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A HISTORY

SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

GENERAL HISTORY

THE SABBATARIAN CHURCHES:

EMBRACING ACCOUNTS OF THE

ARMENIAN, EAST INDIAN, AND ABYSSINIAN

EPISCOPACIES

IN ASIA AND AFRICA,

THE WALDENSES, SEMI-JUDAISERS, AND SABBATARIAN

ANABAPTISTS OF EUROPE;

THE SEYENTH-DAY BAPTIST DENOMINATION

IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY

MRS. TAMAR ^AVIS.

" The dragon -was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the

remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the

testimony of Jesus Christ." — Rev. xii. 17.

PHILADELPHIA:

LINDSAY AND BLAKISTON.

1851.

■7)3

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C. SHERMAN, PRIXTKR.

PREFACE.

At the present time, when the Sabbath controversy is

engaging so much of the public attention, and when Sab-

bath Conventions and Sabbath Unions are being chronicled

almost monthly, I consider it unnecessary to offer any

apology for the introduction of the following work to the

public notice. My reader need not fear a repetition or

recapitulation of the arguments generally employed in

favour of the sabbatical institution, as it refers either to

the first or the last day of the week ; neither will his

attention be wearied by prolix and verbose details. It

has been my aim to collect, collate, and condense facts, as

much as appeared consistent with perspicuity. I have not

taken any new stand with regard to the Sabbath question.

The Seventh-day Baptists have, from the first, contended

that the Sabbath was changed, not by Christ or his Apos-

tles, but by ecclesiastical synods and councils. This could

only be proved convincingly by reference to the practice

of those churches who were removed by distance or other-

wise beyond the pale of such authority. That the Arme-

nian, East Indian, and Abyssinian Episcopacies were so

removed, and that they absolutely refused to succumb to

PREFACE.

the authority of the Latin or Greek prelates, sustaining

in consequence the most cruel and desolating wars, is an

undeniable historical fact ; no less so the truth that during

all this time they have been living witnesses against Anti-

Christ, as the observers of the ancient Sabbath, which

practice they learned from the Apostles, or their imme-

diate successors.

With respect to the History of the Seventh-day Baptist

denomination, I am not unaware of the imperfections that

may be detected in it. But I must excuse my own defects

by a just complaint of the blindness and insufficiency of

my guides ; and may also observe that, with reference to

nearly every portion of the work, I have been the pioneer

in the field of research.

The Author.

April, 1861.

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SABBATARIAN HISTORY.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

The word Sabbatarian, whether bestowed by their ene-

mies as a terra of opprobrium upon those who observed. the

seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, or whether

assumed by themselves, is, nevertheless, peculiarly appro-

priate, and very distinguishing of this particular tenet in

their system of religious faith. Neither do we hesitate to

employ it in a very extensive sense, as comprehending all

those religious communities, whatever may be their names,

modes of worship, or forms of ecclesiastical discipline, who

refrain from secular employments upon the last day of the

week, and observe the same as holy time. There cannot,

therefore, be any impropriety in considering the Abyssi-

nian and Armenian Churches as Sabbatarian organiza-

tions, although the former has become greatly corrupted

in worship and doctrine, and exhibits few traces of the

purity and simplicity of primitive Christianity.

We claim for Sabbatarian institutions a very high anti-

quity, and a multitude of the most illustrious exemplars ;

from that grand sabbath proclaimed over the new-born

world by the Eternal Father, and observed by angelic and

seraphic intelligences, to its second ordainment amid the

smoke and thunders of Sinai, and its subsequent obser-

14 SABBATARIAN HISTORY.

vance by kings, priests, sages, and witnesses for the truth

through so many ages, to Him, the Great High Priest of

the Covenant, who sanctified the law T and made it honour-

able. It is incontestable that our adorable Lord and his

Apostles observed the seventh day of the week, and it was

not until a long time subsequent to the close of their

earthly pilgrimages that the reverence due to this holy

time was transferred, in any Christian community, to the

Dominical day.

The first Christian church established in the world was

founded at Jerusalem under the immediate superintendence

of the Apostles. This church, which was the model of all

those that were founded in the first century, was undoubt-

edly Sabbatarian. In the second and third centuries, ac-

cording to the testimony of Mosheim, it was very generally

observed. During the fourth and in the commencement

of the fifth centuries, it was almost universally solemnized,

if the veracity of Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, may

be depended upon.

We have every reason to believe, however, that from

the first, or, indeed, at a very early period, a superstitious

veneration was paid in some places to the first day of the

week. It is certain that, before the close of the first cen-

tury, the original purity and simplicity of Christianity had

become greatly defaced and deplorably corrupted by the

introduction into its doctrines of the monstrous tenets of a

preposterous philosophy, and into its ceremonies of a mul-

titude of heathen rites. Identical with this was the ap-

pointment of various festivals to be observed on particular

days. These days were those on which the martyrs had

laid down their lives for the truth, the day on which the

Saviour had been crucified, and that also on which he rose

from the dead. We have no reason to suppose that the

observation of the first day dates back any earlier than

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS. 15

that of Friday, or those anniversary festivals which were

introduced to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost

upon the Apostles, and the feast of Easter. All were the

fruits of as dark, fabulous, and superstitious times, as have

ever been since the resurrection of Christ. It seems to

have been the policy of the rulers of the church at this

period, to assimilate Christianity in its rites and festivals

to the manners of Paganism, and in its doctrines to the

tenets of a corrupt yet seducing philosophy. For such a

course of conduct various reasons may be assigned. In

the first place they were pleasing to the multitude, who

were more delighted with the pageantry and circumstance

of external ceremonies, and the frequency of holidays,

than with the valuable attainments of rational and consis-

tent piety, or with a sober and steady course of life.

In the second place, we have reason to believe that the

bishops augmented the number of the religious ceremonies

and festivals in the Christian worship, by way of accom-

modating it to the prejudices and infirmities of both Jews

and heathens, in order to facilitate their conversion. These

people were accustomed to a round of pompous and mag-

nificent ceremonies in their religious service ; and, as they

deemed these rites an essential part of religion, it was

natural for them to regard with indifference, or even with

contempt, any service whose forms were divested of all

specious and captivating appearances. As their religion

allowed to them a multitude of festivals, the bishops sup-

posed, and not without reason, that they persisted in their

idolatry on account of the ease, pleasure, and sensual

gratifications thereby enjoyed, consequently the rulers of

the church adopted certain external ceremonies, and ap-

pointed festivities, in order to allure the senses of the vul-

gar, and to make them more disposed to embrace Chris-

tianity. The effect of this course of conduct was most

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pernicious. It effaced the beautiful simplicity of Chris-

tianity, and corrupted its natural purity in order to extend

its influence ; thus making it lose that practical excellence

for which no popular esteem could ever afford compensa-

tion. It may be allowable, it may even be commendable,

to accommodate ecclesiastical as well as civil institutions,

in certain cases, to the infirmities of mankind, and to

make some concessions, some prudent instances of com-

pliance to their invincible prejudices, but all these should

be of such a nature as not to derogate from the majesty of

the divine law, or to substitute for the ordinances of God

the observances and institutions of fallible men.

The multiplication of festivals and holidays would natu-

rally bring the Sabbath into neglect, but what contributed

more than anything else to destroy its influence over the

minds of men, was the almost universal abhorrence in

which the Jews were held. We are informed that multi-

tudes of Christians, in the time of Adrian, abandoned all

the rites and institutions of their religion that bore any

resemblance to the Jewish ritual, for fear of being con-

founded with that people, who had become obnoxious to

the prince, and were suffering the extremity of his ven-

geance. "Let us have nothing in common with that

odious brood, the Jews," says Constantine, when issuing

his edict for the observation of the Dominical day. Sub-

sequently, the sabbath was condemned for the same rea-

sons by synods and councils ; popes and kings rose up in

judgment against it. Perhaps they feared also that its

observation would remind the people of that sacred vo-

lume, which the prelates chose, for their own convenience,

to keep from the world, and in which their condemnation,

as followers of the most detestable vices, would be so

strongly marked. Moreover they were determined, in the

plenitude of their arrogance, to give laws in both a tem-

poral and spiritual sense ; to govern the consciences as

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS. 17

they ruled the actions of mankind. Nor was this all,

some of these prelates actually aspired to stand, at least

in the eyes of the multitude, in the place of God, — to

divert the adoration, which should be paid to him, to

themselves, or to the relics they had blessed, and the

saints they had canonized. Would not the observation of

the sabbath have tended to recall the minds of men to the

Maker of all things, as the only true and proper object for

religious adoration ; to the fact that he alone was the

moral governor of the universe ; his laws the standard of

perfection ; himself of infallibility ? History presents

numerous examples of kings and tyrants, who have as-

sumed the attributes of Deity, and demanded the homage

of mankind ; but, perhaps, a more impious imitation of his

power, a more blasphemous assumption of his prerogatives,

were never exhibited than in the conduct of these hierarchs.

Did God appoint one mediator between himself and man,

— behold the saints they canonized ; did he bestow the

Scriptures as his revealed will upon the world, — behold the

canons of the church in which their authority is super-

seded ; and did he institute and command the observation

of the seventh day as a day of rest, — they substitute an

other in its place. The Sabbath is reprobated as a Jewish

institution : it is a wonder that we hear nothing of a Jewish

religion, as Christianity certainly originated with that

people ; of a Jewish Saviour, since the Redeemer was of

the offspring of David ; and of Jewish apostles, as not one

of the twelve were of the Gentile race. We must go to

the Jews for the Bible, in which is contained the know-

ledge of God, and the hope of the world ; we must go to

the Jews for examples of godliness in the long, dark ages

before the Christian era ; why not go to them for a sab-

bath likewise ? The spiritual pride that opposes such a

measure will not stand in the great and burning day,

2\*

CHAPTER I.

SABBATARIAN CHURCHES IN ASIA AND AFRICA.

SECTION I.

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN OHTJBCH.

The religious and political history of Armenia has, from

the earliest ages, been pregnant with great events ; but,

obedient to necessity, I condense within a few pages what

might fill as many volumes, and content myself with giving

an outline of the subject that some future historian may

amplify and adorn. In countries where there exists a

union between the church and the state, and the prelatic

dignity is supported by royal authority, the revolutions of

the former are intimately connected with the convulsions

of the latter, — the temporal with the spiritual affairs. But

the archiepiscopal see of Armenia appears to have pre-

served its ancient form of discipline and doctrine in the

most remarkable manner, notwithstanding the changes of

the royal and ducal dynasties in the state, and its alternate

subjection to Saracenic and Persian dominion.

The propagation of the gospel throughout Armenia is

ascribed by ancient historians to St. Bartholomew, who is

said to be identical with Nathaniel, — that Israelite indeed.

In Albanopolis, a city of this country, we are informed

that the apostle suffered martyrdom ; but his blood only

watered the seed of divine truth, and caused a more glorious

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 19

harvest of proselytes from the Zendavesta to the gospel, —

from the adoration of the host of heaven to the spiritual

worship of their Maker, " the King immortal, eternal, and

invisible."

Notwithstanding the penal edicts of the sovereign, and

the opposition of the Magian priesthood, Christianity

flourished like a tree planted by the rivers of water, and

the rising generations of Armenia reposed under its salu-

tary shade. Few religious sects have been extirpated by

persecution. Religion shines brightest in the night of

adversity ; it is quenched and extinguished in the sunshine

of courts. Zeal and intrepidity are always stimulated by

the presence of an enemy. The Christians of Armenia

received the crown of martyrdom, rejoicing that they were

accounted worthy to suffer for their attachment to the

cross. At last, however, the eloquence of a priest, named

Gregory, succeeded in converting the monarch and his

principal nobility, who received the rite of baptism, and

entered into the communion of the church. In consequence

of this, Leontius, bishop of Cappadocia, consecrated Gre-

gory bishop of the Armenians, and their church became

annexed to the episcopal jurisdiction of the Antiochan

prelate.

This circumstance, so fortunate in a temporal sense,

proved highly destructive to its spiritual repose. No

longer assaulted, it became the parent of schism ; and one

Eustathius, an obscure priest, has given his name to his-

tory, by the success that attended his efforts to create an

excitement and faction in the church. The convention of

a Council at Gangra might condemn and excommunicate,

but could not suppress this faction, which poured forth

legions of missionaries, and for a long time disturbed the

repose of the Eastern prelates. The doctrines of Eustathius

w r ere neither heretical, nor his conduct in introducing them

20 SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

truly reprehensible, although from their nature highly

offensive to the spiritual dignitaries, who, to judge from

their habits of life, found more solace in wine and female

intercourse than in religious exercises, and who were more

solicitous to acquire wealth and preferments to enrich their

physical heirs, than solicitous about the welfare of their

spiritual progeny. Producing the example and judgment

of Paul, Eustathius boldly condemned the marriages of the

priests, under any circumstances, as productive of evil ;

but denounced second and third marriages as abominable,

and worthy of excommunication. The use of wine, — in

short, all sensual delights, — lie prohibited, as equally

reprehensible in those who were set as exemplars and

rulers of the flock of Christ. Eustathius was succeeded by

Erius, a priest, and semi-Arian, who not only protested

against the multiplied marriages of the priests, but declared

that the bishops were not distinguished from the presbyters

by any divine right, and that, according to the Holy Scrip-

tures, their authority and offices were identical. This

tenet, of which the immediate consequences would have

been to reduce within certain limits the power of the pre-

lates, raised a storm of opposition from that quarter,

although it was highly agreeable to many good Christians,

to whom their tyranny and arrogance had become insup-

portable. Erius also condemned fasts, stated feasts,

prayers for the dead, and the celebration of Easter ; but

he urged a purer morality and a stricter observance of the

Sabbath. He had many followers, whose numbers were

greatly augmented by one Paul of Samosota, from whom

they were called Paulicians. Notwithstanding the oppo-

sition of the prelates, who invoked the secular arm to pre-

vent the defection of their spiritual subjects, the tenets of

this sect struck deep root in Armenia and many of the

eastern provinces, and finally the great body of Christians

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 21

in the former country, withdrew from the Episcopal com-

munion, and publicly espoused the sentiments of the Pauli-

cians. These were accused of breaking loose from the

brotherhood of the Christian world, and they were de-

nounced by the bishops as the most odious of mankind.

Whatever might have been the denunciations of their ad-

versaries, posterity, after a candid examination of their

tenets, must concede that they were principally distinguished

for an adherence to the strict letter of the sacred text, and

for the primitive simplicity of their forms of worship.

Their ecclesiastical institutions exhibited the most liberal

principle of reason. The austerity of the cloister was

relaxed, and gradually forgotten. The standard of piety

was changed from absurd penances to purity of life and

morals. Houses of charity were endowed for the support

and education of orphans and foundlings, and the religious

teachers were obliged to depend for temporal support upon

the voluntary subscriptions of their brethren and the labour

of their own hands. To these churches, famous through-

out the East no less for the purity of their worship than

their exemption from ecclesiastical tyranny, myriads of

fugitives resorted from all the provinces of the Eastern

empire, and the narrow bigotry of the emperors was

punished by the emigration of their most useful subjects,

who transported into a foreign realm the arts of both peace

and war. Among the mountains of Armenia, and beyond

the precincts of the Roman power, they seemed to have

found a new world, where they might breathe the air of

religious freedom. The emperors, ignorant of the rights

of conscience, and incapable of pity or esteem for the

heretics who durst dispute the infallibility of holy councils,

and refused to acquiesce in their imperial decisions, vainly

sought, by various methods, to excite against them the

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22 SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

indignation of their sovereign and the vengeance of perse-

cution.

During this time the Paulicians had increased in a won-

derful manner. The desire of gaining souls for God, and

subjects for the church, has, in all ages, fired the zeal and

animated the activity of the Christian priesthood. It must

not be supposed that the Paulicians were less arduous in

the prosecution of their spiritual enterprises. Assuming

the character of travelling merchants, or in the habits of

pilgrims, a character to this da}' sacred throughout the

East, they joined the Indian caravans, or pursued without

fear the footsteps of the roving Tartar. The hordes en-

camped on the verdant banks of the Selinga, or in the

valleys of the Imaus, heard, with feelings of mysterious

reverence, the story of the incarnation; and illiterate

shepherds and sanguinary warriors forsook their flocks

and deserted their camps to listen to the simple eloquence

of an Armenian pilgrim. Perhaps the exposition of a

metaphysical creed was no more comprehensible to the one

than were lessons of humanity and repose to the other ;

but both were susceptible of the baser passions of hope and

fear, and both could understand the effect that their re-

jection or adoption of the gospel would exercise, according

to the popular belief, upon their destiny in a future world.

The mysterious rites of Christianity were administered to

multitudes, among whom a great Khan and his warriors

were said to be included.\* In other regions the Paulicians

were no less successful. Unwonted crowds resorted to the

banks of Abana and Pharpar, whose limpid waters seemed

particularly appropriate for the administration of the bap-

tismal rite. The bishops of Syria, Pontus, and Cappa-

\* According to Assemanni, Christianity was once professed by the

horde of Koraites ; and their chief, who received ordination, which

probably gave rise to the legend of Presbyter, or Prester, John.

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 23

docia, complained of the defection of their spiritual flocks.

Their murmurs, a principle of policy, above all an impla-

cable hatred against everything bearing the semblance of

freedom, induced the Grecian emperors to commence, and

continue for nearly two centuries, the most terrible perse-

cutions against the Paulicians. During these frightful

convulsions, Armenia was ravaged from border to border

with fire and sword ; its monarchy — then held by a younger

branch of the family of the Parthian kings — extinguished ;

its cities demolished, and its inhabitants either massacred

by the hands of their enemies, driven into exile, or sold

into servitude. Great numbers fled for safety and protec-

tion to the Saracens, by whom they were hospitably enter-

tained, and who permitted them to build a city for their

residence, which was called Tibrica. This afforded them

an opportunity for returning, with interest, the miseries

that they had suffered at the hands of the Greeks ; for,

entering into a league with the Saracens, and choosing for

their leader a chief named Carbeas, they prosecuted

against the Greeks a war w T hich continued during the cen-

tury, and in which the slaughter on both sides was pro-

digious.\* During these convulsions several companies of

the Paulicians passed into Bulgaria, Thrace, and the neigh-

bouring provinces, where their opinions became the source

of new dissensions. After the Council of Basil had com-

menced its deliberations, these sectaries removed into Italy,

where they became amalgamated with the Albigenses and

Waldenses.

\* Some modern theorists have severely reprehended the Paulicians,

or Armenians, for the part they bore in these sanguinary scenes. But

so long as the principle of patriotism is cherished ; so long as the names

of home and country are accounted sacred ; and so long as the memories

of Tell, and Wallace, and Washington, are held up to general emulation,

the laity, at least, may be excused for recognising the legitimacy of

self-defence.

24 SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

Armenia, reduced from an independent kingdom to a

ducal sovereignty, maintained a real independence, though

in nominal servitude. The Roman emperors, in the decline

of their greatness, were content with the name of homage

and the shadow of allegiance. A robe of rare texture and

curious workmanship, formed of the hair or wool by which

the mother-of-pearl, a shell-fish of the Mediterranean,

attaches itself to the rock, was their annual imperial gift

that purchased the nominal fealty of the Armenian satraps.

But the Church, notwithstanding this political vassalage,

preserved its independence. The Armenian priests, in con-

sequence of their ignorance of the Greek tongue, were

unable to assist at the Council of Chalcedon, but the doc-

trines of Eutyches, to which the} r still adhere, were pro-

pagated among them, perhaps, with a slight modification,

by Julian of Halicarnassus. From the earliest a<ros they

have devoutly hated the error and idolatry of the Greeks.

Like the primitive Christians, they have ever exhibited an

unconquerable repugnance to the use or abuse of imag

which, in the eighth and ninth centuries, spread like ;i

leprosy through nearly all Christendom, and supplanted

all traces of genuine piety in the visible church by the

grossest superstition. They are decidedly adverse to the

adoration of relics, the worship of the Virgin, or the ob-

servation of the feasts and festivals of the Church. They

regarded the Greeks as idolaters ; — the Greeks accused

them of Judaism, heresy, and atheism, and to these accu-

sations, with the feelings they engendered, may be ascribed

the unrelenting animosity and persecution that they waged

against each other, and which terminated only when the

Grecian empire ceased to exist.

Armenia has, in all ages, been the theatre of hostile

operations. Times without number her cities have been

plundered, her harvests consumed, and her flocks slaugh-

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 25

tered, to gratify the cupidity or to satiate the hunger of

armies, who, in the character of allies, were marching

through her territories. The empire of the East has, in

many instances, been contested upon her fields ; and,

though generally in servitude, seldom has she been per-

mitted to enjoy the tranquillity of that state. Yet sub-

sequent to the firm establishment of the Saracen dominion

in Asia, they enjoyed a long period of prosperity and

repose. When the Saracenic empire became supplanted

by that of the Tartars, the consequences to the Eastern

Christians were most deplorable.

These ruthless conquerors destroyed, wherever they went,

the fair fruits that had arisen from the labours of the mis-

isonaries, extirpated the religion of Jesus from several

cities and provinces where it had flourished, and substituted

the Mohammedan superstition in its place. The Armenian

churches, in particular, experienced the most deplorable

evils from the ruthless and vindictive spirit of Timur

Bee, or Tamerlane, the Tartar chief. This implacable

warrior, having overrun a great part of northern and

western Asia, exerted all his influence and authority to

compel the Christians to apostatize from their faith. To

the stern dictates of unlimited power he united the com-

pulsory violence of persecution, and treated the disciples

of Christ with the most unrelenting severity; subjecting

such as magnanimously adhered to their religion, to the

most cruel forms of death, or to the horrors of unmitigated

slavery. Under the successors of Timur they were sub-

jected to many vicissitudes, being alternately protected

and oppressed, according as the caprice of the reigning

sovereign seemed to dictate. Nevertheless, under the rod

of oppression their zeal was intrepid and fervent, nor

could the sunshine of prosperity warm in their hearts an

undue love of the world, and render them careless or

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indifferent to the interests of Christianity. In numberless

instances they preferred the crown of martyrdom to the

turban of Mohammed, and have sacrificed the dearest of

temporal interests, — fame, wealth, and preferments, to a

scrupulous adherence to the Christian profession, and a

strict regard for its duties. Once only within the last

thirteen centuries has Armenia aspired to the rank of an

independent kingdom, and even then her Christian kings,

who arose and fell, in the thirteenth century, on the con-

fines of Cilicia, were the creatures and vassals of the

Turkish sultans of Iconium. About the commencement of

the seventeenth century their state experienced a conside-

rable change in consequence of the incursions of Shah

Abbas, the great king of Persia.

This prince, justly apprehensive from the victorious

approach of the Turks, ravaged that part of Armenia

which lay contiguous to his dominions, and ordered the

inhabitants to retire into Persia. It will be perceived that

these devastations were not intended to evince hostility

against the Armenians, but to retard and embarrass the

advance of the Turks. Encouraged by the monarch, the

most opulent of the Armenians removed to Ispahan, where

the Emperor appropriated a beautiful suburb for their resi-

dence, and permitted them to enjoy every civil and reli-

gious privilege, under the jurisdiction of their own bishop

or patriarch. During the administration of this magnani-

mous prince these happy exiles partook the sweets of

liberty and abundance, but his death was the signal for the

triumph of their enemies. A storm of persecution suc-

ceeded, in which the constancy of multitudes was shaken ;

indeed, so general was the apostacy, that for a time it

appeared probable that this branch of the Armenian Church

would be lost. These apprehensions proved to be ground-

less. To the abatement of the rage of their enemies sue-

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 27

ceeded the restoration of their political rights. Their

churches, in Ispahan and other Persian cities, that had

been demolished, were rebuilt, and their schools, which

had been shut, were re-opened. It is said that, at present,

many of the most luxurious seats in Persia are occupied

by opulent Armenians. In Bagdad and Damascus they

vend the magnificent silks of Oriental manufacture, and

preside over the creation of those exquisite fabrics that

are the admiration of the world. In all these cities they

have meeting-houses, with burial-grounds attached, in

which flowers of rare beauty and exquisite odours are

cultivated. In these burial-gardens, were it not for the

presence of monumental marble, one would forget the con-

tiguity of death and decay. The splendid palms, the

glorious rose-trees, and the living song of birds, are any-

thing but inspiring of melancholy thoughts.

The Bible was translated at a very early period into the

Armenian language, but, in 1690, the call for the Scrip-

tures became so great that the manuscript copies were not

sufficient to supply the demand. To remedy this evil, it

was decided by a council of Armenian bishops, assembled

in 1692, to perpetuate and multiply that Holy Book, by

the art of printing, of which they had heard in Europe.

They first applied to France, but the Catholic church ob-

jected to printing and distributing the Bible. It was ac-

complished, however, through the agency of some Arme-

nian merchants, w T ho had settled, for purposes of commerce,

at London, Venice, Amsterdam, and many other European

cities. This Bible agrees in a wonderful manner with the

English version of the Scriptures, to which it is not infe-

rior in correctness of diction and beauty of typography.

The religion of Armenia has derived few advantages from

the power or learning of its votaries, but with the Bible in

their native tongue, and being permitted to read and

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exercise their private judgment in its interpretation, it is

not so very surprising that their church has remained un-

contaminated by Grecian, Roman, and Mohammedan cor-

ruptions. It must not be supposed that the Roman pon-

tiffs, ever zealous to enlarge the bounds of their jurisdic-

tion, were mindless of engaging the Christians of the East

to submit to their supremacy. On the contrary, this was

for a considerable time the chief purpose that excited their

ambitious views, and employed their labours and assidui-

ties. But these attempts were unavailing, nor could any

union between the churches ever be effected.

The residence of the Armenian patriarch is at Ekmiasin,

— three leagues from Erivan. Forty-seven archbishops,

of whom each may claim the obedience of four or five

suffragans, are consecrated by his hand. Many of tl;

however, are only titular prelates, who dignify by their

presence the simplicity of his court. Their performance

of the liturgy is succeeded by their cultivation of the

ground ; and, unlike the prelates of Europe, the austerity

of their life and the plainness of their appearance incre;i

in just proportion to the elevation of their rank. Through-

out the fourscore thousand villages of his spiritual empire,

the patriarch receives the tribute of a small but voluntary

tax from each individual above the age of sixteen years.

But this income is not expended on luxurious living, being

employed to supply the incessant demands of charity and

tribute. The Indian caravan, laden with its precious com-

modities, usually halts in the vicinity of Erivan, which,

through the influence of the wealth thus distributed, has

become a splendid and beautiful city, adorned with foun-

tains, groves, and splendid churches.

Besides the churches in Armenia proper, there are con-

gregations of the same faith and forms of worship in Bar-

bary, Egypt, Poland, Greece, and Turkey. They have

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churches also in nearly all the Oriental cities, between

which a continual intercourse and communication is carried

on by the travelling merchants or pedlars of that sect, who

are distributed all over the East. Decidedly intelligent,

and frequently adepts in Oriental literature, they are always

found at the courts of the Eastern princes, where they act

in the capacity of interpreters. Armenian ladies are

generally chosen to fill the station of favourite, or com-

panion, to the Sultanas.

The Armenian Christians are eminently qualified for the

office of extending the knowledge of the gospel throughout

the East ; and the time is not far distant when they will

prove the most efficient body of missionaries in the world.

Indeed, without the name, in a multitude of instances,

they have assumed their character and acted their part.

It is true that they are unacquainted with the European

habit of supporting expensive missions in foreign countries,

but like the Waldenses, they travel as venders of merchan-

dise, and embrace all opportunities to impart instruction.

They carried the knowledge of the gospel into China,

when that country was inaccessible to Europeans ; and

long before the English obtained a footing in India, they

had erected churches in all the principal cities of that

empire, in which the worship of God was maintained upon

every ensuing Sabbath. They are familiar with the Orien-

tal languages, and acquainted with the habits of the people,

who consequently feel no dread of their foreign character,

but regard them from the first as brothers and friends.

The first version of the Scriptures into the Chinese lan-

guage was made by an Armenian, named Joannes Lassar,

whose knowledge of Oriental literature was really surprising,

and who was no less eminent for genuine and enlightened

piety.

Their ecclesiastical establishment in Hindostan is very

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respectable. The bishop visits Calcutta, but he is not

resident there. They have churches in Calcutta, in Ma-

dras, and in Bombay, which contain together about two

thousand communicants. There are also churches in the

interior. Of these they have one at Dacca, another at

Syndbad, and a third at Chinsurah, that are large and

flourishing. In these churches the greatest simplicity pre-

vails, and everything accords with the apostolic cha-

racter of the worshippers. No magnificent altar, blazing

with gold and gems, no gorgeous candelabra, no exquisite

creations of painting or statuary, no imposing ceremonies ;

neither genuflexions nor lustrations ; neither instrumental

harmonies, nor services performed with pompous parade

and in an unknown tongue. The cross is the only orna-

ment of their churches, accompanied with the Bible and

the liturgy.

From these prayers and texts are read by the officiating

priest, succeeded by an appropriate discourse, and the

whole closes with singing a psalm much in the style and

manner of an anthem.

Baptism, among the Armenians, is administered by

immersion in rivers, or running streams, if such are con-

venient ; when otherwise, in a room, called the baptistery,

which is always contiguous to the church. They regard

the sacrament as a memorial of the Saviour's passion, —

nothing more, — and administer it in both kinds to the

laity. They reject the observation of saints' days, or the

festivals of Christ, but declare that God, in his word,

ordained the seventh day as a day of rest, which they

religiously observe.

The Armenians are not ignorant of the nature of ex-

perimental religion. Many individuals among them have

exhibited examples of genuine and enlightened piety, and

have expired in the triumphs of faith. Their moral cha-

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH. 31

racter, as might be supposed, far exceeds that of any

other Eastern people. The women are modest, dignified,

and observant of their conjugal relations ; the men are in-

telligent and affable. Their general character is that of a

wealthy, industrious, and enterprising people. Their com-

panionship is courted all over the East.

They occupy posts of honour and profit, they monopo-

lize commerce, and hold the highest rank as artisans and

manufacturists. Is not the hand of God in this thing ?

Are they not designed, at some future period, to work

wonders in the moral renovation of mankind ? For that

purpose, probably, the everlasting arm has been beneath

and around them for so many ages, and they have been

preserved frcm the arts and allurements of the tempter.

For that purpose, probably, they have been led into the

cities and palaces of the Eastern countries.

Where are the seven churches of Asia, to whom was

penned the mystic visions of the Apocalypse ? Where are

the splendid cities in which they rose and flourished ?

Gone, gone, with the glory of Babylon and the triumphs

of Rome. Where is the church of Laodicea, in whose

gorgeous cathedral the lordly prelates met to give laws to

the Christian world and to anathematize Sabbath-keepers ?

Echo might answer, " Where ?" since it is only remem-

bered because consecrated by the historic muse. But the

Sabbath they execrated still exists ; is still honoured and

hallowed by large and flourishing churches, whose members

are scattered over all parts of Asia. Churches, who have

never bowed to Baal, who have remained uncorrupted by

Rome, uncontaminated by Mohammedism ; who amidst

the darkness of idolatry kept the lamp of Christianity

replenished and burning ; and in whose moral firmament

the rays of the Star of Bethlehem have never been ob-

scured. That the members of these churches possess

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natural facilities for the propagation of Christianity

throughout the East, that a foreigner could scarcely ac-

quire by long years spent in toil and study, must be evi-

dent to every discerning mind. But they are ignorant of

the art of printing ; and although three editions of their

Bible have been issued at Amsterdam, and another at

Venice, the supply has by no means equalled the demand

among themselves for that holy book. What they require

are facilities for printing. A mission, with printers and

printing-presses, established in the heart of that country,

would prove of incalculable advantage ; — not to teacli them

Christianity: they arc acquainted with its doctrines al-

ready ; — but to print their Bible, and other religious books,

for distribution ; to enrich their travelling merchants, who

are in continual motion from Canton to Constantinople,

with the precious wares of truth and wisdom ; to inspire

their zeal, awaken their energies, and secure their engage-

ment in the glorious enterprise. Would it not be interest-

ing to open a communication with these ancient churches,

whose foundation on the Bock cannot be doubted, since

they have withstood the wreck and ruin of eighteen centu-

ries, neither extinguished by wars and desolations, nor

contaminated by the false prophet or the beast ? Would

it not be delightful to hold intercourse with that venerable

patriarch, — the successor of a line of prelates extending

back to the Apostle, that Israelite indeed, in whom was

found no guile ? Surely that place is hallowed. Within

sight of Ekmiasin is Mount Ararat, where the world's

gray fathers came forth to witness the bow of the covenant,

and whence the Sun of Bighteousness shall yet arise to

the benighted nations with healing in his wings.

The Armenians, though ignorant of the art of printing,

have an abundant store of literature. In the monastery

of Ekmiasin, and in some other places, the accumulated

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lore of ages has been preserved in huge piles of manuscripts,

that would abundantly reward the labours of the scholar

and the antiquarian. They are not ignorant of the belles-

lettres, and they have produced some pleasing poets and

rhetoricians.\*

There are other ancient sects in the East who are repre-

sented as being observant of the ancient Sabbath. Of

these we might instance several branches of the Nestorian

fraternities, the Hemerobaptists, or Christians of St. John,

and the Jusidians. How far this may be the case, I have

no data for determining. Some authors have also ascribed

the observation of the Sabbath to the Greek Church ; but

this, I believe, can only be understood in a partial and

limited sense. Many have been guilty of the incongruity

of including in the term " the Greek Church" all the

Christians of the East. Strictly speaking, that term was,

and is, only applicable to those countries in which the spi-

ritual authority of the Constantinopolitan prelate predomi-

nated.

SECTION II.

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIANS

OF INDIA.

The introduction, rise, progress, declension, and extir-

pation of Christianity in India, is, with some partial ex-

ceptions, wrapped in profound obscurity, yet many histo-

rians of abundant information and unimpeachable veracity

are unanimous in supposing that India received the gospel

probably before Great Britain.

\* Those who desire a more detailed account of the Armenians may

consult La Croza, Galanus, Olearius, Chardin, Fabricius, in Lux Evan-

gelii, and, above all, Tavernier.

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Rev. C. Buchanan says, " There have lately been dis-

covered Sanscrit writings containing testimony of Christ.

They relate to a prince who reigned about the period of

the Christian era, and whose history, though mixed with

fable, contains particulars which correspond, in a sur-

prising degree, with the advent, birth, miracles, death,

and resurrection of our Saviour." The same testimony is

given by Sir William Jones, whose acquaintance with Ori-

ental literature has never been surpassed. Another learned

historian declares, " That it may be proved by the Syriac

records, that in the fourth century Christianity was flou-

rishing in the provinces of Chorasin and Mavaralhara ;

and from a variety of learned testimony, that the gospel

was introduced by the Apostle Thomas himself into India

and China, within thirty years subsequent to the ascension

of our Saviour." La Croze in the clearest manner proves

the antiquity of Christianity in those countries. In the

epitome of the Syrian canons, St. Thomas is styled the

Apostle of the Hindoos. He is uniformly styled, in the

Syrian Chronicles, the first bishop of the East. Ebed Jesus

says, " India and all the regions around received the

priesthood from him." Amru, the Syriac historian, traces

both Thomas and Bartholomew through Arabia and Persia

into India and China. Many of the Syrian writers quoted

by Asseman agree in stating that a few of the twelve, and

many of the seventy disciples went far and wide preaching

the gospel through Northern Asia.

The Bishop of Calcutta, Dr. Wilson, says, " That the

Christians of the Malabar Coast are the remnants of the

ancient church of India, preserved in the midst of idolatry

from the days of the Apostles."

These Christian settlements are located on the Malabar

coast, in the south of India, and contain a population of

probably 200,000. They are agricultural in their mode

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of life, and occupy a fertile and healthy territory. They

are spread along the Cunara. In Mangalore, Onore,

Barcelore, and Carwar, they have flourishing churches.

A large settlement of these people were discovered by Dr.

Buchanan in the interior of Travancore. Their intelli-

gence, the virtuous liberty of the female sex, and the

whole aspect of society, seemed to indicate a Protestant

country.

For the compilation of a history of this people we have

scant materials. Unknown to the world they seem to have

been most happily preserved from its troubles and dissen-

sions. Their obscurity was the preservative of their peace

and the badge of their purity. Yet we are informed by

William of Malmsbury, that these Christians were visited,

towards the conclusion of the ninth century, by ambassa-

dors from Alfred of England, who paid their homage at

the shrine of St. Thomas, in the vicinity of Madras, and

whose return, loaded with a cargo of pearls and the richest

gums and spices, amply rewarded the enterprising sove-

reign, who entertained the noblest projects of discovery

and commerce.\* They asserted that the pepper coast of

Malabar, and even the islands of Ceylon and Socotara,

were peopled with Christians, who were in happy igno-

rance of the quarrels of princes and ecclesiastics. And

that the bishops who presided over this multitude of

churches were unambitious of worldly honours, and re-

ceived ordination from the patriarch of the East. This

account, however, was received as an imposition upon the

credulity of mankind, and was treated as such until the

\* I am aware that the truth of this statement has been questioned,

but after all there is nothing so very improbable in it. Alfred was

a prince of an enterprising disposition, and might have sent an em-

bassy to India for several reasons, and their performance of the journey

was no impossibility.

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progress of modern discovery established the fact. The

Portuguese, who circumnavigated Africa, and dared the

dangers of unknown seas, in order to gather the Indian

spoils of gold and gems, found, not indeed the boundless

wealth they sought, but these companies of Christians

who still preserved their faith in its pristine purity. Su-

perior in arts, and arms, and virtues, to the idolaters of

Hindostan, they appeared to the astonished adventurers

like another race. They occupied extremely neat and

convenient dwellings, shaded by the palm-tree, and conti-

guous to fields of tropical productions. The husbandman

lived in peace and plenty, the merchant grew rich by the

pepper trade, the young -men were admitted to the >< tyhv

and society of the nobility of Malabar; and their simple

virtues demanded and insured the respect of the king of

Cochin, and the Zamorin himself. They were in alle-

giance to a Gentoo sovereign, but the real administration

of their laws, even in temporal concerns, was lodged in

the hands of the bishop of Angumala, who could trace an

uninterrupted succession of prelates to the apostle himself.

He still asserted his ancient dignity as metropolitan of

India, and his jurisdiction extended over fourteen hundred

churches, and embraced the spiritual care of 250,000 souls.

He was assisted by a sufficient number of priests and spi-

ritual teachers, who administered consolation to the dying,

and reproof or correction to the living. Their meeting-

houses were not different from ordinary dwellings. They

had neither pictures nor images. The doctrine of purga-

tory, the invocation of saints, the merit of relics, and the

observation of the first day, was unknown among them.

On the contrary, they rested and attended to divine wor-

ship upon the seventh day of the week, administered bap-

tism to adults, and by immersion, were not ignorant of the

great doctrines of regeneration and justification, and pos-

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sessecl authentic manuscript copies of the Holy Scriptures,

which were publicly read in the churches every ensuing

Sabbath. They were not degenerated into that softness,

effeminacy, and licentiousness of manners, w T hich generally

distinguish the natives of Southern India. They were

chaste, and observant of their conjugal relations ; adultery

was a crime unknown. Their priests were permitted to

enter into wedlock once, with a pure virgin ; they were

scandalized and disgraced by a second marriage, and a

third could only be consummated at the expense of excom-

munication.

The Portuguese were no less surprised at their profes-

sion than offended by their simplicity ; but, what appeared

most unaccountable, they were unacquainted with the spi-

ritual and temporal majesty of Rome, and were ignorant

that, to St. Peter's successor, all the kings and prelates of

the earth owed subjection and allegiance. They adhered,

like their ancestors, to the communion of the Nestorian

Patriarch ; their bishops had for ages been ordained by

him at Mosul, and thence had traversed the dangers of

sea and land to their dioceses on the coast of Malabar.

Their liturgy and sacred books were in the Syriac idiom.

