from one of their ministers named Leon, who lived in the third

century; he affirms that no sect was so pernicious to the church as the Leonists; and this for three reasons: 1st. Because it was the most ancient of all; some deriving its origin from the time of Pope Sylvester (the fourth century), and others from the Apostles themselves. 2ndly, Because it was the most extensive, there being scarcely any country into which it had not penetrated; and, 3dly, That instead of inspiring horror as other sects did, by their frightful blasphemies against the Divinity, it had a great appearance of piety; since its members "lived justly before men, believed rightly on God, and received the Apostles' Creed; but they blasphemed against the Roman church and clergy."**

* *Relatione al consiglio de Prop. Fid. Turin, 1636.*

** *Bibliothèque des Pères, de Gretserus Traité contra les Vaud.*

The most obstinate opponents of the antiquity of the Vaudois must give way before the authority of Claude de Seyssel, Archbishop of Turin, who has this passage in his book against us, printed by privilege of Francis the First of France: "The sect of Vaudois," says he, "took its origin from one Leon, a truly religious man, who, in the time of Constantine the Great, detesting the extreme avarice of Pope Sylvester, and the lavish expenditure of Constantine, preferred living in poverty, with simplicity of faith, to the reproach of accepting a rich benefice with Sylvester. To this Leon all attached themselves who thought rightly of their Creed." The same author, after having made useless researches after the commencement of the Vaudois sect, concludes with these remarkable words: "That there must be some important and efficacious reason why this Vaudois sect had endured during so many ages. Again; all kind of different attempts to extirpate them have been made at different times, but they always remained victorious, and absolutely invincible, contrary to the expectation of all."

The reader will observe that this expression, "during so many ages," was written by Seyssel in 1500.

I have already quoted Rorenco, one of the most zealous of the missionaries sent against the Vaudois; his family still remains in the valleys. One of his descendants bearing the title of Count of La Tour, in his *Memorie Historiche*, addressed to the Duke Victor Amadeus, allows that the Vaudois doctrine was not new, in the time of Claude, many persons having opposed the Roman See before him; he also asserts that their doctrine remained the same in the 11th and 12th centuries. Rorenco will not, however, allow that the doctrine was derived from the Apostles, but avows (which nearly amounts to the same thing) that there is no ascertaining when it was first received in the valleys.

In fine, Samuel Casini, a Franciscan monk, says positively, in his work entitled *Victoria Triomphale*, printed at Coni, 1510, that "the errors of the Vaudois consisted in not admitting the Roman to be the sacred mother church, or obeying her traditions; although he could not, for his own part, deny that they acknowledged the Christian church, and had always been and still continued to be members of it."

Now it seems to me hardly possible, after these proofs, that anyone should venture to deny the truly Apostolic succession of the Vaudois church; but as some people have supposed that the Vaudois, after receiving the opinions of the court of Rome, have subsequently been reformed, like all those who are called Protestants; let them say when and where the Vaudois reformation took place; and let them also account for the silence of all historians on such an event! But as long as the testimony above quoted, of Catholics, Protestants, Vaudois; nay, of the very edicts of their princes, and their own petitions and replies, exists, I shall consider it as proved that the Vaudois church, having received the Gospel in the earliest days of Christianity, is the parent of all the reformed churches, and has *never herself been reformed*.

These truths having been established by such incontestable proofs, it remains only to give a sketch of the manners of the Vaudois, and the discipline of their churches, before we come to the historical part of my labours.

CHAPTER V. MANNERS OF THE VAUDOIS

In religion, theory is nothing without practice, and of all species of knowledge none requires less speculation than that of the Gospel. Its Divine Author has declared, that the religion which he came to announce to us consists not in words, but in virtues, which important declaration at once defines the spirit of Christianity, in placing charity even above faith. However this great truth may be forgotten by many of the Christians of these days, or rendered nugatory by the pretensions of their teachers, it is not the less incontestable at the tribunal of reason and revelation, and let us hope, for the good of humanity, that it will soon prevail over the vain phantoms which have been substituted for it throughout the greatest part of Europe. Yes, indeed! I delight in believing that the march of knowledge is a guarantee of this, and that we are approaching that happy time when a man will not be required to prove he is a Christian, merely by repeating, like a parrot, the articles of belief, which have been drawn up by the chiefs of the sect to which he belongs, when it will not suffice alone coldly to admit some Evangelical truths, but when those who call themselves Christians will acknowledge—"That pure religion is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world."* It cannot be too often repeated, that this is real Christianity.

And such have ever been the sentiments of the Vaudois, never have they been known to waste, *in pernicious disputes or useless discussions* that time which might have been employed in good works; and thus, by a natural consequence, they have formed a Christian society of virtuous conduct and irreproachable morals.

* *Epistle of St. James, chap. i. ver. 22.*

We have above quoted that remarkable passage of the Inquisitor Reynerus Sacco, in which he has borne

witness in favour of our ancestors. We will add the testimony of Claude de Seyssel, who affirms that, "for their lives and moral behaviour, the Vaudois are without reproach before men, and do their utmost endeavours to keep the commandments of God." The respectable French historian, De Thou, says that "the Vaudois keep the commandments of the decalogue, and allow among them of no wickedness, detesting perjuries and imprecations, quarrels, seditions, and all debaucheries, usury, &c. &c."

The Cardinal Baronius bears witness to their chastity, and Thuanus (also a Catholic historian) adds to this, "that they are such scrupulous observers of honour and chastity, that their neighbours, though of a contrary faith, intrusted them with the care of their wives and daughters, to preserve them from the insolence of the soldiery."

This occurred in 1560, when the troops of Count de la Trinité were quartered at La Tour, and the Vaudois had retired to the mountains. It was then also that a young girl, to escape the pursuit of a soldier, preferring her honour to life itself, precipitated herself from the summit of a rock. An English monk, quoted by Boxhornius, also gives an example of the purity of Vaudois manners, in the answer of a young woman to the solicitations of her lover; "God forbid, O young man, that I should love thee so much as to become eternally miserable for the gratification of thy wishes."

This admirable purity is still respected in the valleys, and, notwithstanding the corruption of the age, we must look through a long series of years to find one or two females who have not observed it. Those who have fallen are become the objects of universal contempt. The very children point at them, and a whole life of virtue is scarcely sufficient to obtain for them the oblivion of their fault. Compare this with the manners of other Christian nations.

Let us now turn to Vigneaux, who was well qualified to judge of Vaudois morals, having been forty years a pastor among them, and having made a large collection of their ancient writings, which he translated: from his work "On the Lives, morals, and religion of the Vaudois," I extract the following, "They are a people of fidelity in their promises, of irreproachable lives, and are great enemies to vice;" and of his own time he adds, "We in these valleys of Piémont live in peace and concord with the others, but we do not connect ourselves in marriage with the Catholics. For the rest, our manners and morals are so approved by them, that they prefer taking servants from among us to themselves;* and some come from a great distance to choose nurses for their children, considering them more faithful than their own."

** Still the case in the valleys in 1825.*

The order of the French government, in 1592, to M. de Birague, governor of Saluces, to massacre the Vaudois, drew forth the following testimony from one of the council of that town: "That his majesty must assuredly have been misinformed as to these poor people, who were good men, and did him honourable and faithful service, living peaceably with their neighbours; with whom indeed there was no fault to find, except their religion." To all these testimonies there is one other to be added, of still more weight, namely, that of all the edicts which have been *successively* published by the court of Turin against the Vaudois; in no one is the smallest reproach to be found on the score of probity, good faith, or morals. This silence becomes an invaluable avowal from those who eagerly sought some pretext to give a colour to the horrible persecutions they authorized.

Is it not astonishing, after this, to find the Vaudois calumniated by Albert de Capitaxis, Rubis, &c. as the first Christians were by the Pagans? Paradin* and Girard, however; may be cited in reply. They assert that the Vaudois were not guilty of any of the horrible crimes of which they were accused; but only of having freely inveighed against the corruption and vices of the priests and friars, and thus excited their mortal hatred....

** Annales de Bourgogne, par Guillaume Paradin, Lyons, 1566.*

But we may well despise this slander, and consider what has been the cause of their real purity of manners. The ecclesiastical discipline, which has always been in great vigour, may be assigned as the cause, as it has induced the continual study of, and meditation upon the sacred writings. And here I must be pardoned another extract from an ancient author. "All the people," says he, "of either sex, and of whatever age, cease not to learn and teach; the labourer at his daily task either teaches his comrade or learns of him, and the evening is spent in the same instructions, even without books. He that has learnt for one week teaches others for the next, and if any one excuses himself from want of memory, he is told that even one word every day will amount to many sentences at the end of a year, which in many years will form a fund of knowledge." "I have heard with my own ears," says this author, "one of these poor peasants repeat the whole book of Job by heart, without missing one word; and there are others who have the whole of the New Testament at their fingers' ends. Do any of them lead an evil life? they are sharply rebuked, according to their discipline, and told the Apostles lived not thus, nor must we who imitate them." Reynerus Sacco again confirms this by saying, "The Vaudois know the whole of the New Testament by heart, and much of the Old, (in their own language,) nor will they hear any thing else," saying, "that all sermons which are not proved by the Scriptures are unworthy of belief."

This then has been the foundation of Vaudois morality, they knew no other rule of faith than the Gospel, and, as far as possible, adapted their sentiments and conduct to it. The sacred duty of an historian compels me to allow, that the effects of human frailty have sometimes shown themselves among them. Leger, who wrote more than a century ago, thus allows also, that "the Vaudois, his cotemporaries, no longer possessed that great sanctity and detachment from the world which distinguished their ancestors. But I must add," he continues, "that, compared with other reformed nations, there is none which surpass them in zeal for the word of God and constancy to their faith, at the peril of their lives and fortunes; as well as in simplicity, innocence, sobriety, and industry. For they abstain from cards, dice, gambling, and swearing, and have a horror of drunkenness, and even of dancing. So that if any one falls into a vicious life, he is esteemed infamous. Law-suits have been from time immemorial unknown among them; but, according to Thuanus, the first took place in the 16th century, owing to the litigious disposition of a young man, who had gained a smattering of law at the college of Turin, and sued his neighbour for having suffered some goats to browse

among his cabbages."

However much it may cost me to avow it, I must in my turn allow that the Vaudois have degenerated since the days of Leger; law-suits are beginning to become common among them, and luxury and card playing are insensibly introduced; nay, there are even some families who live without labour, a thing formerly unknown.* The zeal for religion has also cooled in those parishes adjoining Piémont. But these blots in the morals of my compatriots are perhaps inevitable to human weakness, which cannot approach perfection: perhaps, too, we are carried away by the common mania of believing our ancestors ever better than ourselves. I remark this both for Leger and myself.

** Qui vivent dans l'oisiveté, et donnent parla un exemple pernicieux.—Perhaps this is translated in too favourable a sense.*

What we can loudly proclaim is, that still in all Europe there does not exist a people of such good faith, simplicity, frankness, and kind-heartedness, as the Vaudois of the present day. They preserve a respect for religion, a love for their duties, and a purity of opinions and morals which may in vain be sought for among other nations called Christian; and these virtues are joined to so much modesty, that they appear perfectly natural, and never ostentatious. What a touching and sublime spectacle do these people present to every kind heart and good understanding which contemplates them! They are good husbands, good fathers, kind friends, and good citizens, and have always, even in the midst of their persecutions, shown the greatest fidelity to their princes. Nay, even have, after an interval of a few days only, turned in their defence those arms which they had used against them, in the preservation of their lives and religion.

During the long course of persecutions they have sustained, notwithstanding the perfidy with which they were treated, and the horrible tortures which they underwent, they have never given way to vengeance, and have contented themselves with repelling force by force. So that no instance is to be found, in their history, of a defenceless enemy having been ill used, or of their having violated their promises, even while treated with systematic perfidy. Nor have they ever shed blood, except when their absolute safety obliged them. If so many virtues, so many good qualities, are sometimes mingled with weaknesses, we must attribute it to the imperfection of human nature; observing that it is only some individuals who are worthy of reproach, and that the mass of society is (humanly speaking) irreproachable. It would, perhaps, be possible to clear off these faint stains, if the ancient ecclesiastical discipline was again enforced; and it is in aid of this object that we have consecrated the next chapter to its description. Happy, thrice happy should I be, if this, or any part of my work, should tend to draw any of my countrymen (still more than at present) into the path of life. If this whole people, by drawing daily nearer to the Eternal One, should ever render themselves worthy to have it said of them—"This is the patience of the faithful, behold them who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Note.—Having had the opinion of my friends, the commissioners of the Walloon Synod, upon my MS. and this having been thought too bright a picture of the Vaudois morals by one of those gentlemen who had never visited the valleys, I thus replied to one of them:—"I am not surprised that my picture of the manners of my countrymen should appear to you too highly coloured. But if you had lived some years among these excellent people, as I have done, and then in a country where the corruption of manners is as great as it is here, and in the towns in Switzerland, you would not think so. For, although we may be degenerated from the purity of our ancestors, I protest to you, that it is only those parishes immediately adjoining to Piémont which have incurred this reproach. In all the rest, their kindness of heart, frankness, benevolence, and zeal for religion, would enchant you. I have more than once visited all the parishes, and have resided in most of them, being acquainted with a great many of their inhabitants; and, by all this experience, I am confirmed in the belief that there does not exist, in our days, a people in morals so pure, life so irreproachable, and piety so exemplary, as the Vaudois."*

** The author's sister is still living in the valleys, and is the wife of one of the most exemplary pastors.—T.*

CHAPTER VI. ON THE DISCIPLINE OF THE VAUDOIS CHURCH.

That the Vaudois have preserved until the time of the Reformation the doctrines of the primitive church, as described in the epistles of the Apostles, has been acknowledged by Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, and Æcolampadius, in the different letters which they addressed to our ancestors. And it was by their advice that the latter relaxed somewhat from the ancient severity of ecclesiastical government, fearing that it might estrange persons otherwise desirous of embracing their belief; and others, who having fallen into error, preferred abjuring their creed to exposing themselves to the shame of public punishment. I cannot think, however, that these changes have proved advantageous, and Melancthon himself confesses, he cannot disapprove of the former strictness, and wishes it had been adopted in the Protestant churches. It is certain that the total abolition of all discipline among the latter has been pernicious to good morals. Let us examine the methods taken by the Vaudois to preserve them uncorrupted.

Public Worship, &c.