They were acquainted with the names of Theodore and

Nestorius, were strenuous advocates of the doctrine of the

two persons of Christ, but they manifested a pious horror,

when they heard the appellation " Mother of God" applied

to the Virgin Mary. When her image was first presented

to receive their adoration, they indignantly refused, ex-

claiming, " We are Christians, not idolaters ; we worship

God." It was the first care of the Romish emissaries to

intercept all correspondence with the Nestorian Patriarch,

to forbid their observance of the Sabbath, and to compel

them to admit the baptism of infants. Their bishops and

leaders were thrown into the dungeons of the Holy Office,

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which, under the auspices of Alexis de Menezes, had been

established, and was in full operation. Their towns were

filled with Portuguese soldiers, their churches with images,

and their pulpits by shaven monks. All the mighty

engines of ecclesiastical authority were brought to bear

upon these defenceless people ; all the passions of the

human heart were alternately assailed, in order to con-

summate their conversion to the faith of Rome. Is it a

wonder that the shepherdless flock succumbed, at least,

for a time ? that where, for ages, the Sabbath had been

observed, strange sounds of secular employment should be

heard upon that holy day? and that the communion,

hitherto regarded as a symbolic memorial of the Saviour's

passion, was accepted as a vicarious sacrifice : " We con-

fess our sins in prayer to God," they exclaimed, when

commanded to appear, for auricular confession, before the

priesthood. " Wc keep the Sabbath," they replied, when

told to observe the Dominical day. Hut ecclesiastical

tyranny prevailed. Menezes, archbishop of Groa, an-

nounced to the synod of Diamper, over which lie presided,

that a union between the heretics of St. Thomas and the

Holy Church had been piously consummated, the memo-

ries of Theodore and Nestorius anathematized, and the

see of Angumala bestowed upon a Jesuit, his minion and

the w T orthy associate of such a prelate. For sixty y<

servitude and hypocrisy prevailed. For sixty years the

mass was chanted on the Lord's day, and in an unknown

tongue, in the chapels of Malabar. But the day for their

liberation arrived. The Portuguese empire in the East

was overthrown by the courage and constancy of the

Dutch. Of the latter, the Nestorians proved the most

valuable of allies; and no one acquainted with human

nature can wonder that they were implacable enemies of

the former, The Jesuits, though loth to resign it, were

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incapable of defending the power they had abused. Forty

thousand Christians in arms asserted, by the most power-

ful arguments, their rights, and their attachment to the

creed of their ancestors. The Jesuits, with their minions,

fled. The Indian archdeacon was brought from a dungeon

to the episcopal chair, which he filled until a new primate

could be solicited and obtained from the Nestorian patri-

arch of the East.

The churches were immediately purged of images and

relics. The observation of the first day was forbidden,

and that of the Sabbath restored. And to crown the

whole, a great procession was formed, in which multitudes

bearing palm-branches, and with all the ensigns of victory

and triumph, repaired to their chapels, singing the Trisa-

gion,\* where the service was performed in the ancient

manner.

Since the expulsion of the Jesuits the Nestorian creed

has been fully professed on the coast of Malabar, and

these ancient Christians have engaged the speculations of

Europe and the civilized world. Dr. Buchanan represents

their episcopal establishment to be equally respectable with

that of the English in India, and says, moreover, that they

maintain the solemn worship of God in all their churches

upon the seventh day.

Another eminent author says, that " their doctrines are

those of the Bible, and that they have been sorely tried in

times past for keeping the commandments of God."f

\* The Trisagion is the hymn supposed to be chanted by the Cheru-

bim before the throne of glory, and commences with Holy, Holy, Holy,

is the Lord God Almighty.

f Authors are far from being unanimous in their accounts of this

people and their origin. It has been maintained by not a few that

they are of Syriac extraction, and that the St. Thomas, from whom

their appellation is derived, was an Armenian merchant and missionary

who nourished as their leader in the fifth century. Others, with equal

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SECTION III.

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH.

Abyssinia, or ancient Ethiopia, comprehends a vast

region in the interior parts of Africa, whose inhabitants,

previous to the acquaintance of their Queen with the Jewish

king Solomon, were involved in a dark and gloomy super-

stition, resembling in many respects the idolatrous worship

of the Egyptians. The connexion and intimacy that sub-

sequently existed between the Jewish and Ethiopian courts

resulted in the conversion of this people to Judaism, in

the profession of which they remained until the time of

our Saviour. It is also evident that considerable inter-

course was carried on between Axuma, the capital of

Ethiopia, and the royal city of Judea, no less for commer-

cial than religious purposes. It is highly probable that

business connected with ecclesiastical affairs, or perhaps

the desire of witnessing and participating in the solemni-

ties of Pentecost, had induced a dignitary of the Ethiopian

plausibility, contend that they originated from a colony of Abyssinians.

Dr. Buchanan maintains an opinion different from either. He supposes

them to be natives of India, whose ancestors were converted by St.

Thomas, the Apostle. He says, that "we have as good reason for

believing that St. Thomas died in India, as that St. Pater died at

Rome."

According to a tradition of the natives, the Apostle came first to

Socotara, an island in the Arabian Sea, and thence departed to Cran-

ganor, where he founded several churches. The next scene of his

labours was Coromandare, and preaching in all the towns and villages

he came to Melsapour, the chief city, where he converted the prince

and a great part of the nobility to the Christian faith. This so enraged

the Brahmins, that one of them secretly followed him into a solitary

place, where he retired for prayer, and stabbed him in the back with

a spear.

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court to visit Jerusalem, where, coming in contact with

Philip, he was converted to Christianity, and baptized by

that apostle. The subsequent fate of this distinguished

personage, the impression produced upon the mind of his

royal mistress and her court by his conversion, or whether

the propagation of Christianity throughout the realm was

effected by his instrumentality, are all mysteries over

which time has drawn an impenetrable veil.

Ecclesiastical historians are united in their testimony

that, early in the fourth century, Christianity became the

established religion of the empire. This happy result was

brought about by a train of singular circumstances. It

appears that Meropius, a merchant of Tyre, having under-

taken a commercial voyage to India, was shipwrecked on

the coast of Ethiopia, when he was barbarously murdered

by the natives, and his two sons carried as slaves

before the Emperor. The intelligence, gentleness, and

peaceable demeanour of the two brothers, of whom the

older was named Frumentius, gained them many friends,

and they w^ere soon promoted to high offices at court.

The brothers, being Christians, soon began to teach the

natives, and the work of conversion went on rapidly. In

a few years, so great was their success, that the gospel

had been preached throughout the length and breadth of

the land, and a thriving branch thereby united to the

great Eastern church. Frumentius subsequently visited

the Patriarch of Alexandria, who received him and the

message he bore with the greatest joy, loaded him with

honours, and consecrated him the first bishop of the Ethio-

pians. The system of doctrine was the same as that

received in the Alexandrian Church, of which Athanasius

gives a very succinct account. This venerable prelate was

a decided opposer of the Arian heresy, and he expresses

their belief in the divinity of our Saviour ; " And we as-

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semble on Saturday," he continues ; " not that we are

infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus, the Lord of

the Sabbath." The friendly relation thus early begun

between these churches, has continued to the present time

through fifteen centuries ; and the office of Patriarch of

the Ethiopic Church is still bestowed upon a Coptish

priest, who receives his appointment and consecration from

the Patriarch of Alexandria.

The Abyssinian Church appears to have remained in a

state of general peace and prosperity while Numidia, Car-

thage, and other African provinces, were convulsed by the

faction of the Donatists. Neither do they appear to have

taken any part in the tumults and dissensions arising from

the Arian and Sabellian controversies. On the contrary,

they were counted by the most rigid as a church of ortho-

dox Christians, until the commencement of the seventh

century, when they embraced the Eutychian sentiments,

in consequence, it is said, of the exhortations addressed

to them by the doctors of that sect who resided in Egypt..\*

About the same time, the Saracens subduing Egypt and

all the adjacent countries, Abyssinia became isolated from

the rest of the world. During the many centuries that

ensued, Christianity, though not without adulteration,

was preserved in this ancient empire, and the solemn

observance of the seventh day unchangeably continued.

Toward the close of the fifteenth century, the Portuguese,

through their brilliant career of maritime discovery, suc-

ceeded in opening a communication into the country of

the Abyssinians, who were found observing the rites and

professing the doctrine of their ancient faith. Rome, in-

flamed with a bigoted zeal to extend the sphere of her

\* According to another account, their conversion to this creed was

effected by the missionaries of the Empress Theodora, which, however,

has been disputed by Assemanus.

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 43

spiritual triumphs, early took advantage of so favourable

an opportunity to establish a mission in this remote quarter

of the globe. Accordingly, John Bermudez, one of the

most enterprising and crafty of the sons of Loyola, was

despatched into Abyssinia, and in order to give his mission

a certain appearance of dignity, he was consecrated patri-

arch of that people by the Pope. According to his own

accounts of the matter, he found them sunk in the most

deplorable state of heresy and ignorance, observant of

Judaical rites and ceremonies, and unacquainted with the

ritual and worship of the true church. As Bermudez was

accompanied by an embassage from the Portuguese court,

who expressed the most solicitous regard for the Abyssi-

nian monarch, that prince, hoping to derive some signal

advantage from such powerful succours, that would enable

him to terminate successfully a war in which he was at

that time engaged with a neighbouring prince, received

them most graciously, and everything seemed for a time

to presage the most happy termination of the mission.

But their sanguine expectations were doomed to disap-

pointment, and though they were several times reinforced,

and neither pains nor expense were spared in the prose-

cution of their enterprise, it became ultimately apparent

to all that the Abyssinians were not to be engaged to

abandon their ancient faith, and the Jesuits becoming weary

of such fruitless endeavours, relinquished the enterprise

and returned to Europe. But the Pope, unwilling to re-

nounce his pretensions in that quarter of the world, took

occasion to renew the embassy about the commencement of

^the seventeenth century. As before, the mission received

at first the most auspicious encouragement from Susneius,

or Segued, the reigning monarch. This prince, whose right

to the throne was fiercely contested by some powerful

adversaries, gladly embraced their overtures. Alphonsa

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Mendez, through the exercise of that consummate cunning

for which his order is proverbial, succeeded in securing to

himself the appointment of prime minister of the realm,

and of patriarch of the Abyssinians. The monarch, also,

in an open and public manner, swore allegiance to the

Pope, and issued a decree commanding all his subjects to

embrace the Romish faith under penalty of confiscation,

mutilation, and death. The execution of this barbarous

decree was committed to Mendez, the new patriarch, who

commenced his mission by the most inconsiderate acts of

violence and oppression. Displaying in all his conduct

the true spirit of the Spanish Inquisition, he employed all

the arts of persuasion and reward on the one hand, and of

terror and cruelty on the other, to compel the Abyssinians

to abandon the tenets of their forefathers, and to adopt

the doctrine and worship of Rome. In this fearful alter-

native, multitudes of that people, with their priests and

leaders, steadfastly adhered to the truth, with a firmness

and magnanimity that would have done honour to the

primitive ages, and resolutely met death in its most fright-

ful forms. Popular insurrections succeeded, and force was

called in to produce submission. Multitudes were slaugh-

tered, and many driven into exile. At last, however, the

inhuman work of persecution disgusted the emperor ; and

after a great victory over twenty thousand of his pea-

santry, in which eight thousand were slain, he relinquished

the bloody task, and by a proclamation, distinguished for

its frankness and simplicity, restored religious freedom to

Abyssinia.

The result is gratifying as a triumph of religious liberty,

and as a check to the extension of Roman despotism and

superstition. To attempt any details of the miseries and

sufferings which the Abyssinians had endured during this

persecution, would require volumes ; for beside the horrors of

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 45

the Inquisition and the evils of civil war, the worst passions

and vices of mankind, as an unavoidable consequence, were

released from all restraint. Intrepid avarice took occasion

to extort and pillage from its miserable victims ; revenge

wreaked the hoarded hatred of years upon its unsuspecting

objects ; and the assassin and the ravisher proceeded,

without fear of punishment, to the consummation of their

crimes.

Mendez had, likewise, ordered those to be re-baptized,

who, in compliance with the will of the emperor, embraced

the religion of Rome, as if they had formerly been the

votaries of Paganism, and their worship a system of idola-

try. They were also compelled to renounce the observance

of the seventh day. This the Abyssinian clergy regarded

as a most shocking insult to the religious discipline of

their forefathers, and quite as provoking as the violence

and barbarity exercised upon those who refused to submit

to the Romish yoke. Besides his arbitrary and despotic

proceedings in the church, Mendez excited tumults and

dissensions in the state, and with an unparalleled spirit of

aggression and arrogance, encroached upon the prerogatives

of the crown, and even attempted to give law to the em-

peror himself. Many circumstances, indeed, concur to

favour the opinion that he entertained the design of sub-

verting the liberties of the empire, and rendering it an

appendage of the Portuguese crown. At any rate, the

kingdom became torn to pieces by intestine commotions

and conspiracies, and though obliged to carry on his ma-

chinations in secret, he filled the court with cabals which

lasted until the death of the reigning monarch, in 1632.

Basilides, the son and successor of the former, deemed it

expedient to free the country from such troublesome guests,

and accordingly, in 1684, he banished Mendez, with all

the Europeans belonging to his train, from the Abyssinian

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territories, commanded all his subjects to return to the

religion of their ancestors, and forbid the worship of

images, or the observance of the first day. He likewise

requested the Patriarch of Alexandria to send them a new

abuna, with which request that dignitary complied.\*

The condition of the Abyssinian church at this time

was most deplorable. The reign of the Jesuits, though

short, had been attended with blighting and fatal conse-

quences. It had been their aim to overthrow in the minds

of the people all respect for the moral law and the revealed

word of God, and to establish in its place a preposterous

veneration for the authority of the fathers, and the canons

of the church. Nor was this all; superstition had immea-

surably increased, and its accompaniments, vice and igno-

rance, everywhere prevailed.

But from this period the very name of Rome, its wor-

ship, or its pontiffs, were objects of the highest aversion to

the Abyssinians ; and even the frontiers of the kingdom

were guarded with the strictest vigilance and the cl<>

attention, lest any Jesuit or Romish emissary might b

into their territory in disguise, and excite new commotions

in the kingdom. In vain the pontiffs made many attempts

to recover what they had lost through the insolence and

misconduct of the Jesuits. For this purpose two Capuchin

monks were despatched into Abyssinia ; but these unfor-

tunate wretches only succeeded in penetrating a short dis-

tance into the interior, when they were discovered and

immediately put to death. The pontiffs, however, were

not discouraged, though they employed more clandestine

methods of reviving the missions, and even solicited in

their behalf the intercession and influence of Louis XIV.

of France. The Jesuits were eager to obtain this employ-

ment, and, accordingly, Poncet, a French apothecary, was

\* Gibbon says that " two abunas had been slain in battle.''

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 47

despatched from Cairo by the consul Maillet, in company

with Brevedent, a respectable member of the former fra-

ternity. Brevedent died in Abyssinia, and, soon after,

Poncet obtained an introduction to the king, who expressed

his dislike of the Catholic religion, and his determination

not to permit his people to embrace it. M. Du Roule was

afterwards deputed to the same court, but he had advanced

no further than Sennaar, when he was cruelly murdered

by the natives, at the instigation, as was supposed, of the

Franciscans, who w T ere disgusted at seeing the mission in

the hands of the Jesuits. In 1709, the throne w r as usurped

by Ousts, who appears to have been well affected to the

Romish system, and who secretly communed with its emis-

saries, although he made no attempt to influence the con-

sciences of his subjects. His successor, David, ordered

three of these strangers to be apprehended, who, being

condemned as heretics and schismatics in a council of the

clergy, w T ere stoned to death. Since that period, Pope

Benedict XIV. made a new attempt to effect a reconcilia-

tion with the Abyssinian church, but his efforts proved

abortive ; and, so far as I am aware, neither the pontiffs

nor their votaries have been able to calm the resentment

of that exasperated people, or to subdue their enmity

against the doctrine and w r orship cf Rome.

In 1634, the Lutherans made several attempts to esta-

blish missions in Abyssinia, in order, as they aaid, to bring

that benighted people to the knowledge of a purer religion,

and a more rational system of worship, although it might

appear questionable to some which church of the two most

required a reformation in its rites and doctrines. In

accordance with this design, the learned Heyling of Lubec

made a voyage into Abyssinia, where he resided many

years, and acquired such a distinguished place in the con-

fidence and esteem of the sovereign, that he was honoured

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with many important offices, and finally became prime

minister of the realm. In this eminent station he acquitted

himself in the most creditable manner, and gave many

proofs of his zeal both for the interests of religion and the

public good. He finally set out for Europe on business of

importance, but never arrived there ; and. as the journey

was being performed by land, it is supposed that he

perished in the deserts of Nubia. Subsequently, howevei',

a communication was kept up between the two countries,

and Ernest, duke of Saxe-Gotha, surnamed the Pious, on

account of his sanctity and virtue, made new attempts t<>

diffuse a knowledge of the gospel, as taught in his church,

among the Abyssinians. This design was formed through

the counsels of the famous Ludolph, and was to have been

executed by the ministry of Gregory, an Abyssinian abbot

who had resided some time in Europe. This missionary

sailed from Antwerp, in the ship Katerina, in 1657) but, in

passing Cape Horn, she was unfortunately wrecked, and

all on board perished. The mission, thus frustrated, waa

not designed to be abandoned; for the prince, in 1663,

entrusted the same important commission to John Michael

Wansleb, a native of Erfurt, to whom he gave the wi-

instructions, and whom he charged particularly to employ

all rational and consistent means to excite in the Abys-

sinian nation a favourable opinion of the Germans, as

this, more than anything else, would contribute to the

success of the enterprise. But this wise and laudable

undertaking failed through the inconstancy of the worth-

less man to whom it was confided, and whose virtue w T as by

no means equal to his ability. Instead of continuing his

journey into Abyssinia, he remained for some time in

Egypt, and finally returned to Europe without ever seeing

the country he was intended to visit. But he entertained

many uneasy apprehensions of the account that would

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naturally be demanded of his conduct, and of the manner

in which he had expended the large sums of money de-

signed for the Abyssinian expedition. These apprehen-

sions, together with the consciousness of guilt, made him

desperate. Hence, instead of returning to Germany, he

went to Rome, and, in 1667, embraced the doctrine of

that church, at least in open profession, and entered into

the Dominican order.

Other missions have been established, or rather attempt-

ed, in this country. In 1829, Messrs. Gobat and Kinglar

were sent by the Church Missionary Society, as mission-

aries to Abyssinia. After many trials, they succeeded in

reaching the place of their destination, by way of Mas-

sowa. The ruler of Tigre, who is greatly beloved by his

subjects, received them in a friendly manner, and they

were much encouraged by his assurances of safety and

protection. Mr. Hinglar died when he had just conquered

most of the difficulties of the language, but Mr. Gobat

employed his time in conversational preaching and distri-

buting Bibles, until, in consequence of the unsettled state

of the country, he was induced to leave for a short time.

It is a fact, however, that previous to this the Scriptures

had been translated by the Abyssinians themselves from

the Arabic and Ethiopic into the Amharic language, which

is the dialect generally spoken throughout the Abyssinian

empire. In 1833, Mr. Gobat, accompanied by Mr. Isen-

berg, returned to his field of labour. They took up their

residence at Adowa, the capital of Tigre, six or eight days'

journey from Massowa. During Mr. Gobat's absence, the

former monarch, Sabagadis, had been dethroned, and

Oobie, an avaricious and cruel despot, reigned in his stead.

It was soon perceived that he regarded the missionaries

with a jealous eye, and his suspicions were increased by

the appearance in the country soon after of many foreigners.

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Mr. Isenberg was openly accused of bringing them into

the country for treasonable purposes. These accusations,

and others of a similar character, were circulated by the

priests, who complained that through the influence of the

missionaries the Ethiopic church was threatened with

extinction. They also charged the missionaries with in-

trigue to overthrow the government of the country, and to

introduce English troops. Oobie was no less suspicious of

the political designs of the foreigners, and it was not long

before an edict came to Mr. Isenberg, from the king, in

which all foreigners were commanded to embrace the Abys-

sinian creed or to leave the country. Preferrinir the latter

alternative, Mr. Isenberg and his associate, Mr. Blum-

hardt, retired into Egypt. Mr. Krapf, a former compa-

nion of Blumhardt, removed to Shoa, where he was favour-

ably received and hospitably entertained for a time. Ulti-

mately, however, it appeared thai the king wished to be

benefited by the superior knowledge <>f the missionaries in

everything but what pertained to the duties of religion.

He said that he wanted workmen, not priests. After Mr.

Krapf had acquired the language, lie established schools,

which succeeded well for a time, or until the pupils, from

their superior knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, began to

question the traditions in which they had been brought up.

Here the priesthood interfered, and through their machi-

nations the monarch was induced to express his decided

disapprobation of the proceedings, and the schools were,

at his command, suppressed. Under these discourage-

ments, the missionaries, after distributing ten thousand

copies of the Bible, returned to Europe.

The empire of Abyssinia has been frequently disturbed

by civil wars ; and the appointment of a new abuna, or

metropolitan, is often attended by intestine commotions.

This was the case in 1715, when that dignitary, in a con-

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vocation of the clergy, declared his opinion of the consub-

stantiality of Christ, which was different from that which

had been proclaimed at the gate of the palace. The abuna

represented Christ as being " one God, of the Father alone,

with a body consubstantial with ours, and by that union

becoming the Messiah." The emperor maintained, on the

contrary, that the Redeemer was perfect man and perfect

God by the union ; one Christ, whose body was composed

of a precious substance, called battery r , not derived from

his mother, or consubstantial with ottrs. Many of the

ecclesiastics favoured the opinion of the abuna ; and, elate

with their supposed triumph, they gathered the populace,

surrounded the palace, and insulted the emperor with shouts

and songs. The enraged potentate gave immediate orders

for their dispersion and punishment. The mandate was

executed by a company of pagan soldiers, who slew about

one hundred of the delinquents, and filled the streets of

the capital with slaughter. The Christian population of

Shoa and Efat is estimated at 1,000,000 souls, and that

of the Pagan and Mohammedan population of the numer-

ous dependencies at an equal number. But this people is

chiefly interesting to us from the fact that here, for so

many ages, a national religious establishment has existed,

which never succumbed to the authority of Rome, and,

consequently, which has ever been in the observation of

the holy Sabbath day.

The Ethiopic church maintains the Eutychian doctrine

respecting the nature of Christ ; and it agrees with the

other Eastern churches in holding the procession of the

Holy Ghost from the Father only. In these respects it

differs from the Western churches. From the Romish

church it is distinguished by its doctrine regarding the

supremacy of the Pope, in which it agrees with Protestants ;

to the rule of faith, which it limits to the Scriptures, includ-

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ing the Apocrypha; to the eucharist, which it administers in

both kinds to the laity, and regards neither as a transub-

stantiation nor as a sacrifice ; to the celibacy of the clergy,

who may be married ; to the adoration of images, which

it regards as unlawful ; to the state of the soul after death,

rejecting purgatory ; and as regards several other less

important and minor points. But, like Rome, it invokes

saints and angels as intercessors with God, paying great

honours to the Virgin and St. Michael, and having a

copious calendar of saints, with a corresponding number

of fasts and festivals.\*

Their most extraordinary peculiarities are certain forma

and ceremonies retained from their ancient Jewish worship.

Their churches, which arc generally small and mean, re-

semble precisely the Jewish temple. Like it, they are

divided into three parts ; the innermost being the holy of

holies, and inaccessible to the laity, who, except on cer-

tain occasions, are forbidden to pass the outer porch. Un-

believers, and all subject to Levitical uncleanness, are

carefully excluded. All who enter must be barefoot, and

the doorposts and threshold must be kissed in passing.

The service is performed in the ancient Ethiopic, or Geez,

now a dead language. It commences with the Jewish Tri-

sagion, and as David danced before the ark, so their priests

caper and beat the ground with their feet, and, with other

similar antics and performances, complete a remarkable

form of devotion. They observe the Levitical prohibitions

of unclean animals, and the Pharisaical ceremonies of ge-

nuflexions and ablutions. Like the Jews, they practise

concubinage. Fasts of unexampled strictness and extra-

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\* It has been supposed, and with reason, that many of these customs

were introduced by the Jesuits, and that previous to the partial sub-

jection of this church. to the Romish authority, it was much more pure

than it has since been.

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ordinary frequency are constantly observed. With scrip-

tural examples before them, and unenlightened by science

and philosophy, it is perhaps not surprising that they

should believe in witchcraft, magic, and sorcery.

The whole country is overspread to excess with churches,

and the number of the professedly religious in Shoa amounts

to one-fourth of the population. The aboon, or abuna, is

the ecclesiastical head, and the church confines to his hands

alone the grace or virtue that makes a clergyman, differing

in this from other churches called apostolic, which allow

it to all bishops.

The Grand Prior of the monks of Debra Libanos is

second in dignity ; then the bishops ; next the priests and

deacons. Monasteries abound, and they are generally

placed on eminences near running water, and amid scenes

of beauty and sublimity. An easy ceremony admits to

the monkish order, and the life of the professed is one of

ease and indulgence, consequently the land swarms with

monks, who are in reality the greatest of pests and plagues.

Every church establishment is supported by certain lands

and villages particularly set apart for that purpose, and to

these are added various fees for baptismal, funeral, and

other clerical services, besides the voluntary contributions

of the superstitious people. These ecclesiastics, taken as

a body, are ignorant, superstitious, and immoral, fearful of

innovation, hating heretics, and observant of religious

forms, some with the sincerity of devotees, and others as

the business-like followers of a gainful profession. Of the

doctrines of justification by faith or regeneration by the

Holy Spirit, the Abyssinians are said to be entirely igno-

rant ; but it is possible, it is even probable, that there has

been some misapprehension upon that point. It is very

easy for foreigners, in a state of society so new and strange,

to misapprehend the purport of what they behold, or to

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arrive at wrong conclusions, from given premises, in conse-

quence of prejudice and partiality. We trust that the Divine

Inhabitant has not entirely forsaken this polluted temple,

and that the sacred fire is not utterly extinguished, although

the surrounding atmosphere may be impure. At any rate,

there is hope, since the Scriptures are the foundation of

the faith of the Abyssinian Church, and there is no infal-

lible pontiff, consecrating with his authority the manifold

corruptions from which that authority sprung, and by

which it is perpetuated.

It is scarcely necessary to repeat what all authors ac-

quainted with the subject have been unanimous in affirm-

ing, namely, that the Abyssinian Church observe\*! the

seventh-day Sabbath. Sandius says, " There is a Christian

empire of the Abyssinians, who adhere to Peter and Paul,

and observe the seventh day." The Jesuits affirmed "that

they kept as sacred the Jewish Sabbath." Mr. Brerewood,

who wrote in 1614, declares that the midland Ethiopians,

the modern Abyssinians, reverenced the Sabbath, keeping

it solemn equal with the Lord's day.\* James Bruce, a

Scotsman, who visited Abyssinia in 1768, testifies to their

observance of the seventh day ; and these accounts have

been substantiated by the witness of modern travellers.

The numerous dependencies of the Abyssinian empire, as

well as some of the neighbouring independent kingdoms,

contain Christian communities, of which some much nearer

than others approximate in their rites and ceremonies to

the simplicity of the apostolic age. Many of these have

for a long period of years, successfully held their position

among mountain fastnesses in the very midst of a Pagan

and Mohammedan population. One of the most remarka-

\* The observation of Sunday was brought in by the Jesuits, who

found it easier to induce them to observe both days than to consent to

a substitution of the first for the seventh day.

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 55

ble of these seats is upon an island of the Lake Zovai,

where, in the Church of Emanuel, are deposited the silver

dishes and other sacred utensils, with numerous manu-

scripts, which Nebla Dengel wished particularly to pre-

serve from the grasp of an invading army. The islands

of this lake contain upwards of three thousand Christian

houses formed of lime and stone. They are shaded by

lofty trees, and the whole has a luxuriant and beautiful

appearance. In Guragee, a dependency of Abyssinia, the

population are exclusively Christian. Twelve isolated

churches previously unheard of were discovered a few

years since in a province called Yoya. Between Garro

and Metcha there is a small tract peopled by Christians,

who reside entirely in mountain caves, as a measure of

security against the heathens by whom they are surrounded.

Eight days' journey hence is Cambat, an independent Chris-

tian state, completely studded with churches and monaste-

ries. AVollamo, another Christian province under an inde-

pendent sovereign, lies below Cambat, and also contains

many religious houses. Skorchassie, another neighbouring

state, is peopled by Christians, and so is Sidama, and both

are entirely surrounded by Pagans. Susa is another im-

portant Christian country, whose king, in 1842, w r as said to

be a very wise and just ruler. The government is liberal,

and the people are, comparatively with the other African

nations, in a high state of civilization. The priests are

distinguished by antique robes and silver mitres, and the

churches and religious observances resemble those of Shoa,

except as regards the saints' days, most of which are un-

known in Susa. In this country all labour is interdicted

upon the Sabbath, but the observation of any Lord's day

is unknown.

That the religion of Ethiopia should have become cor-

rupt is not in the least surprising, although we can only

refer it to the superintending providence of God that, amid

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the wreck of ages and the changes and revolutions of time,

it has survived at all. The wonder is, that, surrounded as

they are by Pagan and Moslem, together with the corrupt

propensities of the human heart, the very name and pro-

fession of Christianity has not been long since obliterated

from their minds, the Sabbath forgotten, and the name of

the Great Mediator supplanted by that of the false pro-

phet.

Abyssinia, notwithstanding her corruptions, is immeasu-

rably above all other African nations in the scale of civili-

zation. This is plainly enough proved by the following

extract from the Narrative of the Travels of Charles John-

ston, through the country of Adel to the kingdom of Shoa,

in 1842-43:

" Arrived upon the summit, the stranger finds an exten-

sive table-land spread out before him, and he cannot divest

himself of the idea that he has readied some new conti-

nent. A Scotch climate and Scotch vegetation, wheat,

barley, linseed, — and yet in intertropical Africa. The

country seems highly cultivated, wheat and barley on all

sides growing close to our path, while near the farm-

houses were stacks of grain, which gave the whole country

an English appearance.

" Amidst the luxuries and conveniences so abundantly

supplied to the embassy by the indulgent care of a liberal

government, I almost fancied that I had returned to the

comforts of European life."

Mr. Johnston says that he was furnished with excellent

wheaten bread, and butter quite as good as any he had

ever eaten, with fish, flesh, fowl, wine, honey, and a kind

of native beer, resembling English ale. He speaks of the

king as being beloved by his people, remarkably just in

all his transactions, moderate in his anger, and benevolent

to his visiters. He himself declared that he had " the fear

of God before his eyes."

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The Holy Scriptures have been preserved in Abyssinia,

on parchment manuscript, and in the Geez language ; but,

in 1826, they were translated by the Ethiopians themselves

into Amharic, the spoken dialect of the country. These

books, our traveller declares, agree perfectly with the Vul-

gate, except the book of the Maccabees, in which he dis-

covered some discrepancies. They also possess a commen-

tary on each of the sacred books, and, besides the five books

of Moses, possess a sixth, which they equally revere. The

names of the books agree with ours, and appear to be

Ethiopic translations of Genesis, Exodus, &c. They also

possess the book of Enoch, which, however, according to

Mr. Bruce, is the production of a Gnostic philosopher.

They have a liturgy in Ethiopic. It is said that all the

literature of the country is embraced in 120 volumes.

But we trust that great and good things are in store for

this ancient people, who, though severely tried and tempt-

ed, have persisted in keeping the commandments of God

and the faith of Jesus ; who, though stumbling, have not

wandered altogether out of the way ; and who have within

themselves all the elements for moral renovation, — the

Holy Scriptures, the Sabbath, and the knowledge of the

Redeemer of mankind.\*

\* The Abyssinians still retain the physiognomy and olive complexion

of the Arabs, and afford an incontestable evidence that three thousand

years can neither change the colour nor the intellectual capabilities of

the human species. Under the burning sun of Africa, the Abyssinian,

a branch of the great Caucasian family, has preserved the name and

semblance of Christianity and civilization through the wreck and revo-

lutions of ages, and amid the tempests of foreign and domestic domina-

tions. Conscious of his ignorance, he once sought the fraternity of

Europe for the sake of her letters and her arts. But how is it with

the Nubian, whose unequivocal African descent is betrayed by his

stupid features, black colour, and woolly hair, yet who enjoyed equal

or superior advantages in ancient times ? The history of his race

would attest to the truth in this case. He has relapsed into that bar-

barism which seems to be his native element, and from which he appears

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Abyssinia, as an empire, has experienced alternately

the contraction and expansion common to the ancient

monarchies. The Negus, as friend and ally of Justinian,

reigned supreme over seven kingdoms, prosecuted an ex-

tensive trade with Ceylon and the Indies, and encouraged

in his country the arts and letters of Europe. Arabia,

surnamed "the blest," and, by contrast with the neigh-

bouring regions, considered as " happy," had been despoiled

of her rich treasures, and led in captivity, to gratify the

avarice or ambition of an Ethiopian conqueror, whose

hereditary claim, founded on his descent from the beau-

teous Queen of Sheba, was warmed and animated by reli-

gious zeal. The inhabitants of Arabia were denominated

Homerites. Their prince, Duncan, was not insensible to

the inflictions, nor inflexible to the entreaties, of the J\*

who, powerful even in exile, persuaded him to retaliate

upon the Christians in his dominions the persecution that

their people suffered from the imperial laws. Accordingly

some Roman merchants were ignominiously put to death,

and the crown of martyrdom bestowed upon many Chris-

tians of Yemen, who refused to apostatize from their faith.

The expiring churches of Arabia invoked the name of the

Abyssinian monarch, who arose like a lion out of his place,

passed the Red Sea with a fleet and army, dethroned the

Jewish proselyte, and extinguished a royal race who, for

many centuries, had exercised sovereignty over the seques-

tered region of precious gums and aromatic groves. The

cities of Arabia immediately resounded with the Trisagion,

chanted, with rapturous demonstrations of joy, by the

conquering army. The Negus himself despatched a mes-

incapable of preserving himself. The only memorials of his Christia-

nity are a few words, of which he is incapable of understanding the

sense ; the only traces of his civilization a few heaps of sculptured

ruins.

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 59

senger to the Alexandrian prelate, announcing the victory

of the gospel, and soliciting of that dignitary an orthodox

ruler for the Arabian churches. To Justinian, this an-

nouncement occasioned much secret gratulation, though it

may be questioned by posterity whether he exulted most

in the triumph of orthodoxy, or the flattering prospects he

thereby entertained of gratifying his ambition, securing a

fortunate ally, and reaping the advantages of a lucrative

commercial intercourse. He was desirous to divert the

trade of the precious commodities of the East, — silk, balm,

and frankincense, — no less than to engage the forces of

Arabia and Africa against the Persian king. Accordingly,

an embassage, under the direction of Nonnosus, was des-

patched into Abyssinia, to execute, in the name of the

Emperor, this important commission. Declining the shorter

but more dangerous route through the desert regions of

Nubia, he ascended the Nile, embarked on the Red Sea,

and safely landed at the port of Adulis.\* From this port

to the royal city of Axuma is no more than fifty leagues,

in a direct line ; but the winding passes of the mountains

detained the embassage fifteen days, during which journey

they were astonished by the droves of wild elephants that

roamed the forests. He found the capital large and popu-

lous, the people Christian in profession, and strictly obser-

vant of the Jewish Sabbath. He found also many traces

of Grecian art.f The Negus received the ambassador

\* The negotiations of Justinian with the Abyssinians are mentioned

by Procopius, John Malala, and others. The original narrative of the

ambassador Nonnosus is quoted by the Historian of Antioch, and Pho-

tius has given a curious extract. Justinian reigned over the Greek

empire from 527 to 565.

f The present village of Anuma is conspicuous by the ruins of a

splendid Christian temple, and seventeen obelisks, of Grecian architec-

ture. According to Alvarez, it was in a flourishing state in 1520, but

was ruined the same year by the Turkish invasion.

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with the splendid hospitality suitable to a potent monarch,

and due to the representative of an imperial friend.

Amidst a numerous and august assemblage of the ladies of

the court, the dignitaries of the church, and the princes of

the empire, the Negus gave audience in a spacious plain.

Dismounting from his lofty chariot, to which was harnessed

four white elephants, superbly caparisoned, he appeared,

clad in a linen garment, with a golden tiara on his head ;

while around his neck, arms, and ankles, blazed the regal

circlets of diamonds, pearls, and precious stones, interwoven

with chains of gold. He carried two javelins of ra;

temper, and wore a light shield of exquisite workmanship.

The ambassador of Justinian approached with awe, and

knelt with becoming deference. lie was raised and cm-

braced by the Negus, who received the imperial missive

of which he was the bearer, kissed the seal, perused the

contents with apparent satisfaction, accepted the imperial

alliance, and, brandishing his weapons, denounced a per-

petual anathema against the enemies of his new friend and

ally. But the proposal for trade was artfully eluded, and

the hostile demonstration was not productive of a cor-

responding efiect. The Ahysstni&ns were unwilling to

abandon the pleasures and luxuries of peace, with the

sensual delights of their aromatic bowers, for the toils of

ambition and the benefit of a foreign potentate. Discre-

tion is certainly the better part of valour, and it was

proved in the sequel that the Negus, instead of extending

his triumphs, was incapable of preserving what he had

already obtained. The sceptre of Arabia was wrenched

from his hands by Abrahah, the slave of a Roman mer-

chant of Adulis. The Ethiopian legions were seduced and

enervated by the luxurious influences of the climate. Jus-

tinian solicited the friendship of the usurper, who returned

his complaisancy with a slight tribute and the acknow-

HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. 61

ledgment of his nominal supremacy. After a long course

of prosperity, the dynasty of Abrahah was overthrown,

his descendants despoiled of their rich possessions by the

Persian conqueror, and every vestige of Christianity

obliterated. This short episode of Abyssinian history

must be interesting to us, from the fact that, could a

Christian empire have been sustained in Arabia, it might

have prevented the rise of the Mohammedan imposture,

and have materially changed the history of the world.\*

\* Those who desire to form an acquaintance with Abyssinian history

may consult Procopius, Baronius, Cosmos, Indicopleustus, Alvarez,

Lobo, and Bruce. In these works, the subject is very amply and ably

treated.

CHAPTER II.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST- IX EUROPE.

SECTION I.

WALDKXSF.s, ALBIGFEN8B8, PA6AGINIAN8, ETC.— -Tin.li:

SABBATIOAX OHABAOfKH i:\.\MlNKl).

It is not my design to gi?6 even an abridged account of

ecclesiastical affairs as connected with this people daring

the many centuries of their existence, hut confine myself

to a consideration of the origin of their distinguishing

appellation, with an account of their doctrinal sentiments

and religious practices, and their terrible persecutions and

dispersion.

. It is evident that the Latin word vallis lias heen the

parent of the English word valley, the French and Spanish

valle, the Provencal vaux. vaudois, the Italian valdesi, the

low Dutch valleye, and the ecclesiastical Yaldensis, Yal-

denses, and Waldenses. The designation of the word is

valleys — inhabitants of valleys — neither more nor less.

There being no iv in the Latin language, the terms Yal-

lenses and Valdenses were employed long before the more

modern one of Waldenses came into use.

It appears that from the earliest ages, the inhabitants

of the valleys about the Pyrenees did not profess the

Catholic faith; neither was it embraced by the inhabitants

of the valleys of the Alps; it occurred, also, that one

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Valdo, in the ninth century, a friend and adviser of

Berengarius, and a man of wealth, talents, and piety, who

had many followers, possessed himself of a Bible, by which

he was led to perceive the errors and corruptions of Rome,

which he severely denounced ; moreover, it came to pass

that about one hundred and thirty years after, a rich mer-

chant of Lyons, whose name was Waldo, openly withdrew

from the communion of Rome, and supported many to

travel and teach the doctrines believed in the valleys.

All these people, though different in their origin, and dif-

ferent no doubt in some minor points of faith and practices

of worship, were called Waldenses as a general term. They

had also other appellations imposed upon them, which,

however, were mostly local, and which I shall subsequently

take into consideration. This accounts in a satisfactory

manner for the diversity of the statements concerning

them. In Languedoc these heresies were supposed to be

of recent origin, and to have originated from Waldo,

whose immediate followers were called Waldenses. This,

however, w T as merely the renovation of the name from a

particular cause, and not its original ; for we find that, in

other districts, other branches of this same original sect

are called by other appellations, significative of some dis-

tinguished leader. Thus, in Dauphiny, they were called

Josephists, and, in other places, Petrobrusians, from Peter

De Bruys. Sometimes they received their names from their

manners, as Catharists (Puritans), Bonne Homines (good

men) ; at others, from the peculiarities of their religious

ordinances, as insabbathists (sabbath-keepers), and Sabbath-

arians, because they contended for the observance of the ori-

ginal sabbath, and denied the real presence of Christ in the

eucharist.\* By some they were denominated Bulgarians,

\* Historical Annals, published in Paris, 1667, p. 230.

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and by others Paulicians, ami, by a corruption of that

word, Publicans, because it appears that a multitude of

that ancient sect had emigrated hither, and amalgamated

with them.\* Sometimes they were named from the city

or country in which they prevailed, as Toulousians, Lom-

bardists, and Albigenses. Nevertheless all these branches

were distinguished as keeping the commandments of God,

and the faith of Jesus.

In more recent times they were particularly distin-

guished in France by the name of Albigenses, from the

great numbers of them that inhabited the city of Alby, in

the district of Albigeons, between the Garonne and the

Ilhone. After the Council of Alby, which condemned

them as heretics, that name became general and confirmed.

In the records of this Council the following passagfe occurs :

"They savour of Judaism, they practise circumcision, f

they observe the Jewish sabbath, but say the holy Domi-

nical day is no better than other days ; let them be ac-

cursed/ '

Very laboured disquisitions have been written, and great

pains taken, by a certain class of writers, to prove that the

Albigenses and Waldenses were very different classes of

Christians, and that they held different opinions and reli-

gious principles. How far this distinction extended it is

impossible at present to ascertain; but when the popes

issued their fulminations against the Albigenses, they ex-

pressly condemned them as Waldenses ; by the legates of

the Holy See they were accused of professing the faith of

the Waldenses, the inquisitors formed their processes of

\* With the former inhabitants of the valleys, whom they closely

resembled in principles and practices, and to whom, in times of perse-

cution, they would naturally fly for refuge.

f This accusation was undoubtedly false, and reminds one of the

endless charges of a community of wives, made at a later period against

the Anabaptists.

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indictments against them as Waldenses ; the leaders of the

crusades made war upon them as Waldenses ; they were

persecuted on all sides as such ; nor did they attempt to

rebut the charges made against them, but readily adopted

the title thus imposed upon them, which they considered it

an honour to bear.

The Pasaginians, or Passignes, were another branch of

this same sect, who derived their appellation from the

country of Passau, where it is computed that eighty or

one hundred thousand of them resided. That these were

all one people is evident from the fact that the provincial

councils of Toulouse in 1119, and of Lombez in 1176, and

the general councils of Lateran, in 1139 and 1176, do not

particularize them as Pasaginians, or Albigenses, but as

heretics, which shows that they existed and were generally

known before these names were imposed upon them.

Their enemies confirm their identity as well as their

great antiquity. JFather Gretzer, a Jesuit, who had exa-

mined the subject fully, and who had every opportunity of

knowing, admits the great antiquity of the heretics, and,

moreover, expresses his firm belief that the Toulousians,

Albigenses, Pasaginians, Arnoldists, Josephists, and the

other heretical factions, who, at that time, were engaging

the attention of the popes, were no other than Waldenses.

This opinion he corroborates by showing wherein they

resembled each other. Among other points he mentions

the following: " Moreover, all these heretics despise the

fasts and feasts of the church, such as Candlemas, Easter,

the Dominical day ; in short, all approved ecclesiastical

customs for which they do not find a warrant in the

Scripture. They say, also, that God enjoined rest and

holy meditation upon the seventh day, and that they can-

not feel justified in the observance of any other."

In the decree of Pope Lucius III., dated 1181, we find

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the Catharists, Paterines, Josephists, Arnoldists, Pas-

signes, and those calling themselves the "Poor of Lyons,"

all considered as one, and laid under a perpetual ana-

thema.

It is evident from all these testimonies that the Wal-

denses, as they penetrated into different countries, became

distinguished by a great variety of appellations, which

they derived from the countries they inhabited, or from

the men who became their leaders at particular periods.

Thus in Albi, Toulouse, Provence, Languedoc, and the

neighbouring countries in France, they were called Albi-

genses ; Yaudois, Vallenses, and Waldenses in Savoy;

Pasaginians in Passau, and the adjacent regions, with

other names and titles too numerous to mention here.

Nevertheless it appears that some distinction existed

between these different parties. The old Waldenses were

not seceders from the Church of Rome ; for neither them-

selves nor their ancestors had ever embraced its faith.

Claudius Seyssel, a popish archbishop, declares that the

Waldensian heresy originated from one Leo, who, in the

days of Constantino the Great, led a party of heretics

from Rome into the valleys. Pope Gregory VII. obser

that it is well known that in the days of Constantino the

Great, some assemblies of Jewish Christians being perse-

cuted at Rome, because they persisted in obedience to the

law of Moses, wandered off into the valleys, where their

descendants remain unto this day. Reiner Sacco deel;

that, in the opinion of many authors of note, their anti-

quity could be traced to the apostolic age. He also ob-

serves that never, within the memory of man, have they

acknowledged allegiance to the papal see. But that there

were seceding parties, who, at different times and under

particular leaders, withdrew from the communion of that

church, and became amalgamated with the old Waktenfl

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we have every reason to believe. That these latter, though

disposed to condemn many of the grosser superstitions of

that church, such as the worship of images, transubstantia-

tion, the sacrament of the mass, etc., might still hesitate

about rejecting all her man-made ordinances, is highly pro-

bable. Indeed, this very thing is mentioned by a very

ancient writer, quoted by Perrin, as producing divisions

among them.

At the head of one of these parties was Claude, Bishop of

Turin, who flourished in the commencement of the seventh

century. It does not appear that this bold reformer ever

separated wholly from the Church of Rome, but he de-

nounced many of her corruptions and abominations in no

measured terms, and had many followers. From the death

of this eminent man until the time of Peter Waldo, of

Lyons, the history of this people is involved in much

obscurity. If they possessed any writers among them-

selves capable of giving their transactions to posterity, or

if any records of their ecclesiastical affairs were committed

to writing, the barbarous zeal of their opponents has pre-

vented their transmission to our times. To the accounts

of their adversaries, therefore, we must look for proofs of

their existence, and here they are abundant. They are,

also, uniformly represented as separated in faith and prac-

tice from the Catholic Church, and as continually multi-

plying in number ; but further than this we have of them

very imperfect statements.

During all this period the popes appear to have been too

intent upon their own pleasures, and too much engaged

by their own quarrels, to interfere with the despised Wal-

clenses, and it was not until the twelfth century, that these

people appear in history as obnoxious to the court of Rome.

About this time one Peter Waldo, an opulent merchant of

Lyons, in France, made an attack upon the superstitions

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of the Romish church, particularly the monstrous doctrine

of transubstantiation. He commenced by causing a trans-

lation of the four gospels to be made into French, which he

circulated extensively among his countrymen, particularly

those of the poorer class. He soon became a preacher,

gathered a large church in his native city, from which, a

few years after, himself and his adherents were driven by

the anathemas of the Pope. Waldo, with his numerous

followers, retired into Dauphiny, where his preaching was

attended with abundant success. His principles were

embraced by multitudes, who were denominated Leoni

Vaudois, AYaldenses, etc.; for the very same class ttf

Christians were designated by all these different appella-

tions at different times, and according to the different

countries in which they appeared.

Driven from Dauphiny, Waldo Bought refuge in 1 Meanly,

where, also, his labours were abundantly blessed. 1 ( <

cuted thence, he lied into Germany, and carried with liim

the glad tidings of salvation. From Germany lie removed

to Bohemia, where lie finally finished hifl course in the year

1179, and the twentieth of his ministry. The amazing

success which had crowned the efforts of this holy num,

aroused the pontiff and bis legates to the most vindictive

and sanguinary measures. Terrible persecutions ensued;

the bishops of Mentz ami Strasbourg breathed nothing but

vengeance and slaughter against them. Thirty-five citii

of Mentz were burned in one fire at the city of Bingen,

and eighteen in Mentz itself. In Strasburg eighty were

committed to the flames. In other places multitudes died

praising God, and in the blessed hope of a glorious resur-

rection.

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SECTION II.

CONCERNING THE DOCTRINAL SENTIMENTS AND RELIGIOUS PRAC-

TICES OF THE WALDENSES — THEIR SABBATARIAN CHARACTER

STILL FURTHER CONSIDERED.

In giving an account of the doctrinal sentiments and

religious practices of this people, we must principally de-

pend upon the testimonies of their adversaries of the

Romish church, and their own apologies, reasonings, and

confessions, some of which have been handed down to us

through the records of the Inquisition,\* and by the histo-

rians of that period. Of these, Reineirus Saccho is the

most celebrated. He had been for seventeen years, in the

earlier part of his life, in connexion with the Waldenses,

but apostatized from their profession, and joined the

Catholic church, in which he was raised to the eminence of

chief Inquisitor, and became the bitterest persecutor of his

former friends. He was deputed by the pope to reside

in Lombardy, at that time the headquarters of the Pasa-

ginians, and about 1250, published a book, in which the

errors of the Waldenses were all summed up under three-

and-thirty distinct heads. f

\* Here is a vast field for research, of which the world is just begin-

ning to discover the importance. The martyrs, with the exception of

those who were destroyed by mobs, by clandestine malevolence, and

local crusades, were allowed formal trials according to the established

usages of law, which were generally in conformity to the Roman system

of jurisprudence. In these records of the old ecclesiastical courts, the

charges against them, with their apologies and confessions, are detailed

at length. Some of these documents have already been examined, but

multitudes of others lie concealed in the galleries of ancient libraries.

f Reineirus, under the title of Waldenses, includes all the heretics of

that period, Pasaginians, Albigenses, Waldenses, Josephists, Arnoldists,

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To attempt any exposition of all these points would far

exceed my limits, I shall therefore confine myself to what

he says in reference to that particular doctrine by which

they were allied to us. " They hold," says he, "that none

of the ordinances of the church, which have been introduced

since Christ's Ascension,\* ought to be observed, as being

of no value."

" The feasts,f fasts, orders, blessings, offices of the

church, and the like, they utterly reject."

In the sketch which Reincirus\_ furnishes of the doctrines

of the Waldenses, there is not the slightest allusion to any

erroneous opinions regarding the doctrines and principles

of the gospel ; and this silence on his part is a noble testi-

mony to the soundness of their creed, lie had himself

been among them, was a man of talents and learning, and

intimately acquainted with all their doctrinal sentiments :

and, having apostatized from their faith, and become their

bitterest enemy and persecutor, no one will suppose that

he wanted the inclination to bring against them any accu-

sation, which bore the least similitude to the truth. The

errors of which he accuses them, are such as no Seventh-day

Baptist of the present day would shrink from the charge

of holding, since they all, in one way or other, resolve them-

selves into the unfounded claims of the ecclesiastical order,

or the substitution for doctrines of the commandments of

men.

In the twelfth century, a colony of the persecuted Wal-

Henricians, &c, from which it appears that these names were derived

from local causes.

\* This of course included the keeping of the first day, which the

Catholics unanimously declare originated with their church.

f In the time of Reineirus, and even to this day, in Catholic count ri

the Dominical day is regarded as a feast, or festival of the church, as

much as Easter, Christmas, &c.

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denses obtained permission to settle at Saltz, on the river

Eger.\* They are represented as working upon, and de-

spising, the holy days of the church, f Another eminent

Bohemian author, in giving an account of the Waldenses

of that country, observes, ^Moreover they say that of six

days, one day is as good as another, but as God had

enjoined rest upon the seventh, mankind were bound to its

observance/'J

An inquisitor of tlie Church of Rome, who declares 'that

he had exact knowledge of the Waldenses, at whose trials

he had assisted many times, and in different countries,

expressly says " that they contemn all ecclesiastical customs

which they do not read of in the Gospel; such as the

observation of Candlemas, Palm Sunday, the adoration of

the cross on Good Friday, and the reconciliation of peni-

tents. They despise the feast of Easter, and all the festi-

vals of Christ and the saints, § and say that one day is as

good as another, working on holydays when they can do

so without being taken notice of."

The same testimony is borne of them by«Eneas Sylvius,

who ascended the pontifical chair with the title of Pope

Pius II. Indeed, of all the multitude of Catholic authors

\* These are particularly mentioned by Crantz, in his History of the

Bohemian Brethren.

-j- This is important testimony, because the Catholics never dreamed

of attempting to establish the sacredness of the first day from the autho-

rity of the Scriptures, but referred it at once to the power of Holy

Mother Church. Consequently, the Dominical day was regarded as a

holy day of the church.

% It remained for more modern theologians to discover, that the in-

spired writers were mistaken, and that instead of the seventh, it was\*a

seventh day, or the seventh part of time.

\ First-day doubtlessly included, which is ever spoken of, by the

Catholic writers, as a festival of Christ, and a holyday of the Church,

and regarded in no other light.

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of eminence, who have mentioned this people, every one

bears testimony to this peculiarity in their doctrinal senti-

ments and religious practices. At a later period, and

among more modern writers, we have every reason to be-

lieve that this feature of their faith has been purposely

disguised. Nevertheless the candour of some has led

them to make very important concessions upon this point.

Mosheim expressly declares that the Pasaginiszu observed

the Jewish Sabbath. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, says, u I

conceive that the old Waldenses, who rejected all the festi-

vals of the church, and went back to the original Sabbath,

were much more consistent with themselves, than tl

gentlemen, the modern Protestants, who, though they dis-

card all the others, still retain the Dominical day/'

But, lest I weary my readers by a multiplication of testi-

monies, I shall add but one more quotation, which contains

a concession that, coming from the quarter and at the time

it does, I consider important. Mr. Benedict, in his History

of the Baptists, says, that during the progress of his his-

torical inquiries, he has met with many facts, where it

seemed as if the heretics, so called, were unsound on the

doctrine of the Sabbath, as established by law; but, he

goes on, it is not certain that all whom the ancient inquisi-

tors accused of being Sabbath-breakers, would come under

the head of Sabbatarians.\*

It appears to me morally certain that the Seventh-day

Baptists may trace through the Waldenses, at least that

portion of them who were never united to the Church of

Rome, an uninterrupted succession to the apostolic age.

\* Of this I would remark that the Dominical day was established by

law, not as the Sabbath, but as a festival of the church ; and that what-

ever uncertainty may exist about all the ancient heretics being Sabba-

tarians, it is very certain that few, if any, of them were observers of

the first day, at least for a very long period.

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Indeed, of all the multitude of writers who have treated

of this people, all, without exception, are unanimous in

declaring that they rejected all the feasts and festivals of

the church, as well as infant baptism, and would not ob-

serve any ordinance which they did not read of in Scrip-

ture. Others, especially the ancient Catholics, accuse

them of Judaism, because, according to their testimony,

they kept the Jewish Sabbath. The Council of Lombez

derided the Good Men of Lyons as Sabbatharians. They

were condemned by the Lateran Council of 1139 for re-

fusing to observe the festivals of the church,\* and the

same accusation was brought against them in canons,

synods, chronicles, conferences, decrees, sermons, homilies,

bulls, confessions, creeds, liturgies, &c. It is hardly pos-

sible that all this concurrent testimony, published at diffe-

rent times and in different countries, could have been

fabricated. It is barely possible that such men as Ever-

vinus, of Steinfield ; Peter, Abbot of Clugny ; Ecbertus

\* That the Catholic writers regarded the Dominical day as a festival

of the Church can be very easily proved. That they regard it as such

to this day in Catholic countries is an undeniable fact. When they

speak of the festivals of the Church, they include the Dominical day as

much as Christmas, Palm Sunday, or Easter. They smile when they

hear learned Protestant sages attempt to prove from the Scriptures

either the abrogation or a change of the Sabbath. We have also the

testimony of a host of Protestants in the earlier part of the Reforma-

tion, who acknowledged that the observation of the first day had no

other foundation than the authority of the Church, among whom is the

celebrated John Calvin, who says — "The old fathers put in the place

of the Sabbath the day which we call Sunday. King Charles I. declares

that the celebration of the feast of Easter was instituted by the same

authority that changed the Sabbath into the Lord's day, or Sunday ;

for it will not be found in Scripture where Saturday is discharged to

be kept, or turned into Sunday. Therefore, my opinion is, that those

who will not keep this feast may as well return to the observation of

Saturday, and refuse the weekly Sunday, since it was the Church's

authority that changed the one and instituted the other,"

7

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Schonangiensis, a very celebrated author in his day;

Ermengendus, a ruler both spiritual and temporal ; Alex-

ander III., in council ; Alanus Magnus ; Izam, the trou-

badour, and an inquisitor ; Favin, Mazeray, Reineirus

Saccho, etc., could have been mistaken upon this point.

But we are not to conclude that no persons bearing the

name of Waldenses saw and imitated the practices of the

Catholics, in the observance of the holydays of the church.

That many of them, particularly those branches that

seceded from the Church of Rome, paid a superstitious

veneration to the Dominical day, we arc ready to admit.

We have no data for tracing the extent of those persons

who held the truth unsophisticated. A considerable por-

tion of the writers to whom reference has been made were

Catholics, — men high in office in that church, and justly

distinguished for natural and acquired abilities. As this

class of men placed great reliance upon tradition and custom

for the defence of their forms and ceremonies, and laid no

claim to Scripture testimony or command to sanction the

rites of their church, it is not Btrange that they should be

open and unreserved in all their dc.tails of the facts, and

in the freedom of their comments on ancient affairs, which

go to prove the Sabbatarian character of the heretical

sects. With modern writers, particularly those of English

and German extraction, the case is materially different,

as they belong to a class which repudiates all arguments

from any source but the Scriptures for Sunday-keeping,

and who take unusual pains to date the origin of Sabba-

tarianism as late as possible. Indeed, as it appears that

the term Sabbatharians was first bestowed upon this very

ancient and holy people, I must consider it as a most

honourable appellation when applied to our denomination.

I am surprised, that though Presbyterians, Episcopalians

and every other class of Protestant dissenters, have striven

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to establish an affinity with the old Waldenses, our own

denomination have remained so inert upon the matter.

Can it be possible that among all our ministers not one

was acquainted with the facts bearing upon this case ?

I must confess that it gives me inexpressible pleasure to

think that we have conclusive testimony, that, for so many

centuries, in the midst, too, of Catholic countries, God

had reserved to himself such a goodly number who had

not bowed the knee to Baal, and whose mouths had not

kissed him ; for certainly next to idolatry is that sin which

would substitute for doctrines the commandments of men,

and neglect the Sabbath of God's appointment, giving

preference to a man-made institution.

There is something extremely ridiculous in the manner

in which modern writers attempt to explain this feature

in the faith of the ancient Waldenses, and in this particu-

lar they are highly favoured by the popular prejudices of

the day. They bring long quotations from ancient Roman

authors to prove that the Waldenses rejected every ordi-

nance not commanded in the Scripture, but are very careful

not to inform their readers that in the opinion of the same

authors, Sunday-keeping was one of those ordinances.

" Because they would not observe the festivals of Christ

and the saints," says an author of this stamp, " they were

falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also." However,

he suppresses the fact that, whatever title Sunday may bear

in modern phraseology, in the times of which we are

speaking it was neither spoken of nor regarded as the

Sabbath, but as a festival of the church the same as

Easter or Christmas. All authorities are unanimous in

declaring that the Waldenses had been from time imme-

morial in the possession of the Holy Scriptures, and that

all, even the children, were deeply read in them. The

French Bible was translated from the original manuscript

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which the Waldenses had retained, according to the testi-

mony of the translators, from the times of the Apostles,

and which they handed down, in their native tongue, from

generation to generation. The following quotation may

serve to give some idea of their proficiency in the Scrip-

tures : —

" In the time of a great persecution of the Waldenses of

Merendol and Provence," says Perrin, "a certain monk

was deputed by the Bishop of Cavaillon to hold a confe-

rence with them, that they might be convinced of their

errors, and the effusion of blood prevented. But the monk

returned in confusion, owning that, in his whole life, he

had never known bo much of the Scriptures as he had

learned during the few days that he had been conversing

with the heretics. The Bishop, however, Bent among them

a number of doctors, young men who had lately come from

the Sorbonne, which, at that time, was the very centre ot

theological subtlety at Paris. One of these publicly owned

that he understood more of the doctrine of salvation from

the answers of little children in their catechisms, than by

all the disputations he had ever heard before." A Domi-

nican inquisitor declared that for the first time in his life

he heard the ten commandments of the Decalogue from

the mouth of a Waldensian heretic.

That the deportment and daily walk of the Waldenfi

was conformable with their religious profession and scrip-

tural knowledge, we have every reason to believe. Rci-

nerus Saccho declares that they live righteously before

men, believing rightly concerning God in every particular,

and holding all the articles contained in the Apostle r fl

Creed. "The first lesson," says he, "that the Waldel

teach those whom they bring over to their party, is to

instruct them what kind of persons the disciples of Chr

ought to be, and this they do by the doctrine of the evan-

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gelists and apostles, saying that those only are the fol-

lowers of the apostles who imitate their manner of life."

An ancient inquisitor gives of them the following ac-

count : —

" These heretics are known by their manners and con-

versation, for they are orderly and modest in their beha-

viour and deportment. They avoid all appearance of pride

in their dress ; they neither indulge in finery of attire, nor

are they remarkable for being mean and ragged. They

avoid commerce, that they may be free from falsehood and

deceit. They get their livelihood by manual industry, as

day labourers or mechanics, and their teachers are weavers

or tailors. They are not anxious about amassing riches,

but content themselves with the necessaries of life. They

are chaste, temperate, and sober. They abstain from

anger. Even when they work they either learn or teach.

In like manner, also, their women are modest, avoiding

backbiting, foolish jesting, and levity of speech, especially

abstaining from lies or swearing."

It may be interesting to notice in this connexion some

of the peculiarities of their religious practices.

They constantly appealed to the Scriptures both of the

Old and New Testament, as their only guide and rule of

faith and practice as to religious duties. They are perpe-

tually accused by Catholic writers of rejecting all human

institutions, traditions, and inventions, and both friends

and foes are unanimous in confessing that there was

scarcely a person among them, either man, or woman, or

child, that was not better acquainted with Holy Writ than

the doctors of the church. They were likewise accused of

being without priests. This must be understood as apply-

ing to the absence among them of a certain class of men

paid or pensioned by yearly salaries for discharging the

ministrations of the gospel. An old historian who was in-

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timately acquainted with their affairs, observes, " That

they severely denounce the whole body of the clergy on

account of their idle course of life, and say that they ought

to labour with their hands, as did the Apostles."

Another says — " Their preachers are weavers and me-

chanics, who get their own living, and arc not chargeable

upon their hearers. " The same author goes on to say that

even their missionaries were accustomed to travel from

place to place in the character of travelling merchants:

and this, he assures us, Subserved to good purposes; first,

they were enabled to support themselves : and second, they

gained thereby readier access to persons of rank and

fortune.

Their treatment of females in their religions assemblies

was liberal and courteous in the extreme. They were not

only allowed to preach, but bore an equal part with the

men in all the business of the church ; and the deeper we

go into antiquity the more evident does this appear.

Against war, capital punishment, and oaths, they Wert

decided in expressing their disapprobation. Their op

sition to bearing arms, and to war in all its operation-.

was unanimous and unequivocal. Whoever commanded

them to the field they refused to obey, alleging that they

could not conscientiously comply. No contingencies would

induce them to assume the weapons of deatli ; and this

peculiarity was well understood by all the world, and made

the onsets of the inquisitors and crusaders upon these wea-

ponless Christians the more cruel and contemptible. Con-

cerning oaths, they appear to have adopted the language

of our Saviour in a literal sense, where he commands his

disciples, " Swear not at all."

Such were their rules. Whatever deviations there might

have been w^ere exceptions. Such deviations, it is natural

to suppose, frequently occurred; but they generally came

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from those portions of the community who had been edu-

cated in the faith of Rome.

As it relates to their Baptist character I shall produce

but one quotation, although a multitude might be given.

" As the Catholics of these times baptized by immersion,

the Paterines, by what name soever they were called, as

Manicheans, Gazara, Josephites, Pasaginians, &c, made

no complaint of the mode of baptizing ; but when they

were examined upon the subject, they objected vehemently

against the baptism of infants, and condemned it as an

error."\*

Of their doctrinal sentiments we can know but little, as

no other portion of their history is involved in so much

obscurity. Reinerus Saccho, however, represents them as

believing rightly in everything pertaining to God and the

Apostles' Creed. And they must have been evangelical

Christians ; for, when we see religious societies, century

after century, holding on to their principles, and persisting

in their religious practices, amidst the severest persecutions

that were ever experienced, there is irrefragable evidence

that they were built on a firm foundation. Indeed, it is

hardly probable that among people whose religious teachers

were obliged to depend upon manual labour for a liveli-

hood, there would be much time wasted in unprofitable

discussions about abstract points of theology.

The locality of these Christians, before they w^ere dis-

persed by persecution, was in the principality of Piedmont,

which derives its name from the singularity of its situation

at the foot of the Alps, — a prodigious range of mountains

that form a natural boundary between Italy, France,

Switzerland, and Germany. It is bounded on the north

by Savoy, on the east by the duchies of Milan and Mont-

\* Robinson. History of Baptism.

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ferrat, on the south by the county of Nice, and on the

west by France. In ancient times it formed a part of

Lombardy, but recently it has become an appanage of the

Sardinian monarch, whose capital is Turin, one of the

finest cities of Europe. It comprises an extensive tract of

rich and fruitful valleys, embosomed in mountains, which

are again encircled in mountains, intersected with deep

and rapid rivers, and exhibiting, in strong contrast, the

utmost beauty and luxuriance with the most frightful

spectacles of barrenness and desolation. The country is

an interchange of hill and vale, mountain and plain, through

which four principal rivers wind their way to the Mediter-

ranean. Besides these, there are eight-and-twenty smaller

streams, which, winding their courses in different direc-

tions, contribute to the beauty and fertility of these Eden-

like valleys.

The Pyrenees are another huge mountain range, that

separate France from Spain, and extend from the Mediter-

ranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, a distance of at I

two hundred miles by a breadth of one hundred. This

surface, like the former, is wonderfully diversified with

hills and dales, mountains and valleys, in which ph

and all along the borders of Spain, throughout the south

of France, among and below the Alps, along the Khine,

and even to Bohemia and Passau, thousands of Christians

were found, even in the darkest times, who preserved the

faith in its purity, rejected the traditions of men, took the

Scripture for their guide and rule of conduct, and were

persecuted only for righteousness' sake. This place, in

the desert, mountainous country, almost inaccessible and

unknown to the rest of the world, was probably the place

especially meant in Revelation, as prepared of God for

the woman, where she should be fed and nourished during

the reign of Antichrist.

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These people were deeply imbued with the spirit of

missions ; but in this, as everything else, they closely

adhered to apostolic example. They had none of the

cumbrous machinery of modern times in their arrangements

for disseminating the light of the gospel. They knew

nothing of supporting in worldly state expensive teachers

in foreign countries, or of building costly chapels for them

to preach in. But, in the simple style of itinerating mer-

chants or pedlers, their missionaries travelled from country

to country, carrying with them a few pages of the Scrip-

tures in manuscript, holding little meetings, ordaining

deacons, and sustaining the hopes and faith of the perse-

cuted and tempted ones.

Of their modes of worship we know but little. Their

churches, however, were divided into compartments, such

as in modern times are called associations ; and these were

again subdivided into congregations. They generally as-

sembled for worship in private houses or in the shade of

groves. Their churches contained from two to fifteen

hundred members. In times of persecution they met in

small companies of six, ten, fifteen, or twenty, but never

in large assemblies. Besides these churches established

in their mountain fastnesses, the Waldenses, or Passagines,\*

had instituted churches in nearly all the principal cities in

the south of France and the northern parts of Italy. At

Modena their place of meeting was in a large manufactory,

which w T as owned and worked by the brethren. In Milan

they occupied almost an entire street, and their church is

said to have contained nearly two thousand communicants.

In 1056, their church in Avignon contained six hundred

members, and a remnant continued, notwithstanding various

reverses of fortune, so late as 1698. We are also informed

\* All writers, both ancient and modern, concur in admitting that the

branch of the Waldenses called Passagines, were Sabbatarians.

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that there were churches of the same order at Brescia,

Ferrara, Verona, Rimini, Romandiola, and many other

places. For many centuries they remained untroubled by

the state ; but the clergy preached and published books

against them. In the eleventh and twelfth century they

comprised the bulk of the inhabitants of Lombardy, and

several men eminent for rank, station, and talents, belonged

to their communion. It is to these that M. de la Roque

refers when he says, "We have had many worthy and

pious men, well instructed in science and the history of

the Fathers, who were neither ashamed nor afraid to adopt

both the practice and defence of the observation of the

seventh day against their cjjgonents; and, contrary to

popular custom, withstood every allurement and tempta-

tion that the enlightened and persecuting ages could afford\*

The observation of the Sabbath remained not with them a

matter of doubtful disputation, as that of the first day did

with the Rev. Dr. Watts, and many others who were en-

gaged in the controversy upon that subject." A modern

French writer, in treating the history of the Gallican

church, observes that it is well known that all Lombard v,

the south of France, and even the mountainous district in

the north of Spain, were infested by a class of heretics,

who not only derided all the festivals of the church, but

kept the Jewish Sabbath; "and I have heard," he con-

tinues, " that the primitive Waldenses were guilty of the

same practices."

From these plain facts, and a multitude of others that

might be recorded, we may conclude that a large propor-

tion of these ancient people were Sabbatarians, — were

Seventh-day Baptists. In tracing their peculiarities, I

have been forcibly reminded of our own denominational

traits, especially at a former period.

There is no doubt but that they continued for ages, pre-

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serving a sameness of views, and keeping the command-

ments of God and the faith of Jesus. When their congre-

gations became too numerous, they separated, and formed

new assemblies. They continually refused to observe any

religious ordinances for which they found no warrant in

the Scriptures. They refused baptism to children, only

admitting to that ordinance those persons of whose repen-

tance and spiritual regeneration no doubts were entertained.

They maintained church discipline upon all, even their

ministers. And though cast down, they were not disheart-

ened ; though persecuted, they were not extirpated, until

the days for their prophesying\* were accomplished, until

they had borne witness for the truth during the time ap-

pointed, when it pleased the great Head of the Church to

permit their enemies to consummate their everlasting glory,

by bestowing upon them the crown of martyrdom, and,

from being the church militant, they were removed, almost

in a body, to join the church triumphant.

Of their Sabbatarian character there is not the least

room for doubt. Indeed, whatever novelty may be con-

nected with this idea, I believe that every one, upon mature

consideration, will perceive its consistency. They were

planted in the valleys — if not in the apostolic age — before

the antichristian power had obtained the dominance at

Rome. Robinson asserts that there were many churches

of Jewish Christians in the imperial city during the fourth

century, which well accords with the declaration of Pope

Gregory VII., that the Waldensian heresy originated from

a company of Jewish heretics, w T ho removed from Rome

thither in the time of Constantine the Great; while a mul-

titude of authorities, both friends and foes, are unanimous

in declaring that they were never subjected to Rome, but

persisted to the end in the abhorrence of all her feasts and

festivals.

\* Reference to Revelation.

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SECTION III.

CONCERNING THEIR PERSECUTION 8, DISPERSION, AND EXTIRPA-

TION — MORE ACCOUNTS OF THEIR SABBATARIAN CHARACTER.

It was not until the twelfth century that the Walden-

ses, and other heretical parties, appear in history as a

people exposed to the persecuting edicts of Rome. And

even then it seems to have been occasioned, in a great

measure, by the great success that crowned the labours of

Peter Waldo, whose followers first obtained the name of

Leonists, or Poor Men of Lyons ; and who, when pe

cuted, fled to the mountains, and became incorporated

with the other inhabitants of the valleys. By this means,

the Waldenses were brought into collision witli the power

of Rome, who, arming against them the civil authorities

proceeded to consummate their destruction and extirpa-

tion. At this time it appears, that under the protection

and through the connivance of the Counts of Toulouse,

the Viscount of Bcziers, and many others of the French

nobility, a score of the principal cities in Languedoe. Pro-

vence, and Dauphiny, were filled with the different here-

tical parties. But the civil power, and even the more

summary efforts of the Inquisition, appear to have been

too slow in their operations to meet the wishes of papal

vengeance, although persecuted under the agency of Do-

minic, the chief inquisitor. The Pope was dissatisfied —

new schemes were projected, apparently more mild ami

conciliatory, but under this pleasing exterior was con-

cealed the most abominable treachery. The papal legi

proposed holding a public debate, in which the point-

issue between the parties should be decided by amicable

arbitration. To this reasonable offer the unsuspecting

brethren readily consented. The place of conference

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agreed upon was Montreal, near Carcassone. Two umpires

were appointed from each side ; those of the Catholics were

the Bishops of Villeneuse and Auxerre, and those of the

opposite party, R. de Bot and Anthony Riviere. On the

part of the Albigenses, a number of the pastors were

appointed to manage the debate, of whom the principal

was Arnold Hot. He first arrived at the appointed place,

accompanied by a number of his friends. He was met on

behalf of the papacy, by a bishop named Eusas, the re-

nowned Dominic, two legates of the Pope, and several others

of the Catholic clergy. According to Catholic historians,

who are very concise and remarkably unanimous in their ac-

counts of this celebrated conference, the points which Arnold

undertook to prove were, that the sacrament of the mass

was idolatry, that the baptism of infants was unscriptural,

that the festivals of the church were heathen appointments,\*

and, finally, that the Pope was Antichrist, and the Church

of Rome the harlot mentioned in Revelations. In main-

tenance of these points, Arnold drew up certain proposi-

tions, which he transmitted to the bishop, who required

two weeks to answer them, which was granted. At the

appointed time the bishop appeared, and read his reply in

the public assembly. Arnold requested permission to make

a verbal answer, only entreating their patient hearing if he

took a considerable time in answering so prolix a writing.

He was answered with fair speeches and many promises of

a patient hearing. He then discoursed upon the subject

for four days, with such perspicuity, fluency and precision,

such order and forcible reasoning, that a powerful impres-

sion was made upon the minds of the audience. He

finally called upon the Catholics for their defence, when

\* That is, that they were adopted from the ancient heathen festivals ;

and as the Dominical day was in that time regarded as a festival of the

church, of course it must have been included with the others.

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the Bishop of Villeneuse declared that the conference must

be broken up, because the army of the crusaders was

approaching, and near at hand.

What he asserted was true. The papal armies advanced,

and all points of controversy were instantly decided by

fire and fagot. It is estimated that not less than two

hundred thousand of these innocent people perished in the

short space of two months. The war of extermination con-

tinued twenty years, and one million persons were put to

death. These disastrous scenes occurred in the commence-

ment of the twelfth century, and three hundred years pre-

vious to the dawn of the Reformation in Germany. During

this long period, the circumstances of the Waldenscs were

always afflictive, but at some times and in some countries

more so than in others. The Church of Rome, with the

armies of crusaders who were always at hand, and ah\

ready to lend their assistance for the extirpation of

heresy, and the monks of the Inquisition, who were never

more numerous and active, seemed determined to extermi-

nate them from the face of the earth. But the contests of

the Catholic states among themselves, the quarrels of the

popes with the secular princes, whose affairs they attempted

to control, combined with other causes, afforded these

victims of ecclesiastical tyranny some short and temporary

seasons of repose.

Of the multitudes who perished beneath the iron power of

the Inquisition, we have little account. Nevertheless some

details of cases of individual suffering have been given to

the world, and multitudes of others lie concealed among

the manuscripts preserved in ancient libraries. From

records of this kind, Philip de Mornay, a French author of

some distinction, composed a w T ork purporting to be the

memoirs of celebrated Waldensian martyrs, in which de-

tailed and circumstantial narratives of many trials were

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given, together with the interrogatories and answers of the

criminals, and the heresies of which they were accused.

According to these statements they were perpetually

accused of Judaism, of practising circumcision, and ob-

serving the Jewish Sabbath. The former charges they

repelled with disdain. Of the latter, they generally replied

that God had commanded the observance of the seventh

day, which command was binding upon Christians, as much

as Jews, since neither Christ nor his Apostles had ever

commanded its abrogation.

Some of these accounts are very interesting, and the

Sabbatarians reasoned in precisely the same manner as we

do now.

On the 14th of September, 1492, about thirty persons

were committed to the inquisitorial dungeons of Toulouse,

upon a charge of Judaism, which, as every one knows,

was considered a mortal sin in Catholic countries. Of

these, the most eminent was Anthony Ferrar, who had

been a pastor or teacher in the Sabbatarian church of that

city. After remaining in prison ten days, he received a

visit from an Italian monk named Gregory, to whom his

examination had been committed. He was accompanied by

two other monks, who were to act as witnesses. After a

long conference touching his age, property, manner of

living, associates, relations, and similar subjects, Gregory

at last came to the matter in question.

Greg. — But, Anthony, you must be a liar and a deceiver,

for I have been credibly informed that yourself, and all

your friends, were of the cursed race of Israel.

An. — It is false, we were all honest Frenchmen, and

Christians, followers of Jesus.

Grreg. — Nay ! but you were Jews, for instead of baptizing

your infant children, you have all the males circumcised.

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An. — You do very wrong to accuse us of that practice ;

for it is something of which we are entirely innocent.

Grreg. — Hey ! do you then baptize your children ?

An. — We do not, neither do we circumcise them.

Grreg. — Nevertheless, you must be Jews, since you say

that the law of Moses is still binding.

An. — We say that the ten commandments are still

binding.

Greg. — Yes, and instead of observing the festivals of the

Holy Church, and honouring the holy day of the Lord, on

which he arose from the dead, you were aeeu>tomed to

meet for worship upon the old Sabbath, or Saturday.

An. — We did, indeed, rest and attend to divine worship

upon the seventh day, even as God commanded.

My limits will not permit me to transcribe the remainder

of this interesting conversation. Anthony, with his associ-

ates in misfortune, were subsequently burned in the market-

place in Toulouse, and all died praising God that they

were worthy to suifer for his name. Hundreds of others,

of whom the names of Jean de Borgen, Matthew Hainer,

Auguste Riviere, Philippe Nicola, and Henri Maisoli,

have been preserved, were accused of and confessed to the

same.

" Of the many who were burned, and otherwise destroyed

for Judaism/' observes a Spanish author of the sixteenth

century, "it is not probable that one-tenth were of the

race of Israel, but heretics, who, for persisting in saying

that the law of Moses was still binding, were accused of

Jewish practices, such as circumcision and sabbatizing, to

the latter of which they uniformly plead guilty."

A Dominican inquisitor, in giving an account of the

proceedings of that infernal tribunal in the north of Spain,

declares that since it was known that many of the heretics

were accustomed to solemnize the old Sabbath by religious

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worship, and an absolute inattention to secular employments,

it became the policy of the Holy Office to take notice of such

shops as were shut up on that day, and of such persons as

were found to be absent from worldly engagements. " The

result answered my expectations,' ■ he continues, " for when

these people were arrested, and being brought before me,

were shown the rack, they generally confessed their Judaical

practices, at least so far as it related to sabbatizing, which

the holy church had expressly forbidden."

Other testimonies of this same character might be pro-

duced, but enough has been said to prove to our own deno-

mination, and to the world, that at the time when the

crusading armies made their frightful onsets upon the

heretical churches of Piedmont, the South of France, and

Catalonia, there were large communities of Sabbath-keep-

ing Christians in all these parts. But historians are

unanimous in confessing that they were drowned in blood,

and driven into exile. Their race disappeared, and their

opinions ceased to influence society. In hundreds of

villages, all the inhabitants were massacred with a blind

fury. Year after year new armies continued to arrive,

more numerous than were employed in other wars. It is

impossible to ascertain how many were destroyed by these

dreadful crusades, but it is certain that the visible churches

of these Christians were extirpated by fire and sword;

though a bleeding remnant escaped by flight, concealment,

and Catholic conformity. t Of the details of their sufferings

and miseries it is impossible to give in this place even an

abridged account. For many consecutive years they suf-

fered every species of cruelty, barbarity, and persecution,

which the crusades and the Inquisition could inflict. Those

who remained were indiscriminately slaughtered, and of

those who fled, multitudes miserably perished by the way.

Their total extirpation was effected in 1686, at which time

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the ancient Waldensian and Albigensian churches ceased

to exist. It is true, that in 1689, three years after the

expulsion of the whole fraternity, a company, sword in

hand, fought their way back to the valleys of Piedmont, of

which they took possession, and in which their descendants

still reside. This company, under the command of one

Amand, committed the most frightful acts of wickedness

and barbarity, and exhibited in all their conduct a spirit

entirely different from the ancient Waidenses. Their leader

acted in the double capacity of spiritual pastor and military

chieftain, and the creeds and formulas which he instituted,

and which are still observed among them, are comparatively

of modern date.

In closing these very brief and imperfect accounts

of these ancient witnesses for the truth, a few remarks

may not be inappropriate, more especially as I have made

a claim regarding their denominational character, that has

never, to my knowledge, been advanced by our friends,

and which will not be readily conceded by our opponent.-.

If we take the Waidenses under the great variety of

names which they bore at different periods and in different

locations, it appears that they were by far the most impor-

tant branch of dissenters from the Church of Rome, and

that they were divided among themselves like the present

dissenters in England. The more I have investigated this

matter, the more evident it appears ; and as it would be

unwise for us to attempt to establish an affinity with all of

them in the distinctive feature of our order, it is certain

that our claims at least to a due proportion can never be

disproved. That many of them observed the seventh day,

and that some of them paid a superstitious veneration to

the first day, is quite as certain as the fact that they were

all persecuted by the Church of Rome. The farther we go

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back into antiquity, the more distinctly does their Sab-

batarian character appear. Nothing but the blindness of

bigotry can induce any man, or class of men, who have

paid the smallest attention to the accounts of all the

Catholic authors concerning them, to deny that complaints

against them for disregarding the festivals of the church,

in which they included the Dominicd day, were wide-

spread and long-continued ; and that almost equally with

the former were the accusations of their paying an undue

regard to Saturday, or the Jewish Sabbath. On the other

hand, it is clear, from the terms " some of them," and "a

part," with similar expressions employed by the writers in

question, that they did not accuse all of having fallen into

this monstrous heresy. The keeping of the first day

appears to be the last thing that is given up by those who

withdraw from the old, corrupt establishments ; and no-

thing affords a clearer evidence of the prejudices of educa-

tion than the slow reluctance with which it is yielded, as

they find that the proofs for its support from the Scriptures

fail them, and the moral and immutable character of the

ancient Sabbath comes up to their view in its practical

operations. Such has been the case in all places where

we have certain knowledge, and the probability is that it

was so in the dark ages beyond our sight.