The public worship was always celebrated in the Vaudois language till 1630, when a pestilence swept off the whole of the barbes,* then fifteen in number, with the exception of two, who were inefficient from age.** In consequence, pastors were invited to come from France and Geneva; as these knew neither Vaudois nor Italian, they preached in French, a custom which still continues, (though the churches have long been served by Vaudois,) but though few families speak French habitually, there is no one who does not perfectly

comprehend it, all their books being in French; and consequently the children always receive their instruction in that language. They make use of the Swiss liturgy, not having it in their power to print one of their own. In the holy sacraments the bread was, until 1630, broken into three parts, and the water thrice sprinkled in baptism, in remembrance of the Trinity.

** Barbe, the ancient word for pastor.*

*** Gilles and Gros, two retired pastors, only remained.*

The parishioners, without exception, assembled at the house of their respective elders, for communion, which was celebrated four times a year; when before Easter, and sometimes before Christmas, each person was required by his pastor to give his reasons for his faith, and if one was passed over, it was esteemed an affront. Oh virtuous people! why hast thou not persisted in this laudable custom, so well calculated to perpetuate thy happiness, and maintain thy zeal for religion? Before the time of the plague above mentioned, the pastors each year were subject to a visit from the moderator and two members of the synod, who, after minute inquiries, made their report to the synod. The foreign clergy would not submit to this ordinance, and though it has been since re-established, these perquisitions have not been made with the same strictness.

The ancient pastors were also accustomed to invite the censure of their consistory once a year, upon any thing they might disapprove; and, after general consultation, the first of the elders freely gave his opinion of the conduct of the pastor. Ecclesiastical punishments were also severe; a murderer, adulterer, or lewd person, could only be reconciled to the church after having given unequivocal proofs of repentance, and a long exclusion from the sacrament. Such persons were also obliged to appear publicly in the church, (the number of times being regulated by the extent of guilt,) and after sitting on a seat apart, stand up at the end of the service, while the pastor announced that a person was permitted to make public reparation for his fault. The penitent then implored aloud the pardon of God, and his brethren, for having set them so bad an example, and promised amendment; upon which the barbe announced to him the remission of his sin, on the part and in the name of the Almighty, and concluded by an exhortation to the people. This custom is authorized, nay, prescribed by the Gospel, as one of great utility. I must however repeat, sins of this nature are still extremely rare in the vallies. Games of hazard were never permitted, and dancing was so strictly forbidden, that the wife of a pastor was publicly censured for having been present at a May-day dance in Luzerne, though she did not herself take part in it. "There are also," says Leger, "ordinances against blasphemy and swearing; but during the twenty-three years I have been minister, and twelve moderator, no one instance of the kind has ever occurred; and I am convinced in a whole century here one should not hear the name of God taken in vain."

The consistories in each parish are composed of the pastor, the elders, and the deacon: * no one is admitted among the elders without a very strict examination; the dignity lasts for life, unless forfeited by unworthy conduct. In important cases the heads of families are called in to the assistance of the consistory, who decide by the majority of votes. There were besides other councils, called colloques,** composed of the pastors and one or two ancients from every church, who met once a month in each valley to take cognizance of those differences which were not finally arranged at the consistories. From the colloques an appeal might be made to the synods; but disputes were sometimes settled by choosing arbiters, and exacting a promise of obedience to their decision. By these means was every dispute terminated, for it was absolutely forbid, under any pretence, to have recourse to courts of law.

** Who acts as churchwarden.—T.*

*** Literally parliaments.*

How consistent these rules were with the spirit of primitive Christianity may be seen, by referring to the sixth chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians.

The synods were the most solemn and general councils of the Vaudois, and were formerly held every year, (but now every second year,) at each parish in turn, excepting the four most remote.* They consist of the pastor and two elders from every parish, together with a commissioner from the sovereign, who, however, is not allowed to speak in the discussions.** This assembly forms a court of dernier resort to all others, appoints pastors and schoolmasters, and creates a moderator, adjoint, and secretary; who, under the name of La Table, form a committee for the management of affairs, until the meeting of the next synod. But the synods do not assume the right of interfering in matters of faith.*** Indeed, I find that all the articles of belief, and declarations of faith by our ancestors, have been drawn up in special general assemblies, consisting not only of pastors and elders, but also of such heads of families who could attend. As, for example, the articles d'union des vallées, in 1571.

At the opening of their synods the pastors preach in turn, and it is then only that the Catholics permit the members of their church to attend such sermons, which they do in great numbers.****

** An ancient Vaudois manuscript, of 1587, asserts that 140 barbes once assisted at a Synod in the valley of Laus, in the Pragelas.*

*** L'intendant de la province envoyé de la part du government.*

**** This perfect liberty of conscience is a natural result from the Vaudois maxims, before stated, and proves them equally devoid of superstition and fanaticism.—Note by Bresse.*

***** Vid. anecdote of the elder Moudon of S. Jean*

CHAPTER VII. OF THE BARBES OR PASTORS

This name, which originally signified *uncle*, was generally given to those persons treated with any particular respect and reverence, and was used to distinguish the pastors, until the calamity of 1630, mentioned above. "These barbes* were," says Leger, "models of all virtue, pious, humble, innocent, mild, and peaceable; as well as diligent, laborious, and vigilant in their office; faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard; they consecrated all their time and talents to the care of souls; exposing themselves to reproaches and persecutions, nay, even death itself in defence of the truth; despising the vanities, luxuries, and honours which the world offered to them. In a word, they fulfilled to the utmost every duty of nature and society." Among them many were married, others remained single, on account of the changes of abode then so often necessary to keep up a correspondence with distant countries; particularly (since the twelfth century) with Bohemia, Germany, Gascony, Provence, Dauphiné, Languedoc, England, Calabria, and Apulia. Our barbes visited each of those countries in turn, preaching and animating the courage of their brethren; and the money necessary for their journeys and support while absent, was furnished them from the valleys.

** The Catholics use the word Barbets, as a term of reproach for the Vaudois.*

Besides preaching, they occupied themselves in making copies of the Holy Scriptures, for the use of their flocks; many of them studied medicine and surgery, an occupation the more laudable as medical men have always been very scarce in the valleys, only one residing even now in the valley of St. Martin, and none in that of Luzerne, except the apothecary of the Catholic town of that name. It is true that the frugal manner of life among the Vaudois renders their assistance little necessary; and well acquainted as were our ancient barbes with the simples, with which our country abounds, they found among them almost all the remedies required.

There were some of these venerable men, who, like the apostles, applied themselves to mechanical arts, but the most particular object of their care was the instruction of youth, and especially those intended for the church. In the most ancient times, the studies of the latter were confined to the learning by heart the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and the epistles; with a good part of the writings of Solomon, David, and the prophets; after which on presenting good testimonials, they were admitted into the ecclesiastical order, by the imposition of hands.*

** Vide Note at the end of this chapter.*

Not only the inhabitants of the valleys, but the youth of distant countries came to have the instructions of our barbes. For Illyricus,* the Papist author before quoted, affirms—"I find that it was common, nay, customary, for Bohemians to travel from their country to their Valdensian preceptors in Lombardy, as if to some school or college for the sake of studying divinity."

The History of Alsace (lib. i.) makes a similar statement, with regard to the Alsaceans preparing themselves for holy orders.

The cavern, which served for the accademia of our venerable barbes, where they sowed and cultivated the principles of their pure and blameless religion, and whence they spread them through the world, is still in existence; it is the cavern of the famous Pré du Tour in the parish of Angrogna. Besides this sacred college, there was, and still exists in each parish, one or more schools, where the children of both sexes are instructed in writing, reading, arithmetic, and sacred music,** well as in the elements of religion. There are also two latin schools, where those destined to the study of divinity learn Latin, and a little Greek, previous to their removal to Lausanne or Geneva.

** Catalog, test, veritat. cap. 15.*

*** It is much to be regretted that an attempt to put these schools upon the Lancaster system, has been rendered abortive. After the revolt in Piémont, in 1820, though no Vaudois was engaged in it, the government (attributing this event to the increase of knowledge) absolutely forbid this rapid mode of instruction.*

Note.—How different is this instruction from the method pursued in our days; it sufficed then to have studied the Christian religion in the gospel. But now a minister of the gospel must pass the flower of his youth, in learning sciences which certainly do not render him a more zealous and virtuous Christian, than he would have been had he studied alone at the school of Jesus. Now, for four or five years he is to groan beneath the study of languages;* then he goes on to the study of the belles lettres; and then to philosophy, of little use indeed to him, and indeed injurious, as it is taught at some universities. See here, ten years of labour and expense! and for what? To gain a knowledge of subjects which have no connection with the science of happiness. Ten years, during which, the youth who has devoted himself to the preaching of the gospel, has scarcely heard mention made of it; or if he has, only as a necessary part of his studies; while he should have made it his principal object. After this comes theology, which surely ought to consist in the simple, but fundamental and thorough knowledge of revelation; the proofs which establish its truth; and above all, the duties which it recommends. Is this the method of study in the colleges? By no means. It is not the gospel which they teach; it is the various opinions of commentators, and heads of sects, on different passages of the sacred writings. Is this to conform to the spirit of religion? is it not, on the contrary, to engage one's self in that pretended wisdom, that futile science it so much reproves? Let me be allowed freely to say, that I consider the manner in which the Christian religion is taught and learnt in our days, as the principal obstacle to its progress. The gospel has no need of all this paraphernalia of science, to affect the feelings or judgment.

** Latin, Hebrew, Greek, French, and Italian.*

It possesses in itself all that is necessary to produce these happy effects. I have only to cast a glance back

upon our good ancestors, when our barbes studied the Bible alone, to be confirmed in my opinion. Is there now among the nations regarded as the most enlightened, any example of a society, which has attained to such a degree of perfection? Surely, if the answer is in the negative, we must not deny the source of the superiority of the ancient Vaudois over other nations, and even over the Vaudois of the present day. It is true that the studies of our young divines have not always been so simple. Logic, together with Italian, French, and Latin, were added, but still there was nothing like the present course of study. I deny not that all these sciences, (with which it is wished to adorn divines,) may be very useful in the countries where they are taught; as France, Germany, England, Switzerland, and the United Provinces; but I believe all this apparatus of learning to be totally useless in our valleys, and that it is consequently in vain to condemn so many youths, destined to the priesthood, to such heavy expense and waste of time;* and every enlightened person will be aware of the cruelty of awakening these young men to the pleasures of learning and science, when on their return to their homes, they must abandon them from poverty, want of time, and their isolated situation. For to whom can they communicate their sciences? to the Vaudois? they understand the gospel alone, and are indifferent as to the rest.

* £40. a year at least.

It must be remarked that the object of this note regards the Vaudois alone, and that it has been added with a view of drawing their attention to the establishment of a college, of which the author has drawn up a plan, which will be added at the end of the history. When it is considered what important objects may thus be obtained by a very small comparative sacrifice of money, it is hoped the benefactors of the Vaudois will turn their attention to it, and that some influence might be exerted by the British government to obtain the necessary permission, at the court of Turin.—Vide calculations of the expense by a traveller, in 1825.

PART THE SECOND.

INTRODUCTION.

Those who are ignorant that our annals are marked by blood and misery, will be surprised to find that the history of these virtuous and simple Vaudois, worthy of the admiration of mankind, is little else than a series of calamity. Nor will they be able to reconcile the barbarity and ferocity, with which they have been persecuted, with the candour and innocence of these victims. One word is sufficient to explain the horrible enigma; mistaken zeal is blind to the duties of religion and nature. Can we call those reasonable beings, who, while claiming the privileges of the human race, utterly forgetful of humanity, massacre thousands of their fellow-creatures in cold blood. Why is it that the potentates of the earth have constituted themselves judges of an affair which regards God alone? Or who has given them a right to treat as heretics, those who think differently from themselves, or to pour out their blood before the altars of God?

It was at the end of the fifteenth century that these scenes commenced; for previously, though the victims of secret intrigue, the Vaudois had suffered no open persecution. It was reserved to the Inquisition to work their ruin. A Spanish priest named Dominic, came to France to preach against the Vaudois of Albi or Albigenes; and succeeded so well that his order received the title of the preachers. He established himself at Toulouse, and thence dispatched his spies in all directions to make *perquisitions* for those suspected of heresy, and punish them.*

** Vide Llorente istoria della Inquisition passim; it is translated; the statement which this learned Spaniard gives, who was himself once a chief officer of the holy office, and has been since entrusted with all its registers, perfectly bears out the sketch given by Bresse.—T.*

Gregory IX., then Pope, soon perceived the advantage he might derive from such missionaries, and authorised the Dominicans in France and Spain, and the Franciscans in Italy, to make inquisition (inquirere) after heretics; as well as to try, convict, and punish them. Such is the origin of the Inquisition, a tribunal so execrable, that it threatened to drown the human race in blood. Its principal seat was at Rome, and on the model of that, was established at Turin, that famous council, De Propaganda fide et extirpendis hereticis, which we shall hereafter call the Propaganda. This council began by declaring the Vaudois unworthy of communication with other Christians, ordered the confiscation of their property, the demolition of their houses, even the cutting down of their trees; sent to all princes and sovereign lords, to require them to search for and deliver up such heretics to the Inquisition; inflicted heavy penalties on those who concealed them; and conferred the third of their property on the informers, who pointed out their retreats. But these measures were too weak; the court of Rome aimed at the utter extirpation of this unhappy people, and committed to its ministers, the power of delivering over to the secular arm, that is, of putting to death without mercy, all those they considered heretics. Nay, these ferocious missionaries pronounced sentence against corpses which had been buried twenty and thirty years; dragged them from their tombs to flaming piles, and confiscated the possessions of the families to which they belonged.

A father was forced to give evidence against a son; a sister against a brother; a wife against her husband; the bonds of nature, blood and friendship, were esteemed as nothing, to the objects of the Inquisition; even those suspected of heresy were rigorously punished, if they could not procure witnesses to swear to their

innocence. The accused was ignorant of the name of his accuser, nor was he allowed any advocate, except such as might be chosen by the Inquisition. One witness alone was sufficient for condemnation to the torture, and even where the crime could not be proved, the victim was never acquitted, but his name was branded with infamy, and remained inscribed on the registers of this relentless tribunal.

I content myself with referring my readers to l'histoire de la religion des églises réformées, by Basnage, 1725, 4to., where they will discover ample proof that the above statement is not overcharged; and find extracts of the acts of the Inquisition of Toulouse, erected against the Vaudois and Albigenes.

I cannot however refrain from transcribing some of the Articles which have served as rules to the inquisitors in the persecutions of our ancestors.

Some of the rules followed by the Inquisitors in their proceedings against the Vaudois:

That no one can be received as a penitent or admitted to absolution, if guilty of directly or indirectly concealing a heretic.