It is not for us to claim the whole body of dissenters of

the better class ; but we may claim, and I believe that

candid men of all parties will concede, upon a thorough

examination of the ancient Catholic authors, that Sabbata-

rian sentiments have prevailed much more extensively

among these ancient sects than has generally been sup-

posed. Neither my time nor my limits would allow a full

investigation of this very interesting subject. The most

that I could hope to do was to make a beginning. The

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field for research is very wide, and upon the Sabbatarian

question it is wholly unoccupied. And here I would re-

mark, for the information of those who may feel disposed

to examine the subject hereafter, that it is only by an

immediate reference to the old Catholic writers that we

can ever hope to obtain much information upon this point.

These speak with great plainness, and without paraphrase,

omission, or concealment, of the rejecters of the church-

festivals, and the observers of the Jewish Sabbath. They

were open and undisguised, and were far from exhibiting

the cautiousness of the moderns upon this subject. They

had no concern about the proofs for the observance of the

first day, and no fear of publishing to the world how many

of the incorrigible heretics refused to venerate it. It made

no difference to them if it was not found in the Bible,

since it was in the decrees of the councils and the bulls of

the popes, which, with them, were of equal authority with

the Scripture command.

For a long time their complaints ran high on this head

against many of the seceding parties ; and it is well for us

that this testimony is placed beyond the reach of modern

writers, where it cannot be garbled, mutilated, and sup-

pressed. It is not to be expected that our first-day breth-

ren, even those of the Baptist persuasion, would take any

pains to prove that these apostolic communities were Sab-

batarian, though possessing the knowledge that such was

the fact. It has been their policy to represent us as insig-

nificant in number and recent in origin. Unfortunately,

we have contributed to extend that delusion. For my own

part, I am of the opinion that in the dark ages there were

many more of our denomination than there are at present.

Not that any in these ages were called Seventh-day Bap-

tists ; no such thing: but that multitudes, like ourselves.

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refused to observe the festivals of the church, contended

that the Decalogue was moral and immutable, and refused

baptism to any but professing believers. Like ourselves,

they took the Scriptures for their guide and rule of faith

in everything, and were most decided in rejecting every-

thing for which they found no warrant in that holy book,

despising all human appointments, all priestly traditions,

and man-made institutions. For many ages the valleys

formed an asylum, to which all seceding parties from the

Romish hierarchy fled for protection. It is not strange —

indeed, we might expect — that this amalgamation with new

parties would beget new customs, which in the end might

entirely change their denominational character. This was

certainly the case as it respects the discipline and govern-

ment of their churches, which for a number of the first cen-

turies partook of all the ease and freedom characteristic of

modern Baptist communities, then was modelled by de-

grees into a Presbyterian form, and finally ended in some-

thing of the Episcopalian character. Such denominational

changes are neither new nor strange, especially when we

consider the severity of penal statutes on the one hand,

and the spirit of conformity, lukewarmness, and indiffe-

rence on the other, which continually operate to prepare

dissenters for an approximation to the established church,

and, finally, for a union with it.

At the time of the Reformation these old communities

were in circumstances of peculiar trials and distress. Xew

persecutions of unusual severity had been stirred up against

them by the Catholics, whose resentment had been exas-

perated in the keenest manner, in consequence of the new

and unexpected attacks that had been made upon the

authority of the church by the Protestant reformers, and

who were thereby led to vent their spite upon all whom

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they found without their pale, whatever might be their

innocence, or however quiet and inoffensive they might

have been. Thus harassed and distressed, these afflicted

people were ready to submit to almost any terms, for the

sake of gaining new friends and protectors ; and one com-

pany after another of those who had been driven into

exile, and were settled in Bohemia, Germany, and the

Netherlands, became associated, as an incipient measure,

and in the end were amalgamated with, the Reformed or

Presbyterian party, under the direction of Calvin and

Zuinglius. Of the fact of this union of the Wald ei

with the Reformers there can be no dispute; but the pro-

cess of this confederacy, and the terms upon which it Wftfl

consummated, have never been satisfactorily decided. It

is morally certain, however, that the subject of the Sab-

bath was discussed by some of these parties, since Ave are

informed by various historical documents that Calvin ob-

jected to the seventh day, but conceded that the old

Fathers had substituted the first day in its place, and

proposed, as an instance of Christian liberty, to reject

both, and make a Sabbath of the fifth day of the week.

This overture, we are informed, was indignantly rejected;

but there is reason to believe that the observance of the

first day, together with infant baptism, were among the

changes in their denominational character which were

brought about by their union with the German reformers.

In 1530, a Waldensian community, located in Provence,

sent two of their ministers, George Morrel and Peter

Masson, as deputies to the Swiss reformers, which resulted

in their union with the new party. These deputies, after

their return, declared to their brethren how many and

great errors their old ministers had kept them in, and how

their new allies had happily set them right. Subsequently

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a part of them, at least, became one with the Huguenots

of France, and the Protestants of Germany.

But, so late as 1823, an English clergyman, named

Gilly, visited the Vaudois in the valley of Perosa, making

his journey thither by Turin, and had an interview with

Mr. Peyrani, who was then seventy years old, and is since

dead. He was the successor of a line of pastors whom

tradition would extend to the Apostles themselves. In his

possession was a library amply supplied with books, and

parchments, and paper manuscripts, accumulated by his

ancestors. According to his accounts, "in the summer,

when these pastoral people are tending their cattle at a

distance from the valleys, and occupying their chalets, or

temporary cabins, upon the summits of the mountains, the

clearness of the atmosphere allows the sound of the Sab-

bath bells to reach them, calling them to the worship of

the Creator, beneath the canopy of heaven. They as-

semble in a convenient place on the green turf, to listen

to the exhortations of their minister, who follows them on

every seventh day to their remotest pasturings." From

this it appears that a portion of them, at least, still observe

the ancient Sabbath.

SECTION IV.

SEMI-JUDAISERS — THEIR ORIGIN, HISTORY, ETC.

We have already seen that the different branches of the

great Waldensian community were known under a variety

of names, which were generally significative of some dis-

tinguished leader among them, the country whence they

came, or something descriptive of their peculiar tenets.

The epithet of Semi-Judaisers, which was applied as a

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term of reproach to a sect which flourished in Transyl-

vania, Holland, and some parts of Germany, and even

extended itself into Russia and Poland, in the latter part

of the fourteenth and during the commencement of the

fifteenth centuries, is of itself sufficient to show the Sab-

batarian character of the people it was designed to distin-

guish. To Judaise, Judaising, and Judaisers, being syno-

nymous terms of reproach, or rather terms appellative, —

the former to signify the action of sabbatizing; and the

latter to designate the person by whom the Sabbath was

thus observed. Of tins we have abundant testimony\* The

Council of Laodieea, in 35.0, passed a decree, in winch

Christians are reproved for Judaising. u If any be found

Judaising, let him be anathematized," was the language of

these pretended fathers of the church.\* Athanasim i

"We assemble on Saturday, not that we are Infected with

Judaism;" thus repelling a charge which, in every age and

country, has been affixed as a stigma to Sabbath-keeper&«

The first glimpse that I bave been able to obtain of this

sect is given by an old German author, whose works i

published at Antwerp, in 1<><>7. In speaking of the reli-

gious parties and factions which agitated the country, he

says: "As to the people called by their enemies the Scmi-

Judaisers, it is certain that they originated from a colony

of the persecuted Walden ses, who fled from Lombardy into

Bohemia about 1450, and thence removed into Transyl-

vania, which subsequently became their head-quarters.

They say that the law of Moses is binding upon Christians,

\* Will not Balaam, the son of Bozor, rise up in judgment against

these men? For, though he loved the wages of unrighteousness, he

had enough of the fear of God before his eyes to make him hesitate

about cursing those whom God had not cursed. These, however, are

bold in cursing those whom God has blessed, — such as observe his

Sabbath.

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and, accordingly, solemnize divine service upon Saturday,

or the old Sabbath.

As to the outward circumstances of this people, they

were generally among the industrious poor, — mechanics

and husbandmen. They were never in squalid wretched-

ness or beggarly destitution, when left to enjoy the fruits

of their industry. Many of them, both male and female,

became inmates of the households of the great, in the

capacity of nurses and servants, and were greatly esteemed

on account of their sobriety, intelligence, and faithfulness.

Others settled on the outskirts of the neglected domains of

the nobility, where they soon converted the barren wastes

into productive fields, and reared new and flourishing

settlements, to the great satisfaction of the landlords.

From the very brief and imperfect accounts that I have

been able to obtain concerning them, there does not appear

to have been anything strange or singular in their manner

of worship. They took the Scriptures for their guide,

rejected all Popish ceremonies, inventions, and institutions,

administered baptism by immersion, and contended that

the church of Christ should be inaccessible to unholy and

unregenerate persons. Their ministers were allowed no

salaries, and were not distinguished from the lay brethren

by any superior authority or attainments. All who felt

disposed to do so were permitted to teach, "or prophesy,"

and in this particular they seem to have strongly resembled

the Quakers.

That they possessed a decided missionary spirit is evi-

dent from the fact that their doctrines were secretly and

silently, but very effectually, disseminated throughout

many parts of Europe, where they took deep and lasting

root.

Subsequent to their removal into Bohemia, they became

incorporated with the United Bohemian Brethren, whose

'. ,v - \ B B A T AIM A N CHURCHES.

numbers were considerable in every part of the empire.

Scarcely, however, were they reduced to order, when a

terrible persecution was set on foot by the Catholic party,

and they wrre called upon to prove the strength of their

faith by endurance and perseverance to the end. They

were compelled to forsake their towns and villages in the

depths of winter. The sick were cast into the fields.

Hundreds expired in flames, or on the rack. The public

prisons were filled with suspected persons. Such as ef-

fected their escape retired into the caves and deserts of

the country, where they held religious assemblies, elected

teachers, and decided upon their future course.

About 1500, a large company of the Semi-Judaisers re-

moved into Transylvania, where they experienced many

vicissitudes until the dawn of the Reformation in Germany.

At this time they had many large and flourishing congre-

gations, and being generally of the poorer class, and withal

extremely peaceable and inoffensive in their manners, they

were suffered by the princes and nobility of the country to

live upon their estates without molestation. In 1565,

they first appear in history as a people obnoxious to the

rulers of Transylvania ; and then it w r as chiefly in conse-

quence of the success which had attended the propagation

of their doctrines, and the conversion of Francis Davidis,

superintendent of the Socinian churches in that country,

to their creed. Davidis, to eminent talents and great

learning, united the most ardent zeal and untiring perse-

verance. Besides taking advantage of every opportunity

to disseminate his own peculiar views, he boldly attacked

the doctrines of the adverse party, disputing in person

with the Socinian doctors, and contending that the ten

commandments of the Decalogue were of a moral and im-

mutable nature, and, consequently, that the seventh day of

the week should be observed as a sabbatical rest. His

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views were highly offensive to Christopher Bathori, prince

of Transvlvania, who threw him into prison, where he died

in 1579, at an advanced age. His doctrines, thus brought

into public and general notice, Bpread rapidly, and were

embraced by several men of eminence. Of these the most

distinguished were Christiern JTrancken, who disputed in

public for three days with Faustus Socinus, upon the ques-

tion of the Sabbath, and John Somers, Master of the

Academy of Clausenberg. The violent contentions that

ensued made a noise in all parts of Germany, and reached

the cars of Luther, who wrote a book upon the subject.

In 1585, Jacob Faleologus, of the isle of Chio, was burned

at Rome for Judaism. At his trial, lie declared that the

ten commandments were moral and immutable in their

nature. In other countries executions of a similar cha-

racter took place : and the Semi-Judaisers were persecuted

from region to region, like the vilest of mankind. Many

of them fled into Poland, Lithuania, and Russia, where,

mingling with the other dissenters from the established

churches, they formed congregations, and became quite

numerous. Under the mild reign of Udislaus II., king of

Poland, their numbers greatly increased, and many persons

of wealth and respectability united in their communion.

A Polish writer informs us that their churches were

mimerous and flourishing in many parts, hut particularly

in the Palatinates of Polotsk, Witepsk, Nuislaw, Mohilev,

and Minsk. At Dorpat, in Livonia, there was a church

Mining five hundred members, where, in 1816, a small

remnant still resided\* From Poland they extended tliem-

Belv£S int<» the middle and southern provinces of Rust

where they remained in n state of general peaee until the

1633, when a persecution began in Poland, through

the instigation of the Catholics, extended to this country,

and multitudes of dissenters of all ranks and classes were

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barbarously put to death. At this time the Semi-Judaisers

were known in these countries under the name of Sab-

baton, a name sufficiently descriptive of their peculiar and

distinguishing tenets. In consequence of these terrible

persecutions, they retired into the most obscure and unfre-

quented districts, and their history is wrapped in a great

degree of obscurity, until the reign of the Empr< sa I ithc-

rine II. , when they are again brought into view as a people

obnoxious to the government. Under her persecuting

edicts, their churches were demolished, their congregations

broken up and scattered, and the more eminent for piety

and learning put to death by a variety of cruel tortures.

But a remnant was saved to perpetuate the truth. Si

that period they have experienced many vicissitudes, but,

upon all and every occasion, they have found their safety

in obscurity. They are distinguished for their ardent love

of the Holy Scriptures, for their opposition to the u><

images or pictures, and for their uniformly pious and con-

sistent conduct. They have no paid or salaried body of

ecclesiastics. They consider the invocation of saints to be

idolatry, and insist upon the right of private judgment in

the interpretation of Scripture ; a circumstance that ren-

ders them highly obnoxious to the Russian priests. They

only admit professing believers to the rite of baptism. In

their sentiments concerning the Trinity they are said to be

Arian.

In 1824, a large community of these Christians were

found by a celebrated French traveller settled on the banks

of the river Moskwa. They numbered several thousand,

and wore the Armenian costume, which people they strongly

resembled in manners and customs. He gives as their

peculiarities that they accounted as no better than fable

whatever was preached without Scripture proof, and affirm

that the traditions of the church are no better than the

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traditions of the Pharisees. They look upon a church

built of stone as no better than any other building ; neither

do they believe that God dwells there. They say that to

suppose that God is found in churches, monasteries, and

oratories, any more than in any other place, is limiting

the divine majesty. Their prayers and sermons are ex-

tempore. Their ministers, like themselves, are generally

mechanics or labourers ; nor is there any difference of

rank among them. They admit all the sacraments insti-

tuted by Christ, but none others. They regard the ten

commandments as moral and immutable, and, moreover,

are conscientious observers of the old Sabbath, or Satur-

day.

"I was told," continues the same author, " that these

people were very numerous in many parts of Russia ; and

that their missionaries could travel all over the empire,

and pass every night with their brethren. They were

known to each other by a secret sign, and all their houses

are distinguished by a private mark, known only to the

initiated. In consequence of their extreme caution that

none but members of their churches should be present at

their assemblies, they have been accused of many horrid

and abominable practices, — such as drinking the blood of

a child, and the indulgence of licentiousness, — their ac-

cusers not considering that the only security for their

safety is in their avoidance of public notoriety." All

testimonials concur in stating that their numbers are con-

siderable, but that, through fear of a recurrence of perse-

cution, they courted obscurity ; being content with the

humblest stations, and only seeking to keep the command-

ments of God and the faith of Jesus. " Of the sect called

Sabbaton, who reside in Russia," says Voltaire, "some

say one thing and some another. It is evident, however,"

he continues, " that they originated from the Vaudois,

9\*"

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who fled before the Crusaders into Germany, Bohemia,

and Poland, and thence into the imperial territories. They

pay great attention to the Bible, and but little to the

priests, for which reason, probably, they have been so

hated by the latter." Again, he observes, "that it is

quite impossible to ascertain their numbers, or the pro-

ceedings of their meetings, since, through fear of persecu-

tion, they keep both entirely secret." A Russian his-

torian testifies to the same. "I have no means of deter-

mining the numbers of the sect denominated Sabbaton, as

they have been estimated by various authorities at from

10,000 to 100,000. It is certain, however, that they are

harmless, simple, and inoffensive in their lives, and that

they avoid all publicity, baying a good reason for so doing."

f"I have been credibly informed/- says the Rev. Joseph

Wolfe, in private correspondence, "that the Sabbatarians

in Russia are quite numerous, and are called Sabbaton:"

In a work entitled " The Annals of Russia/ 1 which irafi

published at St. Petersburg, in 1 7 i \* \* > , and afterwards

translated into French by M. de Brissembourg, we are

told that these people are not only found in the large

cities, but that they had congregations in the rem.

parts of the empire, — in Siberia, and upon the north -

coast of North America. This was proved to be the case

in 1829, when the Rev. J. S. Green, of the American Board

of Foreign Missions, visited a church of fifty communicants

on the northwest coast of Russian America, who religiously

observed the seventh day. He gives rather a deplorable

picture of their ignorance, but upon one point at least he

might have learned a lesson of them.

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SECTION V.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SABBATARIANS IN HOLLAND.

In my foregoing statements I have been governed

entirely by the language and opinions of the writers from

whom I derived my information, and who are almost unani-

mous in supposing that the Seini-Judaisers of Bohemia and

Transylvania were descendants of the primitive Waldenses.

However this may be, we have every reason to believe that

both these countries, with different parts of Germany and

Holland, were the abodes of evangelical Christians, and

probably of Sabbatarians, before the dispersion of the

Waldenses. An ancient author informs us that long

before the dawn of the Reformation in Germany, there lay

concealed in all these countries, particularly in Bohemia,

a class of persons who contended for the spiritual nature

of the kingdom of Christ, and that this kingdom should

be exempt from all human institutions, of which first-day

keeping is such a principal one. It is certain, however,

that they were first brought into public notice about this

time, and the probability is, that being similar to, they

became amalgamated with the persecuted Waldenses ; and

as their safety lay in their obscurity, they took no pains to

form records to perpetuate their memories. This opinion

is further strengthened from the fact that many of the

Anabaptists of Holland, whose origin is confessedly hid in

the remote depths of antiquity, are known to have been

Sabbatarians, and the same was true of multitudes in the

Netherlands, or Low Countries, as we learn from Father

Lebo, a Spanish inquisitor, who accompanied the Duke of

Alva on his expedition to that unhappy country, of which

he wrote an account. He says, " Of all the heretics, none

were more incorrigible than a certain set, who were quite

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numerous, who refused to pay any regard to the festivals

of the church, but persisted in Judaising, and openly de-

clared that the Mosaic ritual was still binding."

Of the origin of Sabbatarianism in Holland, however, we

have no account ; neither have the names of its teachers

been handed down to us. Whether its first observers were

led to its adoption by an examination of the sacred records

alone, or whether the commandments there laid down, were

argued and explained by some popular leader, I have at pre-

sent no means of ascertaining. Certain it is that the Sabbath

controversy became, in the commencement of the sixteenth

century, the principal one of the age, in all those northern

Germanic countries, and engaged not only the attention of

prelates and doctors of divinity, but of princes and sovereign

states. In this controversy learning was opposed to igno-

rance, and influence to obscurity. Wealth, talent, and

civil power, were arrayed on the side of the No-Sabbath

doctrine. Here I would remark, that the Sabbatarians in

Europe, at this period, were engaged in a controversy, which,

originating upon different principles, required to be managed

in altogether a different manner, from the present contro-

versial discussions of the Sabbath question. The change

of the Sabbath at this time had not been broached. It

was conceded by all that the Dominical day was a mere

festival of the church, brought in and perpetuated by

human authority, and the mass of the people, with the so-

called great Reformers at their head, contended that all

sabbatical statutes had been abrogated, and consequently

that, under the present dispensation, it was a matter of

perfect expediency, whether or not any day of rest was

observed. On the contrary, the Sabbatarians maintained

that a Divine law could only be abrogated by its institutor,

that the law of the Sabbath had not been so abrogated, and

consequently, that it must be still in force. They appealed

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to the Scriptures ; the opposite party appealed to the sword :

and though the arguments of the former could never be

answered in a satisfactory manner, their upholders could

be hushed in death or driven into exile. One of the most

eminent and learned men of this age, was a Sabbatarian,

and a bold advocate of Sabbatarian views. I refer to

Grotius, who wrote and published a book, in which he

proved that the ten commandments are moral and immu-

table, and consequently the law of the Sabbath is still

binding. This book was condemned in the celebrated

council convened at Dort in 1618, and its author denounced

in the severest manner. But however much this distin-

guished man contributed to support the Sabbatarian cause,

he was certainly not its founder. A Catholic historian, in

treating of the Anabaptists in Holland, at the commence-

ment of the sixteenth century, remarks, that, " these here-

tics, through the instigation of the devil, for their overthrow,

were divided among themselves, part teaching one thing,

and part another ; for, though all unanimously rejected the

holy sacraments of the church, and refused to obey its

ordinances, a certain set were for going back to Moses for

a Sabbath, in which matter, they went so far as to form

congregations, and hold meetings on the seventh day."

In another place he observes, " I never heard that they

were persecuted by their brethren, the other Anabaptists,

except by the way of jeers, scoffs, and ridicule."\*

Again, "The followers of Moses being chiefly among the

poorer classes, they escaped for a long time the notice of

the civil authorities, and so greatly increased in numbers, that

they had teachers and congregations in all the principal cities

of Holland, but when the persecutions broke out, some fled,

others conformed, and their meetings were generally broken

\* The Anabaptists had not the power of persecution ; for their dis-

position, particularly in some cases, I would not be answerable.

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- up." It is well known that the Lutheran princes and prelates

practised upon the Anabaptists all the cruelties to which

themselves had been subjected by the Roman hierarchs.

The names of Luther, Calvin, and Zuinglius, have been

marked in this manner with an indelible stain. The con-

scientious Sabbatarians neither expected nor found sym-

pathy in the bosoms of these men. Luther, who could send

a circular to the princes of the empire, urging them to

execute summary vengeance upon the heretical sect, and

who bitterly denounced Carlostadt for sympathizing with

them ; Calvin, who could smile with complacency over the

tortures of those who refused to be governed by his own

opinions; and Zuinglius, who, when questioned regarding

the fate of certain Anabaptists, replied, "Drown the

Dippers," — what sympathy could be expected from prii

whose consciences were guided, and whose opinions were

influenced by such men? and is it a wonder, that while the

horrible scenes of the Inquisition were re-enacted in Pro-

testant countries; that while women and children, old men

and maidens, indeed, a multitude of all classes, were being

drowned, hung, burned, racked, and crowded into prisons

to be literally starved to death ; is it a wonder, I say, that

under all these circumstances, posterity is beginning to

inquire whether they were reformers or deformers. and

whether pure and undefiled religion was really benefited by

their services ? This inquiry appears the more rational, when

we consider that it was for being baptized as baptism was

practised in the primitive church, and, so far as the

Sabbatarians were concerned, for observing the Sabbath

that God had commanded, that these frightful persecutions

were carried on. Although many Sabbatarians doubtlessly

perished, the name of only one martyr known to have been

of that faith has been preserved. This was Barbary A T on

Thiers, who had been baptized by a Sabbatarian minister

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named Stephen Benedict. At her examination, she declared

her rejection of Sunday and the holydays of the church,

but said that "the Lord God had commanded rest on the

seventh day ;" in this she acquiesced, and it was her desire,

by the help and grace of God, to remain as she was, for it

was the true faith and right way in Christ. At the time

when the Arminian schism was creating such a great

excitement in Holland, the Sabbatarians appear to have

become amalgamated, at least to a certain extent, with that

people. Both were equally obnoxious to the state, and

that of itself would have created a sympathy between

them. It is well known that Grotius embraced the

Arminian tenets. Maurice, at that time the reigning

prince, exerted his utmost efforts to crush both parties.

Inquiries were set on foot with all the rigours of the Inqui-

sition. The suspected were tortured not so much to make

them criminate themselves, as to betray their friends and

associates. Some were beheaded, and others escaped into

foreign countries. Of the latter class was Grotius, who,

being condemned to perpetual imprisonment, escaped his

doom by flight. Their houses were demolished, their pro-

perty confiscated, and every measure that tyranny and

malice could invent, was exerted for their extirpation.

Partially, at least, these efforts were attended with success,

and since that period few Sabbatarians have been found in

that country.

SECTION VI.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

About sixty years after the ascension of our Lord,

Christianity was first introduced into Britain, and many

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of the nobility, as well as those of inferior birth, were hap-

pily converted. As it can be proved that, at this early

period, the seventh day was observed by the Christians in

general, we may conclude that these primitive churches

were Sabbatarian. The British Christians experienced

various changes of prosperity and adversity, until about

the year 600, when Austin, the monk, with forty associ;i

was sent hither to subject the island to the dominion of

Rome. Various ancient authors might be quoted to prove

the Sabbatarian character of the English at this period\*

In the Biography of Austin, published in the Lives of the

Saints, we are told that he found the people of Britain in

the most grievous and intolerable heresies, being given to

Judaising, but ignorant of the holj sacraments and Pi

vals of the church, 'flic author then goes on to relate the

prodigies wrought in their conversion.

The terms of conformity proposed to these Christians by

Austin related, among other things, to the observation of

Easter and the festivals of the Romish church. A divi-

sion among the people immediately ensued, and the diffe-

rent branches of the church were designated as the old

and the new. The old, or Sabbatarian Baptist church

retained their original principles; while the new adoj

the keeping of the Dominical day, infant baptism, and the

other superstitions of the Romish hierarchy

Benius' Councils, fol. 1448, says that a council was cele-

brated in Scotland in 1203, in which the initiation or first

bringing in of the Lord's day was determined. Lucius

says of this council, that " it was enacted that the Domini-

cal day should be holy, beginning at the twelfth hour on

Saturday, until Monday.'' "The same year,' says Ho-

veden, " Eustachius, Archbishop of Flay, returned into

England, and therein preached the word of God from

city to city, and from place to place, and said the command

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND. 109

under written, came from heaven about the observation of

the Dominical clay ; that it was found in a letter at Jeru-

salem, on the tomb of St. Simeon, which the Archbishop,

after fasting, praying, and doing penance, at length ven-

tured to take and read, which was as follows :

" I, the Lord, who commanded you that you should

observe the Dominical holy day, and ye have not kept it,

and ye have not repented of your sins, as I said by my

gospel. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word

shall not pass away. I have caused repentance unto life

to be preached unto you, and ye have not believed. I

sent Pagans against you, who shed your blood, yet ye

believed not ; and because ye kept not the Dominical holy

day, for a few days ye had famine. But I soon gave you

plenty, and afterwards ye did worse. I will again, that

none, from the ninth hour of the Sabbath,\* until the rising

of the sun on Monday, do work anything, unless what is

good, which, if any do, let him amend by repentance.

" And if ye be not obedient to this command, amen, I

say unto you, and I swear unto you, by my seat and

throne, and cherubim, who keep my holy seat, because I

will not command anything by another epistle, but I will

open the heavens, and for rain I will rain upon you stones,

and logs of wood, and hot water by night, that none may

be able to prevent, that I may destroy all wicked men.

This I say unto you ; ye shall die the death ; because of

the holy Dominical day, and other festivals of my saints,

which ye have not kept, I will send unto you beasts having

the heads of women, and the tails of camels; and they

shall be so hunger-starved that they shall devour your

flesh."

There is more of this wretched stuff; but let this suffice

\* Observe, the seventh day is called the Sabbath,

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as a specimen of the arts and intrigues used to impose

upon the simple and unsuspecting, by a forged letter pur-

porting to be from heaven.

The same author goes on to state that " the king and

government of England opposed the discontinuance of the

markets upon the Dominical day, and required that those

who observed it in such a way should be brought to the

king's court to make satisfaction, or otherwise purge

themselves of the observance of the Dominical daj\''

In this connexion I will just add a few more expedients

of the Romanists at that time t<> deceive the people of

England into a superstitious veneration for the first day,

" But our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we ought to obey

rather than man, who, made famous and exceedingly re-

nowned, dedicated unto himself this day, which ^ve call

the Dominical or Lord's day, by his birth, and by his

resurrection, by his coming, and by the sending of the

Holy Spirit upon his disciples, he raided up miracles of his

virtue, and thus manifested it upon some transgressors of

the Dominical day :

" Upon a certain Sabbath, after the ninth hour, a cer-

tain carpenter in Bevcrlac, making a wooden pin against

-the wholesome admonition of his wife, being struck with a

palsy, fell to the ground. A certain woman, knitting

after the ninth hour of the Sabbath, whilst she was very

anxious to knit out part of her work, falling to the earth,

struck with the palsy, she became dumb. And at Noa-

fortum, a village of Master Roger Arundel, a certain man

made for himself bread, baked under the ashes, on the

Sabbath, after the ninth hour, and eat of it, and reserved

to himself part until the morning, which when he brake,

upon the Dominical day, blood came out of it. And he

that saw it hath given testimony, and his testimony is

true.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND. Ill

"And at Wakefield, upon a certain Sabbath, when a

miller, after the ninth hour, endeavoured to grind corn,

suddenly, in the place of meal, there issued out so great a

stream of blood, and the mill-wheel stood immovable

against the vehement impulse of the water ; and those

who saw marvelled, saying, ' Forgive, Lord, forgive thy

people !' And at Lincolnshire, a certain woman had pre-

pared dough, or paste, or pudding pie, which carrying to

the oven, after the ninth hour of the Sabbath, she put into

a very hot oven ; and when she had drawn it out, she

found it not baked, and she put it again into the oven,

made very hot ; and on the morning, and on Monday,

when she thought to have found the bread baked, she

found the dough unbaked. Also, in the same province,

when a certain woman had prepared her dough, willing to

carry it to the oven, her husband said, ' It is the Sabbath:

— the ninth hour is now past. Let it alone until Monday.'

And the woman, obeying her husband, did as he com-

manded, and wrapped the dough in linen, and, in the

morning, when she went to look at the dough, lest it

should exceed the vessel, because of the leaven put into it,

she found, by divine • will, bread made thereof, and well

baked with material fire. This is a change of the right

hand of the Most High ; and although the Almighty Lord,

by these and other miracles of his power, did invite the

people to the observation of the Dominical day, yet the people,

fearing more kingly and human power than divine, and

fearing more those who kill the body, and can do no more,

than Him who, after killing the body, can send the soul to

hell, and fearing more to lose earthly things than hea-

venly, and transitories than eternals, as a dog to the vomit,

returned to keep markets of things saleable upon the

Dominical day."

The term Sabbath, during all this period, was applied

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exclusively to the seventh day. Indeed, whenever, for

fourteen or fifteen centuries, that name occurs, it must be

understood as applying to the last day of the week. Up

to the present time, on the records of England, particu-

larly on the Journals of the House of Lords, the highest

court of England, all things entered as done on the seventh

day are entered as done die Sabbati, upon the Sabbath

day. From the time of Constantine to the Reformation,

Sunday was never regarded as the Sabbath, nor called by

that sacred name. During all this time, in England, here

and there, were found individuals who observed the Sab-

bath — the seventh day of the week — strictly, though ex-

posed to many privations and frequent persecutions. Of

their numbers or their locations we have at present but

very imperfect accounts. The mass of men regarded the

Sabbath as abolished; — Sunday as no Sabbath, but merely

a church-holiday, to which they paid no conscientious

regard. With the dawn of the Reformation a new spirit

of inquiry was awakened in regard to the duties of prac-

tical godliness. Among the subjects for discussion we find

the Sabbath early introduced and thoroughly examined.

There was one class of reformers who, dwelling alone on

the sufficiency of faith and the frceness of the Gospel,

trembled at the thought of imposing rules upon men, and

expressed a sort of holy horror at the term "law.\*' Of

this description were Luther and Calvin. It is well known

that the former recommended to Christians "to ride, dance,

and feast," on Sunday, rather than to submit to any in-

fringement of the liberty of conscience. But there were

others, who contended that an institution given in Para-

dise, and enforced by one of the commandments of the

Decalogue, could not have been abolished; yet, finding

themselves in the dilemma of observing another day than

that originally appointed, they maintained that the day

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had been changed so early as to justify us in allowing it.

A third class contended that an institution so early given,

and so often enforced, could not have been abolished or

changed without explicit authority ; that this explicit

authority had never been given; and, therefore, the

seventh day of the week, and that only, should be ob-

served. Compared with the whole, the number who

acknowledged the perpetuity and morality of the Sabbath,

and manifested a sacred regard for either the first or the

seventh day, was small. However, they were sufficient to

prove that wherever the subject of the Sabbath has been

considered, there has always been found those who, by

precept and example, have witnessed for the Sabbath of

the fourth commandment.

In 1595, a book was written and published by Dr. Bound,

in which the morality of the Sabbath, and a change of the

day, was advocated in quite a masterly manner. This

excited a controversial spirit, and was soon followed by

many others, both for and against his view. The ortho-

doxal doctrine of the Church of England, by bishops and

historians, then was, that the Sabbath had been abolished,

and that the Lord's day, so called, was altogether another

institution, which could not be enforced by the fourth

commandment. Among the men who held this view, we

may mention Dr. Francis White, Lord Bishop of Ely,

Dr. Peter Heylyn, Edward Brerewood, Gilbert Ironsides,

and others. Against these men were arrayed the leading

Puritans, who maintained the morality of the Sabbath and

the necessity of restraining men by the sanctions of the

fourth commandment. Many true Sabbatarians, however,

stood opposed to both these parties, maintaining not only

the morality of the Sabbath, but the obligation to observe

the seventh day of the week. A work supporting this view,

from the pen of Theophilus Brabourne, appeared in 1628.

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He took the position that the fourth commandment was

simply and entirely moral ; that the seventh clay of the

week ought to be an everlasting holyday in the Christian

Church ; and that the Sunday is an ordinary working day,

which it is superstition and will-worship to make the Sab-

bath of the fourth commandment. This view was adopted

by considerable numbers in England, and has been repre-

sented from that day to this, by men of learning and piety.

Many who remained in connexion with the established

church, were conscientious observers of the seventh day

Sabbath, among whom were several ministers of piety,

and authors of eminence.

About the same time, small dissenting parti\* Q to

organize churches and to boldly maintain the worship of

God upon the Sabbath. Of these the Natton Church

has been much celebrated. It is situated in the west of

England, near Tewksbury, and about fifteen miles from

Gloucester, thirty-five from Birmingham, and ninety from

London. The first pastor of this church whose name has

come down to us was Mr. John Purser. He is represented

as a very worthy man, and a great sufferer for conscience,

sake. He was descended from an honourable family, and

was heir to a considerable estate, but his father disinherited

him because he observed the seventh day for the Sabbath.

Notwithstanding this wrong, it pleased Divine Providence

to bless him abundantly in the little that he possessed.

He became a respectable farmer, and lived at Ashton-

upon-Carrant, in the Parish of Ashchurch, in the county

of Gloucester, during the reigns of Charles and James

the Second. In common with other nonconformists, he

experienced much oppression and great opposition on

account of his religion. At one time his persecutors

came upon him while he was engaged in ploughing a

field, and took from him his team and utensils of hus-

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bandry. Notwithstanding the severity of the laws against

dissenters, the officers, in many instances, far exceeded

their commission, and sometimes w r ere made to suffer for

it. Such was the case in this instance ; for one Wil-

liam Surman, Esq., a conformist, but worthy man, seeing

the cruelty and injustice of thus depriving an honest man

of his property and the means for procuring a liveli-

hood, obliged his adversaries to return the property

thus wrongfully taken\* It appears from authentic testi-

monies that he suffered much during the persecutions

between 1660 and 1690. But he overcame all by faith

and patience, and came out of the furnace like gold doubly

refined.

It is probable that Mr. Purser commenced his ministry

in 1660, but did not receive ordination until some years

later. In the mean time one Mr. Cowell was the chief

preacher at Natton, and an author of some eminence,

having published a book entitled "The Snare Broken,"

which seems to have occasioned considerable difficulty

between the observers of the first and seventh day. Mr.

Cowbell appears to have been rather wavering and unstable,

but withal a pious and well-meaning man. He departed

this life in 1680, when Mr. Purser took the principal charge

of the church. The Sabbatarians at this time were widely

scattered. There was no meeting-house, and Mr. Purser

opened his dwelling for that purpose. He also held meet-

ings at various other private houses, in different places, by

which those living at a distance w r ere accommodated by his

labours. It may be remarked, that although this worthy

man steadily pursued the occupation of husbandry, and

reared a large family, he faithfully served the church.

While his hands were industriously employed, his medita-

tions w T ere upon things above, and upon these occasions he

was highly favoured with manifestations of the divine pre-

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sence. All his children and grandchildren were also dis-

tinguished for virtue and piety, though many of them

adopted the first day for the sake of convenience, and be-

came worthy members of Baptist churches. Mr. Purser,

through age and infirmity, was unable to discharge the

duties of the sacred office for some time before his death,

which occurred in 1720.

His successor, Mr. Edmund Townsend, was plain and

unobtrusive in his manners, but was highly respected for

his cajidour and integrity. Soon after his ordination he

took up his residence for a time with the Mill-Yard Church ;

and then, in 1727, accepted an invitation to become the

pastor of the Cripplegate fraternity, which had been left

destitute by the death of Joseph Stcnnett.

When Mr. Townsend left this church, he waa succeeded

by Mr. Philip Jones, who discharged the duties pertaining

to this sacred office for nearly fifty years. His oolleag

Mr. Thomas Boston, was a young man of great promise and

usefulness. Mr. Jones lived for several years at Chelten-

ham, but held meetings at Natton, Panford, and other towns,

for the purpose of accommodating members living at each

of those places. In 1731, he removed to Upton, but con-

tinued his ministry in different places. In this way he

encountered many difficulties, sometimes haying to travel

in the worst of weather, and at others running great risks

from the floods of the Severn and Avon. Yet neither

dangers nor inconveniences were suffered, to interfere with

his duty. His character has been thus given by a contem-

porary : " He was a holy man of God, and a great and

lively preacher of the gospel. Few were better acquainted

w T ith the scriptures ; for, whatever his subject was, he could

have chapter and verse to prove the whole. In short he

was a living concordance ; a man of unblemished character,

a sincere friend, and a faithful reformer, but always in the

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spirit of meekness. Perhaps but a few living had a greater

command over the passions than he had."

Previous to the death of this worthy man, in 1770, Mr.

Thomas Hiller, his nephew, accepted the pastoral care of

the Baptist church in Tewksbury, near Natton. He was

a Sabbatarian in both opinion and practice, and conse-

quently was invited to serve the Sabbath-keeping church

at the same time that he remained pastor of the First-day

Baptist church. He accepted the invitation, and continued

to minister to both churches until his death, a few years

ago. His ministry is said to have been successful in both

Natton and Tewksbury ; although in what that success

was seen it would probably be problematical to determine.

The church over which he presided has become a mere

handful, in the greatest want of spiritual strength and

support. Mr. Hiller w T as doubtlessly a man of worth, and

deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of both churches,

by whom his memory is still highly venerated; but the

history of his connexion with these fraternities proves

that no man can successfully serve two masters. It is

barely possible that a minister of the gospel, who is at one

and the same time the pastor of one church worshipping on

the seventh day of the week, and another church worship-

ping on the first day of the week, can be faithful to both.

Since the death of Mr. Hiller, the congregation at Natton

have been without a pastor. However, it has engaged the

services of a worthy Baptist minister from Tewksbury for

a considerable time.

It is worthy of note, that, in 1746, Mr. Benjamin Purser,

the youngest son of Rev. John Purser before mentioned,

purchased an estate in the village of Natton, and fitted up,

at his own expense, a chapel for divine worship, adjoining

his dwelling-house. It is a small room, distinguished only

for neatness and convenience. He also walled in a corner

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of his orchard for a burial-place. When he died, in 1765,

he donated the house and burial-place to the church, toge-

ther with ten pounds a year out of his estate to all suc-

ceeding ministers. At the present time the congregation

is so small that the chapel is not opened except upon extra-

ordinary occasions, such as a funeral or the like. It sei

however, as the depository for a small collection of rare

and valuable books.

THE CRIPPLE GATE OHDBC&

A congregation of Sabbatarians, known under that

denomination, was gathered in London by Francis Bamp-

field, during the reign of Charles the Second. Mr. Bamp-

field was descended from an ancient and honourable family

in Devonshire, and was a brother of Thomas Bampfield,

Speaker in one of Cromwell's Parliaments. Having been

designed for the ministry from childhood, lie received a

classical education, at Wadham College, Oxford, where he

remained for eight years. Subsequently he was provided

with a living in Dorsetshire, and was likewise chosen Pre-

bend of Exeter Cathedral. Thence he was transferred to

the populous town of Sherburne, where he exerted a D

extensive and happy influence among the members of the

established church. In this connexion he continued only

a short time ; for beginning to doubt the authority of the

church to prescribe forms of worship, he became in the end

a decided nonconformist. Consequently he was not only

ejected from the ministry, but confined in Dorchester jail,

for preaching and conducting religious services contrary to

law. During his imprisonment, which continued about

eight years, his views upon the subjects of the Sabbath and

baptism were materially changed, and he became a decided

advocate of Seventh-day Baptist sentiments. He preached

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his new opinions boldly to his fellow-prisoners, and several

were led to embrace them. Soon after his release from

Dorchester, Mr. Barnpfield went to London, where he

preached the gospel for about tea years. In Bethnal

Green, in the eastern parts of London, he gathered a small

church, whose place of meeting was in his own hired house.

This church was organized in 1676, and Mr. Bampfield

continued its pastor until 1682, when he was brought before

the Court of Sessions, on a variety of charges connected

with his nonconformity. He was several times examined,

and upon each examination required to take the oath of

allegiance, which he persisted in refusing, alleging that his

conscience would not allow him to take it. This resulted

in his condemnation, the forfeiture of his goods, and a

sentence of imprisonment during life, or what was equiva-

lent, during the king's pleasure. The anxieties incident

to this trial, combined with a naturally feeble constitution,

together with his great privations, brought on a disease, of

which he died in Newgate prison, on the 15th of February,

1684, aged 68 years.

The imprisonment of Mr. Bampfield was followed by

the dispersion of his flock, but the times becoming more

favourable, they reunited in church fellowship in 1686, and

invited Mr. Edward Stennett, of TTallingford, to accept

the pastoral care of their church. He partly complied,

coming to London at stated periods to preach and ad-

minister the ordinances, though he still retained his con-

nexion with the people at Wallingford. But finding that

he could not consistently serve both churches, he resigned

the pastoral care of the London church in 1689. Mr.

Stennett is distinguished as being the ancestor of the

famous Stennett family, who were all Sabbatarians, and

were for several generations an ornament to religion, and

champions for the cause of Protestant dissent. Being on

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the side of Parliament in the civil wars, he was exposed, in

consequence, to the neglect of his relations and many

other difficulties. Although a faithful minister, he pos-

sessed no stated salary, but supported his family by the

practice of physic. He bore a part in the persecutions

which fell upon the Dissenters of that time. In several

instances his escape seems altogether miraculous, and

affords a striking evidence of Divine interposition.

He was succeeded by his second son, Joseph Stennett,

who had enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education.

He came to London in 1685, and was employed for a time

in the instruction of youth. His first appearance in the

pulpit created a great sensation. His ministry was emi-

nently evangelical and faithful ; ami while preaching con-

stantly to his own church upon the Sabbath, he almost

always waited in the ministry upon other congregations on

the first day. Perhaps no Dissenting minister in England,

at that time, exerted a more powerful influence, or main-

tained a higher standing than did Mr. Stennett. He was

at different times appointed by his brethren in the ministry

to draw up letters and addresses of congratulation to be

presented to the sovereign upon particular occasions. Mr.

Stennett likewise appeared before the public as the author

of other works, which acquired considerable popularity.

Early in the year 1713, he began to decline, and on the

11th of July fell asleep, in the forty-ninth year of his age,

and the twenty-third of his ministry.

The death of this worthy man was a particularly disas-

trous event to his little flock, who remained for fourteen

years without a shepherd, during which time they generally

met for worship with the Mill- Yard Church. But in 1727,

Mr. Edmund Townsend became their spiritual guide, in

which relation he continued until his death in 1763.

Subsequent to the decease of Mr. Townsend, the church,

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for four years, was supplied with ministerial assistance

by different Baptist ministers, until Mr. Thomas White-

wood accepted the pastoral office, in June, 1767. His

race, however, was short ; for after preaching three times,

and administering the Lord's Supper once, he was attacked

by a fatal disease, of which he died the ensuing October.

Dr. Samuel Stennett, son of Dr. Joseph Stennett, being

at that period pastor of the Baptist church in Little Wild

Street, London, was solicited to accept the pastoral office.

It appears that he complied in part, performing all the

duties without accepting the nominal relation of pastor.

He administered the Lord's Supper, and preached to them

regularly on the Sabbath morning ; while the afternoon

service was conducted by four Baptist ministers in rotation,

among whom were Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Rippon.

In 1785, Robert Burnside accepted the pastoral charge

of this church, in which relation he continued forty-one

years. Mr. Burnside united to great natural abilities, a

kind and loving heart, by which he was particularly qua-

lified to impart instruction. He became tutor, at different

periods, to the sons of several of the nobility, and dis-

charged the duties attendant upon that difficult office in a

manner honourable to himself, and advantageous to his

pupils. He also prepared several works for the press ;

among which was a volume on the subject of the Sabbath.

He died in 1826, and was succeeded by John Brittain

Shenstone, whose early labours had been in connexion with

First-day Baptist churches. For more than forty years he

was connected with the Board of Baptist ministers in

London, of which he appears to have been the principal

projector and main support. He commenced the observa-

tion of the Sabbath in 1825, and upon the decease of Mr.

Burnside accepted the pastoral care of the church, which

he continued to serve until his death, in 1844. Since that

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event this church has been without a pastor, and is in a

very low and enfeebled condition.

THE MILL-YARD CHURCH.

This church is located in the eastern part of London,

but of its founder, or the date of its origin, our accounts

are very imperfect and unsatisfactory. The present re-

cords, in possession of the church, date back to 1673 ; but

as they refer to another book which had been previously

used, it is certain that the church was organized much

earlier. Indeed, we have every reason to believe that this

church is a perpetuation of the fraternity gathered by John

James, the martyr, which originally met in Bull-Steak

Alley, Whitechapel. We shall therefore consider Mr.

James as the first pastor of this church. On the 19th

day of October, 1661, while in the midst of a warm and

fervent discourse, an officer entered the place of worship,

forcibly ejected him from the pulpit, and led him away to

the police under a strong guard. Thirty members of his

congregation were likewise taken before a bench of justices,

then convened at a public house in the vicinity, where each

one was required to take the oath of allegiance, and those

who refused to comply were committed to prison. Mr.

James underwent a long and tedious examination, when he

was committed to Newgate, upon the testimony of several

profligate witnesses, by whom he was accused of speaking

treasonable words against the king. At his trial, which

came on about one month afterwards, his apparent inno-

cence, deep piety, and resignation, sensibly affected a large

concourse of spectators, but could not soften the obdurate

hearts of his judges, by whom he was sentenced to be

hanged, drawn, and quartered. He was unaffected by

this horrid sentence, and calmly observed, " Blessed be

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God, whom man condemneth, God justifieth." While he

lay in prison under sentence of death, he was visited by

several persons of distinction, who were deeply affected by

his patience and resignation, and who cheerfully engaged

to exert their utmost influence to secure his pardon. But

he appears to have been too well acquainted with the

power and designs of his enemies, to have entertained much

hopes of their success.

Mrs. James, by the advice of her friends, was induced

to present a petition twice to the king, setting forth her

husband's innocence, and entreating his majesty to grant

a pardon. But in both instances she was repulsed with

scoffs and ridicule. At the scaffold, on the day of his exe-

cution, he addressed the people in a very sensible and

affectionate manner. Having finished the address, and

kneeling down, he thanked God for covenant mercies, and

for conscious innocence. He then prayed for all, both his

friends and his enemies, for the executioner, for the people

of God, for the spectators, for his church, and his family,

and lastly, for himself, that he might enjoy a sense of the

divine presence and support in this his hour of trial, and

entrance into glory. When he had finished, the execu-

tioner, who was much affected, said, " The Lord receive

your soul;" to which Mr. James replied, "I thank you."

A friend then observed to him, " This is a happy day for

you;" he replied, "I thank God it is." He then thanked

the sheriff for his courtesy, and bade farewell to his

friends; then saying, "Father, into thy hands I commit

my spirit," was launched into eternity. Bat the rage of

the bigoted tyrant did not end here. His heart was taken

from his body and burned, his body itself quartered, and

the mutilated parts afiixed to the gates of the city, and his

head set up in Whitechapel, on a pole opposite to the alley

in which his meeting-house stood.

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At the time when the present record of this church

commences, 1673, William Sellers exercised the pastoral

function. The church was then in a flourishing condition;

the members being quite numerous, and strict discipline

maintained. Mr. Sellers was probably the author of a

work on the Sabbath, in review of Dr. Owen, which ap-

peared in 1671. His ministry is supposed to have con-

tinued until 1678. He was succeeded by Mr. Toursby,

who was a man of considerable controversial talent, which

he exercised in defence of the Sabbath. He prepared a

work for the press upon that subject, but it is believed

that it has long been out of print. His ministry cc;i

in 1710.

About this time two persons named Slater preached oc-

casionally, though it does not appear that they were ever

ordained.

Mr. Savage, in 1711, accepted the pastoral office. His

colleague, the venerable John Maulden, had long been the

pastor of a Baptist Church in Goodman's Fiejds. which he

left on account of his having embraced Sabbatarian princi-

ples. After the decease of these worthy men, the pastoral

office was vacant for some time, during which the preach-

ing brethren officiated in the ministry in a manner pre-

scribed at the business meetings of the church. In 1720,

Dr. Joseph Stennett was invited to accept the pastoral care

of this church. He was then presiding over a Baptist

Church in Exeter, and after considerable delay declined the

call.

Mr. Robert Cornthwaite became their pastor in 1726.

He had been connected with the Established Church, but

becoming convinced that the gospel did not authorize any

such establishment, he withdrew from its communion and

identified himself with the dissenters. Becoming interested

in the Sabbath controversy he soon decided for the seventh

day, and was chosen pastor of this church, in which rela-

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tion he continued until his death in 1754. He was distin-

guished for great mental vigour, and a firm adherence to

whatever he deemed true and scriptural. He published

several works relating to the Sabbath, which greatly con-

tributed to draw attention to that important subject.

Daniel Noble, his successor, was a member of a Sabbath-

keeping family, and being designed for the ministry, re-

ceived the advantages of a liberal education. His studies

were pursued first in London, and afterward at the Glas-

gow University. He commenced preaching occasionally

at Mill- Yard in 1752, took the pastoral charge when that

office became vacant, in which connexion he remained until

his death in 1783.

At this time William Slater, a member of the church,

was invited to conduct the services. This he did with such

general acceptance that he received ordination, and became

the pastor of the church. His ministry was very success-

ful, and continued until he died, in 1819.

For several years ensuing that event the church was

without a pastor, being supplied with ministerial assistance

by brethren of other denominations, until William Henry

Black, the present incumbent, became its spiritual guide.

Through the pious liberality of one of its members, the

Mill-Yard Church enjoys the benefit of an endowment.

Mr. Joseph Davis, who united in its connexion at the time

that John James suffered martyrdom, purchased, in 1691,

the grounds adjoining the present Mill-Yard Church, erected

the place of worship, and provided for the permanency of

the society. This property was conveyed to trustees, ap-

pointed by the church, in 1700. In 1706, shortly before

his death, Mr. Davis bequeathed his property to his son,

with an annual rent-charge in favour of the Mill- Yard

Church, together with seven other Sabbatarian churches in

England. He likewise provided, conditionally, that his

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whole property might afterward come into the possession

of the church, and be vested in trustees -for its benefit.

Mr. Davis, in the earlier part of his life, had suffered ex-

tremely from severe persecutions. He was a prisoner in

Oxford Castle for nearly ten years, from which he was

released in 1673. Subsequently he entered into business

in London, where prosperity attended him, and he not

only obtained a competence, but became a wealthy man.

Few have made a more laudable use of riches, and I would

say to the reader, go thou, and do likewise.

A short account of some of the most eminent among

those who embraced Sabbatarianism previous to the orga-

nization of these churches, may be interesting to the gene-

ral reader.

Shortly after the publication of Dr. Bound's book, in

which he advanced the modern notion regarding the so-

called Christian Sabbath, that it is a perpetuation of the

fourth commandment, but that the day specified therein

had been changed by divine authority, we first hear of John

Traske, who both wrote and spoke in defence of the

seventh day.

He also contended that the scriptures are sufficient to

direct in religious services, and that the state has no right

to prescribe any ordinances contrary to the laws of God.

For this he was brought before the Star-Chamber, where

a long discussion was held respecting the Sabbath, in which

Dr. Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, took a prominent part.

Traske could not be turned from his opinion, but received

a censure in the Star-Chamber. " He was sentenced on

account of his being a Sabbatarian," says Paggitt's Here-

siography, " to be set upon the Pillory at Westminster, and

from thence to be whipped to the Fleet Prison, there to

remain a prisoner for three years. His wife, Mrs. Traske,

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was confined in Maiden Lane and the Gate House Prisons

fifteen years, where she died, for the same crime.

Another distinguished advocate for the truth was Theo-

philus Brabourne, a learned minister in connexion with

the Established Church. He wrote a book, which was

published in London in 1628, wherein he argued that the

Lord's Day is not the Sabbath by divine institution, but

"that the seventh day is still in force." For this, and

similar works, he was arraigned before the Lord Archbishop

of Canterbury, and the Court of High Commission. His

examination was conducted in the presence of many per-

sons of high distinction, and several lords of his Majesty's

Privy Council. For some reason, it is not possible to

ascertain distinctly what, though probably he was over-

awed by the character of the assembly, he signed a recan-

tation and went back to the bosom of the church. Never-

theless he continued to assert, that if the Sabbatic institution

be indeed moral and perpetually binding, the seventh day

ought to be sacredly kept.

About the same time, it appears that Philip Pandy

commenced propagating the same doctrines in the northern

parts of England. He was educated in the Established

Church, of which he became a minister. He withdrew from

its communion, however, and became the mark for many

shots. He held several important disputes about his pecu-

liar sentiments, and contributed much to promulgate them.

James Ockford, another early advocate of the Sabbath

in England, appears to have taken part in the discussions

in which Traske and Brabourne were engaged. He also

wrote and published a book in 1642, which was seized and

burned by the authorities of the Established Church.

There does not appear to have been any regularly orga-

nized churches of Sabbatarians in England, until the com-

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mencement of the seventeenth century, though subsequent

to that period there were eleven of these fraternities, be-

sides many scattered Sabbath-keepers, in different parts of

the kingdom. These churches were located in the follow-

ing places, viz. : Braintree, in Essex ; Chersey ; Nor-

weston ; Salisbury, in Wiltshire ; Sherbourne, in Bucking-

hamshire ; Natton, in Gloucestershire ; Wallingford, in

Berkshire ; Woodbridge, in Suffolk ; and three in London —

the Mill- Yard, Cripplegate, and Pinner's Hall Churches.

Eight of the eleven are now extinct, and hence a complete

account of them cannot be obtained.

A very interesting correspondence between the Mill-

Yard Church and the General Conference of the Seventh-

day Baptists in the United States lias been carried on for

the last fifty years. In 1844, George B. Utter, as dele-

gate from that body, visited the brethren in England, where

he was hospitably entertained. The worthy pastor of the

Mill- Yard Church is, I understand, collecting materials for

a history of the Lives and Writings of Sabbatarians in

England, and likewise preparing a list of Sabbatarian

authors, together with an account of all the books which

have been published that relate to the Sabbath controversy.

From an attention to the foregoing it will be perceived

that Sabbatarianism has greatly declined in England ;

and that decline seems to have been produced by the ope-

ration of a variety of causes. There are certainly great

inconveniences, particularly in large towns and cities, con-

nected with the observance of a day of rest so utterly at

variance with the popular custom as that of the seventh

day has ever been. This, with that spirit of conformity

by which men are ever prone to accede to established

usages, together with the fact that they never instituted

any associational organization, sufficiently accounts for

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their early declension, without supposing any unsoundness

in their creed.\*

We have every reason to believe that formerly, and down

so late as the commencement of the seventeenth century,

Seventh-day Baptist churches, of considerable magnitude,

existed at the foot of the Grampians, and among the Welsh

mountains, but their history appears to be buried in obli-

vion.

I have also been recently informed that there is a Se-

venth-day Baptist church near Burton-upon-Trent, and

nine miles from Derby. That a Mr. Witt, in 1832, offi-

ciated as pastor. That they own a large brick meeting-

house, in which their meetings are solemnized every Sab-

bath day, and are a very respectable body of people.

\* I have been informed that there is at this time a small society of

Seventh-day people in the west part of England, in the vicinity of St.

Asaph, but will not vouch for the accuracy of the statement.

CHAPTER III.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

SECTION I.

GENERAL HISTORY.

The Seventh-day Baptist churches in the United St;r

occupy isolated situations in different parts of the Union,

and are distinguished from other religious denominations

by certain distinctive views relative to the immutability of

every precept of the moral law.

The term Sabbatarian was formerly adopted by those of

the same persuasion in England, subsequent to the Refor-

mation, when the word Sabbath was applied exclusively to

the seventh day of the week, and those observant of it as

holy time were regarded as the only Sabbath-keepers.

This term, though highly expressive of the main Sabbath

doctrine, w T as, on account of its supposed indefiniteness,

rejected by the General Conference of the American

Churches, in 1818, and the appellation of Seventh-day

Baptist, which was considered more generally expressive,

adopted in its stead.

The differences existing between the Seventh-day Bap-

tists and the other Baptist denominations, all relate to the

Sabbatical ordinance. In respect to this the former be-

lieve that no system of morality can be complete which

does not include time devoted to God and religious wor-

ship ; that the seventh day was particularly appropriated

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and set apart for this purpose in Paradise, and was

designed, not for any one class or race of men, but for all

mankind ; that it forms a necessary part of the moral law,

which is immutable and unchangeable in its nature, and of

universal obligation ; that no other day was substituted

for this by divine authority at the introduction of Chris-

tianity ; that the first day is nowhere mentioned in the

sacred volume as possessing a divine character ; that what-

ever respect was paid to it in the primitive ages originated

from the supposition that it was the weekly anniversary of

the glorious triumph of the risen Saviour, and not from,

the idea of its being the Sabbath ; and that the substitu-

tion of the first for the seventh day, as holy time, was

brought about by the Antichristian power, who, according

to the word of prophecy, was to usurp the prerogatives of

the Deity, and change times and laws.

These opinions, though countenanced by Holy Writ, and

perfectly agreeable with many historical records, are

directly in opposition to the popular prejudices of the day,

and, consequently, their conscientious supporters have

been exposed, sometimes, to downright persecution in the

shape of fines and imprisonment, and at others, to the

equally cruel, though less ostensible, suffering imposed by

vituperative sarcasm and disingenuous ridicule.

We have all heard of a very expressive proverb, import-

ing that the world will think of us just as we think our-

selves. Perhaps the seventh-day people have not made

sufficient exhibitions of self-gratulation. Perhaps they

have walked too contentedly down the valley of humilia-

tion, involved in the shadows of obscurity. Certain it is,

that they have striven to make themselves acceptable to

God rather than to men ; that they have been distinguished

more for morality, good sense, and quiet, unobtrusive

manners, than for brilliant, but superficial, attainments ;

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and that they have been rewarded, not by outbursts of

popular applause, not by a rising upon them of the sun of

worldly prosperity, but by the sweet consciousness of doing

right, and a slow but steady progress in Christian know-

ledge and acquirements. The Seventh-day Baptist churches

have been blessed and honoured by the labours and exam-

ple of a succession of worthy ministers. Men, pre-emi-

nently qualified to break the bread of life, and administer

the milk of the word ; — men truly apostolic in simplicity

and purity of doctrine, in fervour of piety and zeal. True,

they have not been distinguished for the wisdom of this

world. They have not rejoiced in the learning of Bossuet,

neither have they exhibited the eloquence of Bourdalone,

Massillon, or Whitefield ; but they have adhered steadily

to the truth, have been uncompromising in opposition to

error, and little prone to seek worldly honours and emolu-

ments. Few of them have ever grown rich except in

grace ; indeed, the possibility of opulence was precluded by

the cost of living, and the smallness of their salaries. The

same has also operated to prevent the accumulation of

large libraries by the ministry, or their devoting much time

to learned research or literary pursuits.

Few denominations of Christians have been equally dis-

tinguished for fraternal feeling and unanimity of senti-

ment ; — in no one has society assumed a more healthy and

moral tone. Industry, frugality, and integrity, are their

leading characteristics ; mendicity is rare among them, and

squalid poverty unknown.

Man is eminently a social being. No one perceives,

perhaps no one apprehends, how much society contributes

to strengthen and perfect the noblest virtues and highest

attainments. The affections are particularly under the

control and guidance of social influences. The interchange

of the forms of hospitality and courtesy powerfully pro-

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motes the growth of friendship and kindliness of feeling.

Consequently, social worship is of the highest importance

to every Christian fraternity ; and nothing is more pro-

ductive of congeniality of sentiment and unity of design

between churches of the same faith and order than fre-

quent convocations for mutual encouragement and edifica-

tion. The Seventh-day Baptists were aware of this, and,

accordingly, when the church in Newport, R. I., organized

a part of its members into a separate and distinct body,

now known as the First Hopkinton Church, it was stipu-

lated that an annual interview should take place, which

was subsequently known as the yearly meeting. Thus

was formed a little confederacy, whose bounds gradually

enlarged as new churches were instituted, until it included

the parent churches of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New

York, and New Jersey. These meetings were held alter-

nately at different places, and were usually attended by

the ministers and other leading members of the respective

churches, who generally travelled at their own expense,

and spent some time in this social and religious visit. The

consequences of this interchange of Christian sympathies

and feelings were every way delightful. The bonds of

union were cemented, many pleasing acquaintances were

formed, and a warm and growing attachment to the Sab-

bath, and the cause of truth, increased in the minds of all.

So early as 1800, the churches composing this denomina-

tion began to consider the expediency of establishing some

formal ecclesiastical organization. This was considered

the more necessary in consequence of certain differences in

some doctrinal sentiments that prevailed to a considerable

extent. The question was under consideration until

1805, when, at a meeting convened at Hopkinton, certain

articles of union were agreed upon, and subscribed by dele-

gates from eight sister churches ; and thus an ecclesiastical

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body for the transaction of business was formed, which was

denominated the General Conference.

The second session of this venerable body was held at

Berlin, the third at Cohansey, now Shiloh, and the fourth

again at Hopkinton. In 1808, the Lost Creek and New

Salem churches, in Virginia, united with the Conference,

which subsequently received continual and almost annual

additions.

The meetings of this body were solemnized alternately

from place to place, and were attended with the most

happy consequences. Before the venerable body, whose

members were uniformly distinguished for integrity, can-

dour, and piety, all difficult cases were brought for con-

sideration and adjustment. Here divisions were recon-

ciled, schisms healed, and such differences as appeared

likely to disturb the general peace removed. Here, also,

religious and benevolent enterprises were projected and

recommended to the churches for their action and con-

sideration. The authority of the General Conference was

subject to several limitations, which will be perceived by

attending to the form and government of the Sabbatarian

fraternities. Every church is in itself a distinct body,

capable of transacting its own concerns, of receiving or

expelling members, of appointing its own pastor and other

officers, fixing their salaries, and suspending their minis-

trations in case of impiety or gross immorality. The

internal regulations of these churches are simple and

democratic, every member being equally entitled to a

vote, and the pastor, except by the superior respect at-

tached to his station, having no more voice, and exercising

no more influence in business affairs, than a private indi-

vidual. It could not be expected that these churches,

after having experienced the benefits of their equal and

impartial government, would accede to the establishment

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of any ecclesiastical organization that might tend to sub-

vert their independence, or to centralize in an extraneous

body the authority which was then disseminated through

and exercised by the members of the churches themselves.

Accordingly, we find that the right to choose, elect, and

ordain their own deacons was still retained by the churches,

as well as the privilege of specifying from their numbers

such candidates for the ministry as appeared eligible for

that sacred office, which specification and appointment,

being submitted to the Presbytery (a board of ministers

appointed for that purpose), by whom the qualifications,

talents, and character, of the candidate is examined, which

examination proving satisfactory, he is forthwith ordained

by the laying on of f hands.

Neither has the Conference any right to institute a

judicial investigation of any difficulties that may arise

between individual members and the churches to which

they belong, nor to attempt any interference with dissen-

sions between sister churches, except by special and par-

ticular invitation, and unless the subject has been pre-

viously laid before the respective churches, and their dele-

gates to the Conference instructed to take cognizance of

the matter.

Such churches of the Sabbatarian order as desired ad-

mission into this confederacy, were required to furnish a

written exposition of their doctrinal sentiments respecting

regeneration by the Holy Spirit, justification by faith, and

salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ, which, prov-

ing satisfactory, the right hand of fellowship was extended

to their delegate on behalf of the Conference. Here we

may observe that this proceeding was not calculated nor

intended to establish any inquisitorial censorship of doc-

trinal views, but to perpetuate good order, unanimity of

sentiment, and purity of faith.

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At the time of the organization of the General Con-

ference, there were several churches of Seventh-day Bap-

tists who remained aloof from that confederacy. Of these,

one was situated in a very pleasant country, on the west

fork of the Monongahela River, in Harrison County, Vir-

ginia. This church, in 1808, sent a letter to the Confe-

rence, requesting admission into that body, but stating

their practice of receiving first-day members. In conse-

quence of this, their reception was postponed, and an

admonitory message upon the subject prepared and sent

to them. This church soon fell into a decline ; its mem-

bers removed into other parts, and it finally became ex-

tinct.

With the exception of the minutes of the General Con-

ference, and one or two other works scarcely deserving of

consideration, the Seventh-day Baptists made no attempt

to form a denominational literature until 1820, when an

association of ministers edited and published a periodical

designated the Missionary Magazine. About the bum

time a collection of hymns for the use of the denomination

was made, which met with very general acceptance and

applause. After the publication of the magazine had been

continued for two or three years, various causes contributed

to render the further prosecution of the enterprise inexpe-

dient and unadvisable. Upon the discontinuance of the

magazine, the necessity of a denominational literary organ

was very generally felt, but engagements in other pursuits,

fears of pecuniary losses, and other causes, operated to

prevent the enterprise until 1827, when Deacon John

Maxson, of Scott, projected and brought into successful

operation a weekly newspaper, called the Protestant Sen-

tinel, which, by untiring energy and perseverance, he suc-

ceeded in supporting and publishing for several years.

The paper was first issued at Homer, then at Schenectady,

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and finally at De Ruyter. To Deacon Maxson, the pub-

lication of this paper appears to have been, from the first,

a losing concern. His engagement in the enterprise was

not undertaken with the view or expectation of pecuniary

profit. He was influenced by considerations far more

sacred and important. No doubt in the advantages secured

by that enterprise to his brethren he feels amply repaid

for all his toils and difficulties ; for a man of his benevolent

heart and amiable disposition ever forgets all personal

considerations in the general good.

When the press was removed to De Ruyter, Deacon

Maxson resigned the editorial charge, which passed in a

very short period through several hands ; the paper bear-

ing the name of The Seventh-day Baptist Register. Even

here its location was not considered as the most favourable,

and many supposed that the city of New York would

afford a more eligible situation. To that place, therefore,

in 1844, it was removed, and the Rev. George B. Utter

assumed the editorial chair, since which removal it has

borne the name of The Sabbath Recorder.

The denomination became early aware of the utility of

tract publications, and the General Conference in 1831,

recommended the formation of tract societies in the diffe-

rent churches, which should become auxiliary to a general

tract executive committee, annually appointed by that

body, to procure, examine, and publish such tracts as in

their opinion might be desirable. In compliance with this

suggestion, such organizations were instituted in nearly all

the churches, and several tracts were procured and printed.

But the tract cause, like that of the denominational paper,

laboured under much discouragement and great embarrass-

ment. As a means for disseminating Christian truth and

knowledge, it does not seem, even yet, to be duly appre-

ciated. The want of available funds crippled its opera-

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tions, and lessened its usefulness ; nevertheless it continued

to support a nominal existence until 1843, when it was re-

modelled and reorganized under the name of the Sabbath

Tract Society, since which period its activity and useful-

ness have been abundantly exhibited. It has a series of

stereotyped tracts, of which editions are published accord-

ing to the means and demands of the society. In connexion

with this, is a publishing society, recently organized, that

has issued several publications not connected with the

series, but all relating to the Sabbath controversy. The

denominational paper is also published under the auspices

of this society ; and it is believed that whatever obstacles

may have impeded the progress of our publishing interests,

they are rapidly disappearing before the development of

our literary resonrci

The utility of missionary organizations engaged, at a

very early period, the attention of the General Confe-

rence. At this time it was the practice of the individual

churches to depute their ministers to make short journeys,

of which they generally defrayed the expense. The ineffi-

ciency of this course had become painfully manifest, and

it remained for the Conference to devise some plan by

which the missionary efforts of the denomination could be

concentrated. The subject was under consideration for

two or three years, and finally resulted in the organization

of the Seventh-day Baptist Missionary Society. By refe-

rence to the constitution of this society, which bears the date

of 1819, it appears that its object was to consolidate the funds

and concentrate the efforts of the denomination, in order to

promote the interests of religion by employing missionaries

and sending them to the destitute and scattered brethren

in our fellowship. This society, notwithstanding its laudable

object, was destined to meet with many difficulties and em-

barrassments. The poverty of some of the churches, and

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the unwillingness of others to contribute, were serious ob-

stacles in the way of its accomplishment of the good it had

purposed to perform. Yet under its auspices, several mis-

sionaries were annually appointed, for three, six, or nine

months, to occupy such fields of labour as appeared most

eligible, and generally embracing visitations to Sabbath-

keepers who were removed to distant localities. These

journeys, though attended in the sequel with the happiest

results, often required no small share of personal sacrifice

and inconvenience on the part of the performer. Diffi-

culties were always to be encountered ; many times dangers.

These were greatly enhanced, from the fact that the mis-

sionary field generally lay in some new region, where the

forests were as destitute of roads as the rivers of bridges, and

where the uniformity of the one might prove quite as per-

plexing to the wanderer, as the swollen tides of the other

might render dangerous the unaccustomed ford. Not un-

frequently circumstances required the performance of these

journeys in the winter season, when every discomfort was

proportionately increased.

These missionaries held meetings, organized churches

w T here such a course seemed expedient, and administered

baptism to believers. Sometimes their visits to the desti-

tute would be attended by a gracious revival, but at all

times were accompanied with gratifying results. But the

embarrassments of the society continued, and finally, in

1841, it was formally extinguished, in order to make room

for another, w T hose regulations, it was conceived, were more

judicious, and which commenced operations in 1842. To

the domestic this adds a foreign field. Under its direction,

Messrs. Solomon Carpenter and Nathan Wardner, with

their wives, are labouring at Shanghai, in China, and the

mission, with which a small school, under the management

of the excellent Mrs. Wardner, is connected, is in a highly

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flourishing condition. The Board are collecting funds to

build a chapel for public worship, to purchase an eligible

site for which, about one thousand dollars have been already

despatched to that country.

A Seventh-day Baptist society for the dissemination

of religious truth among the Jews, took a permanent form

in 1838, and Elder William B. Maxson was appointed to

labour, under its direction, with that ancient and bigoted

people. The success of this enterprise was not propor-

tionate to the anticipation indulged, although probably as

great as could have been expected, had all the difficulties

and obstacles of the mission been fully considered, In

connexion with this society, a small work on the prophetic

character of the Messiah was published) and many copies

gratuitously distributed among the Jews. Recently this

society has only supported a nominal existence.

The attention of the Seventh-day Baptists was early

called to the subject of education, and two institutions of

a high classical character, have been established among

them. Of these, one is located at Alfred, Alleghany

County, New York, and is denominated the Alfred Aca-

demy and Teachers' Seminary ; the other at De Ruyter,

New York, was founded in 1837, at an expense of near

thirty thousand dollars. The first has a charter from the

state, and both have acquired a high reputation, and

furnish the means of a classical education to a large number

of students. Besides these, academic schools have been

projected and brought into successful operation in other

sections, in connexion with our denomination.

The Sabbatarians have repeatedly taken action in their

ecclesiastical bodies, against war, intemperance, slavery,

secret societies, and the like, and in favour of the great

moral reforms and benevolent enterprises of the age.

Within the last twenty years a very interesting cor-

respondence has been carried on with the Sabbatarians of

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England, through the medium of Rev. Robert Burnside,

and Rev. William Henry Black.

About 1830, the great increase of business, as well as

the scattered situation of the churches, seemed to justify, in

the opinion of many, some modification of a general annual

Conference. It was therefore proposed to divide the deno-

mination into two Conferences, according to their geogra-

phical position. When the subject came up for action, it

was judged most expedient to continue the Conference, but

to divide the churches into Associations, which should

meet annually, to transact the business of the churches

within their own bounds, and appoint delegates to repre-

sent them in the General Conference, which, according to

a resolution passed at one of its meetings, convened at

Shiloh, in 1846, is hereafter to meet triennially instead of

annually. Five Associations have been formed, in accord-

ance with this plan, — the Eastern, embracing the churches

in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey, — the Cen-

tral, including those in the State of New York, east of the

small lakes, — the Western, composed of the churches in

Western New York and Pennsylvania, — the Southwestern,

comprising those in Ohio and Virginia, — and the North-

western, including those in Wisconsin and Iowa. The

utility of this arrangement is unquestionable, and, so far

as it has been tested, has been found to answer all the pur-

poses of an Annual Conference without its disadvantages.

But it must not be supposed that during all this time, the

sun of prosperity to this people has been unclouded ; that

no difficulties have arisen in their straight and narrow path.

On the contrary, they have been subjected to many and

peculiar trials. They have been despised by the worldly

and the great, have been oppressed by law, and persecuted

in more ways than one by those professing the Christian

name. Even now they are subjected to many inconveni-

ences from their nonconformity, and are deprived of many

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social and literary privileges that they might otherwise

enjoy. In consideration of this, and the strong worldly

tendencies that bind the human heart, it is not surprising

that thousands who have been brought up to recognise the

obligatory and sacred character of the fourth command-

ment, and who were fully convinced of its unalterable

claims, have been induced to abandon it ; while others, for

the same reasons, although fully convinced of their duty,

have refused to embrace it. Yet some have been able to

appreciate the vast importance of the stake at hand, have

felt the danger of trifling in an affair on which eternal

interests depended, and have concluded that popular

applause was nothing comparative with an approving con-

science, and the smiles of God. Such have strictly adhered

to the Sabbath, or have embraced it, notwithstanding the

consequences. Of the latter, we might instance several

eminent and worthy ministers, who now r occupy prominent

places in the denomination. Rev. Wm. M. Jones,\* and

Rev. J. W. Morton, Professor of Modern Languages in

the De Ruyter Institute, are both converts to Sabba-

tarianism.

In the history of Sabbath-keepers we have had a beau-

tiful exemplification of the truth of that promise, that he

wdio soweth in labour and with many tears, shall return

rejoicing, laden with the products of an abundant harvest.

Their numbers were few, their churches isolated, and their

opportunities for sharing in the emoluments of the world

both limited and unfrequent, nevertheless the dissemination

of their doctrines has become, through Divine Providence,

the means of reclaiming many wanderers to the Bible

Sabbath. The increase of the number of the Sabbath-

\* It is questionable, however, whether Mr. Jones will be an addition

to our society or not, since he appears to be a man of inferior abilities

and attainments, and one disposed to meddle with subjects above his

capacity or information.

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keeping churches may be attributed to a variety of causes.

Every society possesses within itself the principle of exten-

sion and multiplication, by which it will ultimately quadru-

plicate its numbers, when no counteracting agencies of

more potent influence are at work. In consequence of this,

the numerosity of a church sometimes became burdensome,

and it was considered necessary to establish a new fraternity

from the surplus members of the old. Emigration also became

a great source for the dissemination of the scriptural doc-

trine of the Sabbath, as well as indicative of the ground

to be occupied by future churches. Thus some brother,

whom poverty or untoward circumstances had forced to

abandon his native state, and the Christian society of his

childhood, has been the pioneer of religious instruction to

the neighbourhood, and the honoured founder of a reli-

gious establishment.

In the third place, the perceptions of many have been

enlightened by an unprejudiced perusal of the Holy Scrip-

tures, accompanied by the convincing energies of the Spirit

of truth. A venerable lady, resident in the State of New

York, embraced the Sabbath, to which she rigidly adhered,

notwithstanding the opposition and persecution of her

husband and kindred, although at the time unaware that

any denomination of Christian Sabbatarians existed. She

had obtained her knowledge of the Sabbath, its ordinance

and obligation, from the Bible alone. A gentleman of

Maryland, with his family, embraced the Sabbath without

having any previous communication or connexion with the

Sabbatarians; but the unprejudiced perusal of the Scrip-

tures had instructed him in the knowledge of his duty, and

he hesitated not in the performance of it. A multitude of

similar cases might be recorded ; these, however, are suffi-

cient to show that Scripture testimony, when acting upon

unprejudiced minds, will invariably lead to a clear convic-

tion of the holy and sabbatical character of the seventh day.

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It is well known, that in nearly every State of the Union,

the observance of the first day is enforced by law. It is

certainly remarkable that these States, so distinguished for

their otherwise liberal and enlightened policy, should retain,

with such tenacity, this hateful feature in their legislative

system; thus subjecting to the alternative of conformity,

or to the liability of fines and imprisonment, a large and

respectable portion of the community. To obtain the re-

dress of these grievances, and the exemption from being

made amenable to civil processes served, or made return-

able upon the Sabbath, petitions were circulated for two or

three consecutive years, in the different States where the

Sabbatarians reside, and then presented to the considera-

tion of the legislative bodies. In no ease, liowever. were

they attended with the results anticipated, either by a re-

peal of the obnoxious statutes, or by the enactment of other

laws, more conformable to the spirit of the age.

Upon several occasions, the SSventh-day Baptists have

attempted to participate with their first-day brethren, in

Sabbath Conventions, and similar convocations. But, U

might have been expected, they have been uniformly exclu-

ded from these deliberations; courteously, it is true, and

with expressions of Christian feeling and charity. In con-

sequence of this, they have instituted, and held, within

their own bounds, several Conventions and similar meet-

ings, designed to advance and disseminate the Bible doe-

trine\* of the Sabbath.

SECTION II.

EASTERN ASSOCIATION.

The Eastern Association of Seventh-day Baptists, em-

braces the churches located in Connecticut, Rhode Island,

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and New Jersey. The history of these communities must

be highly interesting, and fraught with instruction to every

pious mind.

CHURCHES IN RHODE ISLAND.

This little territory, which circumstances have rendered

so peculiarly dear and interesting to every pious mind, was

settled at a remarkable period in the history of the world,

and under circumstances not only new and peculiar, but

strongly adverse to former theories and practices. It re-

mained for the founder of this little colony to make the

discovery that the consciences of men were above the cog-

nizance of penal regulations or legal processes ; but the

principles of religious freedom which he exposed and incor-

porated in his government were regarded by all other

bodies, both civil, judicial, and ecclesiastical, as in the

highest degree visionary in theory, and dangerous, disor-

ganizing, and impracticable in real life.

It is not surprising that a pampered priesthood and

lordly prelates, whose honours and preferments were based

upon a system of ecclesiastical tyranny, should oppose, by

every possible means, the establishment of unlimited tole-

ration ; although we may well wonder that those who had

felt themselves the heavy weight of religious persecution,

should commit so great an error, so palpable an inconsis-

tency, as to attempt to deprive others of the inestimable

blessing of worshipping God according to the dictates of

their own consciences. Roo;er Williams, who fled from the

persecuting Puritans, became the founder of the first Bap-

tist Church in America, which was instituted at Providence,

1644, and from which originated a church at Newport, in

1652, under the auspices of Rev. William Vaughan. From

this community seven persons seceded in 1671, and esta-

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blished the first Seventh-day Baptist, and the Third Bap-

tist Church upon the American continent. This secession

took place in consequence of the teachings of Stephen

Mumford, who emigrated from England in 1665, and who

contended, with zeal and fervour, for the perpetuity and

unchangeable nature of the Sabbatical ordinance. It is

greatly to be lamented that of the early life of this man,

the parent, under God, of so many flourishing religious

communities, so little is known.

Only a few facts have been preserved, and these rest on

questionable evidence. I have not been able to obtain any

knowledge of his parents, of the place of his birth and

education, or any of the circumstances connected with his

conversion. It is certain, however, that lie embraced Sab-

batarian sentiments, or was educated in that belief in

Europe.

Mr. Mumford, when he arrived in this country, was in

the middle of life; a period when the energy of youth

remains without its rashness, and the mind is prepared to

act with steadiness without exhibiting the timidity and per-

tinacity of old age.