That no one, after having been given over to the secular power, be permitted to justify himself before the people, lest by his explanations it should appear to the simple that injustice had been done him; and if he should escape, the Catholic religion be thereby injured.

That no one condemned before the people shall be pardoned, even should he retract, and promise conversion; for a sufficient number of these heretics could never be burnt, if they were suffered to escape on such pretexts; because these promises being only drawn from them by the fear of torments, would not be observed, and if they should promise conversion before the people, and death be then inflicted, the people might think them unjustly treated. Therefore it is best never to let them speak before the people.

That during examinations, the Inquisitor should always have a book open before him, appearing to have therein registered, a quantity of depositions, and, indeed, the whole life of the heretic.

Inevitable death must be placed before his eyes, if he refuses to confess and renounce his heresy. If he answers—"If I must die, then, I prefer to die in my own faith," his execution must be hurried on as much as possible, and *mercy never shewn*.

No attempt should ever be made to convince heretics by the Scriptures, for they pervert them with such dexterity, as often to confound the most learned men, who attempt to answer them, and thereby they become more hardened.

A heretic must never be answered categorically; and in an interrogatory several questions should always be given at a time; so that in whatever way he may answer, he may be replied to, to his confusion.

If there are any who protest they never were guilty of the Vaudois heresy, they must be admonished, that there are proofs sufficient to convict them; promising them in ambiguous terms, that they may hope for pardon on a free confession; many will then confess, with the hope of saving their lives.

Such were the Rules of the Inquisition, at the end of the eleventh century.

CHAPTER I. THE VAUDOIS QUIT THE VALLEYS IN THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH

CENTURIES.

We have already stated, that when Valdo and his disciples were driven from Lyons, towards the end of the twelfth century, many settled in our valleys. In consequence about 150 years afterwards, the population becoming excessive, many families withdrew to Provence, where they built Cabrieres, Merindol, Lormarin, and other villages. Others went to Paysanne, Biolet, &c., villages in the Marquisate of Saluces; and some retired to Meane and Mathias, near Susa. But the most considerable colonies formed at this time, sought an asylum in Calabria, and Apulia; where they first built the town called Borgo d' Oltramontani,* near Montalto, and fifty years afterwards (on the increase of new settlers) San Sisto, Vacarisso, Argentine, and St. Vincent. The Marquis of Spinello also allowed them at last to build on his lands, near the sea, the fortified town of Guardia, which soon became a flourishing place.

** Foreigner's Town.—T.*

About the year 1400, a persecution arising in Provence, many Vaudois returned to the valleys, and thence, accompanied by others of their brethren, directed their course to Naples, in the neighbourhood of which they founded successively the little towns of Moulione, Montavato, La Celia, and La Motta.

About 100 years after this some Vaudois of Frassinieres (then making one body with those of the valleys) went to inhabit the town of Volturara, near those above mentioned, which was the last considerable emigration at this period.

All these little colonies were regularly instructed by pastors, who travelled from town to town for that purpose. Our barbes even possessed houses at Florence, Genoa, and Venice, in which last city were 6000 Vaudois.* There were even numbers in Rome itself, who lived in concealment.

Although the Vaudois of Val Louise, and two other places in Dauphiné, were persecuted in 1380,** this calamity did not extend into Piémont till 1400, when all the inhabitants of Pragela were forced to fly to the highest mountains, where about eighty women and children died of cold. After the massacre of all who fell into their hands, the persecutors pillaged their houses, and carried their booty to Susa.

** The barbe Gilles, who visited them, affirms this.*

This persecution was far exceeded in severity by that in the Valley of Luzerne, excited by the monkish missionaries in 1476. These men, notwithstanding the four edicts confirmatory of the privileges of the Vaudois, published by the Dukes Louis and Amadeus and Duchess Jolante, from the years 1448 to 1473, procured bulls of great severity against them, from the inquisitor, Aquapendente, and Campesio, bishop of Turin, in 1475. Many Vaudois in consequence fell beneath the hands of the executioner, and among them the barbe Jordan Tertian was burnt at Susa; and Rouzier, Chiamp, Ambroise, and Hian, also suffered martyrdom in other places.

In order to add force to the above bull, the Duchess Jolante issued, in 1476, her Latin edict, (still extant,) directing the magistrates of Luzerne, Cavour, and Pignerol, to use every means to bring the Vaudois over to the Catholic faith; and, in case of resistance, to execute the inquisitorial bulls against them.

In this edict, the Duchess herself gives evidence of our antiquity; I had almost said, apostolical succession, since the words are, "to make them enter (venire) into the bosom of the Roman communion," and not re- enter.

Clement the Seventh may be regarded as the founder of the most monstrous empire which has ever existed, exciting the flames of persecution against all those who refused to acknowledge him as supreme head of the church. Innocent the Eighth proceeded upon the same plan; taking advantage of the brutal ignorance of the age, to lay the world at his feet, and to dictate supreme laws to nations and their sovereigns.* The bull of the latter Pontiff,** addressed to Albert de Capitaneis, papal nuncio at the court of Charles Duke of Savoy, is too important to pass unnoticed. The Pope complains that "the followers of that pernicious and abominable sect of malignants, called Pauvres de Lyon, or Vaudois, say and commit many things contrary to orthodox faith, offensive in the eyes of God and pernicious to their own souls." In consequence of which, (and thinking himself obliged by the duties of his office absolutely to root out this accursed sect and all contaminated by it,) Innocent, through his full power, orders "all bishops, archbishops, vicars, and others possessing ecclesiastical office, to obey his inquisitor, and to take up arms with him against the said Vaudois, in order to tread them under foot, as venomous serpents, and thus fortify the people confided to them in the profession of the true faith." He then recommends to all—"to neglect nothing, and employ their best endeavours for such a holy and necessary extermination of the said heretics." And exhorts all sovereigns and princes "to take the shield of orthodox faith, and to lend him and all bishops, &c. &c. their assistance, to the end that they may exterminate and entirely destroy all these execrable heretics."

** A title frequently used by the Popes is "servant of servants."*

*** Bearing date, Rome, 1477.*

The Roman Pontiff proceeds, "to order all preachers to preach this crusade, to excite and inflame the faithful to destroy this pestilence by force and arms; to absolve all the crusaders, contributing by their arms or otherwise to this holy extermination, from all ecclesiastical censures and sentences. He grants to all the crusaders a dispensation for all irregularities. He recommends to all inquisitors to make composition with all those who have goods or possessions unjustly acquired, provided they will employ them for the extermination of the heretics. And he gives to all persons fighting against the latter full indulgence and remission of all the sins they may have committed; and this pardon is to extend even to the moment of their death."* He also gives to the crusaders "the right to take possession of all goods of heretics, moveable and immoveable. The missionaries shall command all those in the service of these heretics to leave them, and to obey our apostolical commands, under pain of excommunication. All those who have any debtor promise due to these Vaudois shall hold themselves as free from it, and discontinue all commerce with them. All those disobedient to these commands shall be deposed from all their orders, rank, and dignities, whatsoever they may be; and the ecclesiastics shall lose their benefices, the laity their honours, titles, fiefs, and privileges, becoming infamous, and incapable hereafter of holding any office or employment."

** Articulus mortis.*

Such is this series of horrible maxims, subversive alike of all justice, humanity, and religion.*

** The MS. of this bull is in the library at Cambridge.*

This bull, which was followed by an apostile from the Legate, almost as long, and signed by two notaries of Pignerol, authorized by the Duke of Savoy, to publish it in all his territories; was the cause of *eight hundred thousand* Vaudois being put to death in different parts of Europe. Leger vouches for this fact; can any terms then be sufficiently severe for the cruelty of this monster Innocent VIII.

To return, the nuncio Capitaneis, furnished with the Pope's letters patent, having engaged the Duke of Savoy, the King of France, and other neighbouring princes to furnish troops for the extermination of the inhabitants of the valleys, about 18,000 men were assembled, besides 5 or 6000 Piemontese volunteers, eager to obtain both the pillage of the valleys and full remission of their sins.

In order to ensure success, this army was divided into several corps, and attacked at once Angrogna, Luzerne, Perouse, and St. Martin, as well as Pragela, where, after many cruelties committed, they were repulsed by the inhabitants. The chief attack was made in the Valley of Angrogna, towards Roccal Mag-nol, where the Vaudois were prepared to receive it; some of the advanced guard had armed themselves with a kind of long wooden cuirass, which defended the men, and from which the arrows rebounded; and under this living rampart the second rank made good use of their long cross-bows, but were on the point of yielding to superior numbers; when one Revel, indignant at the insulting shouts and imprecations of Lenois, who commanded the enemies, shot him with an arrow, upon which his troops were struck with a panic and fled. The French and Savoyards, irritated by this defeat, made another attack on the side of Angrogna, but though at first successful, they were afterwards repulsed. One of their captains, Saquet, falling from a rock into the torrent Angrogna, the spot was called by his name more than a hundred years after.

In the attack upon Pral, of 700 men, who engaged the Vaudois near Pommiers, one ensign alone escaped, whom the Vaudois pardoned, that he might carry the news of this defeat to the rest of the army. The attacks in other quarters having had no better success, all open hostilities ceased, although desultory incursions were made into the valleys for a year afterwards, which did great mischief, in keeping up an alarm and preventing the cultivation of the land.

Philip the Seventh, Duke of Savoy, at length resolved to put an end to the war, and sent a bishop to treat with the Vaudois, at Pra Ays-suit; the only condition being, that they should come to Pignerol, where his court was, to ask pardon. This was assented to, and the Duke granted a general pardon, on receiving a sum of money; he allowed that he had been ill informed; confirmed their former privileges, and affirmed that he had not such good, faithful, and obedient subjects as the Vaudois.

It was on this occasion that Philip VII. desired to see the children, it having been reported among the vulgar, that the Vaudois children were born with one eye in the midst of the forehead, and four rows of black teeth: a striking instance of the ignorance in which Piémont was plunged at that time.

The favour of their prince did not, however, defend the Vaudois from the persecutions of the inquisitors, who, from the convent near Pignerol, took many prisoners, either by force or stratagem, and seldom allowed them to escape death. By their intrigues they prevailed upon Marguerite de Foix, widow of the Marquis de Saluces, to drive all the Vaudois from her territory, in the year 1500. These poor exiles, after taking refuge for five years in the valley of Luzerne, and making incessant supplications for permission to return, at length suddenly attacked their enemies sword in hand, and gained possession of their homes, where they remained unmolested during the greatest part of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II. THE REFORMATION.

Every one knows that the commencement of the sixteenth century was marked by the change in religious opinions throughout Europe which produced the Reformation; nor need I here specify the names of the reformers, or enumerate their labours in different countries, from Luther's public acts, in 1516, to the assemblage formed by Cranmer in England, of Bucer the martyr, Fagius, and others, about the middle of the century.

Our barbes had, in 1526, sent barbe Martin and others, to hold a conference with the reformers Zwinglius, OEcolampadius, and Bucer, and had returned with many eulogiums on the constancy and simplicity of the Vaudois. Luther, though at first no friend to the Vaudois, admitted, upon better information respecting them, that they were most improperly styled heretics, and expressed his admiration of the courage with which they had renounced all human systems, in order to be guided solely by the light of revelation. Calvin also took a lively interest in them, and held their doctrines in high estimation. To the eulogiums of the reformers were added, however, some rebukes on what they esteemed errors in church discipline, and some German ministers returned with the barbes, to consult on their amendment. The strictures of the reformers rested on points of doctrine not specified by our histories; too much lenity shown towards feeble persons, who attended mass from fear of persecution; and lastly and principally, "that the Vaudois had not celebrated their worship with sufficient publicity for some years."

I must be permitted to say, that even these, reproaches appear to me ill founded. Our ancestors would have been indeed blamable had they concealed their faith; but, on the contrary, they defended it at the price of their property and lives. All that can be said is, that their external worship was not so regular as in our days; because, as a means of security, they often worshipped God only in caverns and forests, and in their private houses.

When our barbes had communicated to their brethren the observations of the reformers, an assembly was convoked to discuss them, at Angrogna, on the 12th of September, 1532, which was attended from every part of the valleys. The result was a new confession of faith, though it appears the assembly was not entirely unanimous, for two pastors and some others were of opinion (and with reason) that it was better to adhere to the old confessions, and particularly that of 1100.

I would go farther and say, that these confessions of faith, so frequent since the Reformation, have been pernicious.

Is it not an act of folly or vanity to dare to form confessions of faith, other than the Apostles' creed? I do not hesitate, therefore, to blame our Vaudois for having thus departed from the wise maxims of their forefathers.

The spirit of this document, and the publicity with which the Vaudois resolved in future to celebrate divine worship, greatly astonished their enemies. The monks, who had been sent into the valleys to collect the revenues of their curés, and to convert the inhabitants, despaired of their undertaking, and returned in great ill-humour. But their hatred to the Vaudois was too inveterate to allow them to remain idle; and having put in force every stratagem, they at last succeeded in their plots so far as to induce Duke Charles to begin a new persecution.

CHAPTER III.

Many Vaudois, to escape the last persecutions, had withdrawn from their country to Merindol, Cabrieres, and Lormarin, in Provence, where they lived undisturbed until 1534; when the bishops of this country,

making researches for heretics, seized these unhappy people, and finding them to be Piemontese, wrote to the inquisitor and to the archbishop of Turin, at whose instigation the Duke consented to appoint Pantaléon Bressour, lord of Rocheplatte, director of the war against the Vaudois. Bressour, provided with letters patent, went to examine the Vaudois prisoners in Provence; and from them learned not only who were the barbes who came from the valleys to instruct them, but the names of almost all the families there. From this information, he formed two lists., viz. one of declared, the other of suspected heretics, which he presented to the inquisitors; he was soon armed with fresh powers, by the edict of Quiers, (dated August, 1535,) to seize all whom he knew to be Vaudois, and to force them to enter into the Catholic faith, or undergo the punishments they deserved. Civil and military officers, and all other subjects were enjoined to obey the requisition of Bressour for assistance, under a heavy penalty.

Having chosen 500 men from the Duke's whole army, this leader attacked the Vaudois, who had not the slightest suspicion of the violation of the peace, and massacred them without any distinction of age or sex, spreading consternation throughout the valleys. The following day, as they marched into the Val de Luzerne, with the intention of continuing the carnage, our Vaudois suddenly attacked them in front, rear, and flank, and succeeded in destroying most of these assassins, the rest took to flight, abandoning their prisoners and booty. Perrin (the historian) attributes this victory, in great measure to the slings, which the Vaudois used at that time with the greatest dexterity, and which formed their principal weapon. Blanche, countess of Luzerne and Angrogna, complained in vain of this perfidious invasion: two days afterwards appeared letters from the Duke, forbidding the inhabitants of the valleys to assemble in arms, under a penalty of one hundred silver marks. Bressour, however, contented himself with seizing those Vaudois who were mingled among the Catholics in Lower Piémont, and soon filled his castle, the prisons and Convents at Pignerol, and the inquisition at Turin, with prisoners. After they were tried by the inquisitors, vicar, and assessors, part of them were condemned to the flames, and the rest to several years imprisonment. There were some indeed whose fate was never known.

The Duke, seeing that these persecutions made no impression, and having remarked that, in open warfare, "the skin of a Vaudois always cost fifteen or twenty of his best Catholics," by his letters, forbid them to be further molested on any pretence whatever.

My readers will see that he was here actuated by a political motive* Francis the First, king of France, having demanded a passage for his army destined for the reconquest of the Milanese, the Duke thought proper to refuse, and consequently to employ all his forces to protect the frontiers. It was therefore necessary to engage the Vaudois to defend their passes, through which the French could have directly penetrated. However, notwithstanding all resistance, the enemy soon forced their way through Savoy into Piémont; and, after bearing their part in the sufferings of the war, the Vaudois remained under the government of the French for twenty-three years.

They were during that time little disturbed on account of their faith, although some individuals occasionally fell victims to the fanaticism of the inquisition. Catelan Girardet, of St. Jean, was burnt at Revel in 1535; as he was led to execution he took up two pebbles, and, rubbing them together, thus addressed his persecutors: "You hope by your persecutions to destroy our churches; you will no more obtain your object than I can destroy these two stones in my hands." After which he submitted to his fate with admirable resignation. In 1536, the barbe Martin Gonin, of Angrogna, as remarkable for his learning as for his piety, was seized at Grenoble, on his return from Geneva, and thrown into the Isere for his perseverance in the faith.

The Vaudois at this time resolved on publishing the Bible, having only the New Testament and some books of the Old, which were sparingly scattered among them, This they accomplished at the expense of 1500 gold crowns, paid to the printer at Neuchatel, who undertook the work. The translation was made by the barbe Robert Olivetan, with the assistance of his relation the celebrated Calvin. Though some say, that the version of Lefevre d'Estaples, prepared a few years before, served them for a model; it is certain that this translation of Olivetan's was used as the basis for almost all those since published. It was revised and reprinted by the academy of Geneva, in 1588.

We have mentioned the commencement of the persecutions of the Vaudois in Provence, in 1534; they were revived in 1540, by the parliament of Aix citing the inhabitants of Merindol to appear before them; when they refused to do so on account of, the danger they would be exposed to, they were condemned to the loss of their lives and possessions. The execution of this barbarous sentence was deferred till 1545, when Cardinal Tournon obtained permission to proceed by force of arms; Minier, president of the parliament and lieutenant of the king, was the principal executioner; having marched from Aix on the 16th of April, he commenced by burning the villages of Pepin, La Motte, and St. Martin, and massacred all the inhabitants, sparing neither age nor sex. On the 17th, he ravaged and burnt Lormarin, Ville-Laure, Treizemenes, and Genson. On the 18th, he set fire to Merindol, when he put to death a child, the only one remaining of its inhabitants. And, finally, on the 19th, this monster destroyed the town of Cabrieres, where 800 victims scarcely satiated his thirst for blood. The assassins under Minier's command even extended their cruelties to infants yet unborn, in a manner too shocking to relate.

Those who escaped from this horrible carnage fled to the valleys and to Geneva; but, after some years, returned to take possession of their property. While these scenes were acting in the south of France, Pope Paul III. excited the parliament of Turin to similar acts in the valleys, then under the French dominion. To a petition for mercy, the only answer returned by Francis the First was, that if they did not conform to the laws of the Roman communion he would punish them as obstinate heretics, since he did not burn such persons in France to tolerate them among the Alps. They were then enjoined to send away their barbes and receive Roman Catholic priests to celebrate the mass.

The Vaudois replied courageously, that it was impossible for them to obey such commands; that they were always ready to render unto Cæsar the things which belonged to Cæsar; but that they would render unto God what pertained to him, however dearly such obedience might cost them. No doubt, at another time, this would have excited a general persecution, but Francis had too much to do to employ his forces against them. The parliament, therefore, contented itself with individual persecution, and ordered all judges and magistrates vigorously to assist the officers of the inquisition, and to commit to the flames all the Vaudois

who might fall into their hands. In consequence many suffered, and among them one Hector, a bookseller, who was burnt 1555, in the square of the castle at Turin, and behaved with great heroism.

Until this time the houses of the barbes had served for the churches of their flocks; but they were now considered as too small, and it was decided to build temples:* the first erected was St. Laurence, at Angrogna; but others were built in val Luzerne and val St. Martin in the same year, 1556. It was also about this time that they began to send students to foreign universities, which relieved the barbes, who were much employed now, but also decreased the number of young divines, as comparatively only a few could support the expense.

** Temple is the word always used by the Vaudois for church.*

The number of pastors having at length greatly diminished, recourse was had to Switzerland to fill up vacancies.

Two commissioners were sent this year, on the part of the king, to command all to go to mass; but after a tour in the valleys they were convinced that their threats and promises were equally ineffectual, and returned with the intelligence that the Vaudois were determined to resist to the last extremity. This information was transmitted by the parliament to Francis, whose answer was received the year after, 1557, and consisted of a peremptory order to all the Vaudois to receive the mass, under penalty of confiscation and death; and to send twelve of the principal inhabitants and all the pastors immediately to the prisons of Turin, to receive the condemnation they deserved. The Vaudois to this replied much as before, with unshaken resolution. And though the parliament of Turin cited a great number by name to appear before them, none presented themselves.

Two barbes perished this year by the hands of the executioner. Sartoris, who was seized and burnt at Aosta, and Varaille, who suffered the same horrible fate at Turin. He was the son of Varaille who commanded the troops against the Vaudois in 1488, and had been a monk and a missionary; but the arguments used by his opponents, during his discussions with them, having at length made a strong impression upon his mind, he renounced the Catholic faith, though he was in the suite of a nuncio in France, retired to Geneva to complete his studies, and then served as pastor the church of St. Jean, till, yielding to an invitation to visit the brethren at Busque, he was seized at Barges on his return.

The intercession of the Protestant princes of Germany procured repose for the Vaudois till 1559.

When peace was signed and Duke Emanuel Philibert regained most of his territories, and concluded a marriage with Margaret of France, sister to King Henry. They at first seemed favourably disposed to the Vaudois, who now again fell under the Piemontese dominion. But the Duke was so pressed by the Pope's nuncio, the King of Spain, and some Italian princes and prelates, that a fresh edict was obtained from him against our ancestors.

CHAPTER IV.

This edict, dated Nice, 1560, was appointed to be carried into execution by Raconis, the inquisitor-general, and Thomas Jacomel, and the provost-general of justice, under the direction of Philip of Savoy, lord of Raconis, and George Coste, Count de la Trinité.

These delegates commenced their task at Carignan, where they burnt a man and his wife for refusing the mass; but the other Vaudois, determining to remain faithful to their religion, retired into the French territory. The commissioners, after committing some excesses by the way, attacked the parishes of Mathias and Meane, which they cruelly ravaged, and actually burnt the pastor on a slow fire.

The Vaudois, favoured by some of the nobles, again petitioned the Duchess to have compassion on their situation; which petition the court forwarded to the Pope. The answer was as follows: "That the Pontiff would by no means consent to any discussion respecting the articles of faith; that every person must submit blindly to all the ordinances of the Papal chair; and that mild treatment having proved useless, recourse must now be had to vigorous measures, and to force of arms if necessary."

In the mean time a desultory species of warfare was carried on, during which, attacks were made on Villar and Pinache, and a desperate assault on St. Germain by a troop of 300 robbers, kept in the pay of the monks of Pignerol.

After the answer of the Pontiff, Anthony Pousserin, commander of the order of S. Antonio di Fossano, made a tour through the valleys, preaching to the Vaudois and exhorting them to receive the mass, and dismiss the barbes. Petitions were again vainly sent in, and finding there was no hope of peace, the Vaudois, after holding a council-general of the heads of families, celebrated a public fast, and removed the feeble and old, as well as most of their goods, to the houses in most elevated situations. The army at length appeared in November, 1561, under the command of the Count de la Trinité.

It was at this time that the Catholic inhabitants of La Tour sent their wives and daughters for protection to the Vaudois on the mountains, as before mentioned, with a request that they would take care of them as long as the army remained at La Tour.

The Count having garrisoned the chief towns in the valleys, and made successive attacks in different quarters of the passes, which all proved futile, pretended an eager desire to treat; and for that purpose it was arranged at Angrogna, that deputies should be sent to the Duke, and a truce agreed upon in the interim. The Count, indeed, asserted in the most barefaced manner, that the recent attacks were made without his knowledge. No sooner were the deputies departed than the Count required the inhabitants of two hamlets to surrender their arms; thus surprised they obeyed, and retired to Angrogna. An old man of 103 was massacred, having been found concealed; and his grand-daughter, to escape the affronts of the soldiers,

threw herself down a precipice. After ravaging the Val de Luzerne, the Count promised to withdraw his troops on payment of 8000 crowns. He hesitated not, however, to remain after the payment of this sum. After committing some ravages and great cruelties, the army was ordered into the plains below the valleys.*

About this time the deputies returned with the edict of the Duke, dated 10th of January, in which he declares, that having considered all the privileges and immunities of the Vaudois, he now confirms them by this present edict, and commands all officers, civil and military, to observe them to the letter.**

** One Geiraet was absolutely put to death by the wounds inflicted by quantities of the scarabeus stercorarius, confined under a vessel placed on his stomach.*

*** Cited in the second page of the original collection.*

It now seemed that the utmost wishes of the Vaudois were accomplished; but, nevertheless, on the 7th of February the army re-entered the val' Luzerne, and after a general attack upon Angrogna, which was repulsed, burnt many hundred houses and barns, carrying away what they could. The Vaudois this night took possession of the strong post of Pré du Tour, abandoning their position at Angrogna, which was seized some days after by the Count, and a regular attack made upon them from it, as well as from the side of val Perouse and val St.

Martin. These three simultaneous attacks all failed, with great loss to the enemy. The Vaudois, who had only two men killed and as many wounded, terminated the day by thanksgivings to God, who had thus preserved them from total destruction.

After the entire destruction of the village of Rora, the Count retired to recruit his army; but, in the middle of March, again took possession of Angrogna, with forces amounting to six or seven thousand men.

The Count de la Trinité next called upon the inhabitants of Taillaré to give up their arms, promising not to molest them if they did. They had the weakness to consent, and the very next night a large division of the enemy massacred *all* they could find in the village, and proceeded to take up a position for a third attack on the Pré du Tour, supported by a strong body, which made a simultaneous attack from Angrogna.

On the arrival of those who had gone by Taillaré at a narrow pass, near Pré du Tour, they were for some time held in check by only six Vaudois, three of whom occupied the pass, while the others rolled down rocks and stones from above, until a reinforcement came up and forced the enemy to retreat. The attempt from Angrogna was equally unsuccessful, and the enemy was even pursued to the castle of La Tour.

It would have been easy to have killed many more of the fugitives, had not the barbes, with the ardent benevolence of true Christians, given strict orders to act only on the defensive, and on all occasions to spare the effusion of blood.

On this memorable occasion the Vaudois had but four killed and wounded, which the enemy has never contradicted, though the behaviour of the defenders of Pré du Tour made a great impression on them; one officer declaring, that in no war had he ever seen soldiers so dismayed as when they were led against the Vaudois; and another, bringing the remains of his company to the Count, absolutely refused again to engage in such expeditions. It must be remarked, that among the reinforcements of the Count were ten companies of infantry and some other troops, all composed of picked men, sent by the King of France at the request of the Duke.

These successes, added to the illness of the Count de la Trinité, and the intercessions of the Duchess Marguerite, induced the Duke again to offer peace, and demand deputies from the Vaudois, whose noble firmness is recorded by Daubigné, a French historian. Chassin-court, who was appointed to meet them, rudely demanded, "How dare such wretches as you treat with a prince against whom you have made war? or how can such poor ignorant shepherds, who deserve a gibbet for your folly, have the assurance to contest religious points with a great prince, advised by men of learning and authorized in his belief by the whole world?"

"Sir," replied the most aged of the deputies, "it is the goodness of our prince who has called us, which gives us the assurance to appear before him. Our resistance has been just, since it was compulsory, and God has approved it by the wonderful assistance he has afforded us: nor have we fought for worldly wealth, but purely for conscience sake; and that when we found our prince endeavouring to put an end to the true service of God, and actuated not by his own will (as we charitably believe) but by that of others, while executing with regret the commands of the Pope. With respect to the simplicity, with which you reproach us, God hath blessed it, since the most humble instruments are often the most agreeable to him, and he can elevate the most ignoble for his own good purposes: the counsels of the Spirit are sufficiently wise, the hearts He excites sufficiently courageous, and the arms which He strengthens vigorous enough. We are ignorant, and affect no other eloquence than to pray with faith. As to the death you threaten us with, the word of our Sovereign is dearer than our lives; at all events, he who has the fear of God in his heart fears not death."

Chassin-court is said to have been so struck with this reply, that he changed his faith, and many were led by it to interest themselves for the Vaudois, so that peace was granted them by an edict, dated Cavour, June, 1565, in which their privileges, &c. were all confirmed, and not only the free exercise of their religion permitted, but communication and commerce with the states of his highness. In consequence, the Vaudois again took possession of their villages, houses, and lands; owing their restoration, in great measure, to Philip de Savoy, lord of Raconis.

Many families were, however, entirely ruined, and more reduced to the greatest distress. The pastors of Geneva generously undertook to solicit subscriptions for them among the reformed churches; and the celebrated Calvin distinguished himself by his zeal and charity; so that they received considerable assistance from the Palatinate, Wirtemberg, Baden, Strasbourg, and the Swiss and Provençal Protestants.

CHAPTER V.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned formal treaty of Cavour, signed on the part of the Duke Emanuel Philibert, by his cousin, Philip de, Savoy, and by the principal people in the valleys, for the Vaudois; notwithstanding the many solemn promises, (so often repeated,) that they should not be again disturbed, another edict appeared, bearing date at Turin, June 10th, 1565, (only five days afterwards,) which authorised the seventh persecution.