It has been observed, with more beauty of expression than

either truth or consistency, that great circumstances make

great men. It is certain that extraordinary trials, new situa-

tions, and difficult exigencies may and will develope unex-

pected powers, and give prominence to certain traits of cha-

racter; nevertheless, the mind, in its essential qualities, ge-

nerally remains unchanged. Horace, whose knowledge of

human nature no one has ever distrusted, very pertinently

remarks, that those who cross the ocean pass under a new

sky, but do not change their disposition. This was un-

doubtedly true of Mr. Mumford ; and could we trace his

early history, we should doubtless find an exhibition of the

same principles and conduct which marked his subsequent

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career. But the actions of Mumford speak loudly in his

behalf. He was evidently a lover of the truth, and one

neither ashamed nor afraid to advocate unpopular tenets

if they agreed with the Word of God. He cannot be

accused of bigotry or intolerant feelings towards those

who differed from him in sentiments, for he united with,

and continued in the communion of the First-day Baptist

Church in Newport for a considerable time. Neither does

it appear that he attempted to make proselytes by any

violent or injudicious methods, but simply showed the way

of right by expounding the Scriptures in friendly conver-

sation. It is evident that he had no ambition to be con-

sidered as a partisan leader, for he never aspired to become

an elder even in the church which he had been instrumental

in gathering. While a conclusive testimony of his gene-

rally irreproachable character, and the piety of his little

band of followers, is evinced by the fact that they were

not excluded from the First-day community, but volun-

tarily withdrew from it, in consequence of the " hard

things" which were spoken against them by their brethren.

It is probable that Mr. Mumford was one of those amiable

and worthy characters, who, possessing an humble and un-

aspiring disposition, never dream of worldly distinction or

popular applause, or that their actions, or the pepetuation

of their memories, can be beneficial or grateful to posterity.

At this time, too, the founder of a poor and despised sect

must have had other subjects of greater moment in mind,

and must have been too busy to record his own fortunes,

and too pious to feel any pride in recounting his ancestry,

his adventures, and his sufferings.

In the colony of Rhode Island liberty of conscience was

professedly established, and the friends of Roger Williams

have chanted his praise in no measured terms upon that

account ; but how do their eulogies agree with the fact

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that even here the Sabbatarians were subjected to peculiar

troubles, and suffered much inconvenience, being exposed

to insults and annoyances upon their Sabbaths, and like-

wise driven from their fields of labour upon the first day

of the week by the magistrate, although peaceably at work

in a manner that precluded any disturbance. Of the

manner of Mr. Mumford's death I have no account; bat

"mark the perfect, and behold the upright, for the end of

that man is peace." Doubtless it was so with him.

x I w p o B t c ii r 11 c ii.

The Sabbatarian church at Newport was instituted in

1041. It then contained seven members, who had with-

drawn from the communion of the First-day church on

account of the differences subsisting between them with

respect to the Sabbatical ordinance. Their names were

Stephen Mumford, William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard,

Roger Baster, and three sisters ; William Hiscox became

their first pastor.

The early history of Elder Hiscox, like that of most of

his contemporaries, is wrapped in obscurity, lie appears,

however, to have held an eminent place in the First-day

Baptist Church of Newport, then under the pastoral care

of Rev. Mr. Clark, as we find that he a\ as appointed by

that body, in conjunction with Joseph Torrey and Samuel

Hubbard, to assist the Baptists at Boston, in a public dis-

pute concerning infant baptism, to which they were chal-

lenged by the Puritan persecutors. This dispute was

actually held and continued for two days, though to little

purpose, for all turned out a farce so far as the Baptists

were concerned, who, as it appeared, were only invited

there to be tantalized and abused.

It is very probable that Mr. Hiscox had acquired a re-

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putation for public speaking before he was chosen or

ordained to the ministerial office by the infant church at

Newport. Be that as it may, his faithfulness, the pros-

perity of the church under his ministry, and the successful

manner in which he vindicated the Scriptural tenets which

he had espoused, evinced the wisdom of their choice. He

fell asleep in Jesus in 1704, in the sixty-sixth year of his

age.

Rev. William Gibson, from London, where he received

his ordination, was his successor. Elder Gibson is said to

have descended from an ancient and highly respectable

family in Warwickshire. From his youth he was destined

for the church, and consequently he received a classical

education in Oxford, that nursery of ecclesiastics. While

prosecuting his preparatory studies, he accompanied his

fellow-students to see what they denominated " sport,"

which was, in reality, the public whipping of a poor woman

for nonconformity as it respected infant baptism, and the

religious observance of the first day. The great patience

and apparent piety of the victim, together with the brutality

of the sentence, wrought powerfully upon his sympathetic

mind, and finally he abandoned the study of logic for that

of the Bible, in order to discover what part of the sacred

volume authorized such proceedings. This inquiry, to the

inexpressible grief of his parents, who saw the prostration

of their worldly hopes, terminated in his conversion to

Baptist sentiments, and his emigration to America. He

filled the office of pastor to the church at Newport until his

death, which occurred in 1717, in the 79th year of his age.

Joseph Crandall, who had been his colleague for two years,

succeeded him. He was an able and worthy minister,

although illiterate, and the church prospered under his

administration. He died in 1737.

Rev. Joseph Maxson, another father in Israel, followed,

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who died in 1743. Mr. Maxson is said to have been ex-

tremely apt and pointed in argument, but he was mainly

distinguished for judicious adaptation of means to ends in

all his intercourse with the unconverted. This will be

illustrated by the following anecdote. He had a neighbour

notorious for infidel principles and unchristian conduct, but

as such characters generally are, he was entirely ignorant

of the Bible, nor could he be prevailed on to read or accept

one. Mr. Maxson did not press the matter, but manifested

as much unconcern as he could assume. Some time after,

our infidel friend was returning home, when near his gate.

he discovered a book presenting the appearance of having

been accidentally dropped. He took it up : it was a Bible.

Upon the blank leaf was written —

" 'Twas for me, thy soul death tasted,

Seeking me, thy worn feet hasted;

Let .such Labour not be wasted."

The exquisite beauty of this stanza .-truck the mind of

the scoffer; he thought that certainly liis principles could

not be shaken by a Blight examination of the book, H li< i

wished particularly to discover to what passage such boun-

tiful lines could apply. He did so; the result wad his

conversion.

Rev. John Maxson, their next pastor, was a man of emi-

nent piety. He was not a proficient in the wisdom of this

world, but he possessed that without which all learning is

vain. He was eminently distinguished for his knowledge

and love of the Scriptures. He died in 1778.

Rev. William Bliss received" the mantle of the ascending

Elijah. Mr. Bliss, in his early life, was much inclined to

deism, but when about thirty years of age, he became truly

serious, and finally he was happily converted, and united

in communion with the church. Soon after his public pro-

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fession of religion, he became exercised on the subject of

the ministry. He had frequently improved his gift for

speaking, in the prayer and conference meetings ; and he

received a public call of the church in 1773. In 1780, he

was installed pastor of the church, in which station he con-

tinued during the remainder of his life, which was about

twenty-eight years.

Mr. Bliss was a warm and steady friend of his country,

and suffered much by the English soldiery, during the

Revolutionary war, being completely in their power while

the city of Newport remained in their possession. They

took possession of a part of his farm, on which they erected

forts, and a part of his dwelling, in which were quartered

many of their officers. They also cut down his orchards

to barricade the roads, and committed many depredations

of a similar character.

Mr. Bliss was the father of a large family, and some

very interesting circumstances are related of one of his

daughters. This young lady, when about sixteen years of

age, had a long and painful sickness, in which time she became

hopefully converted ; and God was pleased to recommend

himself to her in a remarkable manner. During her illness,

at a time wdien she was very low, she lay for a long time

as one asleep, without sense or motion. Her attendants

looked upon her as dying ; but presently she revived, and

was in the greatest transports of joy. She declared to

them that she had been favoured with a view of another

world, and had been conducted both to the mansions of

misery, and the abodes of felicity ; and that in both places

she saw and recognised those with whom she had been

acquainted, and were then dead, but that she was forbid-

den to tell them who were in misery ; that she had water

given her to drink, which was inexpressibly sweet, — that

she was told that she would not recover from her sickness,

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but must return for a season, and then that she should be

admitted back to stay for ever. She lived about a year

after this, during which time she looked forward with the

greatest pleasure to the time of her departure, and died in

full confidence that she should be immediately reconducted

to those scenes of felicity with which she had been made

acquainted.

As a minister of the gospel, Mr. Bliss was more distin-

guished for logical and spiritual argumentation, than for

oratorical fervour. Few have excelled him in solidity of

judgment, and the happiest consequences uniformly re-

sulted from following his advice. As a Christian lie was

remarkably exemplary, and adorned his profession in both

public and private life. He was warm and tender-hearted,

circumspect in his deportment, and always anxious to pro-

mote the happiness and usefulness of all about him. lie

was distinguished for a pleasant cheerfulness, which made

his conversation agreeable to persons of all ages.

The circumstances attending his death were quite re-

markable. For a few months previous to his decease, he

experienced several paralytic strokes, which, though light,

greatly reduced his physical strength. Still he retained

his mental faculties to the last, and was not confined to his

house but a few days. From this period he was sensible

that his departure was at hand, and he waited in the

greatest composure of mind for his approaching change.

For a few days before his death, he found his strength de-

caying, but felt no other disease than a gradual loss of

physical power. The day before his death, he was visited

by his intimate friend, the Rev. Mr. Eady. To him, he

remarked, "I am going to try the truth of my doctrine."

The morning before he died, he was visited by a grandson

who had recently returned from Spain. With him he con-

versed freely on the political and religious state of that

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country. From these subjects, he referred to his own cir-

cumstances, observing that he no longer possessed any

interest in the busy scenes of this world, as he was on the

point, he believed, of departing for a better one. He sig-

nified that he thought himself to be dying, and appeared

animated with the prospect before him. He seemed like

Moses, who in his full strength, was permitted to ascend

the summit of Mount Pisgah, and thence view the fair and

fertile fields of the promised inheritance. Towards evening

he was visited by Deacon B., from Hopkinton, who called,

not intending to tarry through the night. He observed to

this gentleman that he was going to die, and thought he

would be needed about his person. He also made, with

great deliberation, further arrangements for calling assist-

ance, as he believed he should leave them before morning.

When Deacon B. retired to rest, he was walking the house

without exhibiting any unusual symptom except a strange

coldness of the hands and the feet. He had left him but a

short time when he heard an unusual stir below, and imme-

diately arose and repaired to his bedside ; but his spirit had

fled. Thus closed his long and useful life on the 4th day

of May, 1808, in the 81st year of his age.

The Rev. Henry Burdick, was his successor, and

was assisted in the ministry by Rev. Arnold Bliss.

Both were young men of eminent piety and considerable

ability, and both continued to exercise their holy vocation,

until they were called to rest from their labours at a very

advanced age. Subsequent to the death of Elder Bliss,

which occurred in 1826, this church appeared to sink under

an accumulation of misfortunes and unpleasant influences.

This deplorable state of things continued for several years,

when the General Conference took into consideration the

utility of appointing a missionary to labour in that vicinity.

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Accordingly, Lucius Crandall received an appointment to

that field, in which connexion he continued for three years.

He was succeeded in 1846 by Libbeus Cottrel, a young

man of considerable promise.

Besides this succession of pastors, the church at New-

port had several highly eminent men in its connexion.

Of these, the Wards were distinguished for holding high

official stations in connexion with the royal government of

the province. They were descended from an ancient and

highly respectable family in England, whose elder members

espousing the cause of the Parliament in the civil wars,

thereby became obnoxious to the dominant party at the

time of the Restoration. Mr. Thomas Ward, Esq., emi-

grated to America, and joined the Sabbatarian church, of

which he continued a member until his death.

Richard Ward, his son, was one of those rare eharaeters,

who, with talents and capacities fitted to adorn the highest

circles, are, nevertheless, not ashamed of godliness, or of

a consistent observance of the humble duties of religion.

He made a public profession of Christian faith, in 1753,

and uniting with this, then infant church, contributed

greatly by his talents, and wealth, and influence, to its

support. Determined likewise to give his brethren a solid

proof of his affection and regard he bequeathed five hun-

dred pounds sterling to the church at his death, which

occurred in 1766. This eminent man, as a citizen and

statesman, was distinguished for patriotism and philan-

thropy. In his executive character as royal governor of

the province, he displayed a singular ability, and his

memory will long be remembered with affection and respect

by the people whom he served. Samuel Ward, his son,

was also governor in the years 1762 and 1765 ; the duties

of which office he administered with fidelity and zeal. In

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the years 1774 and 1775, he was a member of the Conti-

nental Congress, in which difficult station all his conduct

was signalized by an inflexible integrity and unfailing

patriotism. As a man, a scholar, a statesman, and a

Christian, his character was equally respectable.

Mr. Henry Collins, another member of this church, was

pre-eminently distinguished in his time, being one of the

wealthiest citizens of Newport in the days of her colonial

glory, a munificent patron of the fine arts, and a highly

respectable literary character. He donated the ground

upon which the Redwood Library now stands, and was a

liberal contributor to all public enterprises of a benevolent

and useful character. Mr. Collins participated at all times

in the labours of his brethren with much zeal and great

effect ; being always ready to act his part, sometimes as a

messenger to the other churches, and often at home in the

service of the congregation. In 1729, he was elected

Trustee, and with Mr. Jonathan Weeden had the sole

charge of erecting the house of worship. This venerable

structure stands upon a lot of land donated by Mr. Almy

to the church for that purpose. A rather singular anec-

dote relative to this meeting-house is on record. During

the Revolutionary war, when Newport was occupied by

the British army, most of the meeting-houses in the town

were converted into barracks for the soldiers. The Seventh-

day meeting-house was also selected for this use, but when

the officer sent to take possession of it opened the door, he

discovered the ten commandments, which were written on

two tables representing marble, and placed over the pulpit.

Pausing a moment, he ordered his men to retire, remarking

that he could not spoil a house in which were written the

sacred laws of God. The meeting-house was accordingly

saved, although of but little use to the church during the

captivity of the town.

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FIRST SEVEN T H-D AY BAPTIST CHURCH, HOPKIXTOS,

RHODE ISLAND.

This church was first organized in 1708, although

Seventh-day Baptists, in connexion with the church at

Newport, had resided here for a long period.

Rev. John Maxson, their first pastor, and one of the ear-

liest ancestors of the large and respectable family of that

name, was distinguished for great oratorical fervour and

pathos in public speaking, although lie did not possess the

advantages to be derived from a classical education. His

voice is said to have been remarkably strong, clear, and

harmonious ; his eye mild, blue, and beaming : his counte-

nance noble and expressive, and then he knew so well how

to touch the hearts of his auditory : always beginning his

discourses in a low and subdued tone, but warming with

his subject, and exhibiting throughout the general course

of his argumentation an air of vivacity and glowing energy;

and in his appeals, an ardour, pungency, and force alto-

gether irresistible. "When addressing sinners, he would

weep from sympathy and feeling; but how would his coun-

tenance irradiate and brighten when he told of a Saviour's

love ! He died in 1720, in a ripe old age.

Rev. Joseph Clarke, who succeeded him, was ordained

in 1712, and exercised his ministry with great acceptance

until 1719, wdien he fell asleep in Jesus.

" Rev. John Maxson, Jun., his successor, received ordina-

tion in 1719, and continued his pastoral care over the

church, until 1747, when he went to receive his crown. It

is said that Elder Maxson possessed one gift most rare,

and at the same time most essential for a Christian minister.

This w r as great fervency and frequency in prayer. From

the closet he went to the pulpit, and he went from the

pulpit to the closet. He wrestled with the angel of the

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covenant like the patriarch of old, and like him he secured

a blessing.

Upon the death of Elder Maxson, the ministration of

Gospel ordinances in this church devolved on Elder Joseph

Maxson, of Newport, who served both churches until 1750.

Rev. Thomas Hiscox assumed at this time its pastoral

charge. He was a man of rare piety and eminent ability.

Evangelical in sentiment, eloquent in delivery, forcible and

pointed in argumentation, he was very successful as a

minister. Endowed with great conversational powers, a

pleasing and affable address, he was eminently qualified to

adorn the social circle, and no one could frequent his com-

pany without being benefited by his piety and improved

by his wisdom.

He made a public profession of religion in early life,

and was even then distinguished for close application to

the study of the Scriptures. Contemning the vain and

fickle amusements of youth, he was ever found at the

prayer circle, and delighted particularly in solitude and

retirement. His maturity amply fulfilled the promise of

his spring, and the autumn of his days was accompanied

by an abundant harvest. He died in 1773, in the seventy-

seventh year of his age. Rev. Thomas Clarke, his col-

league, was appointed to the work of the ministry in 1750,

and departed this life in 1767, aged eighty-two years.

His death was eminently triumphant, and even after he

had ceased to speak, his pallid countenance shone with a

glory, and his glazing eye glowed with a rapture altogether

indescribable.

Rev. Joshua Clarke, son of the former, was eminently

distinguished, not only as a Christian minister, but as a

citizen. He sustained with fidelity and trust several

important town offices in the early part of his days, and

as a member of the corporation for the College at Provi-

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dence ; was highly distinguished for classical and literary

taste, as well as the faithful discharge of the laborious and

varied duties pertaining to that station. His patriotism

and public spirit were continually exhibited during his

long and honourable service in the legislature of the state ;

but it was chiefly in his position as a Christian minister,

that his gifts and graces were brought into action, and his

character displayed in all its beautiful and symmetrical

loveliness. For this station he was eminently fitted both

by nature and grace : a form lofty and commanding ; eyes

deep and dark as midnight; voice clear and musical. His

preaching was powerful, and chiefly for this reason, it came

from the heart. The church, during his ministration, was

blessed with several revivals of religion. He travelled

many journeys on business connected with the church, but

finally rested from his labours in March, 1793, in the

seventy-seventh year of his age.

Rev. John Burdick, his successor, was equally distin-

guished for eminent piety and natural ability. His dis-

courses were marked by a fervid, yet gracefully simple

eloquence. He was also eminent for faithfulness in disci-

pline. No member under his auspices was retained in the

church whose conduct or reputation could be a blot upon

her bright escutcheon ; yet no one could accuse him of in-

justice or partiality. His ministry was signally blessed

by a powerful revival, in which more than two hundred

persons were added to the church in one year. As a

citizen, he was liberal, public-spirited, and benevolent.

Incessant in his Gospel labours, he travelled much, visiting

destitute churches, many of which he had assisted in orga-

nizing. He never received nor required a stated salary,

but wrought at the useful and healthful occupation of hus-

bandry. He was highly respected by other Christian de-

nominations, and maintained the most friendly intimacy

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with their ministers. He died in the seventieth year of his

age, in 1802.

Rev. Abraham Coon, his successor, was ordained in

1798, and was very generally admired for solidity of judg-

ment, copiousness of thought, and eloquence of delivery.

He was frequently employed among other demominations

to their great satisfaction. He died in 1813.

Rev. Matthew Stillman, his colleague, was ordained in

1804, and continued his ministry with great acceptance

for nearly half a century. Elder Stillman, was a man of

moderate ability, but he possessed, in an eminent degree,

those excellencies of character and disposition, that are

far more desirable than brilliancy of wit, or depth and

variety of talent. Although others might be more admired,

none were more extensively and universally beloved. In

1819, Elders William B. Maxson, Daniel Coon, Thomas V.

Wells, and Amos R. Wells, are all reported as associated

with Elder Stillman in the ministry of this church. In 1832

Christopher Chester is reported as licentiate. He was

ordained in 1834, and continued in connexion with Elder

Stillman, to administer Gospel ordinances to this church,

until 1836, when Elder Coon became, for the second time,

a resident minister in the place. Subsequently he assumed

the pastoral relation in connexion with the church, which

situation he still occupies.

Beside these ministers, others have been ordained by

this church and that of Newport, who removed into other

parts, and became the founders of new" fraternities. Of

these we may mention John Davis, of Burlington, Nathan

Rogers, of Berlin, and Ebenezer David, afterwards chap-

lain in the American Army. Several members of this

church have risen to places of trust and importance in the

state. Their deacon, Daniel Babcock, held for a long

time, the office of Assistant Governor in the upper house of

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the legislature. Others have been elected to fill offices of

responsibility in civil, judicial, and local affairs. As a

community, they are noted for wealth and intelligence, for

improvements in the useful arts, proficiency in scientific

pursuits, and steady industrious habits.

This community, notwithstanding the numerous amicable

dismissions that have been made from it to form other

churches, still remains one of the largest and wealthiest in

the connexion.

SECOND SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST OHUBCH, HOPKIJTTON,

RHODE ISLAND.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1835, and Amos 11. Wells became its first pastor, in which

relation he continued for two years.

Rev. John Green assumed the pastoral charge in 1839,

which he held until 1840.

Rev. Lucius Crandall, his successor, remained two years,

and was succeeded by Rev. S. S. Griswold, the present

incumbent.

THIRD SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, H o I' K [ N T

RHODE ISLAND.

This community, like the one last mentioned, is a branch

of the First Hopkinton Church, and seceded from the pre-

sent body in 1835. It may be observed, that previous to

this separation the Hopkinton Church became very nume-

rous, and built three meeting-houses for the accommodation

of the different neighbourhoods. These meeting-houses

are now occupied by the respective churches. This church,

however, remained in a rather low and depressed condition,

in consequence of being deprived of the services of a settled

pastor, until 1845, when Rev. A. B. Burdick assumed the

responsibility of that station. Rev. Charles M. Lewis, the

present incumbent, was installed in 1848.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND.

This church was organized in 1837, and was served by-

Henry Clarke as licentiate, and subsequently as pastor, for

several years.

Rev. Jacob Ayres, the present incumbent, was installed

in 1848. Elder Ayres, is the grandson of Rev. Jacob

Ayres of the Marlborough Church, and he seems to have

inherited Elisha's portion of the spirit and ability of his

venerable ancestor. He possesses, in an eminent degree,

one most rare and inestimable qualification for a gospel

minister, — a remarkable talent in prayer.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PAWCATUCK,

RHODE ISLAND.

The distinct organization of this body took place in 1840,

and Rev. Alexander Campbell became its pastor, in which

connexion he remained until 1847.

Rev. Isaac More, his successor, was a convert to Sab-

batarian sentiments from the First-day Baptist denomi-

nation.

Rev. A. B. Burdick, the present pastor, was installed

in 1848.

SEVENTH -DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, RICHMOND,

RHODE ISLAND.

This infant community was organized in 1843, and con-

tains about twenty members. Its prospects, however, are

highly encouraging, and it must be regarded as a very

auspicious omen, that Rev. John Green has consented to

assume the pastoral charge. Perhaps no one in the deno-

mination is better calculated to encourage the timid and

strengthen the weak.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SOUTH KINGSTON,

RHODE ISLAND.

This church, another infant community, was organized

in 1843. Elder Henry Clarke is their present pastor.

Rev. Christopher Chester has also been a very efficient

labourer in this region. His ministry has been blessed at

different seasons with the outpourings of the Spirit of grace,

and the hopeful conversion of many. This was particu-

larly the case in 1841, when a First-day Baptist church,

consisting of forty members, was gathered and organized

altogether through his instrumentality. In 1847, he visited

them again, and another revival was the consequence. In

this the Seventh-day church participated.

EXTINCT CHURCH.

A church was organized, in 1791, at Oyster Pond, on

Long Island, by Elisha Gillette, who came from Nei?

Jersey, 1789.

But he soon began to admit members who observed the

first-day, in consequence of which intestine difficulties

arose. This church soon fell into decay, and ultimately

became extinct.

SECTION III.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS IN CONNECTICUT.

In the first settlement of this country, Baptists were

persecuted by Pedobaptists, on account of their tenacity

for believer's baptism ; but all parties were united in op-

pressing and persecuting the Sabbatarians. Soon after

the organization of the church at Newport, the sentiment,

that the moral law was immutable and unchangeable, found

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS IN CONNECTICUT. 163

advocates in New London, Connecticut, where the spirit

of persecution was under less restraint than it was in

Rhode Island. There is an old work, which was written

by a Friend, and published in Baltimore in 1698, and

which gives a very detailed and circumstantial account of

the sufferings of the dissenting parties in New England.

According to his statement, no less than ten Sabbatarians

were mutilated, imprisoned, and subjected to barbarous and

cruel scourgings by their Puritanical brethren. Of these,

John Rodgers, a member of the church at Newport, but a

resident in New London, was fined, imprisoned, and sen-

tenced to sit a certain time upon the gallows with a rope

about his neck. Another, named Philip Rodney, who

was a Seventh-day Baptist in sentiments, although not a

member of the church, was scourged, and then deprived of

one of his ears. Sometimes their meetings would be dis-

turbed and broken up by the lawless violence of a mob.

At others they would be fined, imprisoned, and maltreated

for pursuing any ordinary business or labour upon the

first day of the week ; and such w r as the opposition to

them, in many places, that a man who religiously observed

the Bible Sabbath, would much sooner be subjected to

fines and imprisonments, than if he had acknowledged it

to be the Sabbath. These hostilities against the observers

of the seventh-day, occasioned a remonstrance, addressed

to the Governor of New England, by Peter Chamberlain,

Senior Doctor of both Universities, and first elect Physi-

cian in ordinary to His Majesty's person. This somewhat

abated the rage of persecution, although the Sabbatarians

were continually exposed to great inconveniences. It

does not appear, however, that any sect was ever extir-

pated by persecution, particularly one that had the testi-

mony of Scripture upon its side, and flourished in an age

of general inquiry.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BURLINGTON,

CONNECTICUT,

The distinct organization of this church took place in

1750, and Elder John Davis, who had been ordained at

Hopkinton, became their first pastor. The place was then

called Farmington, West Britain. This church, while yet

in its infancy, was considerably weakened by the loss and

removal of several of its most influential members. Other

difficulties arose of a peculiarly trying and painful cha-

racter, and few, if any, additions were made to their num-

bers for more than ten years. But previous to the dec

of Elder Davis, which occurred in 1702, they were blessed

with a precious revival, and the church received several

additions. In the character of Elder Davis, we discover

few points that are brilliant or remarkable, but many that

are lovely and amiable. It is said, that he pre-eminently

exemplified the Christian duty of loving hifl neighbour.

His entire life exhibited a. scries of actions illustrative of

that virtue. The quiet placidity of his mien, his venerable

and dignified countenance, were long remembered with

enthusiastic veneration by the people of his charge. His

glory was not of this world — his name has never been

ranked with those of ecclesiastial dignitaries, scholars,

or civilians ; but it was set in the Lamb's Book of Life — it

was known to angels, and the spirits of just men made

perfect.

Rev. Amos Burdick succeeded him in the pastoral care

of the church, in which station he continued until his death,

in 1803. The church, under his ministry, enjoyed great

prosperity and union. Rev. Amos Stillman, for some time

his colleague, was his successor. Elder Stillman, though

subject to many temporal embarrassments, was a preacher

of considerable ability and unblemished character ; he was

universally esteemed. In the autumn of 1807, he visited the

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS IN CONNECTICUT. 165

churches in New Jersey, where the Conference was being

held, in which he presided and preached many times to great

satisfaction. But on his return home, he caught the yellow

fever, of which he died in 1807, in the forty-fifth year of

his age. From the loss occasioned by the death of Elder

Stillman, this church never recovered. A general declen-

sion in religious feeling almost immediately followed, and

although meetings were regularly sustained a number of

years, and the name occurs in the Conference minutes,

it never after possessed that inestimable blessing, a stated

pastor. From 1810, its decline was gradual but sure, and

a few years since, it was publicly announced that the

Sabbatarian church at Burlington had ceased to exist.

Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that the Sabbata-

rians of this community apostatized from their ancient

faith. Without a regular administration of gospel ordi-

nances, there could be few, if any, additions to their num-

bers. Some of the old members were removed by death

to that home where congregations never break up, and

Sabbaths never end. Others have been the pioneers of

Sabbatical sentiments, and the founders of new churches,

in distant regions.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, AT WATEEFORD,

CONNECTICUT.

Soon after the organization of the Sabbatarian church

at Newport, we find that John Rogers of New London,

Connecticut, was fined and imprisoned, on account of his

adherence to Sabbatical sentiments. Others were subse-

quently persecuted for the same cause ; but they persisted

in their adherence to the truth, and ultimately became the

founders of a church at the place now called Waterford.

The church was organized in 1784, and Rev. Davis

Rogers became their first pastor. Their number was

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sixteen ; but soon after, several families emigrated from

Hopkinton and settled among them. In 1804, Elder

Rogers resigned the pastoral care of the church, and

removed to Preston, Chenango County. He was suc-

ceeded by Rev. Jabez Beebe, whose ordination took place

in 1796, and whose ministry was very acceptable, though

not of a long duration.

Rev. Lester Rogers, his successor, was distinguished

for sobriety of mien, and although not calculated to shine

as the preacher of a promiscuous assembly, was very useful

and acceptable as a pastor of this church. He died in

1822.

Rev. Lester T. ]l the present incumbent, i

licensed to preach in 1822, and ordained in 1824. Rer,

Benedict Wescott, for some time his colleague, was licensed

in 1828, and ordained in 1831.

SECTION IV.

CHURCHES IN NEW JERSEY.

The churches in New Jersey arc large and efficient

bodies, and date back to an early period in the history of

the state. They were distinguished in early times, and

when the denomination was in its infant state, for wealth

and respectability of character, and for pastors of eminent

piety and worth.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PISCATAWAY,

NEW JERSEY.

This fraternity, the third Sabbatarian Church in Ame-

rica, was organized in 1705, and Rev. Edmund Dunham

became their first pastor.

Elder Dunham had been for some time a leader in the

\* In the autumn of 1850 Elder Rogers was removed by death.

CHURCHES IN NEW JERSEY. 167

First-day Baptist Church at that place, and was moreover

extremely scrupulous in his observance of the first day.

This led him to reprove one Hezekiah Bonham, for attend-

ing, upon that day, to secular concerns. Mr. Bonham

replied by requesting his censor to prove from Scripture

that the first day was holy by divine appointment. Upon

examination, Mr. Dunham not only discovered that his

point was untenable, but became in the end a zealous

advocate of the sacred character of the seventh clay. In

a short time, the force of his arguments carried conviction

to the minds of seventeen others, who formed a church,

chose him for their pastor, and sent him to Rhode Island

to be ordained. He served the church until his death in

1734, and was succeeded by his son, Rev. Jonathan Dun-

ham. The talents of Elder Dunham were above medio-

crity, and although he had not been favoured with literary

advantages, his preaching was very effective, and he was

greatly beloved by his brethren. In the earlier part of

his ministry their first meeting-house was built, the church

having formerly met for worship in private houses. It

was erected upon a lot of one acre of land, which had

been donated to them for that purpose by Jonathan Fitz

Randolph. Elder Dunham, after serving this church up-

wards of forty years, rested from his labours in 1777, in

the eighty^sixth year of his age. Rev. Jonathan Jarman,

for some time his colleague, was ordained in 1772, but

soon after removed to French Creek, in Pennsylvania.

Subsequent to the decease of Elder Dunham, this church

remained for several years without a pastor, but depended

for ministerial assistance upon the occasional visits of

travelling missionaries, or a precarious supply by first-day

brethren. The church also suffered much from being near

the seat of war, and in the vicinity of the ravages of the

British army.

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Rev. Nathan Rogers, in 1786, assumed the pastoral

charge, and during that summer and autumn the church

was blessed with a remarkable revival of religion, in which

upwards of sixty were added to its numbers. During the

same year, Rev. Elisha Gillette received ordination as

evangelist, in connexion with this community, which rela-

tion he sustained for three years.

Rev. Henry M. Laffcrty, for three years the colleague

of Elder Rogers, was subsequently his successor in 17 < . , 7,

and continued to occupy the pastoral office until 1811,

when he was succeeded by

Gideon Wooden, as licentiate, and subsequently as

pastor, who served the church until 1825, when he

succeeded by

Rev. John Watson, whose ministry continued until

1840.

Rev. William B. Maxson, for eight years his colleague,

was for one year his successor, when

Rev. Walter B. Gillette, the present incumbent, w&S in-

stalled. Bcsidesc these pastors, other ministers have, at

different times, been connected with this church, who have

removed to other fields of labour.

This church occupies a very pleasant situation, about

thirty miles from the city of New York.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, P L A I X F 1 E L D,

NEW J E 11 S E Y.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1838, and Lucius Crandall, first as licentiate and subse-

quently as pastor, assumed the spiritual charge, in which

relation he still continues.

Both these churches are very wealthy and highly intelli-

gent, and occupy a distinguished position in the denomi-

nation.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SHILOH, NEW JERSEY.

This church dates to a very early period. So long ago

as 1695, an itinerant minister of the Seventh-day Baptist

persuasion, named Jonathan Davis, removed from Long

Island to the State of New Jersey, where he settled near

Trenton, and preached until his death, which occurred in

1T50.

Elder Davis visited Cohansey, where his nephews re-

sided, one of whom, also named Jonathan Davis, was a

minister, and a principal agent in gathering this church,

which was constituted in 1737, and consisted of twenty

members, some of whom were emigrants from Piscataway.

Elder Davis continued to serve this church until his death,

in 1769. During his ministry their first meeting-house

was erected. It stands on a lot of one acre of ground,

which was donated to them by Mr. Caleb Ayars. The

burial-ground, as might be supposed, contains many time-

honoured monuments.

Rev. Jonathan Davis, his successor in the ministry, was

of Welsh extraction, and the son of Rev. David Davis, a

distinguished minister of the Welsh Tract Church. He was

born in 1734, received ordination in 1768, and installed as

pastor of the church upon the death of his predecessor, in

which relation he continued until his death in 1785. Elder

Davis was eminently distinguished for sound judgment,

great stability, and moral worth. He was universally

beloved, and the church, under his ministry, attained a

considerable degree of strength and permanence.

Rev. Jonathan Jarman, for some time his colleague, re-

moved to Cape May, where he died, but his remains were

subsequently brought back to Shiloh for interment.

Deacon Philip Ayars was likewise considered a leader

in this church, and an administrator of baptism.

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Rev. Nathan Ayars was ordained in this church in 1786,

and remained its pastor until 1810.

Rev. John Davis, youngest son of Elder Jonathan Davis,

was for several years his colleague, and finally his suc-

cessor. Elder Davis was ordained in 1807, and continued

to serve the church until 1842, when, overcome with age

and infirmity, he resigned the pastoral charge to

Rev. Azor Estee, who was succeeded in 1844 by

Rev. Solomon Carpenter, whose transfer to the China

Mission left the church without a pastor. However, in the

latter part of 1845 they secured the services of

Rev. Samuel Davison, a convert to the Sabbath, and a

very able preacher, who remained for about two years,

and was succeeded by

Rev. Giles M. Langworthy, whose illness and premature

death left them again in a destitute condition.

During the past summer the church was served by

Rev. Enoch Barnes, a very worthy man, and a convert to

Sabbatarianism from the Methodist connexion.

Rev. George R. Wheeler is also a member of this church,

but he resides at Salem, about ten miles distant. Mr.

Wheeler and family were likewise converts to Sabbatical

sentiments.

This church has been blessed with many auspicious

revivals. One took place in 1807, and continued for a

long time. It was very extensive, and about seventy were

added to the church. Subsequently many precious seasons

were enjoyed, but perhaps the greatest in-gathering oc-

curred in the commencement of the year 1843, when about

ninety were added to the church. This gracious visitation

of the Holy Spirit commenced and continued through a

meeting of days, in which Elder John Green and Elder

Estee were the leaders. It was marked at first by a deep

and unusual seriousness in the congregation, that gradu-

CHURCHES IN NEW JERSEY. 171

ally increased, and seemed to pervade every heart in the

vast assembly. Meetings for prayer and religious inquiry

succeeded, at which old and young attended, whose coun-

tenances were indicative of the various emotions of their

souls. Some in a fixedness of look that seemed to say,

" God and eternity are near ;" some with a settled gloom

and depression of countenance ; some with marks of inde-

scribable anguish ; and some with the holiest and happiest

serenity, placid and beautiful as the loveliest sky after a

storm.

Sabbath after Sabbath scores of candidates of all ranks

and ages, from the child of ten summers to the old man

of seventy winters, came together requesting the ordinance

of baptism, and what was most remarkable, the greatest

order and propriety prevailed. There were no exhibitions

of enthusiasm, no rapturous outbursts, or passionate excla-

mations. All was calm, sedate, and tranquil. Every one

seemed to be impressed with a sense of the indescribable

holiness of God, and the sinfulness of the human heart.

Every one seemed to feel himself within the most holy

place. There was confession, thanksgiving, and entreaty,

— so humble, and yet so confiding, — so confiding, and

yet so presumptuous, — so importunate, and yet so submis-

sive. There were songs of praise and sighs of penitence.

There were tears of holy joy, of exalted hope, of remorse-

ful sorrow. From this church the sacred excitement ex-

tended to others, and many precious revivals occurred in

the neighbourhood.

This community is at present engaged in building a new

meeting-house, at a cost of five thousand dollars, having

donated the old one to a school and society formed for

educational and agricultural purposes.

This church was for a long time concerned in a very

tedious affair relative to a lot of land in Philadelphia,

which had been left by the will of Richard Sparks to the

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Seventh-day Baptists for a burial-ground. The date of

the will I have been unable to obtain, but it appears that

Sparks was one of the Keithian Seventh-day Baptists;

that he was baptized by William Davis, in 1600 ; and that

he belonged to a church of our persuasion in Newtown,

Chester County. He was a man of large property, and

being determined to give his brethren some substantial

proof of his regard, donated to them the before-mentioned

lot, which, at that time was in the suburbs of the city,

although at present it is nearly in the centre. It was

used, for some time, as the burial-ground of the church,

and upon a marble slab, placed in the wall by which it is

surrounded, arc inscribed the names of those who arc

interred within. Subsequent to the extinction of that

church, and the removal of its members, many of whom

emigrated to Shiloh,\* it became a question whether the dis-

posal of this property might not be effected, and the pro-

ceeds of the sale appropriated by the General Conference.

Pursuant to this design, Caleb Shepherd, of Shiloh, was

appointed as agent for the sale of said lot, with instruc-

tions to present a memorial to the Legislature of Penn-

sylvania, petitioning them to authorize its disposal for

pecuniary compensation, or in exchange for other land

more conveniently situated. But these tedious negotiations

resulted in a manner the most unsatisfactory. The Legis-

lature decided that according to the tenure of the will, their

only right to it was founded upon their using it for burial

purposes ; and that therefore there could be no legal dis-

posal made of it.

About this time the Conference, in its denominational

capacity, withdrew all claim to it in favour of the Shiloh

and Piscataway churches. Subsequently it was leased to

a hose company ; and afterwards sold by these churches to

\* The large and respectable families of the Swinneys, Tomlinsons,

and Thomases, were among the earliest members of the Shiloh Church.

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Stephen Girard, by whom it was conveyed to the corpora-

tion of the city of Philadelphia, in whose possession it still

continues.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, MARLBOROUGH,

NEW JEBSEY.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1811, and Rev. Jacob Ayras became its pastor, in which

relation he continued until his death, in 1838, having

served the church nearly twenty-five years.

Rev. Samuel Davis, brother of Elder John Davis, of

Shiloh, was for some time his colleague in the ministry.

Rev. David Clawson, his successor, was returned as

licentiate in connexion with the church at Piscataway, in

1833 ; was ordained in 1836, and installed as pastor of

this church in 1839, in which relation he still continues.

OBSERVATIONS.

It will be perceived that this Association embraces the

oldest churches, and is emphatically the stronghold of

Sabbatarianism. Most of them also have originated from

ordinary causes. Those of Piscataway and Shiloh have

each produced a branch. Three of those in Rhode Island

originated from a remarkable revival, which progressed in

1837, under the ministrations of Elder John Green, in

which sinners were converted to God by hundreds. All

the older churches have been the seats of stated pastors ;

consequently they escaped, at least in former times, all

the evils to be apprehended from frequent changes. These

pastors, also, however deficient they might appear in the

graces of elegant diction, were distinguished for sound

reasoning and plain sense. Their zeal was tempered with

moderation; their piety with rationality. If not very

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scrupulous as to method and language, they were correct

in their views, and orthodox in their principles. The

themes of their discourses were the doctrines of the Gospel,

and the nature of experimental religion, which they ex-

plained in a manner adapted to the capacities of their

hearers. That much of this old-fashioned system is being

done away with, is evident to the most casual observation.

This profitable mode of preaching has been exchanged for

one disposed to harp on opinions and debatable points.

But, although a deep explication of mysterious subjects

may look more wise, and excite, for the moment, more

interest than to travel on in the old track, the tampering

with matters beyond knowledge, to the neglect of plain but

edifying subjects, will be attended by a general dearth of

religious feeling.

SECTION V.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

This body embraces all those large and respectable

churches which are situated in the State of New York, east

of the small lakes. Most of this great body of our deno-

mination have been collected here within half a century.