It merits notice, from the false principles and fanaticism which it displays; independent of the reckless perfidy to which it owes its existence. After a short preamble, it runs thus:—"And seeing that the support of such a sect would excite the anger of God against us; and that public tranquillity and repose cannot exist in a country where there are two kinds of religion; and being resolved to maintain the ancient Catholic faith, &c. Nevertheless, not wishing to have recourse to rigour against our subjects, but to use clemency and humanity; We, by the advice of our good council, publish this our irrevocable order.—That all those who will not live according to the said Holy Catholic faith, do quit our states, within two months from the publication thereof; in which case we permit them to dispose of their possessions and goods. But all those who disobey this order, continue to dogmatise, or sell the forbidden books of this sect, will incur the penalty of death, and the confiscation of all their property."

To every virtuous and honourable man, who reflects on this edict, it must appear subversive of every principle of nature, religion, and of policy, even without considering the perfidy of it.

This frightful tyranny owes its origin to the Inquisition, the very name of which makes me shudder with horror.

Sebastian Gratioi, a colonel of Militia, had, by intrigues, obtained the office of Governor of the valleys, and was eager to gratify his hatred of the Vaudois, which had been excited by the dishonour of having been their prisoner, though he was well treated. His first act of vengeance was the persecution of Gilles de Gilles,* Humbert, and Lentule, all barbes, of whom the latter was forced into exile, and the first dragged to Turin, where every means was used to induce him to desert his faith, in vain.

** He wrote a History of the Vaudois.*

The persecution also extended to Lower Piémont, where the fiscal general, Barberi, conducted it. Coni was the first town which suffered; and here the Vaudois had already endured much, for seven years preceding, since the peace of 1559; for during the war they were employed against the French. All who remained faithful to their religion, were now either driven into banishment, or imprisoned; those alone remaining in possession of their goods who received the mass. The village of Carville, where great numbers of Vaudois lived, was treated in the same way; and all who resisted condemned to the galleys. Imprisonments, and numberless horrible cruelties, took place also in other districts, wherever Vaudois were to be found. As soon as intelligence of these persecutions was received in Germany, the Electors of Saxony and of the Palatinate, united in complaining to the Duke of Savoy of his conduct; and in consequence the most solemn assurances were given to their envoy, that the Vaudois should no longer be harassed. But no sooner had he departed, than Castrocaro recommenced his severities; and among others, ordered all those of the valley of Luzerne, not natives, to depart in twenty-four hours, under pain of death. Such was the fanaticism of the time, that not the slightest scruple was made of breaking faith with those whom they were pleased to call heretics. The Elector of Palatine, indignant at such conduct, wrote again, very energetically to the Duke of Savoy, in 1566, expressing his bitter complaints, and exculpating the Vaudois from the calumnies spread against them.* The demands of the generous Frederic, added to those of the duchess herself, at last procured them repose until 1571.

** A copy of this letter is to be found in Leger.*

CHAPTER VI.

In 1570, another decree was published, forbidding the Vaudois to assemble together, under a fine of one hundred crowns; their refusal of obedience to this order, which so clearly violated their privileges, greatly irritated Castrocaro, who was particularly enraged at the recent construction of the fort of Mirabouc, on which depended the only issue of the val Luzerne towards France, and would undoubtedly have proceeded to great extremities against the inhabitants of Bobbi, had he been allowed. Strict searches were also made after some of the Vaudois, who were accused of having assisted the Protestants in France; until Charles the Ninth requested the Duke of Savoy to forgive them, as he had already done his own Protestant subjects.

In 1571, at a general assembly of the heads of families, six articles, called "the articles of the union of the valleys," were drawn up; the object of which was to bind themselves by still more solemn ties to persevere in their religious faith, and in obedience to their prince, when his orders were not contrary to their conscience. The news of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in that same year, gave them the utmost disquietude, and the more so, as Castrocaro manifested his intention to inflict the same punishment on all the French refugees he could find; until he received the Duke's order to desist.

A sudden attack was made about this time by order of the parliament of Pignerol, upon St. Germain, in val Perouse, by Charles de Birague, an officer in the French service; but he was repulsed, after taking five Vaudois prisoners, who were hanged by the Papists.

Peace was soon after concluded; and in consequence of Henry the Third passing through Turin, on his way from Poland, to take possession of the crown of France, the town of Pignerol and the valley of Perouse were

CHAPTER VII.

Before we proceed further it is necessary to give some account of the Vaudois of the marquisate of Saluces, who chiefly inhabit the valley of the Po, the most northern part of the marquisate, and only separated from the val de Luzerne by mount Viso, at the foot of which that noble river takes its source. We have already mentioned the colonies sent here from the valleys at the beginning of the fourteenth century; these increased into numerous flourishing churches, among which those of Praviglielm, Biolet, Bietonet, and Dronier were the principal ones, in 1561; when they had no less than nine barbes distributed among these and other towns.

They had experienced only partial persecutions till 1572, when, (being then under the French government,) after the dreadful day of St. Bartholomew, M. Birague, governor of the marquisate, received an order to put the chief Vaudois to death, and particularly those whose names were transcribed in an accompanying list. On referring to the council, after much discussion, the archdeacon remarked, that false reports could alone have changed the sentiments of the king, who had before commanded that his Protestant subjects should be treated with lenity; and he advised that a representation of their good conduct should be sent back, with a request for further orders. The courier charged with this despatch met another, bearing an edict revoking the former one, and requiring only that the Vaudois should not be allowed the public exercise of their religion. In consequence, many who had fled returned, and were reinstated in their possessions.

All persecution was then suspended till 1588, when the Duke of Savoy took possession of their country, and, in 1597, exhorted the Vaudois to receive the mass by every means in his power; they replied firmly, but dutifully, like peaceful subjects, and the threatened persecution was suspended till 1601. When Charles Emanuel became absolute master of the marquisate, in exchange for Bresse: he published an edict, commanding that every Vaudois, who did not declare his intention of receiving the mass in fifteen days, should leave the country within two months, and never return, under pain of confiscation and death. Let the compassionate imagine the distress of these unfortunate Vaudois, when they found that nothing could diminish the rigour of this decree; they were forced to abandon all their property and retire, some to France, and others to Geneva and the valleys. Those of the church of Praviglielm were alone flattered with the hopes of an exception in their favour; yet they too were forced to fly suddenly, leaving their wives and children; but some time afterwards, upon a threat of retaliation if any harm happened to them, they were allowed to return. They remained till 1633, visited occasionally by a pastor from the valleys, in the greatest secrecy; when, on the reception of an order (from Duke Victor Amadeus, similar to the one issued by Emanuel Philibert in 1565,) they too were driven into perpetual banishment, and thus perished the last trace of the Vaudois church in the marquisate of Saluces, where it had flourished for three centuries.

CHAPTER VIII.

Charles Emanuel having succeeded his father Emanuel Philibert, Castrocaro, governor of the valleys, was, for his many enormities, imprisoned for life; and, in 1582, the young prince issued an edict, confirming the ancient privileges and usages of the Vaudois; a list of them is included in this document of the dates' of these former edicts, being 1448, 1452, 1466, 1473, 1499, 1509, all, it will be observed, preceding the Reformation. For some years the Vaudois enjoyed some repose; but Charles Emanuel, being afterwards occupied by the war in Provence, the French army, under Les-dequiere, entered the valleys in 1592; and, after some resistance, possessed himself of the town of Perouse, and the castles of La Tour, Mirabouc, Cavour, &c. During which time the Vaudois, having taken arms, sent a deputation to the court to inquire what they should do, and were recommended to submit to the enemy, as there were not forces sufficient to oppose him effectually. The campaign was concluded on the return of the Duke, and, after an engagement at Salabertran, each army retired to its respective country. In 1593, Charles Emanuel retook some of the forts, and took up a position near Luzerne, on the southern bank of the Pelice, while the enemy occupied the opposite side. A truce was then concluded till 1594, when the Duke took Bri-queiras; and, in 1595, Cavour, and Mirabouc, the only remaining forts in the hands of the French; on this occasion the inhabitants of the valleys assembled at Villar, to felicitate him on his victories, and received the most flattering assurances of his protection. Indeed, the preceding year, an edict granting them full pardon for their submission to the French had appeared. This did not, however, prevent the Roman Catholic clergy from persecuting all who fell into their hands. One Coupin, an elder, was seized at Aste, and dying in prison, his body was publicly burnt.

Such acts did not satisfy the enemies of the Vaudois, who, in 1602, succeeded in obtaining from the Duke a public repeal of former immunities. The principal clauses in this edict were:—That the Vaudois should not perform any religious act beyond the limits of the valleys Luzerne, Perouse, and St. Martin, on pain of death:—that they should maintain there neither public nor private schools:—that no marriage should take place between those of different communions:—that no Catholic should assist at the Vaudois worship:—that no Vaudois should dissuade others from attending mass, or reply to the missionaries sent for their conversion:—that all Vaudois should be incapable of holding any public employment whatever:—that no Catholic, under pain of confiscation, should sell or hire to a Vaudois either goods or lands.

It will be observed that this edict, under the appearance of preventing the extension of heresy, acted as a severe persecution on those of the marquisate of Saluces, as well as of Bri-queiras, Fenil, Campillon, Bubiana,

and the town of Luzerne.

CHAPTER IX.

In consequence of this edict, the Count Charles, lord of Luzerne, the governor of Turin, and the archbishop of Broglia, arrived at Luzerne, as commissioners for its execution, accompanied by numbers of monks and jesuits: having ordered the heads of families before them, they commanded all who would not receive the mass to quit the town. Very few were weak enough to comply with this condition. At Bubiana, Campillon, and Fenil, where they next proceeded, they made no more proselytes, and ordered all Vaudois to depart within five days, under pain of confiscation and death. From these towns some of the chief people were sent to Turin, where Valne Boule was presented to the prince, and pressed by him to receive the mass; but, on refusal, was dismissed with kindness. The others promised all that was asked of them, and soon repented of having done so. At Perouse the archbishop had no better success than elsewhere, and the governor of Turin falling into disgrace, the Count of Luzerne was pressed to use his influence in favour of the Vaudois. By his means the edict of Nice was obtained from the Duke, in 1603; by which the religious exercises of the Vaudois were freely permitted within the valleys, and they were allowed to trade with the Catholics and to hold public employments.

Nothing of importance occurred till 1613, when, in consequence of the war in Montferrat, all the subjects of the Duke, and particularly the Vaudois, were summoned to defend the frontiers. The next year the same thing happened, (war having been declared against the king of Spain,) and the post of Verceil was committed to the guard of Vaudois. These duties were so well performed as to obtain the marked approbation of the prince, and the assurance that he would not forget their services. The poor ignorant Catholics, among whom they marched in these wars, were so prejudiced against them that they fled at their approach, believing them to be heathens, and that they had one eye in the forehead, and four rows of black teeth, with which they used to devour their own children, &c. &c.* Those who had the courage to stay in their houses, trembled at the very sight of a Vaudois.

** In 1825, a Catholic priest, educated at the episcopal college of Lugano, asked his Protestant guest if he had been baptised.—That guest was the Translator.*

In the year 1622 a decree appeared, by which the inhabitants of St. Jean were ordered to shut up the church, built there a few years before, and a payment of six thousand ducats required from the three valleys. At the same period Pope Gregory XV. granted to the Duke the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues. In gratitude for this bounty, more vigorous measures were taken against the poor Vaudois. Those of Praviglielm were banished by the prefect of Saluces; and a great number in the valley of Barcelona, dependent on the Cardinal de Savoy, were driven thence in 1625, and fled into the south of France, or Piemontese valleys. Although the decree only mentioned the church of St. Jean, a regiment of infantry, in the val de Perouse, forced the inhabitants to demolish six of their churches, and then made a perfidious attack on St. Germain.

The report of this treatment having spread into foreign countries, an ambassador extraordinary from Great Britain arrived at Turin, in 1627, to intercede for the Vaudois. He received a promise that they should not be any longer molested, and returned in October, having recommended them to the protection of some of the nobility. The following year, the French army having shown a disposition to attack the frontiers, the passes were placed under the defence of the Vaudois; who so well defended them, that no enemy penetrated into Piémont. A convent of capuchin monks was this year founded at Luzerne, by two of the noble family of Rorengo, lords of that place and La Tour, which has since taken a great part in our history.

In 1629, another ambassador came from England, named Carlisle, who earnestly interceded for the Vaudois, and obtained the most honourable testimonies in their favour. But though the court was well disposed towards them, the implacable clergy always found means to evade its benevolent purposes. One of their contrivances was, to disperse a great number of monks through the valleys; but these, upon reference to the court, were at this time withdrawn.

The Vaudois were also this year again called upon to defend the frontiers against a threatened attack, on the part of the French; but a truce having been concluded, it was not till 1630 that the enemy actually advanced by Susa and reduced Pignerol. The inhabitants of the valleys, after some hesitation, consented to submit, on being summoned to do so by Marshal Schomberg; but on condition that no one should be forced to bear arms against the Duke. A violent plague, this year, made great ravages, and most of the pastors fell victims to it. Charles Emanuel also died about the same time, and Victor Amadeus I. having succeeded him, peace was signed between Piémont, Spain, and France, by the articles of which the town of Pignerol and the val St. Martin were retained by the latter.

From this time till the death of Victor Amadeus the First, in 1637, tranquillity remained nearly uninterrupted, except by the violent writings of Rorengo, and the monk Belvedere, which were subsequently refuted by Gilles, pastor of La Tour, and author of the history of the Vaudois.*

** Printed at Geneva, 1644.*

CHAPTER X.

Before we enter upon the dreadful tragedy which took place in the valleys during the regency of the Duchess Christina, sister to the king of France, (which succeeded the reign of Victor Amadeus;) it is necessary to call the attention of the reader to the state of the valleys at this period. For years, the continual partial and individual persecutions had held them in a state of alarm, even in the midst of peace, and now they had suffered most severely by pestilence, and were reduced to want or poverty by the great scarcity of provisions which succeeded it. After a calm of thirteen years, under the regency, what must have been their dismay to hear that councils, for the propagation of the faith and extirpation of heresy, had been established in all Catholic countries, after the model of that at Rome; and that one was now instituted at Turin, in 1650.

This establishment was divided into two bodies of supporters; the archbishop being the head of the male, and the Marchioness di Pia-nezza of the female, devotees.

The eagerness of the ladies engaged in this pious enterprise can hardly be imagined, they sent forth spies to promote dissensions in private families, offered money to new converts, and even penetrated into the prisons to make proselytes. To support their expenses, they went round even to the shops and inns to collect contributions. The secular arm also assisted them, if required, in their labours to deserve the plenary indulgence for all their sins granted them by the court of Rome.