About ninety years ago, we first find traces of Sabbatarian

sentiments in this extensive country. Since that period

the dissemination of this scriptural truth has been slow but

sure. Churches have one after another been constituted,

which, taken as a whole, have occupied an important posi-

tion, not only as to location, but likewise as to the tone of

feeling which they have given to the efforts and enterprises

of the denomination in benevolent and educational pur-

suits. They were among the earliest promoters of Domestic

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Missions in the then destitute regions of their own and

the Southwestern States. By their unwearied and active

exertions, amid all the discouragements incident to poverty,

limited means, and untoward circumstances, evangelists

were sent out to disseminate the truth in those then desti-

tute places, where, for many years past, flourishing churches

and powerful auxiliaries have existed. They seem also to

have first become interested in the subject of Sabbath

schools, conference meetings, and monthly concerts for

prayer. Their anniversaries are held at different places

in their long range of territory, and so commodious

and expeditious is the modern mode of travelling, that

although the churches are spread along a distance of two

or three hundred miles, yet the labour of attending them

is but small, and more than repaid by witnessing the varied

and beautiful scenery along the route. The very flourish-

ing institution denominated the De Ruyter Institute, is

located within the limits of this Association. It is situated,

as its name imports, in the pleasant village of De Ruyter,

on the southwestern part of the county of Madison, It was

projected in 1835, and went into operation in 1837. The

building is of stone, ninety-four feet front, and sixty-four

in width, including the depth of the wings projecting back-

wards. It contains a chapel, a room for philosophic lectures,

one for the library and society for natural history, six re-

citation rooms, and fifty-six students' rooms.

There is both a male and female department in the in-

stitution ; and the faculty, by their ability and assiduity,

have commended it to the good opinion of the public, among

whom it has hitherto sustained a high reputation.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BERLIN, NEW YORK.

This church, the oldest body in this Association, was

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organized in 1783, although many years previous, a num-

ber of Sabbath-keepers, principally members of the Sabba-

tarian churches in Rhode Island, had removed into these

parts, being among the first settlers of the place. Of

these, the large and respectable families of the Coons,

Greenmans, Crandalls, Greens, and Randalls, were most

distinguished for enterprise and intelligence. They occu-

pied a very pleasant situation in the northeasterly parts of

the State of New York, adjoining Massachusetts. The

place was first called Little Hoosack, and the Sabbatarians

resided in the towns of Berlin, Petersburg, and Stephen-

town, in which branch churches have since been established.

After the organization of the church, Rev. William Coon,

from Hopkinton, became their first pastor. Elder Coon

was a man of great natural ability, and was so pre-emi-

nently blessed in his ministry, that nearly two hundred

persons were added to the church in one year. He died

in 1801. He was highly esteemed by Mr. Van Rensselaer,

then deputy governor of the state, who bestowed upon him

a valuable farm, and contributed liberally towards defray-

ing the expenses of their new meeting-house.

Rev. Asa Coon, his nephew and successor, officiated in

the ministry but a few months, when he was removed by

death.

Rev. William Satterlee received ordination in 1805, in

the thirty-seventh year of his age, and was immediately

installed as pastor of the church, in which relation he still

continues. Elder Satterlee has been emphatically a father

in Israel. Thousands have walked in more brilliant paths,

have risen to loftier stations, and acquired more extensive

renown, but perhaps no one has been more really useful as

a Christian minister. In his family, in the church, in the

conference, he w T as equally amiable, equally attentive to

the desires of others, and equally anxious to do good.

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While others pursued the phantom of popularity, Elder

Satterlee remained content with the applause of his own

conscience, and his brethren were so well aware of his

ability and paternal character, that for many years he

was unanimously chosen Moderator of the General Con-

ference.

Under his ministry the church became another mother

of churches, and nursery of ministers, besides producing

several eminent characters.

Rev. James H. Cochran was installed as assistant pastor

in 1849.

SEYE NTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PETERSBURG, NEW YORK.

This community, a branch of the Berlin Church, was

organized in 1829, but remained until 1835 without a

pastor, when Bethuel C. Church became a licentiate in

their connexion, where he continued for one year.

Rev. Azor Estee, his successor, was licensed in 1836,

and received ordination in the autumn of the same year.

In 1841, he resigned the pastoral charge of this church to

Jarecl Kenyon, who continued in its service as licentiate

until 1844, when Elder Estee returned to them again.

Rev. William B. Maxson was resident here in 1845.

Rev. James Summerbell was ordained, pursuant to the

request of this church, in 1849, and was immediately in-

stalled as pastor.

SEVEXT H-D AY BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY.

This church was organized in 1845, although Sabbata-

rians had resided in Brooklyn and its vicinity for a long

time previous. They have a large and commodious meet-

ing-house. Rev. T. B. Brown is their present pastor.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, ADAMS, JEFFERSON

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1822, and Rev. William

Green became its first pastor, which relation he sustained

with great acceptance until 1841, when

Rev. Eli S. Bailey assumed the pastoral charge for one

year, and was succeeded by

Rev. Joel Green, who, in 1845, resigned his station to

Rev. G. M. Langworthy.

Rev. Alexander Campbell is the present incumbent.

This church has been blessed with several revivals of

religion, and is a very efficient community. Unlike some

of its sister churches, it has always been in a sound and

healthy condition, and at present holds a high rank among

the most decided friends of all the principles and institutions

of the denomination.

FIRST SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKFIELD,

NEW YORK.

As early as 1791, several members of the Hopkinton

Church emigrated to this place and began a settlement.

The country at that time was wild and uninhabited. Hills

and valleys were covered with forests in all their primeval

majesty, through which the wild deer and the Indian

roamed. But the hand of industry soon wrought a won-

derful transformation in this now beautiful country. The

woods disappeared. Green pastures and yellow harvests

waved in the valleys. The hills were crowned with cottages,

homely, indeed, but delightful, for they were the abodes

of piety and content. There was temporal comfort and

prosperity. There was spiritual happiness and godly hope.

The Sabbath was neither forgotten nor neglected. It was

linked with too many hallowed memories, too many sweet

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and pleasant associations, too many blessed reminiscences

of home, of kindred, of heaven, ever to be deserted by

those who were exiled by the force of circumstances from

the delightful scenes of their youth. Meetings were in-

stituted, and continued from house to house, and many

precious seasons were enjoyed before the organization of

the church.

In the autumn of 1797, they were visited by Elders

Burdick and Coon, of Hopkinton, and by them constituted

a church in sister relation. They numbered at first but

twenty members.

Rev. Henry Clarke became their first pastor, in which

relation he continued until 1829.

Rev. Eli S. Bailey received ordination in 1819, and the

same year became associated w r ith Elder Clarke in the

ministry.

Rev. Daniel Coon removed from Hopkinton the same

year, and became a resident in connexion with this church.

Rev. William B. Maxson assumed the pastoral relation

as assistant of Elder Clarke, in 1823, and remained until

1833.

Rev. John Green, his successor, continued four years,

and was succeeded by

Rev. Sebeus M. Burdick, who, in 1841, resigned the

office to

Rev. William B. Maxson, who remained for two or three

years, and was succeeded by

Rev. 0. P. Hull, for a short period, when Elder Maxson,

the present incumbent, was again installed.

Several licentiates have, at different times, been con-

nected with this church. Of these we may mention Charles

Card, in 1832, and more recently, Charles M. Lewis,

Waitstill Phillips, and David Burdick.

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SECOND SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKFIELD,

NEW YORK.

This community, a branch of the First Brookfield Church,

was organized in 1823, and Eli S. Bailey became its first

pastor. Under his ministry the church enjoyed several of

those auspicious seasons denominated revivals of religion,

and continued many years in a state of general peace and

prosperity. Elder Bailey was educated for the medical

profession, which he pursued for some time with eminent

success. At this period neither his habits of life nor a

ciations gave promise of his ever becoming a Christian

minister ; but, notwithstanding that his profession was one

of honour, and opened before him a fair path to wealth and

eminence, his heart turned towards the task of winning

souls to God. In 1839, James Bailey was associated as

licentiate, and subsequently as elder, in the ministry of

this church. Rev. Samuel B. Crandall succeeded in 1842,

and continued for one year, when Elder Bailey again

assumed the spiritual charge, which he continues to

exercise.

THIRD SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKFIELD,

NEW YORK.

This church, like the former, originated from the First

Brookfield Church, and was also organized in 1823.

Rev. Daniel Coon became its first pastor, in which rela-

tion he continued until 1836.

Rev. Samuel B. Crandall, his successor, and the present

incumbent was licensed in 1831, and ordained in 1832,

since which period, with the exception of one year, he has

been connected with this church.\*

\* Since the above was written, this church has been visited by a most

extraordinary and afflictive dispensation of Providence. Elder Crandall,

supposed to be labouring under a temporary fit of insanity, put a period

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SEVENTH-DAT BAPTIST CHURCH, T R U X T N, NEW

YORK.

Originally, this church was composed of emigrant mem-

bers from the First Brookfield Church. Its distinct organi-

zation took place in 1824. In 1826 it became the seat of

Rev. Alexander Campbell, who remained until 1833.

Rev. Zuriel Campbell, his successor, was licensed in 1835,

and ordained in 1838. Subsequent to his removal, which

took place in 1839,

Rev. Russell G. Burdick, assumed the spiritual care for

one year. He was followed by Elias Rogers as licentiate,

who, in 1844, was succeeded by Solomon Coon, and Var-

num Burdick, in the same capacity. Varnum Burdick is

the present incumbent.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, DIANA, LEWIS COUNTY,

NEW YORK.

This church originated from a small company of Sabba-

tarians who removed from Brookfield, several years ago,

and who, although deprived of sabbatical and sanctuary

privileges, nevertheless maintained prayer and conference

meetings, and exhibited in their daily walk and conversa-

tion an exact conformity to their holy vocation. Recently

several influential and highly respectable families in this

vicinity have embraced the Sabbath, and in 1846, a church

was organized consisting of sixteen members, with pros-

pects of large additions at an early period. It is supplied

with ministerial assistance by the Missionary Society.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, DE RUYTER,

NEW YORK.

This church, originally composed of emigrants from the

to his existence by suspending himself from a beam in his barn, in Sep\*

tember, 1850.

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Berlin and Hopkinton communities, was constituted in

1806. David Davis became their first pastor.

Rev. John Green, his successor, was ordained to the

work of the ministry in 1819. A well-written biography

of Elder Green would be most edifying, as perhaps no

other minister in the denomination has been the leader in

so many auspicious revivals. In numerous instances, his

visitations to the churches have been accompanied with

the most remarkable outpourings of the Spirit of grace.

Indeed, so often has this been the case, that long since it

became proverbial among the people, and a promised visit

from Elder John Green was considered as the sure pre-

cursor of a reformation. It is no wonder, therefore, that

this venerated man is, with few exceptions, so universally

beloved and respected, for multitudes look up to, and

regard him as their spiritual father. It is no wonder that

the aspersions of malice, and the machinations of envy

hav<^ been unable to destroy his credit or his influence with

the denomination at large. Yet this man, who has received

so many seals to his ministry, and whose presence to the

churches is so auspicious, is a plain old-fashioned man,

neither skilled in logic nor taught in the schools. He has

none of the polish or blandishments of modern eloquence,

no affectation of learning, no parade of jingling phrases or

high-sounding words.

how many of our young men, who discourse learnedly

of preparatory studies for the ministry, might, with infinite

advantage, sit at the feet and learn of this Shamgar in

the churches, who, coming from the fields of honest industry

to the pulpit, has been more instrumental in winning souls

to God, than most of the scholars who have come to the

contest elate with the honours of a full collegiate course.

Like a certain remarkably effective preacher of old, who

came into the ministry with hands undried from the fisher-

man's net, or like another, of some account at one time in

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the churches, who wrought at a useful occupation that he

might not be burdensome to any, Elder Green was undoubt-

edly called and set apart as a chosen vessel, by the Spirit

of truth. What weeping sinner, what returning backslider,

ever thought or inquired whether he was skilled in alge-

braic problems, Hebrew nouns, or Greek verbs ? Learning

to such a preacher would not and could not be any help ;

it might be a hindrance. It might lead him to trust in

earthly availments, and make him forget in what his great

strength lay. Have we not reason to fear that a vain

trust in learning and temporal advantages is the Delilah

that has shorn the locks from so many spiritual Samsons,

and rendered them powerless before their enemies ? It

would be a difficult matter to attempt an analyzation of

the sermons of Elder Green, or to show in what the secret

of his success consisted. No one, while listening to his

discourses, would think of applying to them the ordinary

tests of criticism ; indeed, no one would be half so much

pleased with the speaker as displeased with himself. He

would probably forget the time, the place, and the congre-

gation, and see himself transported at once to the bar of

God, with the world in flames. His cogitations would not

be, " Oh, what a learned and beautiful discourse !" but

" Oh, wretched man that I am !" or, " Oh, blessed Jesus,

how wonderful is thy love and goodness !" Yet in these

sermons, so remarkably effective, there does not appear

the least striving for effect, no attempt to enlist the

passions of the auditory, no forced and laboured ejacula-

tions ; but the attention is first engaged by the voice, the

look, the manner, the appearance of the speaker ; our

interest increases with his amplification of the subject, and

his application of it every one that hears must feel.

Elder Green remained at De Ruyter until 1826, when

the church was for some time without a pastor.

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Rev. Alexander Campbell, his successor, was installed

in 1834, and remained for several years.

Rev. James Bailey succeeded him in 1842, and remained

until 1848.

Rev. James R. Irish, Principal of the De Ruyter Insti-

tute, is the present incumbent.

Many licentiates, in connexion with the Literary Insti-

tution, have at different times officiated in this church.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, HOUNSFIELD,

JEFFERSON COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church originated from the Seventh-day Society in

Adams, and was constituted in 1841, William Green

assuming the pastoral charge, in which relation he still

continues.

The services of a settled pastor are, to these infant

churches, of inestimable value.\*

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, LINCKLAIN, CHENANGO

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1831, and Sebeus M.

Burdick became its spiritual guide.

In 1839, G. M. Langworthy and Thomas E. Babcock

were returned as licentiates in its connexion, but Elder

Burdick, in 1842, assumed its parochial charge for the

second time. He was succeeded, in 1846, by the Rev\*.

Joshua Clarke.

\* Since writing the above, I have been verbally informed that Elder

Joel Green was called to preside over the church at Hounsfield, as col-

league to Elder William Green, to the great dissatisfaction of the latter,

and in consequence of which, such a great difficulty arose, that the

ministrations of both were suspended, — but I will not vouch for the

accuracy of this statement.

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At present it is supplied with ministerial assistance by

the brethren at De Ruyter, of the church in which place

it is a branch.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, OTSELIC, CHENANGO

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1830, and Ephraim Curtiss

became its pastor. Elder Curtiss was a man of distin-

guished merit and great promise. His talents and services

were of inestimable value to this infant community ; but

the Great Head of the church was pleased, for wise but un-

seen purposes, to remove him from earth while yet in the

noon of his days. His decease, combined with other causes,

has contributed to keep this church in a backward state.

For a long time their harps were hung upon the willows,

and although they remained inflexible in their attachment

to the great distinctive principles of the denomination, and

supported sabbatical ordinances in a regular manner, they

have been blessed with few additions to their numbers.

Rev. Joshua Clarke, their present pastor, was installed

in 1847.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PRESTON, CHENANGO

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church dates back to a very early period. In 1804,

Davis Rogers, who had been ordained in 1784, with several

members of the Waterford (Connecticut) Church, emigrated

to this place, where they organized a church, which, under

his ministry, continued for a long time in a flourishing

condition. In 1818, it was admitted into the Conference,

at which period David Davis was associated with Elder

Rogers in the ministry. The death of Elder Rogers,

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which, as I am informed, occurred about 1832, left this

weak and sickly community in peculiarly trying and pain-

ful circumstances, and the members became scattered like

sheep without a shepherd. Subsequently they were ga-

thered and the church reorganized by Elder Benedict

Wescott, of Waterford, in 1834. This worthy and use-

ful man then assumed the spiritual charge of the scattered

flock, in which relation he continued until 1842.

Rev. Varnum Hull, his successor, was ordained in 1843,

and continued to serve this church for four or five years.

Rev. Joshua Clarke, the present incumbent, is connected

both with this and the Sabbatarian community at Otselic.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST OEUBOH, IIirilLAND, OSWEGO

COU N T Y, N I W Y (> II K.

This infant community was gathered and organized in

1845. Though few in number, they give promise of great

efficiency.

Rev. Elias Burdick is their pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SCOTT, CORTLAND

COUNTY, NEW YOUK.

This church was originally composed of members from

the Berlin and Rhode Island Churches. Of these we may

notice the large and respectable families of the Burdicks,

Babcocks, and Hubbards, who, even to this day, are the

bone and sinew of the Scott fraternity. It was organized

in 1820, and William B. Maxson became its first pastor,

and Holly Maxson the first deacon. It is justly due to

the memory of this venerable man to remark, that for

piety, disinterested benevolence, and every amiable and

Christian grace, he has rarely been equalled and never

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excelled. Mild and equable in disposition, complacent and

affable in manner, he was particularly qualified to soften

animosities and settle difficulties; while the uniform esti-

mation in which he was held, and the known impartiality

of his decisions, caused him to be chosen as umpire and

arbitrator in all disturbances and divisions of whatever

kind. His memory is still venerated, and the most honour-

able testimonies to his merit are yet borne by the commu-

nity where he resided. His death was in character with

his life. He died repeating

" Jesus can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillars are."

Rev. Joel Green was licensed in 1823, and ordained,

agreeably to the request of this church, in 1824, in which

connexion he continued until 1840.

Rev. Job Tyler, for a long time his colleague, was also

licensed in 1823, and received ordination in 1825.

Rev. Orson Campbell, of Berlin, assumed the spiritual

guidance of this church, in connexion with and during the

prolonged absence of Elder Green, in 1838 and 1839.

Rev. Russell G. Burdick, the present incumbent, suc-

ceeded to the parochial care of this church in 1842.

This church has been blessed with several powerful and

extensive revivals, and twice to my remembrance these

auspicious seasons occurred during the visitations of Elder

John Green. These religious excitements were generally

attended with extraordinary exhibitions. Sometimes nearly

every individual in the congregation would be prostrate

upon their knees, while a mingled utterance of screams,

wailings, prayers, notes of grief and joy, would rise in one

deep chorus. Ever and anon some sinner who felt his

burden removed would burst out in a song of triumph and

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loud hosannah ; others, who had been groaning for hours

in the deepest agony, or sitting silent, sullen, and dejected,

like images of unutterable woe, would arise with a glory

upon their countenances, and words of praise and exulta-

tion on their lips. Many entirely lost the use of their

limbs, and lay a long time as if entranced. At these meet-

ings there would generally be several ministers, who would

officiate at the same time in different parts of the congre-

gation, some in exhortation, some in praying for the dis-

tressed, and some in arguments with opposers, who con-

sidered such proceedings the height of fanaticism.

FIRST B1Y1I T II - DAI BAPTIST (' II D ■ ft II, VERO I A,

N | I I) A COIN T v, N i: W FOB K.

This church was organized in 1820, although several

years previous a number of families of Seventh-day Bap-

tists had removed from Hopkinton and Bettled in this

place, where they kept up meetings on the Sabbath, The

large and respectable family of Wflliamsefl appears to have

been the principal support of this infant church, which,

until 1842, remained without the services of a settled

pastor, when

Rev. Charles M. Lewis assumed the spiritual charge.

Rev. Christopher Chester, his successor, was installed

in 1848.

A branch church was organized at Schenectady in 1834.

John Maxson became its deacon, but so far as I am aware

it never had a settled pastor. It continued only a few

years. A church was likewise organized in Baltimore the

same year, which long since ceased to exist.

SECOND SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, VERONA,

ONEIDA COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

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1837, but remained in a destitute condition until 1842,

when Rev. Elihu Robinson became its pastor, in which re-

lation he continued for several years.

At present they have no settled pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, WATSON, LEWIS

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1841. Joshua Clarke

and William Gr. Quibell were recognised as licentiates in

its connexion. Subsequently they received ordination,

and the latter assumed the parochial charge, in which he

still continues.

This church, although in its infancy, gives great promise

of future efficiency and usefulness.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWPORT, HERKIMER

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This small but interesting community was formed in

1838. It has received ministerial assistance from the

Missionary Society at different times, although deprived of

the services of a settled pastor.

Elihu Robinson officiated as licentiate in this place for

a short period.

EXTINCT CHURCHES.

In 1820, a branch of the Berlin Church was organized

in Fox Township, Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, which

continued for several years in a flourishing condition. In

1822, John Bliss was ordained to the work of the ministry,

and subsequently Jeremiah Bliss was returned as licentiate.

But many evil influences were at work, which this church,

always weak and feeble, was unable to withstand. Its de-

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cline may be dated from 1832, since which period it gra-

dually sunk, its members removed into other parts, and

finally it ceased to exist.

It may be conceded that neither legal enactments, penal

statutes, nor popular customs, can suppress the course of

truth, or prevent the exercise of its legitimate effects upon

the minds of men. The progress of our denomination, not-

withstanding the adverse circumstances and many disad-

vantages under which we have laboured, has been steady

and unceasing ; and although many of our churches are in

a state of infancy, their numbers arc respectable, and their

influence considerable.

Many ministers who have arisen in these fraternities,

have removed thence into other parts. Ministers distin-

guished for evangelical enterprise and fervent zeal, some

of whom have been among the first pioneers of the gospel

in the western regions.

In connexion with these churches are some very effi-

cient High Schools, and one Literary Institution of a

higher class. It is true that these institutions arc not of

a theological character; nevertheless, they are important

appendages of the denomination, and, if well managed,

will become what is most needed, and will confer immense

benefits upon the community at large. The general diffu-

sion of knowledge will elevate the moral and intellectual

standard, and will be the sure forerunner of higher minis-

terial attainments, and the better management of the

churches.

SECTION VI.

WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

The churches embraced in this Association, are situated

on what was formerly considered missionary ground, al-

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though some of them are at present among the most effi-

cient bodies in the 'denomination. The principal ornament

of this section is the Alfred Academy, a very flourishing

literary institution, of a high classical character. It

appears to have originated from a High School, and went

into operation two or three years previous to the De Ruyter

Institute.

FIRST SEVENTH-DAT BAPTIST CHURCH ALFRED, ALLE-

GHANY COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church was originally composed of emigrants from

the Rhode Island and New Jersey fraternities, and was

constituted in 1816. The region at that time was extremely

destitute, and these pioneers of our faith were required to

undergo many hardships, and experience great depriva-

tions in the prosecution of their schemes. Generally their

means were moderate, and their worldly advantages limit-

ed ; but they were zealous for the truth and rich in faith.

They found a wilderness, here and there broken by the

hand of man : they left smiling fields and growing villages.

They found penury and destitution : they left wealth and

plenty. They found a region where the songs of David

were not repeated, where the Sabbath was not observed :

they left flourishing schools and churches. Did they live

in vain ?

Rev. Amos Satterlee was installed as pastor of the

Alfred Church in 1820, which station he filled with great

acceptance for several years.

His successors, Daniel Babcock and Richard Hull, were

ordained in 1824, and remained with this church about

fifteen years, when they removed to other fields.

Rev. James R. Irish became their pastor in 1837, in

which relation he continued until 1846.

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During the ministry of these brethren, the church has

been blessed at intervals with many precious revivals ; and

it appears to have been from the first in a sound and

healthy condition.

Rev. Hiram Cromwell, his successor, remained for only

a short period, and was succeeded by

Rev. N. V. Hull, the present incumbent.

Elder Hull is endowed with talents of the very highest

order, and perhaps no minister in the denomination is

better qualified to shine in a promiscuous assembly. His

fine understanding, ready wit, and brilliant imagination,

are united to the most fascinating powers of oratory, a de-

meanour of princely elegance, and the highest style of

manly beauty. His services either as a settled pastor, or

visiting evangelist, have been highly efficient in this region,

and his preaching has been attended with many powerful

revivals.

SECOND SEVENTH -DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, ALFRED, ALLE-

GHANY COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1831, and Elder Ray Green became its pastor. In 1835

Clarke Potter and N. V. Hull were returned as licentiates

in its connexion. In 1842, Amos Burdick was also licensed,

who continued to serve this church after the removal of

Elder Green, until 1844, when

Rev. James H. Cochran assumed the pastoral charge.

He was succeeded by Amos Burdick and P. C. Witter,

the present incumbents.

FIRST SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, GENESEE,

NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1827, and Henry P. Green

served as licentiate until 1835, when his ordination took

place. Under his ministry, which continued until 1847,

WESTERN ASSOCIATION. 193

the church received many additions, and became a large

and efficient body.

Rev. James Bailey, his successor, was installed in 1848.

SECOND SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHUECH, GENESEE,

NEW YORK.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1834, and was served by Prentice C. Maine as licentiate,

for some time. At present it has no settled pastor, but is

supplied with ministerial assistance by travelling mis-

sionaries.

THIRD SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, GENESEE,

NEW YORK.

This church, likewise a branch of the former, was organ-

ized in 1842, but remained until 1843 without a settled

pastor, when their spiritual charge was assumed by L. D.

Ayres, who remained until 1847.

Rev. H. P. Green, the present incumbent, was installed

1848.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, CLARENCE, ERIE COUNTY,

NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1828, although Sabbata-

rians had for some time previous been among the inhabi-

tants of the country, and maintained worship upon their

holy day. They remained for a long time without a pastor,

but, in 1838, Rev. Nathan V. Hull consented to settle among

them. In 1839, James H. Cochran was returned as licen-

tiate, and subsequently, in 1846, as pastor.

At present they have no settled minister.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, FRIENDSHIP, NEW YORK.

This community, like that of Alfred, dates back to an

early period. It originated, likewise, from an emigration

194 SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

of the members of older churches. Between the years

1812 and 1820, many families in connexion with the New

Jersey fraternities removed to this place, and became the

pioneers of our faith in its then lonely regions. In 1824

a church was constituted. Rev. John Green became its

first pastor, in which relation he continued until 1833,

when

Rev. Walter B. Gillette succeeded him, and remained

until 1842, when he removed to another field.

Rev. Zuriel Campbell followed, who continued until

1845.

Rev. A. A. F. Randolph, his successor, had been for

some time his colleague.

Rev. B. F. Bobbins, a man of deep piety and irreproach-

able character, who embraced the Sabbath in 1845, is the

present incumbent.

A short time since Elder John Green visited this place,

and his presence, as usual, was attended with a gracious

revival.

SEVENTH -DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, HARTSVILLE, ALLEGHANY

COUNT Y, NEW Y O R K.

This infant community, a branch of the Alfred Church,

was organized in 1847.

Rev. Hiram Cornwell is its present pastor.

It gives a cheering promise of future efficiency and

usefulness.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, HAYFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA.

This church is the oldest one in this Association, and

originated from the Keithian Seventh-day Baptists, who,

in 1770, resided in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia.

About this time it appears that Rev. James Dunn, with

WESTERN ASSOCIATION. 195

several families of Sabbatarians, removed to this place,

where he instituted meetings and organized a church, over

which he assumed the pastoral relation. Elder Dunn lived

to be very old, but some time previous to his decease, his

reason failed, and he became partially insane. This mis-

fortune, combined with other disadvantages, brought the

church into a state of deep depression. In 1821, Rev.

John Davis, of Shiloh, made them a visit, and by their

unanimous request ordained Isaac Davis to the work of the

ministry. Subsequently, however, the church remained in

very low circumstances, and in 1829, at which time it was

admitted into the General Conference, it only numbered

twenty-four members, and was without a settled pastor.\*

Beside the occasional visits of missionaries, it remained

thus destitute until 1836, when

Rev. Job Tyler removed into that region and assumed

the pastoral charge.

Rev. Thomas B. Brown, his colleague in 1840 and 1841,

and subsequently his successor, was installed in 1842, and

continued until 1844.

Morris Cole succeeded him as licentiate, in which rela-

tion he served the church until 1846, when

Rev. A. A. F. Randolph, the present incumbent, was

installed.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHUECH, INDEPENDENCE,

NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1834, with very auspicious

prospects, and

Rev. Stillman Coon became its pastor, in which relation

he continued until 1842, when, being transferred to another

\* For all the incidents relating to the early history of this organiza-

tion, I am indebted to Rev. John Davis, of Shiloh.

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field, the church was served by Decatur M. Clarke, as

licentiate, for two or three years.

Rev. Sherman S. Griswold, assumed the parochial charge

in 1845, and continued two years.

Rev. T. Babcock, the present pastor, was installed in

1848.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, WIRT, ALLEGHANY

COUNTY, NEW YORK.

At a very early period in the history of this district,

Sabbath-keepers were found among its inhabitants, chirlly

emigrants from the older settlements, but they were not

gathered and arranged into a church until 1827. Sir

quent to that period they remained in low and depressed

circumstances, which may be chiefly attributed to their

want of the services of a settled pastor. Recently, how-

ever, they have been mostly supplied with ministerial

assistance by

Rev. James L. Scott, until 1845, when they engaged

the services of

Rev. Zuriel Campbell for one year; who was succeeded

by Rev. Thomas E. Babcock.

C. T. Champlin, the present incumbent, is a licentiate.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SCI O, ALLEGHANY COUNTY,

NEW YORK.

This church was organized in 1834, but remained for a

long time without many additions, or the services of a set-

tled pastor.

Rev. Ray Green assumed the parochial charge in 1845,

and continued until 1847.

Rev. Rowse Babcock, the present incumbent, was installed

in 1848.

In reviewing the progress of Sabbatarianism within the

bounds of this Association, we find abundant reasons for

WESTERN ASSOCIATION. 197

encouragement. An interest hitherto unprecedented in

the modern history of the Sabbath-keepers, has been

awakened. Many have embraced the truth in opposition

to the popular sentiments of the day, among whom are

several ministers of eminent talent and piety, who may be

reckoned as pillars in the cause of God.

The number of churches has proportionately increased,

but it must be confessed that many of them are infant

bodies, utterly unable to support the pastor whose services

they require, and without whose presence they can never

rise to any degree of strength and usefulness. They want

such pastors as the Hopkinton, the Berlin, the Piscataway,

and the Shiloh Churches possessed during the first century

of their existence. Men who could preach the truth for

its own sake, who could share with and for their brethren

— live as they did — dress as they did — and even work as

they did.\* Under such plain but substantial guidance,

these churches all rose to great spiritual strength and per-

manence. Whatever honour belongs to him who is in-

strumental in gathering and organizing a church, much

more is justly due to the one, who, at the expense of per-

sonal sacrifices and temporal inconveniences, adopts the

spiritual infant, administers to its necessities, leads it

through the green pastures and by the still waters of tire

heavenly pilgrimage, and finally brings it to such a degree

of maturity that it is able to go alone. It is a lamentable

fact, that some of these churches for the want of such

leaders are even now threatened with extinction. Upon

whom in such cases must the delinquency rest ?

\* One of these fathers, who was considered no mean preacher in his

day, and who was instrumental, not only in organizing, but in support-

ing and bringing to maturity an infant church, used to remark that he

desired no better time for studying a sermon than when following the

plough.

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SECTION VII.

SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION.

Most of the churches embraced in this confederacy are

of recent origin. Many of them occupy highly advanta-

geous situations in the broad, the bright, the glorious

West, and give every promise of rising to future eminence

and usefulness.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW SALEM, HARRISON

COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

The history of this church, the oldest one in this Asso-

ciation, is highly interesting. It appears that in 174f), a

company of Sabbath-keepers, including one John Davis,

removed from Rhode Island, to a place called Square, in

Monmouth County, New Jersey. Here they organized a

church, and sent said Davis back to Westerly to be or-

dained, which was done in 1746. They remained here

nearly forty years, when the whole church, men, women,

and children, emigrated to the place that their descen-

dants now inhabit in Virginia. They went in wagons,

drove their cattle, and the cavalcade was many days in

performing their journey. Their venerable minister con-

tinued with them for many years. He was also assisted

by one Jacob Davis, who was esteemed as a very amiable

man and worthy minister.

Rev. John Davis his son and successor, was installed

about 1800, and continued to serve the church for a num-

ber of years. Zebulon Maxson, Peter Davis, and Lewis

A. Davis, were likewise associated with him in the ministry

at different times, and

Rev. Peter Davis finally succeeded him in 1834, in

which relation he still continues.

SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION. 199

Ezekiel Bee is a licentiate in connexion with this

church.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, LOST CREEK, VIRGINIA.

This church was constituted in 1805, and the large and

respectable family of Bonds — its first originators — appear

to be still its principal supporters. Richard Bond, while a

resident in Maryland, became convinced of the sacred cha-

racter of the seventh day, from reading the Bible alone.

Once convinced of his duty he was not slow in performing

it ; but embracing the Sabbath, he instituted weekly reli-

gious meetings in his family, and was, for a long time, the

priest of his household. Subsequently he emigrated to

Virginia, and became the founder of the Lost Creek

Church. This church has never been large, and for a

great proportion of the time it has been without the services

of a stated pastor, but the fact of its steady and uniform

course amidst these privations, affords conclusive evidence

of the valuable materials of which it is composed.

Richard C. Bond, the present incumbent, was installed

in 1843.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, HUGHES RIVER, VIRGINIA.

This church, a branch of the former, was organized in

1833. It is in a very weak and depressed condition, con-

taining only seven members.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SOUTH FORK, HUGHES

RIVER, VIRGINIA.

This church, another branch of the eldest fraternity,

was constituted in 1842. It contains only nineteen mem-

bers, and was served by Asa Bee and Joshua S. Davis, as

licentiates.

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SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, NORTHAMPTON,

CLARKE COUNTY, OHIO.

This church originated from a division, on the tempe-

rance question, in the Sabbatarian church at Pike, in the

same county. It was organized with seventeen of the

seceding members, in 1837. In 1840, it was blessed with

a precious revival, and received many additions.

Rev. Samuel Babcock is the present pastor, assisted by

L. Lippencott as licentiate.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PIKE, CLARKE COUNTY,

OHIO.

This church was constituted in 1824, although Sabba-

tarians had for some time previous resided in that region.

Rev. Simeon Babcock and Rev. Samuel F. Randolph,

were for several years connected with these churches,

under whose ministry they were greatly blessed, and the

fraternity under consideration numbered 102 members.

Subsequently, however, it fell into a decline. The seces-

sion of a part of its members, the death and removal of

others, combined with other causes, left it in a very weak

condition. In 1842, James B. Davis was a licentiate in

its connexion. At present it has no stated pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PORT JEFFERSON,

SHELBY COUNTY, OHIO.

This church was organized in 1840, and contained nine-

teen members. It is in a very pleasant situation, and

gives great promise of future usefulness.

Rev. Lewis A. Davis has been the father, and is the

pastor of this church.

SEVENTH -DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, SCIOTA, OHIO.

This church was organized in 1842, by emigrant mem-

SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION. 201

bers from Scott and Brookfield. It is situated in a very

pleasant country, and will probably become, in time, a

large and efficient body.

It is occupied as missionary ground, but has no stated

pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, STOKES, OHIO.

This church was organized in the same year as the for-

mer, and is much in the same condition. It is blessed

with the services of Rev. Joshua Hill, as pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON, OHIO.

This church was organized in 1840, and embraced thirty-

eight members, most of whom had removed from Pike,

Clarke County, to this place. For some time it appeared

quite flourishing^ and received several additions, but it is

at present in a very low and depressed condition, owing to

the want of ministerial assistance.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, WOODBRIDGETOWN,

PENNSYLVANIA.

This church was gathered through the exertions of Rev.

Samuel Woodbridge, and was organized about 1790. All

the knowledge that I have been able to obtain of Elder

Woodbridge is, that he was a First-day Baptist minister,

who became convinced of the sacred character of the

seventh day, and embraced it accordingly. Subsequently

he removed to this place with his family, where his preach-

ing was blessed to the conversion of many, a church orga-

nized, and a meeting-house erected, whose pulpit he occu-

pied until his death. This church likewise received several

additions from an emigration of the members of the Notting-

ham and Pennapack fraternities, among whom we may men-

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tion the children of Rev. Enoch David. But the death of

Elder Woodbridge was the commencement of its decline, as

no one arose to take his place. Its ancient and venerable

meeting-house, being without a pastor, soon became almost

deserted. Some of its members removed to other parts,

and others of them went to receive their reward for loving

the law and keeping the commandments of God. In 1843,

they numbered sixteen, and Lewis Sammons served the

church as licentiate. Since that period its decline has

been gradual, and it is a moral certainty that but a very

short time will elapse before we shall have to announce

the disappearance of another star from our constellation,

the extinction of another luminary in the moral world.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, INDIANA.

This small company of Sabbath-keepers was organized

into a church in 1843, since which period it has received

few additions, and has been in a low and depressed condi-

tion for the want of pastoral services.

SECTION VIII.

NORTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, MILTON, ROCK COUNTY,

WISCONSIN.

This large and flourishing church was organized in 1838,

since which period it has rapidly increased in numbers,

and promises to become a very useful and efficient body.

For a long time this region was considered as missionary

ground. Recently, however,

Rev. Stillman Coon and Rev. Zuriel Campbell have con-

nected themselves in the pastoral relation with the church,

in which they still continue.

NORTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION. 203

Many of its members were emigrants from Scott and

the older churches.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, ALBION, DANE COUNTY,

WISCONSIN.

This church was organized in 1843, and

Wm. H. Redfield became its servant in the capacity of

licentiate, which relation he sustained for one year, when

he was succeeded by

Rev. 0. P. Hull, the present incumbent, under whose

ministry it has enjoyed many precious seasons, and re-

ceived many additions.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, WALWORTH, WISCONSIN.

This church, mostly composed of emigrants from New

Jersey, was organized in 1849, and contains twenty-one

members, with a prospect of large additions.

It has no settled pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PREDONIA, IOWA.

This church was organized in 1842, and

Rev. Rolean M'Reynolds, formerly a First-day Baptist,

a minister of exemplary character and eminent talent, be-

came its pastor, in which relation he continued for some

time.

At present it has no settled pastor.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH, PARMINGTON, ILLINOIS.

This church was constituted in 1849, and consists mostly

of emigrants from Shiloh, with the family of

Rev. Samuel Davison, the present pastor.

It is said to occupy a pleasant and healthful situation.

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REMARKS.

A majority of the churches embraced in this Association

may be considered as enjoying all the advantages of a

healthful climate and fertile soil, with facilities for com-

merce. Although few in numbers, their prospects are

most encouraging, perhaps too much so. It is not in the

sunlight of worldly prosperity that the good seed rises to

maturity and bears much fruit : the mind, exulting in

temporal advantages, the accumulation of riches, or the

acquisition of worldly honours, is too apt to become cold

and indifferent to the subject of religion. We trust that

it may not be so with these sister fraternities, who have

designed to hold up the light of the truth, and to witness

for the Sabbath among an apostatizing community. May

they grow in grace as in numbers ; may they become rich

in heavenly wisdom as in earthly goods ; moreover, as

they have received liberally may they be disposed to give

liberally, and to bear in their hearts and upon their prayers

the burdens of a perishing world. In connexion with this

subject another consideration is presented. These churches

occupy situations as desirable as can be found throughout

the whole country for mercantile, mechanical, or agricul-

tural avocations, and embrace every variety of soil, scenery,

and climate. Some are located on broad meadow-like

prairie ; others amid a diversified landscape of hills and

valleys ; and yet others in the neighbourhood of marts of

commerce, and communicating with lakes and rivers. No

brother need forsake the Sabbath, in order to find a more

eligible or advantageous situation than could be obtained

in contiguity with the settlements of the Sabbath-keepers ;

and no person, whatever may be his denominational cha-

racter, who wishes to emigrate, will find in any locality a

state of society more elevated, moral, and Christian-like,

NORTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION. 205

or schools more really useful and well-conducted than are

to be found among the Sabbatarians. In tracing the his-

tory of our denomination, there occur many reflections of

a pleasant and interesting character, particularly in con-

nexion with our missionary efforts. The review of the

fields of labour thus occupied would prefigure in a remark-

able degree our gradual expansion and increase. First we

see those good old fathers, over whose graves the flowers

of centennial summers have bloomed and withered, making

short journeys from Rhode Island to New Jersey, and per-

haps to some parts of Pennsylvania. This, at that time,

was missionary ground. Subsequently the area was ex-

tended. Where was the missionary ground in their youth

to those venerable men who have grown gray in the ser-

vice of the sanctuary ? In the wildly beautiful and romantic

region of western New York and Pennsylvania, where a

glorious harvest has arisen as the fruit of their labours.

Then gradually expanding westward, Ohio, Wisconsin, and

Iowa, became alternately the theatres of new scenes of

trial and triumph. Intimately connected with the progress

of our denomination in this region are the names of Rev.

L. A. Davis and Rev. J. L. Scott, both indefatigable mis-

sionaries, through whose instrumentality several of these

churches have been gathered and organized. Is not our

missionary ground still expanding ? Does not the time

approach when the broad plains of the Missouri will be

so occupied ? when the region of the Rocky Mountains will

be so occupied ? when Oregon and California will be so

occupied ? Does it appear impossible or improbable ? All

that is necessary for its realization, is the application of

means, and faith in the promises of God.