The council of men formed still greater designs, in the execution of which they were indefatigable, and sent spies and missionaries into the valleys, who were always at hand to excite quarrels, rebellion against church discipline, and even to carry off women and children from the Vaudois, and attack the pastors. They cited the principal people to appear before the tribunal at Turin, whence they scarcely ever escaped without having been imprisoned, ill treated, or nearly ruined; nay, often were they condemned to confiscation and banishment. Such were the means used by the Propaganda to harass the Vaudois. An unfortunate accident happened in 1603, which gave them more power of doing mischief. A convent of monks had been some years established at Villar, when an infamous traitor, whom they had engaged in their service, undertook to excite the Vaudois to expel these missionaries; having persuaded the wife of the pastor Manget to further the plan, she had influence enough to induce her husband, and two others of the name of Pellene, to call an assembly, where this subject was discussed, and the project of Manget highly disapproved of and censured. The wife of Manget made a false report of the decision to the two young Pellenes, who succeeded that very evening in driving out the monks and setting fire to the convent. It may well be supposed that the inquisitors did not lose so favourable an opportunity; and the fact having been represented in the blackest colours to the Duchess Regent, they obtained five or six thousand men, under the command of Count Tedesco, who marched immediately with orders to surprise and burn down the town of Villar.

In the mean time Leger, then moderator of the valleys, with the principal members of his own and the neighbouring churches, repaired to the chief magistrate at Luzerne, and protesting the innocence of the assembly, and even the parish of Villar, offered to bring the offenders to justice. The Count Tedesco nevertheless proceeded to Villar, and made his attack; but a storm of rain prevented the muskets of his soldiers from going off, and the Vaudois then having given every where the alarm, the approach of darkness induced him to return to Luzerne without having accomplished his purpose.

The Propaganda being thus defeated, had recourse, in 1654, to a still more sanguinary plot for the destruction of the Vaudois, by means of the French army under Marshal Grancé. The court of Savoy had offered to provide this army with winter quarters in our valleys, at a much less sum than had been demanded elsewhere, in consequence, the troops appeared before Pignerol, demanding their quarters; in the mean time, the monks and other agents of the Propaganda had artfully persuaded the Vaudois, that it was contrary to the intention of the Duchess, that these troops had entered her states, and excited them to take up arms. The main body of these forces was already before the fort of La Tour, and all the inhabitants of the val de Luzerne were drawn up to oppose them, when Leger, the moderator, throwing himself at the feet of the Marshal, explained the trick played upon him, and requested he would suspend hostilities until a written order could arrive from the Duchess Regent for the cantonment of the troops. This was assented to, and on the arrival of the order, on the morrow, the army quietly took possession of their quarters.

This plot was afterwards more fully proved by two officers in De Grancé's army,* and its details were lodged with the other MSS. by Leger, in the Cambridge library.

** One named De Petit Bourg.*

A year had scarcely elapsed when another motive was added to the zealous labours of the propaganda, which was the wish of establishing in the valleys those Irish whom Cromwell had banished in consequence of the massacres they had committed among their Protestant countrymen.

This eager desire to obtain possession of the valleys, and all that the Vaudois possessed in them, excited a series of intrigues, which ended in an order to Gastaldo, auditor of Luzerne, to enjoin and command the Vaudois inhabitants of Briqueiras, S. Second, Bubiana, Fenil, Campillon, Luzerne, St. Jean, and La Tour, to abandon those places within three days, or receive the mass, under pain of death and confiscation of their property.

What makes this step still more cruel and unjust, if possible, is, that it took place in the winter of 1654, when Charles Emanuel II. had, by an edict of 3rd December, just confirmed all their privileges, &c.* In this, and in the one of the preceding year, they were mentioned as faithful and obedient subjects; nay more, at the very time the lawyers were employed in verifying the original charters, the last decree was about to be enrolled, and the sum of money exacted on these occasions had long been paid.

It will easily be imagined that no time was lost in sending deputies to Turin, and trying every means to obtain a mitigation of this dreadful sentence. These deputies were amused by an affected deliberation on their petition, and were referred sometimes from the Duke to his mother, sometimes from the Duchess to the Marquis di Pianezza, and from him to the Propaganda, till they received information on the 16th of April (though they were promised a final audience on the 17th) that the Marquis was already at Luzerne with his forces, and that they had better provide for their own safety.

Thus, by a series of base treachery, duplicity, and cruelty, was the way prepared for those dreadful

massacres, which have cast so foul a stain on the reign of Charles Emanuel the Second.**

** This seems to have been necessary every new reign, these confirmations being personal acts of the sovereign.—T.*

*** Which excited the compassionate muse of Milton.—T.*

CHAPTER XI.

It was on the 17th of April, 1655, that the Marquis di Pianezza entered the valleys with an army of 15,000 men, composed of the troops of the Duke, four French regiments, one German corps, and 1200 Irish.

On the 18th, this army ravaged the parishes of St. Jean and La Tour. On the 19th, they even attacked them in quarters to which the order of Gastaldo (to abandon their possessions) did not extend; the enemy was repulsed, notwithstanding his immense superiority of numbers; and, on the 20th, vainly attempted to burn the church of St. Jean.

In consequence of this spirited resistance, Pianezza had recourse to the most infamous treachery. Having sent to demand a conference, he protested to the deputies that his only object was to enforce the order which had been given by Gastaldo, and that the parishes not falling within it might rest secure of peace, if, in sign of their obedience, they would permit a regiment of infantry and two troops of cavalry to be quartered in their territory for two or three days.

The deputies who, unsuspecting of treason, judged of the Marquis by themselves, assented, though M. J. Leger and some other pastors greatly suspected the measure.

The before mentioned troops no sooner entered, than they seized the strong points round each village, and (regardless of entreaties that they would remain in the lower villages) pressed forward to the highest positions. Meanwhile they were followed by the whole army, in divisions, which marched in different directions against Angrogna, Villar, and Bobbi, and upon the last bulwark of defence, the Prè du Tour; this last force laid the country they passed through waste by fire and sword; and in consequence, the error being now perceived, most of those who inhabited the right of the Val de Luzerne, passed the mountains in the night, and took refuge in the Val de Perouse. The inhabitants of the other side of the valley were almost all obliged to remain, having no means of retreat,* the passage being completely closed against them. The enemy after gaining entire possession of the valleys, pretended to have no intention of remaining there more than a few days, and exhorted the Vaudois to recall their fugitive brethren, which some had the weakness to do, trusting to the assurance given them that no harm should befall them. Such was the situation of affairs when, on the 24th of April, the signal was given from a hill near La Tour, called Castellas, for a general massacre, which extended through the whole valley, and began at the same instant neither age nor sex were spared; every refinement of cruelty which the malice of demons could invent was put in practice.

** Behind the mountains in their rear was a Catholic country.*

The very mention of these horrors excites too much disgust to allow of a detail of them. Violation, mutilation, and impalement were mere common atrocities; many were roasted by slow fires; others cut in pieces while alive, or dragged by mules, with ropes passed through their wounds; some were blown up by gunpowder placed in the ears and mouth; many rolled off the rocks, with their hands bound between their legs, among precipices, where they were abandoned to a lingering death; children were carried on pikes, and women.... But let us not dwell longer on these infernal barbarities.* They are detailed in Leger, and the names of many of the sufferers, and the evidence of eye witnesses there recorded. The number who perished in the Val Luzerne alone, amounted to 250, besides children and others, whose names have not been collected, and the men who fell sword in hand; for nearly all the victims of these cruelties were women, children, and old people. But the mere recital of the numbers destroyed, cannot suffice to give an idea of the miseries endured, we must add the horrors encountered by the survivors, wandering in utter destitution among the mountains, in terror and want, after witnessing the murder and outrages committed on their dearest relatives and friends.

** The translator has spared the feelings of the reader by omitting many of the horrors mentioned by Bresse.*

*** Leger, chap. ix. second part.*

Will it be believed, that the Marquis di Pianezza, shortly afterwards published, in the name of the government, a manifesto, justifying these barbarities, and even declaring that the Vaudois had deserved greater punishment.

In addition to this, appeared an edict under the name of Charles Emanuel II., dated 23rd May, 1655, one month after the massacre, by which he condemns to exile all the principal persons of the Vaudois, setting a price on their heads, "because they had rebelled against his supreme authority, and opposed in arms the forces of the Marquis di Pianezza."

Such is in general the blindness of those who misunderstand the true spirit of the gospel, that after having violated its clearest precepts, there is no sort of artifice which they do not use in order to give a colour to their crimes.

CHAPTER XII.

The very day on which this massacre was perpetrated, in various parts of the Val de Luzerne, the Count Christophe, Seigneur de Rora, a member of the Propaganda, sent 400 or 500 men to surprise Rora, and put all the Vaudois they should find there to the sword; although they were included in the promise of Pianezza, "that no harm should befall them." This band of assassins had reached the summit of Mont Rummer, from whence they were about to rush down upon Rora, when they were perceived by Joshua Janavel, who had retired there for refuge. With only seven others he took up an advantageous position, and falling upon the enemy with great spirit, forced them to retire; killing no less than fifty in the pursuit. On the news of this defeat, the Marquis sent to say that these troops had not acted under his orders, and were robbers, whose destruction he was pleased to hear of. On the very next day, Pianezza, notwithstanding, sent 600 men to make another attack, by the hill of Cassulet. Janavel was again fortunate enough to discover them from a distance, and assembled twelve men, armed with pistols and cutlasses, muskets, or slings. This feeble force he divided, and placing a party in three places of ambush, once more repulsed the enemy, who retired with the loss of sixty men.

The Marquis di Pianezza had again the effrontery after this, to send a message by Count Christophe to his vassals, to assure them that the late attack was made by mistake, and owing to a false report; and on the following day, a third party, of 900 men, was detached for the destruction of Rora. The intrepid Janavel attacked them at Damasser, and drove them back upon Bianprà, where, owing to a perfect knowledge of the mountains, the Vaudois attacked them in their march, and converted their retreat into a shameful flight, in which great numbers perished, owing chiefly to the cattle and other plunder they were endeavouring to carry off with them. The Marquis now became furious, and assembling all the troops within distance, ordered no less than 8,000 men, for the destruction of a village composed of only twenty-five families. Three divisions were formed, and a rendezvous given, at which they arrived two hours too late, except the corps of Captain Mario, who, thinking his force sufficient, formed his men into two divisions, and attacked the Vaudois near Rummer. These brave men had the good fortune to take up a position where their flanks and rear were well covered, and made so vigorous a resistance, that the enemy again retired, leaving sixty on the field, besides others who perished in their flight. Mario himself fell into a chasm, from whence he was extricated with great difficulty; and when languishing under a painful illness at Luzerne, he declared that he already felt the fires of hell within him, in consequence of the people, houses, and churches, which he had caused to be burned. He died amidst agonies of pain and remorse.

To return to the heroic party of Janavel, which consisted of only seventeen persons, they soon discovered another division of the enemy on the side of Villar, climbing the mountains to attack them in the rear, and immediately seized on an advantageous position. The advanced guard, sent to reconnoitre, mistook them for their own people, and approached so near, that on firing, the Vaudois each brought down his man, which struck so much terror into the survivors, that they fled back to the main body, and spread such a panic among them, that the whole army commenced a retreat. The Vaudois again followed and killed great numbers; after which they assembled to thank God for the memorable deliverance he had granted them.

Three days after this event, the Marquis di Pianezza, ashamed of such ill success, sent another message to Rora, enjoining every one to go to mass within twenty-four hours, if they wished to avoid immediate sentence of death, and prevent their lands being laid waste, and their houses razed to the ground.

Rather death than the mass, was the unanimous reply of the inhabitants.

It may well be imagined that the Marquis was not satisfied with it. He now ordered 10,000 men to march to the reduction of Rora, and divided them into three corps, one of which took the road from Luzerne, and the others by Bagnol and Villar. Janavel hesitated not to attack the last of these divisions, and succeeded in killing great numbers, when being informed that the other divisions had gained the post where the twenty-five families of Rora had taken refuge, and seeing himself overcome by numbers, he escaped with his brave companions, into Val Queiras, taking with him his son, who was only seven years old.

It is needless to harrow the feelings of my readers with a detail of the dreadful fate of Rora; suffice it to say, that none of the horrid tortures to which their countrymen were condemned on the 24th of April, were omitted here; nearly all the victims were old or infirm, women, and children. And lest any stragglers should ever return to their once beautiful home, the houses were all burnt, and no vestige of cultivation left around them.

Yet even this was not enough to glut the vengeance of Pianezza; Janavel had escaped—and the Marquis did not hesitate to use the most unworthy means of getting him into his power. He wrote to him, urging him to renounce his heresy, as the only means of obtaining mercy for himself, and his wife, and his daughters, who had been taken prisoners. In case of non compliance, he was threatened that they should be condemned to the flames, and that so high a price should be put on his head, that he could not escape; in case of his capture no torture should be spared to punish his rebellion. Janavel's simple reply was, that "no tortures were horrible enough to induce him to abjure his faith, which the threats of the Marquis only served to confirm; and as to my wife and daughters," he adds, "Providence will not abandon them; if you are permitted to put them to death, the flames will only destroy their bodies, while their pure souls will soon accuse you before the throne of the God of the universe."

CHAPTER XIII.

Janavel returned from Dauphiné, after having remained there a short time, and collected the Vaudois who had also taken refuge in that province. He made, another attack, in hopes of taking some prisoners, whom he

might exchange for his wife and daughters, but being unsuccessful, he proceeded to join Captain Mayer, who had put himself at the head of those who had escaped the massacres. They very soon after took the town of St. Second, by assault, and put the Irish garrison of 800 men to the sword, as a punishment for the barbarity with which they had acted on the 24th of April. The Piemontese by their own avowal, lost from 500 to 600 men, in this action; but the Vaudois had only seven killed and six wounded. The houses and churches were burnt, and some booty retaken; but the women, children, and old people, were not insulted.

After some other successes, in which great numbers of the enemy fell, and many severe combats, Janavel found himself posted at An-grogna, with 300 men, while the rest of his troops were engaged in an expedition to the Val Pragela; the enemy here attacked him 3000 strong, but he defended himself, in a good position, from morning till two o'clock in the afternoon, when they retired, losing 500 men in the retreat. Mayer now coming up, the pursuit was pressed farther, most unfortunately, for Janavel received a severe wound, and Mayer, misled by treachery, was surrounded, and lost his life, together with 150 brave men, one only escaped, who returned with the melancholy news in the night.

Notwithstanding the consternation which this disaster occasioned, the Vaudois, under the command of Jacques Mayer and Laurens, now amounting only to 550 men, courageously marched from La Vachere to meet the enemy, who attacked them with 6000 men; but were repulsed, with the loss of more than 200, and of the Vaudois only two were killed, one of whom was Captain Bertin.

The beginning of July was marked by the arrival of the moderator, J. Leger, who had made a long journey, with the hope of interesting the French and other Protestants for his countrymen. Colonel Andron, of Geneva, also joined them with one of his captains, and a soldier; he had served already with honour in France and Sweden, and now came to assist the cause of the unfortunate Vaudois.

Having pointed out some negligence in their manner of encamping, and sent out picquets, this officer received intelligence of an intended attack, which must have destroyed the little force of the Vaudois, had it been made unexpectedly: after a most severe combat of ten hours, when Les Barricades was the only post they could make good against the enemy, they at last obtained a victory; in great measure by rolling down fragments of rock, when their ammunition was expended.

The enemy lost nearly 400 in killed and wounded; and to add to the pleasure occasioned by this success, Mons. Descombier, a French officer, who had served with great distinction, arrived on the 17th July, with some other French Protestants. He was immediately elected commander in chief, and a corps formed of from sixty to eighty French gentlemen, under the command of M. Feautier.

These circumstances filled the Vaudois with the most lively hope, and an attack upon La Tour was resolved on; on the 19th they marched there by day-light, and would certainly have got possession of the town, if Mons. Descombier had not been dissuaded from the assault, by the French soldiers he had sent to reconnoitre. On their report of the strength of the place, he sounded a retreat; but captains Belin and Peyronel resolved to proceed, and, making a vigorous attack, pierced the wall, and entered the town, when the citadel immediately offered to capitulate. At this moment troops poured in from Luzerne, upon their rear, when captain Janavel (now for the first time in the field since his wound) sounded a retreat, and brought off the party with the loss of only one man.

Besides the engagements above mentioned, there were many others, in which the Vaudois obtained advantages; indeed they universally behaved with such heroism, that M. Descombier declared they fought like lions.*

** Bresse here gives the names of those who most distinguished themselves.*

A very short time after the attack on La Tour, the court of Turin published a truce, which was not broken till the peace. We shall pursue the negotiations after a few remarks, which appear necessary at this point of our history.

CHAPTER XV.

The news of the severity with which the Vaudois had been treated having now been spread throughout Europe, had awakened the sympathy of all the Protestant powers; the British ambassadors extraordinary have already been mentioned, and we must not here omit, that, on the publication of Gastaldo's proclamation, in 1655, the Swiss cantons interfered in a similar manner. The only reply to the statement of the fidelity, &c. of the Vaudois, being a complaint of their great insolence, particularly as manifested on Christmas day, 1654; thus grounding their conduct on some ridiculous masquerading which took place on that day, and which was afterwards allowed by Gastaldo himself to have been conducted by Catholics. So much for the reasons given for driving the Vaudois from their ancient possessions beyond the three valleys. The further order for the massacre has been (it will be remembered) justified by their self-defence on that occasion, when attacked, even within the bounds assigned for their allowed possessions.

On receiving the news of the massacres, the Swiss cantons proclaimed a solemn fast, wrote the most affecting and pressing letters to other powers, and made a general collection for their unhappy brethren; deputed at the same time Colonel de Wits to press their intercession at the court of Turin. This envoy was referred by the court to the Marquis de Pianezza; and, after a vigorous representation of the injustice of the court towards the Vaudois, he returned without having gained his point.

The cantons resolved nevertheless to send another solemn embassy, and wrote pressing letters to the United Provinces, and to the protector of England,* entreating these powers to assist them in the defence of their innocent and most undeservedly persecuted brethren.

Mons. de Wits arrived at Turin for the second time, in the beginning of July, (the period of the successes before mentioned,) closely followed by four other Swiss envoys. His object was eluded by the court; and the reply given was, that the king of France having offered himself as mediator for these rebels, the affair could not be taken out of his hands. The four other envoys arrived on the 24th, and were graciously received; they presented a memorial, justifying the Vaudois, and bitterly complaining of the cruelties exercised towards them; even using the words "so cruelly oppressed." After many pressing entreaties for an accommodation of differences, a Mons. Gresi, counsellor of state, was sent to the envoys with papers, tending to calumniate the Vaudois, and justify their persecutors; they were allowed, (notwithstanding the transactions with the king of France,) to go to the valleys, for the purpose of examining into their present state. The next day they accordingly went to Pignerol, then in the hands of the French, and were soon met by the French ambassador, M. Servient, the Count Truchis, the senator Perraquin, the prefect Ressau, the prior M. A. Rorenco, and some other agents of the Duke, as well as the deputies from the valleys, at the head of whom was M. J. Leger, the moderator.*

** Afterwards, in his banishment, he wrote his valuable History.*

Under the auspices of these gentlemen negociations of peace were entered into on the 3rd of August, 1655.

CHAPTER XVI.

On the 18th of August, articles of peace were finally concluded. In the intermediate time, Mons. de Wits had received letters from the English envoy extraordinary, Morland, requesting him to delay the conclusion of the treaty, hoping himself to arrive in time to take part in the business.

The details of the negociations can hardly at this time excite much interest; the agents of the Duke were most imperious in their demands, choosing always to treat the Vaudois like obstinate rebels, and notwithstanding the protestations of these oppressed people, the treaty was entitled a "patente de grace", and in the preamble they were represented as "culpable in having taken up arms," and said to be pardoned by the "sovereign clemency" of their prince.

The Vaudois, by the second article, were required to give up possession and the right of habitation in the villages beyond the Pelice; that is, in Luzerne, Luzernette, Fenil, Cam-pillon, Bubiana, Briqueiras, &c. (It will be recollected that they were established in all these places long before the house of Savoy possessed any authority in Piémont.) An exchange of prisoners was agreed to, but many there were who never returned to their homes, and many children were detained. The fifteenth article is singular, as marking the spirit of justice dealt to them, when the non violation of a right is esteemed a favour. "No person of the pretended reformed religion shall be forced to embrace the Roman Catholic apostolic faith: children shall not be taken away from their parents during their minority; that is, the boys before the age of twelve, the girls before that of ten." A secret article respecting the demolition of the fort at La Tour was eluded by the court.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of all the potentates who interested themselves for the Vaudois, Oliver Cromwell showed the greatest zeal. He is known to have said, that nothing ever so affected him as the news of the massacres of the 24th of April; and to have declared to the Duke of Savoy, "that if he did not discontinue his persecutions, he would cause a fleet to sail over the Alps to defend the Vaudois."

It is certain, that as soon as he heard of the horrors of April and May, 1655, he ordered a general fast, and collection for the Vaudois, throughout England, Ireland, and Scotland, to which he personally subscribed £2000. He also wrote to many princes in their favour, particularly to the kings of Denmark, Sweden, and to the States General of the United Provinces, and sent Morland as his envoy extraordinary to the court of Turin, charged also to deliver a letter to the king of France on the same subject.

In answer to this, Cromwell was assured that the French troops had been employed without the orders of their court, which greatly disapproved of their interference; and was well content with the fidelity of the French Protestants.

Morland, on his presentation at the court of Turin, made a most eloquent and ardent appeal to the Duke, boldly stating the horrible outrages which had been committed, and the innocence of the sufferers. He was well informed of all the facts from M. J. Leger, whom he had met at Lyons. Yet the court, in the answer to Cromwell's letter, dared to express its surprise, "that the malice of men had presumed so to misrepresent the mild and paternal castigation of the rebels," as to excite the odium of the other courts of Europe.

Besides Morland, Mr. Downing and Mr. Pell were sent from England to assist at the negociations; but on finding that the treaty was already concluded, while they had been consulting with the Swiss Protestants, they returned to England and Sir Samuel Morland to Geneva.

It was owing to the absence of these gentlemen, as well as that of the Dutch ambassador, that the terms granted to the Vaudois were so unfavourable.

Morland, having been informed of the miserable poverty to which almost all the Vaudois were reduced, the

want of provisions, and particularly the inability of the pastors to support themselves or to obtain a salary, made such representations as to induce Cromwell to make an order in council, dated Whitehall, May 18th, 1658,* stating, "That report having been made to us by our commissioner and committee for the affairs of the poor Vaudois churches, upon the information relative to the state of the said valleys, given them by Sir S. Morland, &c. &c. it is ordered that the money, which remains from a collection made for them, shall be applied as an annual stipend, as under:

<i>To M. J. Leger,</i>	
<i>who has always supported the interests of the valleys, £100</i>	
<i>To eight ministers in the territory of Savoy, £320</i>	
<i>To three ditto in the territory of France £30</i>	
<i>To one head schoolmaster £20</i>	
<i>To thirteen other schoolmasters £69</i>	
<i>To four students of theology and medicine £40</i>	
<i>To a physician and surgeon £35</i>	
<i>Annual amount</i>	<i>Sterling £614"</i>

These annual stipends, thus derived from the residue of the subscriptions left in England, which amounted to upwards of £12,000.** were paid very regularly until the restoration of Charles the Second; when that prince declaring that he had nothing to do with the orders of an usurper, or the payment of his debts, the valleys were entirely deprived of them. It is needless to make any observation on this injustice—injustice not only to the Vaudois, but to the British nation, whose humane generosity was thus defeated in its purpose, and whose contributions were seized without a shadow of reason.

** Three years after the first mission of Morland, consequently a large sum had been paid out of the collection, for present use. Of this large sum, it has been asserted, that the government of Geneva possessed themselves of a great part, to repair their fortifications.—T.*

*** Jones says, £38,241 1s. 6d.—T.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

We have now the agreeable task of recording the bounties of the United Provinces, ever celebrated for their philanthropy. No sooner had they received information of the disaster in the valleys, than they wrote to the courts of England, France, and Turin, as well as to the Swiss cantons, and deputed M. Van Ommeren, a deputy of the States General, to confer with the Swiss cantons, and to carry their joint complaints to the Duke of Savoy. In the mean while a general fast, and the order for collections in every town and village, seconded the zeal of the government, and Amsterdam was distinguished by its generous contributions, which furnished our ancestors with the means of rebuilding their houses, and churches, and recultivating their land.

From the Swiss cantons M. Van Ommeren went to Geneva, to confer with the British envoys, Morland, Pell, and Downing; and thence to Paris, where he urged the king to take into consideration the complaints of the Vaudois against the treaty of Pignerol, just concluded, and in which he had appeared in the character of a mediator, by means of his minister M. Servient. A person of confidence (M. de Bais, *maréchal de camp*) was in consequence sent to inquire into the truth of the facts. He obtained at a meeting of the principal Vaudois, at La Tour, in March, 1656, a justificatory recital of the complaints of the valleys, a letter to the king of France, and another to M. Le Serdigences, governor of Dauphiné, with which he sought redress at the court of Turin; but his object was defeated by the agents of the Propaganda, who so contrived to disguise the truth, that he seemed suddenly to have lost all that insight into the affairs of the Vaudois, which he had obtained by his visit to the valleys. The king of France was, however, so touched by the letter of the Vaudois that he was about again to intercede, when the intrigues of the same agents had the effect of convincing him that the statements of the Vaudois were without foundation.

CHAPTER XIX.

Charles Gustavus, king of Sweden, replied with great warmth to the letter which Cromwell addressed to him in favour of the Vaudois, testifying the horror he felt at such cruelties, and his desire to support the cause of the Gospel with the same energy as the Protector.

This king also wrote to the court of Turin, earnestly to request that the Vaudois might not be disturbed in their possessions and privileges; and soon after desired that M. J. Leger should be sent to him, that he might receive from him all necessary details, and take efficient measures for the re-establishment of the Vaudois. A premature death unfortunately put a stop to his benevolent intentions.

The elector Palatine acted similarly in writing to Turin.

Frederick William, elector of Brandenburg, interested himself in the most lively manner, corresponding with the other Protestant courts on the subject, and offering a general collection.

The landgrave, William, of Hesse Cassel, exhibited the same spirit of charity, and acted with equal energy.

The republic of Geneva showed great interest in the affair, and indeed every one of the reformed churches

of Europe wrote the most touching letters, evincing their great interest and compassion for their brethren of the valleys.

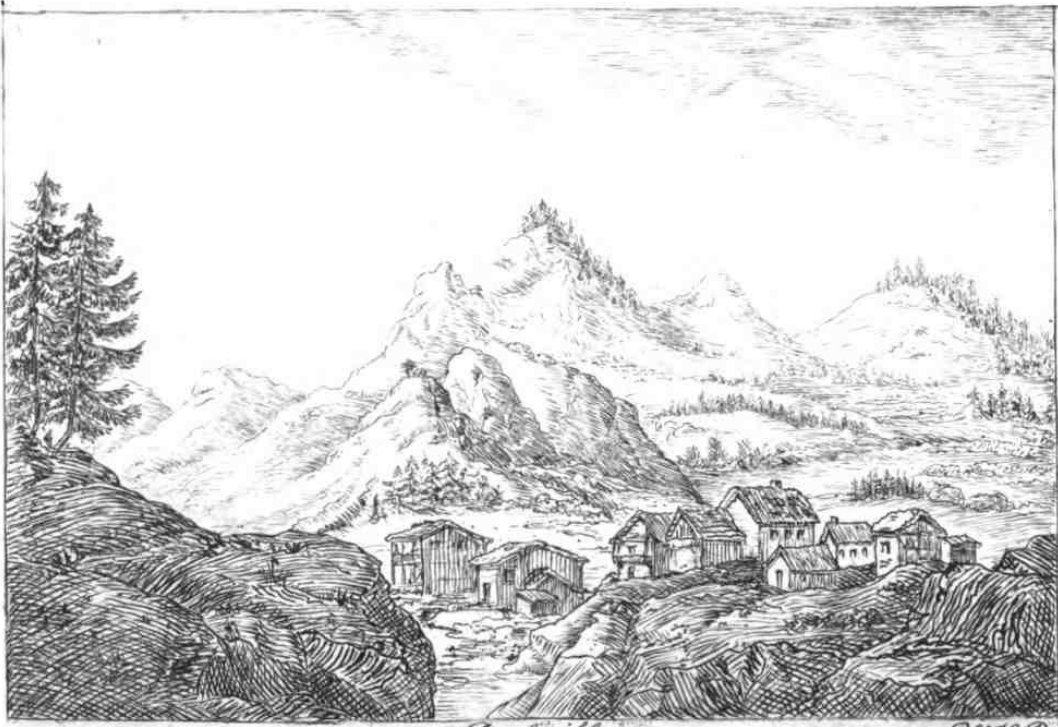
So many proofs of the kindness and respect shown to our ancestors, by the most wise and enlightened governments, would suffice for the eulogium of this unfortunate people, were not the details of their own conduct amply sufficient to place them in their true light; nor can the unrestrained malevolence, to which they have been exposed, withhold from them the admiration and esteem of all good men.

The Vaudois had scarcely begun to enjoy the repose which was granted them, when their implacable enemies had again recourse to the same system of intrigues, which had so often been resorted to against them. But, for the moment, we will not follow them any farther, lest the minds of my readers should be wearied with this tale of suffering, they require to be relieved for a time from the contemplation of these dark plots of malevolence and fanaticism, before they return to the scenes which we have yet to lay before them.

Alas! a cloud of misfortune seems to have hung over all the Vaudois historians:—Gilles de Gilles was persecuted, as we have seen above; the indefatigable J. Leger (the same moderator already mentioned) finished his great work in exile, and died in Holland; and our author, the virtuous Bresse, after experiencing the most cruel injustice at Geneva, was forced by circumstances to establish himself at Utrecht, where he died before the publication of the last part of his work, which it had been the project of his life to accomplish, and to which he had devoted himself since the sixteenth year of his age.—Note by the Translator.

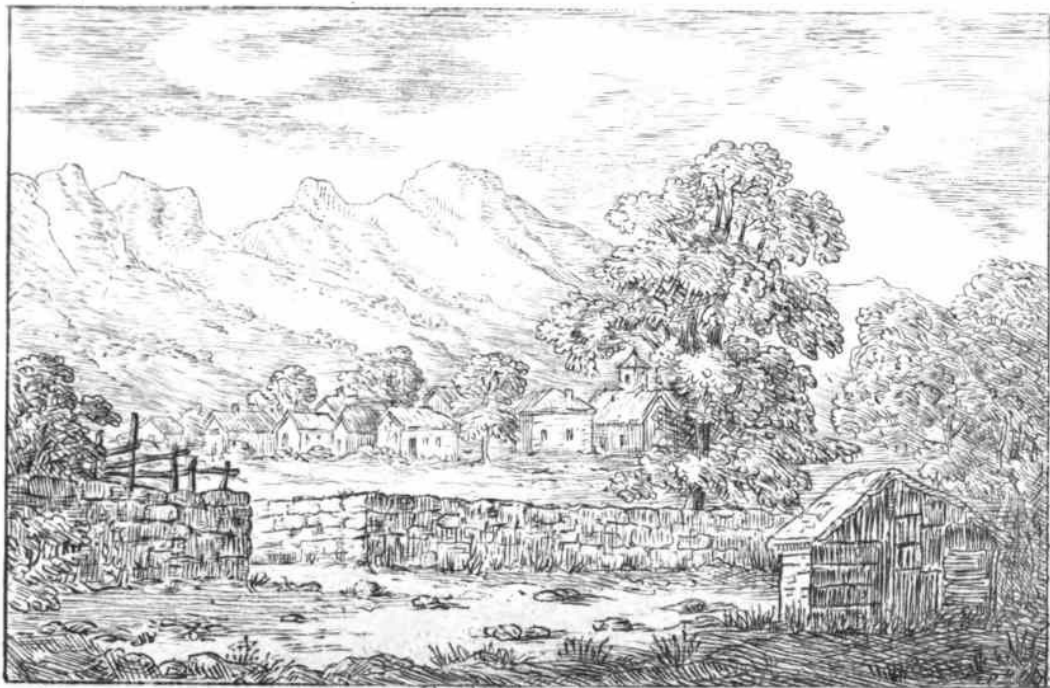
ETCHINGS





Balsville.

W.H.B.



D.H.M.

Bobbi.



Julime

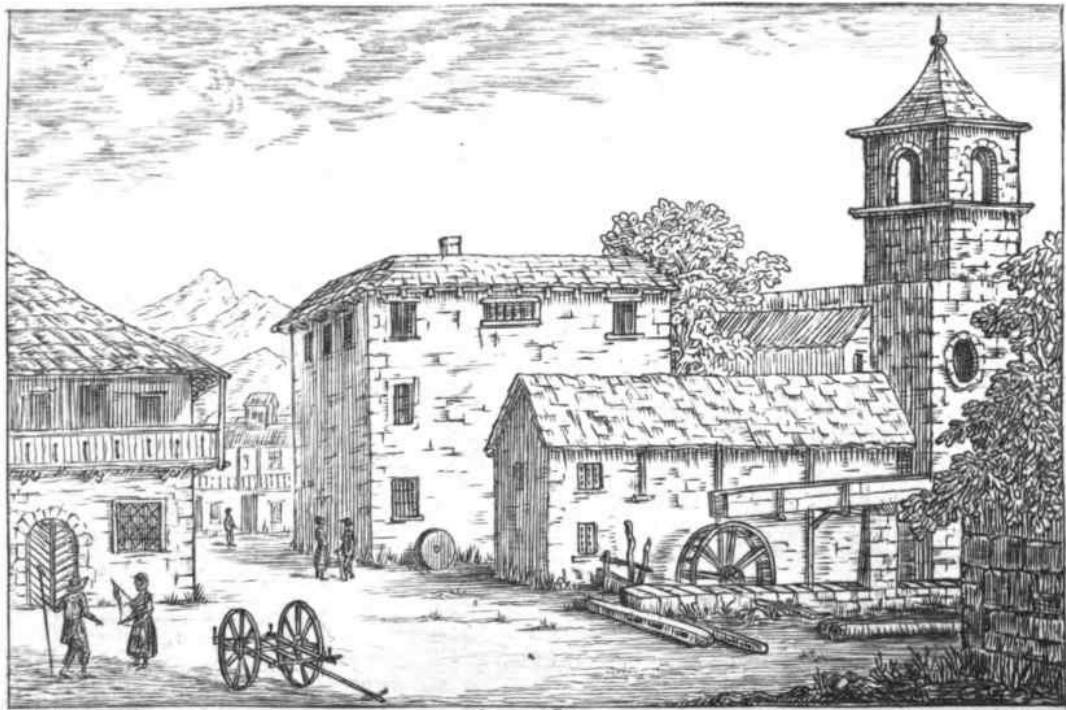
Grave of Peyran.



WHB.

Gros Villar

D. W. Wiertemberg



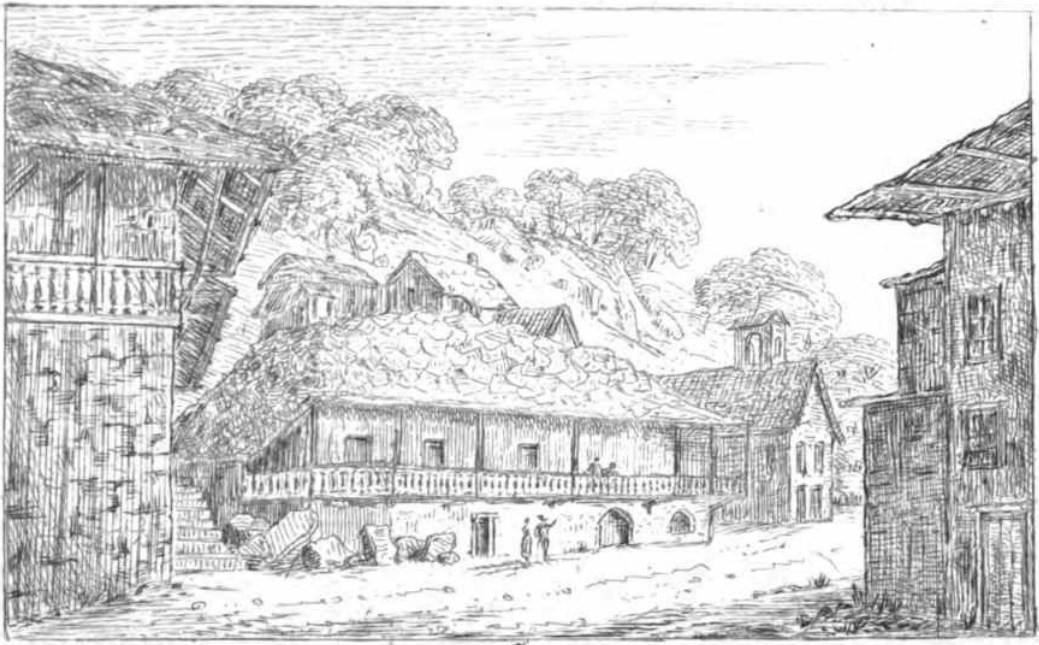
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La Tour



WHB

Masgia

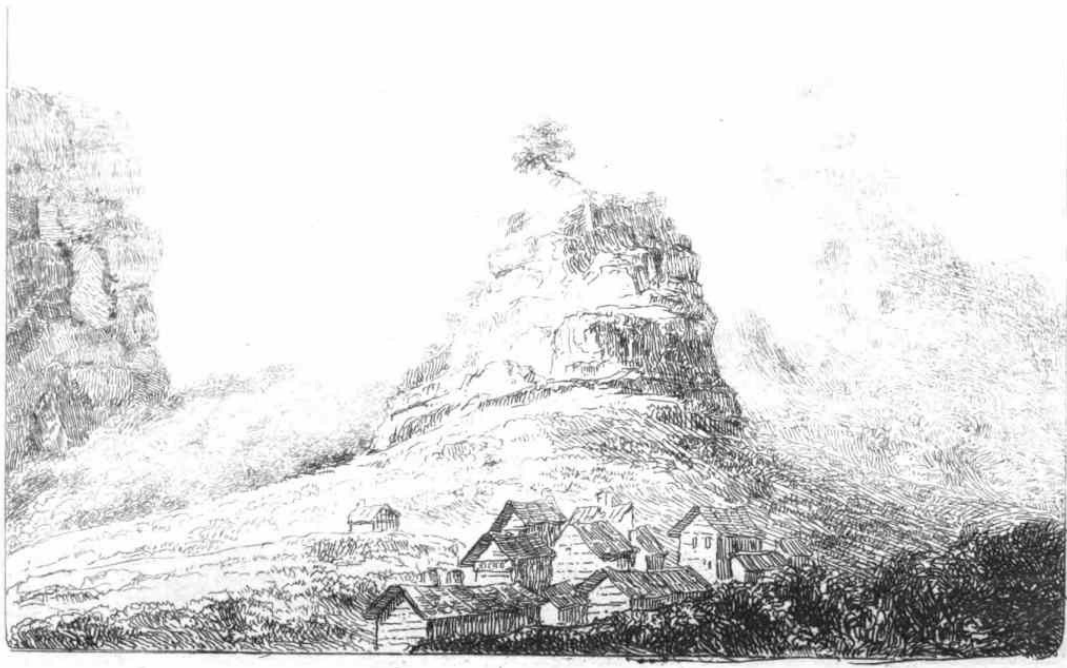


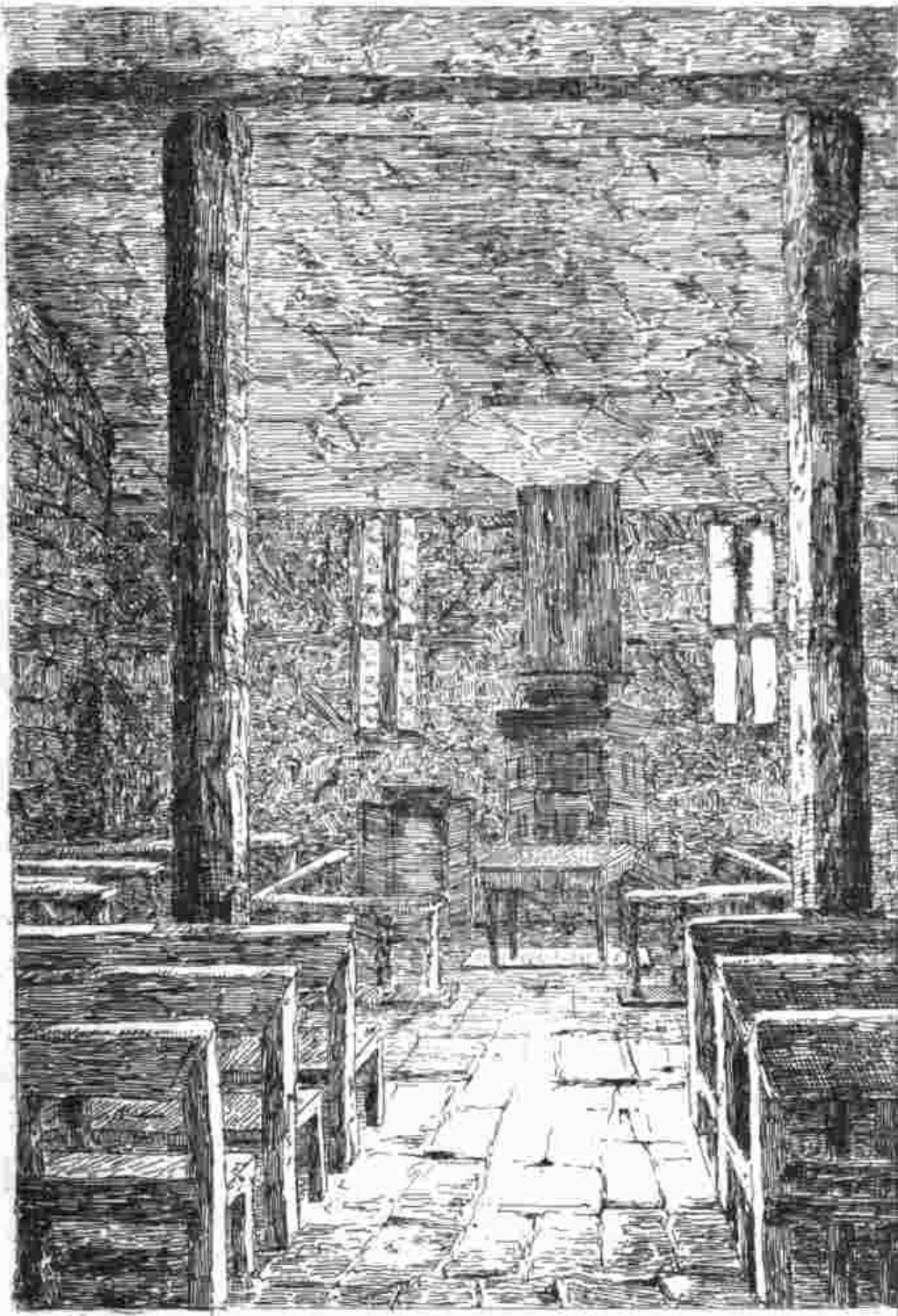
Rona



Shönberg Church.

The Bolselley.





The interior of the Church at Schönburg.
* Tomb of Henri Arnaud.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK L'HISTOIRE DES VAUDOIS ***

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