18

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SECTION IX.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

The reader who has followed me through this brief and

imperfect sketch of the history of the Seventh-day Baptist

Denomination, cannot fail to perceive that our churches

have gradually and healthfully increased in numbers, not-

withstanding the continual opposition which is manifested to

the cause we advocate, and the continual discouragements

that we have to encounter both in society and business. It

is now about one hundred and seventy years since the first

Seventh-day Baptist church was organized in America ;

and the efforts which have been made within the last thirty

years have accomplished more to advance the interests of

the cause than what was done for nearly a century and a

half preceding. This has not been produced by any special

excitement, but by increased energy and courage, and

by the multiplication of means for disseminating the truth ;

and those means have but just begun to develope their in-

fluence. Our Education, Missionary, and Tract Societies

are yet in their infancy ; our denominational paper is

only beginning to acquire a circulation corresponding to

its merits, indicative to other denominations of Chris-

tians of our literary resources, — and yet effects that would

have astonished our ancestors have been realized. In 1805,

we numbered eight churches, and about one thousand five

hundred communicants. Twenty-five years increased that

number to three thousand four hundred ; but the five sub-

sequent years to more than four thousand five hundred.

In 1840, we numbered a fraction over five thousand mem-

bers, which in three years increased to six thousand. At

this period, there are about seven thousand communicants

GENERAL SUMMARY.

207

in the connexion. There are sixty-five churches united

with the Conference ; sixty ordained ministers, and about

thirty licentiates.

RECAPITULATION OF CHURCHES FOR 1849.

EASTERN ASSOCIATION.

Designation.

Newport,

First Hopkinton,

Second Hopkinton,

Third Hopkinton,

Marlborough,

New York, .

Piscataway,

Pawcatuck,

Plainfield, .

Richmond, .

Shiloh,

South Kingston,

Waterford, .

Westerly,

Date of

Number of

Organization.

Communicants.

1671

28

1708

344

1835

173

1835

166

1811

131

1845

33

1707

174

1840

172

1838

83

1843

25

1787

261

1840

25

1784

110

1837

72

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

Adams,

1822

230

First Brookfield, .

. . 1797

200

Second Brookfield,

1823

109

Third Brookfield,

1823

128

De Ruyter, .

1806

111

208

SABBATARIAN CHURCHES.

Designation.

Diana,

Hounsfield,

Lincklean,

Otselic,

Preston,

Richland,

Scott, .

Truxton,

Watson,

First Verona,

Second Verona,

Berlin,

Petersburg,

Date of

Number of

Organization.

Communicants.

1846

18

1841

65

1831

104

1830

50

1806

81

1845

14

1820

176

1824

51

1841

66

1820

70

1837

31

1784

272

1820

109

WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

Amity,

First Alfred,

Second Alfred,

Clarence,

Friendship, .

First Genesee,

Second Genesee,

Third Genesee,

Hartsville, .

Hayfield,

Hebron,

Independence,

Pendleton, .

Persia,

Scio, .

Ulysses,

Wirt, .

1834

27

1816

437

1831

249

1828

77

L824

155

1827

171

L884

60

1842

39

1847

54

1.771

85

1833

61

1834

118

1844

20

1832

59

1834

40

1845

17

1827

34

SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION.

First Hughes River, Va.,

Second Hughes River, Va.,

1833

1840

12

7

GENERAL SUMMARY.

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Designation.

New Salem, Va.,

Lost Creek, Va., .

Jackson, Ohio,

Northampton, Ohio,

Port Jefferson, Ohio,

Sciota, Ohio,

Stokes, Ohio,

Pike, Ohio, .

Madison, la.,

Woodbridgetown, Pa.,

Date of

Number of

Organization.

Communicants

1745

71

1805

68

1843

40

1837

20

1840

31

1842

20

1842

22

1824

30

1843

12

1780

4

NORTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION.

Albion, Wis.,

1843

90

Milton, Wis.,

1838

112

Walworth, Wis., .

1849

21

Fredonia, la.,

1842

9

Farmington, 111.,

1849

16

In dating the organization of the churches, I have had

recourse to Clarke's History, and to the old Conference

Minutes ; between which and the minutes for 1849, I dis-

covered some discrepancies. Should the reader wish to

institute a comparison between my work and other docu-

ments, he will please refer to these sources, by which, for

several reasons, I consider it safest to be guided.

Besides these churches, there are many scattered fami-

lies of Sabbath-keepers in different parts of the Union. The

Rev. Isaac P. Labagh, a minister of eminent ability and

attainment, in connexion with the Episcopal Church in

New York, is an observer of the Sabbath.

CONCLUSION.

It may be observed, in conclusion, that these churches ex-

hibit nothing peculiar in their forms of worship. Psalmody

18\*

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is universally practised, and the science of vocal music is

cultivated in all the older churches.

Previous to 1822, Rippon's Collection of Hymns was

generally used. About that time a new collection, de-

signed particularly for this denomination, was made and

published by a committee appointed for that purpose by

the General Conference. Recently that collection has

been superseded by another, which is in present use.

Sabbath schools and Bible classes have been instituted,

and generally receive attention in all the churches ; and

the same may be said of conference and prayer meetings.

There are also tract and missionary societies within the

bosoms of the different fraternities, whose officers consti-

tute the board for the transaction of business.

CHAPTER IV.

SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS IN THE UNITED STATES, CONTINUED.

SECTION I.

THE KEITHIAN SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS.

The Keithian Baptists were sececlers from the Quakers

of Pennsylvania, and were so called from their leader, the

famous George Keith, who, in 1691, with forty-eight other

individuals, withdrew from the communion of the Quakers,

and set up separate meetings in different places, and a

general one at Burlington, in opposition to that of Phila-

delphia. Subsequently they published several works of a

controversial character, and finally, by resigning them-

selves to the guidance of Scripture, they became altogether

Baptist in their religious practices. At the time of this

change in their denominational character they numbered

four churches, of which one was situated at Upper Provi-

dence, another at Philadelphia, a third at Southampton,

and a fourth at Dublin. These continued for some time,

but in 1700, a difference arose among them concerning the

Sabbath, that broke up their societies. Some of them

contended rightly that the original Sabbath remained un-

changed, and that its observance was still incumbent upon

Christians. The division appears to have been fomented

by one Abel Noble, who, according to Morgan Edwards,

came to this country in 1684, and who appears to have

212 SABBATARIAN OHURCHES.

been the first Seventh-day Baptist in the state of Penn-

sylvania. His name is found among those who, in 1691,

signed the articles of the Keithian separation. By him

was the first Keithian baptized in 1697, and by him were

they gained over to the observance of the seventh day.

Through his instrumentality four churches of that order

were constituted. The first at Newtown, in Upper Provi-

dence, about twenty-four miles from the city of Phila-

delphia. Their meeting was held at the house of one

David Thomas. Three families belonged to this place, of

whom seven individuals were baptized members of the

church, in 1770.

Another society resided at Pennapack, in the county of

Philadelphia. It was to this society that Richard Sparks

belonged, and to it he donated the lot of land for a burial-

place, which subsequently became the property of the

Shiloh and Piscataway Churches. William Davis was their

minister. He was baptized in 1697, by Rev. Thomas

Killingworth, of Cohansey, now Greenwich. In 1701,

they built a place for worship in Oxford township, on a

lot given to them by Thomas Graves, but neglecting to

take a deed in due time, the Episcopalians dispossessed

them of both the house and lot. In 1711, their preacher,

William Davis, leaving them, and no one risifig to supply

the vacancy, they were soon scattered like sheep without

a shepherd. The third society of them was at Nottingham,

about fifty miles from Philadelphia. Their meetings were

sometimes held at the house of Abigail Price, and at

others in the dwelling of Samuel Bond, in the contiguous

state of Maryland. The Sabbatarian families to which

Nottingham was central, were six, of which eight persons

were baptized. Here a yearly meeting was kept during

the last week in August, 1770. This church originated

from the Keithians at Upper Providence ; but being desti-

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tute of a settled pastor, it received few additions. Its

most influential members were the family of Samuel Bond,

whose son, Richard Bond, became subsequently the founder

of a Sabbatarian church in Virginia.

Another society of them was in East Nantmill Township,

about thirty-two miles from Philadelphia. Here was a

meeting-house, built in 1762, on a lot of one acre square,

the gift of David Rogers. The Sabbatarian families in

this place were six, of whom ten individuals were baptized.

They had no settled pastor, and subsequently they removed

in a body to French Creek, near Meadville, and became

the fathers of the present church at Hayfield. Thus it

appears that in 1770 there were twenty-six families of

Sabbatarians in Pennsylvania, and thirty-one baptized in-

dividuals of that order. That they had two yearly meet-

ings and one meeting-house. At this time also they had

one minister, Rev. Enoch David. He was born in 1718,

at Duck Creek, county of Kent, in the state of Delaware ;

called to the ministry, at Welshart, in 1751 ; and ordained

in 1769. He was married four times, and became the

father of nine children. Ebenezer, his oldest son, was

considered a very promising young man. He entered

Rhode Island college as a student in 1770, and became a

member of the Newport Church the same year. He was

ordained to the work of the ministry in 1775, and being a

young man, accepted the office of chaplain in the American

army, under Washington, where he remained until his

death, in 1778. He was highly esteemed by both officers

and soldiers, and afforded every promise of future eminence

and usefulness.

About this time, Zedekiah David, with several others,

removed to Fayette County, and became the founders of a

Seventh-day Baptist church in that place, where Rev.

Samuel Woodbridge exercised his ministry for many years.

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To his children and to the church in this place, Rev. Enoch

David paid a visit in the autumn of 1795, where, preaching

in the open air, he caught a violent cold, which settled on

his lungs, and finally terminated in a consumption, of

which he died in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and

the fortieth of his ministry. His remains were deposited

in the burial-place at Woodbridgetown, in the certain hope

of a joyful resurrection.

This venerable man was one of the good old ministers of

the ancient school, who could preach the truth for its own

sake, and who neither required nor expected a salary. He

supported his numerous family by working at his trade,

that of a tailor. Four times he was left a widower, and

each time with the care of an infant. He lived to see six

of his children consigned to the grave. He had an estate

of some value in the city of Philadelphia, which was sold

at his decease and the proceeds divided among his family.

From the church in East Nantmill Township, Pennsyl-

vania, a church was formed on Broad River, in the parish

of St. Mark, South Carolina, in 1754. In 1770, it had

increased to eighteen families, of whom twenty-four persons

were baptized. At this time there were several churches

of the Dunker Baptists, in this state, who observed the

seventh day.

In 1759, eight families of the Seventh-day Baptists

passed over from South Carolina, and settled near Sucka-

seesing, in Georgia. Their leader was Richard Gregory,

son of John Gregory. Another of their preachers was

named Clayton. After remaining here about five years,

the whole company returned to Edisto, in South Carolina.

It is believed that these churches have been for a long

time extinct.

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SECTION II.

A GENERAL HISTORY OF THE GERMAN SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS.

The Reformation in Germany and Holland was produc-

tive of great and glorious effects, although it was not com-

plete. Errors in doctrine, nearly or quite as incongruous

with Scripture as those abandoned, were retained ; ceremo-

nies, nearly equal in absurdity to those prohibited, were still

celebrated; and persecutions, exhibiting more similarity to

the practices of Papacy than to the meekness and quietude

of pure Christianity, were still prosecuted. The Reforma-

tion required to be reformed, and of this many pious and

holy men were aware. At length, in 1694, a violent con-

troversy arose in nearly all the Protestant churches of those

two countries, in consequence of the attempts which were

being made to promote a practical and vital religion. At

this time the pious Spener was ecclesiastical superinten-

dent of the court of Saxony. He was likewise at the head

of the party distinguished for its advocacy of reformatory

measures. However, neither his dignified and important

station, nor the fact that the tenets of his followers were

predicated upon scripture according to its literal interpre-

tation, could preserve them from falling under the odium

of heresy, and\* incurring the effects of a virulent opposition.

Their doctrines were examined by the ecclesiastical digni-

taries, who, instead of instituting a comparison between

them and Holy Writ, sought to discover whether or not

they were conformable to the tenets deemed orthodox by

the Consistory of Wittemberg. The decision was in the

negative ; hence they were suppressed in their public lec-

tures and ministrations. This prohibition, while it shut up

churches, and hushed the eloquence of public lecturers,

savoured of persecution, and consequently excited a spirit

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of inquiry in the minds of the multitude. In such cases as

this, reverend divines would consult their own interest by

bestowing greater attention upon the study of human

nature. Persecution agitates the public mind, excites the

sympathy of some, the curiosity of all, and promulgates

the very sentiments it is endeavouring to restrain. Besides,

persecutors are not omniscient, conventicles will be held,

and to their other charms that of secrecy is then added.

In the year 1708, Alexander Mack, of Schriesheim, and

seven others in Schwartzenen, Germany, met together,

regularly to examine, in a careful and impartial manner,

the doctrines of the New Testament, in order to ascertain

what obligations it imposes upon professing Christians.

These inquiries terminated in the formation of the society

now called the Dunkers, or First-day German Baptists.

Persecution, while it scattered them, likewise led to the

dissemination of their doctrines ; some were driven to

Crefelt, in the Duchy of Clevcs, and the mother church

voluntarily removed to Sevustervin, in Friesland, whence

its members emigrated to America in 1719, and dispersed

to different parts of Pennsylvania. In 17 '2o, they formed

a church at Germantown, under the pastoral care of Peter

Becker. The rapid growth of this church has rarely been

excelled, and it received continual accessions of new mem-

bers from the banks of the Wissahickon, and from Lancaster

County. In this county, another community was soon after

established by Conrad Beissel, a native of Germany. He

was a man of eminent piety and ability, much given to

metaphysical speculations, and distinguished for his love of

solitude. Being determined to seek out the true obli-

gations of the Word of God, independent of all precon-

ceived opinions and traditional observances, he was soon

led to perceive that the sentiments of the Dunkers were

erroneous so far as they related to the day designed to be

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hallowed as the Sabbath. It appeared evident to him " that

the seventh day was the command of the Lord God, and

that day being established and sanctified by the Great

Jehovah, for ever, and no change, nor authority for change,

ever having been announced to man, by any power suffi-

cient to set aside the solemn decree of the Almighty, he

felt it to be his duty to contend for the observance of that

day." These opinions he maintained, not only in many

eloquent discourses, but, about the year 1725, he published

a short treatise which entered into a full and very able

discussion of this point. The publication of this tract

formed, in more ways than one, an epoch in the community,

and created so much stir and excitement among the Society

at Mill Creek, that Beissel quietly retired from the settle-

ment, and took up his abode in a small cell on the banks

of the Cocalico, which had been occupied previously by one

Elimelech, an anchorite. Here, retired from all the

world, he sought, by prayer, fasting, and meditation, to

converse with superior intelligences, and to perfect him-

self in holy knowledge. But the community that had

opposed his fervent and spiritual teachings when present,

found his absence a great deprivation, and although many

inquiries were made, it was a long time before the place

of his retirement became known. By this time many

members of the society at Mill Creek had become con-

vinced of the truth of his proposition relative to the

Sabbath, who now removed and settled around him in

solitary cottages. They rested from secular labours and

celebrated the public services of religion upon the original

Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, which has ever since

been observed by their descendants.

In 1728, they resolved themselves into an ecclesiastical

body, and a monastic society was instituted in 1732, for

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the accommodation of which suitable buildings were erected.

Other buildings w r ere likewise erected by the community,

and all together constituted the irregular, yet lovely village

of Ephrata. Both men and women were admitted into the

convent, and both appear to have been singularly attached

to the monastic state. They wore the habit of the Capu-

chins, or White Friars, which consisted of a shirt, browsers

and vest, with a long white gown and cowl, of woollen

web in winter, and linen in the summer. That of the

sisters differed only in the substitution of skirts for trowsers,

and some slight peculiarities in the form of the cap. All

who entered the cloister received monastic names. Their

first Prior was Onesimus, (Israel Eckerlin,) who was suc-

ceeded by Peter Miller, surnamed Jabez. Beissel, whose

monastic name was Friedsam, received the title of Father

— spiritual father, — and subsequently that of Gottrecht,

implying together, Peaceable God-right, from the breth-

ren of the community. " In the year 1740, there were

thirty-six single brethren in the cloister, and thirty-five

sisters ; and at one time the society, including the members

living in the neighbourhood, amounted to near three hun-

dred." The government and arrangement of this little

community were perfectly republican, and all the members

stood upon the most fraternal equality and freedom. They

were bound by no vows, neither had they any written cove-

nant. The New Testament was their confession of faith,

their code of laws, and their rule of discipline. Such pro-

perty as accumulated with the society, by donation and

from the labour of the single brethren and sisters, was held

as common stock, but none were obliged to devote their

personal property to this purpose or to resign any of their

temporal possessions. A considerable income was derived

from the farm, which, with the proceeds of the grist-mill,

paper-mill, oil-mill, fulling-mill, and the industry of the

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brethren and sisters, sufficed to support the society in a

comfortable manner.

The principles of this society appear to have been su-

perficially understood and partially represented by most

writers upon the subject, although there is nothing about

them mysterious or intricate.

" They receive the Bible as the only rule of faith, cove-

nant, and code of laws for church government. They do

not admit the least license with the letter and spirit of the

Scripture, especially with the New Testament, do not

allow one tittle to be added or rejected in the administra-

tion of the ordinances, but practise them precisely as they

are instituted and made an example by Jesus Christ in his

word.

" They believe in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and the trinity of the Godhead ; having unfurled this dis-

tinctive banner on the first page of a hymn book which

they had printed for the society as early as 1739, viz. :

' There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father,

the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one.

And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit,

and the water, and the blood ; and these three agree in

one.'

" They believe that salvation is of grace, and not of

works ; and they rely solely on the merits and atonement

of Christ. They believe, also, that that atonement is

sufficient for every creature ; that Christ died for all who

will call upon his name, and offer fruits meet for repent-

ance ; and that all who come to Christ are drawn of the

Father.

" They contend for the observance of the original Sabbath,

believing that it requires an authority equal to that of the

Great Institutor to change any of his decrees. They main-

tain, that as he blessed and sanctified that day for ever, which

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has never been abrogated in his word, nor any scripture to

be found to warrant that construction ; it is still as binding

as it was when it was reiterated amid the thunders of

Mount Sinai. To alter so positive and hallowed a com-

mandment of the Almighty, they consider would require

an explicit edict from the Great Jehovah. It was not

foretold by any of the prophets, that with the new dispen-

sation there would be any change in the Sabbath or any

of the commandments. Christ, who declared himself the

Lord of the Sabbath, observed the seventh day, and made

it the day for his special ministrations : nor did lie autho-

rize any change. The Apostles have not assumed to do

away the original Sabbath, or give any command to sub-

stitute the first for the seventh day.

" They hold to Apostolic baptism — and administer trine

immersion, with the laying on of hands and prayer while

the recipient yet remains kneeling in the water.

" They celebrate the Lord's Supper at night, washing,

at the same time, each other's feet, agreeably to his

command and example. This is attended to in the

evening after the close of the Sabbath — the Sabbath

terminating at sunset of the seventh day ; thus making

the supper an imitation of that instituted by Christ, and

resembling also the meeting of the Apostles on the first

day to break bread, which has produced much confusion

in some minds in regard to the proper day to be observed."

Although celibacy was neither enforced nor required, it

was considered a virtue. There was no prohibition of mar-

riage or of legalized sexual intercourse, as many writers

have erroneously stated, but when two concluded to be

joined in wedlock, they were assisted by the society. They

conceived with Paul, whose opinion and practice does not

find many clerical imitators at the present day, that celibacy

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was more conducive to a holy life. There are many pas-

sages of Scripture to that effect, which they, unlike the

ministers of other Protestant denomination^ kept in per-

petual remembrance. " He that is unmarried, careth for

the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the

Lord ; but he that is married careth for the things of the

world, how he may please his wife. There is this difference

between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth

for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in

body and in spirit ; but she that is married careth for the

things of the world, how she may please her husband. I

say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for

them if they abide even as I." They likewise, and, in my

opinion, truly considered that those ircho sacrificed conjugal

endearments for Christ's sake, were better fitted for, and

will enjoy the highest places in glory. Hear the sublime

language of the Revelator : "I looked up, and lo, a Lamb

stood on Mount Zion, and with him an hundred and forty

and four thousand, having his Father's name written in

their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the

voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder ;

and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harpe ;

and they sung as it were a new song before the throne,

and before the four beasts and the elders ; and no man

could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four

thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.- These are

they that are not defiled with women ; for they are virgins.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he

goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the

first fruits unto God and the Lamb." This idea was fondly

cherished, and continually inculcated. It formed the foun-

dation of the monastic institution at Ephrata, whose sup-

port and prosperity was entirely dependent on its being

properly appreciated. It formed the subject of many an

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eloquent harangue, the theme of many a pleasant song,

the object around which the holiest memories gathered, and

with which tl?e sweetest associations were combined. It

was sedulously kept before them by their ministers and

teachers in its most favourable light, and all the scripture

susceptible of this application, which was not a little, was

brought to excite their enthusiasm, and to inspire them

with faithfulness and perseverance. It promised capa-

bilities for the divine life which others could not possess,

and held out to their enraptured imaginations the brighter

rewards of heaven.

Their ministers never received a stated salary. In their

opinion the Gospel was destined to be free, "without money

and without price," and they thought that everyone called

to preach the word, should do it from the love of the cause,

and in this matter, as in that of celibacy, to follow the

advice and example of Paul. Nevertheless, their ministers

were always well supplied with such necessaries as the

brethren themselves enjoyed. Individual members gave

as presents whatever they could conveniently spare, in

money, goods, and the like; and whenever the minister

travelled for religious purposes, he was supplied from the

treasury to bear his expenses.

This is not the place, neither am I disposed to institute

any comparison between the doctrines of the Scripture,

according to its literal interpretation, and the great and

leading tenets of the German Seventh-day Baptists of

Pennsylvania. However, it is evident, from the most

casual observation, that few religious communities have

adhered more closely to the letter and language of Holy

Writ, have been more scrupulous about conformity to

worldly opinions and practices, or have given, in their

conduct, a more faithful and practical exemplification of

Christianity. Their peculiarities sprung, likewise, from

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the same source as many of their virtues ; and these will

be adverted to in replying to the charges of error which

have been urged against them, with more gravity than

truth, by many writers, who were, probably, offended by

the pure and primitive simplicity of their tenets and habits.

It is not necessary to attempt a full exposition of their

peculiar views, or to describe the minutiae of the manner

in which they perform the ceremonies and ordinances of

religion. However, in their regular worship, they com-

mence with singing ; then prayers, the assembly kneeling ;

then singing again ; after which the minister requests any

brother to read a chapter out of the Scriptures, which they

are at liberty to choose from either the Old or the New

Testament. This the minister expounds, tracing its bear-

ings and historical connexions with the other parts of the

Bible. Then the exhorters enforce the duties it inculcates ;

and should any brother or single sister be able to improve

the subject to the edification of the others, or to make any

remarks relative to the topic, there is perfect liberty for

such an expression. Prayer and singing, with the reading

of a psalm, conclude the service, — than which nothing can

be more solemn and impressive.

Ignorance, in a writer, is nearly or quite as culpable as

misrepresentation ; for no one has any right to assume the

responsibilities of the historian, without first making him-

self the master of his subject. By a contrary course, he

may inadvertently expose the most innocent and virtuous

community to the reprobation and ridicule of contempo-

raries, and the abhorrence of posterity. Few societies

have suffered more in their reputation from ignorant and

unprincipled authors, than the society of Ephrata ; others,

however, have borne honourable testimony to its merits.

The account of their sentiments in Buck's Theological

Dictionary, is a tissue of misrepresentation and calumny,

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unworthy a place in such a work. We are there told that

their "principal tenets appear to be these: that future

happiness is only obtained by penance and outward morti-

fication in this life ; and that Jesus Christ, by his merito-

rious sufferings, became the Redeemer of mankind in

general, so that each individual of the human race, by a

life of abstinence and restraint, may work out his own

salvation. Nay, they go so far as to admit of works of

supererogation, and declare that a man may do much more

than he is in justice or equity bound to do, and that his

superabundant works may therefore be applied to the sal-

vation of others." This, as well as the accounts given of

them in many other English books, is a gross falsehood.

Gordon's Gazetteer of Pennsylvania is almost equally

reprehensible, as the account which it contains was first

published by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and

contains many erroneous charges, that are entirely without

foundation, and could only have originated in gross igno-

rance or shameful wickedness. Among other misrepre-

sentations, the good and devout founder is declared to have

been a crafty and designing usurper of ecclesiastical autho-

rity, and as assuming honours and titles. These state-

ments are utterly unfounded. Beissel had been educated

in the Calvinistic faith, but perceiving its dissimilarity to

the word of God, as respects church government, minis-

terial salaries, and other things of a like nature, he emi-

grated to America in order to enjoy liberty of conscience,

and he left the society of Dunkers at Mill Creek, because

his peculiarities relative to the Sabbath created some dis-

sension. It is true that he was drawn from his seclusion,

but it is no less true, that the people whom he had forsaken,

sought him out and came and settled around him, entreat-

ing his ministry. After this time he devoted his whole

time, life, and property to advance the welfare of the

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society, giving the management of the secular affairs

entirely into the hands of others, while he gave his atten-

tion wholly to instructing the people in the word of life.

The doctrine of celibacy which he taught was no new-

fangled idea, being quite as old as the time of the Apostle

Paul. He received the title of "Father," and " Gottrecht,"

from the brethren, instead of presumptuously assuming them

himself.

In their habits of life, they have been equally misrepre-

sented. They are not accustomed to wear long beards, as

is frequently said of them, neither did the rules of the

society forbid meat for the purpose of mortifying the

natural appetite, or require them to repose on w^ooden

benches with billets of wood for pillows, as acts of penance.

Nevertheless they did so, but their conduct admits of a

different explanation. They practised austerity from con-

siderations of economy. With limited means and restricted

circumstances they had undertaken an expensive enterprise.

Hence, all their arrangements, though distinguished for

neatness, were extremely simple. Wooden flagons, wooden

goblets, and wooden trays were used in the administration of

the sacrament, and although they have been presented with

richer and costlier ones, the same service is still in use.

Their domestic and kitchen utensils were likewise made of

wood. The plates off which they ate, were thin octangular

pieces of poplar boards. Their forks and candlesticks, and

indeed every article that could be, were made of that mate-

rial. Subsequently, when they were relieved from the

burdens of their expensive enterprise, they generally en-

joyed the cot for nightly repose, and partook, though in

the most moderate and temperate manner, of the comforts,

and even some of the luxuries of life. Temperance societies

had not been instituted, "but there were no ardent spirits

used in building the whole village, although the timber

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was hewn and all the boards sawn by hand during the

winter months." The society was a social community?

organized for mutual support and assistance. Its members

were distinguished for kindness, hospitality, and promptness

in affording relief to the suffering, whatever might be their

character or denomination. The following account of them

is taken from a work, entitled the Journal of an Officer,

which was published in 1784. He says, " I came among

this people by accident, but I left them with regret. I

have found out, however, that appearances may be delu-

sive, and that where we expected to meet with a cold

reservedness, we may sometimes be surprised by exhibi-

tions of the most charming affability and disinterested

benevolence. They all acted the part of the good Sama-

ritan to me, for which I hope to be ever grateful ; and while

experiencing the benefits of their kindnesses and attentions,

witnessing the sympathies and emotions expressed in their

countenances, and listening to the words of hope and pity

with which they consoled the poor sufferers, is it strange

that, under such circumstances, their uncouth garments

appeared more beautiful in my eyes than ever did the

richest robes of fashion, and their cowls more becoming

than head-dresses adorned with diamonds, and flowers, and

feathers ? Until I entered the walls of Ephrata, I had no

idea of pure and practical Christianity. Not that I was

ignorant of the forms, or even of the doctrines of religion.

I knew it in theory before ; I saw it in practice then.

" Many a poor wounded soldier will carry to his grave

the sweet remembrance- of those gentle sisters, who watched

so patiently by his side, supported his fainting head, admi-

nistered the healing draught, and cheered him with both

earthly and heavenly hopes. What mattered it to him that

their words were couched in an unknown dialect ; he read

their meaning in the deep, earnest, liquid eyes. Eternity

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likewise will bear a glorious testimony to the labour of the

Prior, who could converse in the English language. Many

a poor fellow, who entered there profane, immoral, and

without hope or God in the world, left it rejoicing in the

Saviour."

This officer had been wounded in the battle of Brandywine,

and had been, with many of his comrades, despatched to

the hospital at Ephrata. I shall allude to this circumstance

again. Morgan Edwards bears the following testimony of

this people.

"From their recluse and ascetic habits, sour aspects

and rough manners might be expected ; but on the con-

trary, a smiling innocence and meekness grace their

countenances, and a softness of tone and accent adorns their

conversation, and makes their deportment gentle and obli-

ging. Their singing is charming, partly owing to the

pleasantness of their voices, the variety of the parts they

carry on together, and the devout manner of the perform-

ance." The following character" of Beissel is derived from

the same source.

" He was very strict in his morals, and- practised self-

denial to an uncommon degree. Enthusiastic and whim-

sical he certainly was, but an apparent devoutness and

sincerity ran through all his oddities. He was not an

adept in any of the liberal arts and sciences except music,

in which he excelled. He composed and set to music, in

two, four, five and seven parts, a volume of hymns, and

another of anthems. He left behind him several books in

manuscript, curiously written and embellished, and likewise

published several other works." One writer has observed,

" that the sisters apparently took little delight in their

state of single blessedness, as two only, (aged and ill-

favoured ones, we may suppose,) remained steadfast in the

renunciation of marriage." This invidious remark is

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entirely unfounded ; for though they were not required to

renounce matrimony on entering the cloister, only four or

five of the whole number that were received in it as inmates,

during the period of one hundred and ten years, left and

were married. One of these became the wife of a gentle-

man of Philadelphia, and afterwards, amid the cares and

burdens of a large family, she regretted her change exceed-

ingly, as did all the others who were induced to leave the

"stille einsamkeit." "The others remained steadfast in

their state of single blessedness, and now, with the excep-

tion of those remaining in the convent, lie beside each other in

the beautiful cemetery in the foreground of the village."

These gratuitous aspersions would be passed over with the

silence they deserve, were it not that a fresh currency lias

been given to them by a late popular work. They have

likewise been charged with denying the doctrine of original

sin, and the eternity of punishment. They do not indeed

believe that every individual of mankind is included in the

condemnation of Adam, for many who are born, die without

sinning; but they admit that in the fall of Adam, all dis-

position to good was lost, and "that the whole race inherit

a natural innate depravity, which will lead them to sin, and

prove their sure condemnation, unless they repent and are

born again of the Holy Spirit." Beissel wrote a most curi-

ous and ingenious treatise upon this subject, in which he

enters into long disquisitions on the nature and intellectual

capabilities of Adam in his primeval state of innocence.

He then explains in what manner he was affected by the

fall, and with it elucidates many passages of scripture,

which have escaped the attention of men of more erudition,

but less profundity of penetration and genius. His views,

however, though deep and ingenious, are somewhat mys-

terious, and would, in the present day, be considered as

little better than the hypothetical speculations of an over-

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wrought imagination. However, there is nothing that can be

construed as denying the doctrine of human depravity, and

the woful consequences that the fall of Adam has entailed

upon his posterity, unless each one be regenerated by the

sanctifying influences of the Spirit of Grace. They never

received the doctrine of universal salvation in the usual

acceptation of that term. They believe in the sure reward

of submission and obedience to the requisitions of God,

through faith in Christ, but they teach likewise, that the

" wages of sin is death," death to holiness, and exclusion

from the joys of heaven and the presence of the Lord.

It is not to be denied that the idea of a universal resto-

ration of all things was cherished by some of them in

former days, and that it was based upon several passages

of Scripture, particularly the fifteenth chapter of the first

epistle to the Corinthians, and the twentieth chapter of

the Revelations. Nevertheless it was never taught as a

doctrine, but was treated with the greatest caution and

delicacy by the pastor, and aged members, in private cir-

cles, and was always accompanied by expressions of the

necessity of making their calling and election sure, that

thereby they might be prepared to participate in the first

resurrection. Many of the brethren were no less distin-

guished for high literary attainments than for piety, and

they established a school at a very early period which

afforded every facility for the acquisition of classical and

scientific education, and which gained for itself so honour-

able a reputation, that many young men from the first

families of Baltimore and Philadelphia were sent here to

be educated. A Sabbath school was likewise instituted,

which afforded the best facilities for moral and religious

instruction. It flourished many years, and was attended

by important consequences. The minds of the juvenile

population were excited to a state of religious inquiry,

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which increased to what would be termed, in these days, a

powerful revival, accompanied by the most intense ex-

citement. The scholars met together, before and after

common school hours, for prayer and exhortation, but

their zeal, at least in the minds of the older brethren,

ran into excess, which induced Beissel to discourage the

enterprise, and also to object to the erection of a building,

which was already commenced, for the especial use of the

school, to be called Succoth. This Sabbath school had

been instituted under the following circumstances. Ludwig

Hoecker, or Brother Obed, as lie was designated, who was

the teacher of the common school, perceiving that many

of the indigent children were kept from regular attendance

by necessary employments during the week, projected the

plan of holding a school in the afternoon of the Sabbath,

where instruction would be administered to those of all

circumstances. It is not known, neither is it material, in

what year the Sabbath school was commenced. Hoecker

took up his residence at Ephrata in the year 1739, and it

is presumed that he commenced the enterprise soon after.

By reference to the minutes of the Society, we find that

the materials for the building were provided in 1741\*.

After the battle of Brandywinc, the Sabbath school-room,

with others, was turned into a hospital, which it continued

to be for some time. The school thus broken up, was

never afterwards resumed. The honour of having projected

and successfully introduced the present general system of

Sunday School instruction, is certainly due to Robert

Raikes ; but the Seventh-day Baptists of Ephrata had

established and maintained in operation for upwards of

thirty years, a Sabbath school, nearly half a century before

one was opened by the Gloucester philanthropist.

In 1777, the Society began to decline, but the declen-

sion cannot justly be attributed to the causes which some

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writers have erroneously stated. Beissel died in 1768, and

his successor, Peter Miller, was a man of much higher at-

tainments and more eminent mental powers. Indeed, Miller

had the principal management of the establishment during

Beissel's time, and to his extraordinary abilities the early

prosperity of the institution is mainly imputable. Its de-

cline, however, can be rationally accounted for, without

supposing either incapability or degeneracy in those who

were intrusted with the direction of its affairs, especially

when we take into consideration the great changes in poli-

tics and government that transpired, and the consequent

alterations in public sentiment. The seventeenth century

was prolific in monastic institutions, of which this was one ;

and the feelings and motives that animated its founders

were decidedly European. During the first fifty years

from the establishment of Ephrata, a remarkable progress

was made in liberal opinions, and with the march of intel-

lect and politics, different opinions with regard to religious

institutions were also entertained. It was commenced as

a social community, and as such it succeeded admirably,

and was adapted to every purpose of life, when surrounded

by a howling wilderness, filled with wild beasts, and wilder

inhabitants ; but when the hand of improvement had turned

the forests into fields smiling with plenty, and the neigh-

bouring country became filled with a dense and promiscuous

population, it appeared evident to all that it was not com-

patible with the circumstances of the times, or the spirit

of the age. Besides this, its members were exposed to in-

cessant persecutions, and were kept in perpetual conten-

tions and turmoils by their envious] neighbours, which, of

themselves, were enough to have produced a declension in

the Society.

The community at Ephrata still comprises a small band

who retain the principles and manners of their forefathers,

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and who meet regularly to worship God on the evenings

and mornings of their Sabbaths. But although they have

the forms, they are without the spirit or the zeal of their

ancestors. In ancient times they had bestowed upon them

in ridicule the epithet of " Zealots." Zeal, however, when

it is according to knowledge, is commendable ; under any

circumstances it is preferable to indifference. Christianity

without zeal is like the body without life, and it is an

honour to any denomination to receive, even in ridicule, a

title designative of faithfulness and activity. Eplirata

would be a paradise now as it was in former days, did its

inhabitants possess, in the same degree, that desirable

quality which those of old possessed, and for which they

were stigmatized. Yet in this zeal there was neither noise

nor display. It was not the occasional gleam of the meteor,

but the pure, steady, unchangeable light of the pole-star,

so quiet and all-absorbing, in which the world, with its

pomps and vanities, was sacrificed upon the altar of pure

and constant devotion. They lived and moved in the

world, performed the routine of all the duties devolving

upon them, and cherished the highest and holiest affections ;

but their treasures and their hearts were centred in heaven.

Could they stoop to quaff from the springs of earth, who

had once slaked their thirst at the fountains of immor-

tality ? could those ears be delighted with terrestrial songs,

that had once been ravished by the unimaginable harmonies

of the upper world ? How would they thirst and long for

another draught ! How would they wait and listen to catch

another echo ! And how would the ignorant world deride

their enthusiasm and mock their zeal ! Of those who, at

Ephrata, were derided as zealots and enthusiasts, Mr.

Winchester makes the following declaration : " God will

always have a visible people upon earth, and these (speak-

ing of the Society at Ephrata), are his people at present,

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above any other in the world. They walk in all the com-

mandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, both in

public and private. They bring up their children (alluding

to the married members), in the nurture and admonition

of the Lord ; no noise, rudeness, shameless mirth, loud

laughter, is heard within their doors. The law of kind-

ness is in their mouths ; no sourness or moroseness dis-

graces their religion, and whatsoever they believe their

Saviour teaches, they practise, without inquiring or re-

garding what others do. They read much ; they sing and

pray much ; they are constant attendants upon the worship

of God; their dwelling-houses are all houses of prayer."

Although Ephrata has degenerated — is now spiritually

dead — the truth has not become extinct, but is still ex-

tending. From this parent society several branches have

originated. One in Bedford County was founded in 1753,

which is still in a flourishing situation. Another in York

County, about fifteen miles from the town of York, was

founded on the Bermudian Creek, in 1758, of which some

of the members remain, although they have been without

a leader for many years. A third branch was established

at Snowhill, in Franklin County, under the superintendence

of Peter Lehman and Andrew Snowberger, where the

greatest part of the Society are still resident. Besides

these, there are other smaller branches in Western Penn-

sylvania.

SECTION III.

PARTICULAR HISTORY OF THE GERMAN SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Ephrata is located in the interior of the state of Penn-

sylvania, and is one of its earliest settlements. Few places

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in America are hallowed by more interesting associations,

and none perhaps are connected with an institution of such

a peculiar character and ancient establishment. It occu-

pies a pleasant position in Cocalico Township, Lancaster

County, at the intersection of the Reading Road with the

Downingtown and Harrisburg Turnpike, sixty miles north-

west of Philadelphia, thirteen northeast from Lancaster,

and thirty-eight from Harrisburg. At present this name

is applied to the vicinity of Ephrata proper for at least a

mile along the turnpike, making Cocalico Creek the centre.

Thus considered, it contains many dwellings, several stores,

two taverns, and a paper mill. New Ephrata is a small

village, about a mile further west on the turnpike.

Ephrata proper is an irregular enclosed village, lying in

a triangle formed by the turnpike, the old Reading Roadj

and the Cocalico Creek, and belongs entirely to a Seventh-

day Baptist community. It contains the first Protestant

monastery established in America, and several other build-

ings for the accommodation of the Society ; to which is

attached and belongs a farm containing one hundred and

forty acres of land, with a grist and saw mill. The post-

office bearing this name is situated half a mile from the

original village.

Kedar and Zion, a meeting-house and convent, were the

first buildings of consequence erected by the Society. They

were located in a pleasant situation, on a hill called Mount

Zion. In the meadow below, larger accommodations were

subsequently erected, comprising a sisters' house, called

Saron, to which a large chapel is attached, with a " Saal,"

where are held the Agapas or love-feasts. They likewise

erected a brothers' house, called Bethania, with which was

connected the large meeting-room with galleries, in which

the whole Society assembled for public worship, in the

times of their prosperity. These edifices are still standing,

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surrounded by smaller buildings, which were occupied as

a printing-office, school-house, bake-house, almonry, and

others for different useful purposes, on one of which the

town clock is erected. These buildings are all of sin-

gular character, and very ancient architecture, all the out-

side walls being covered with shingles. The two houses

for the brethren and sisters are large and commodious,

being three or four stories high. Each contains an apart-

ment particularly appropriated to their night meetings,

and the main buildings are divided into small compart-

ments, of which each building contains fifty or sixty. The

rooms are so arranged, that six dormitories, which are

barely large enough to contain a cot, a closet, and an hour-

glass, surround one of larger dimensions, in which each

subdivision pursued their respective avocations. These

silent cells and long winding passages possess an indescri-

bably romantic air ; and one can scarcely divest himself of

the belief that he is threading the tortuous windings of

some old baronial castle. The ceilings have an elevation

of about seven feet ; the passages leading to the cells, or

"kammers," as they are designated, and through the

different parts of both convents, are barely wide enough to

admit one person, and if two should meet from opposite

directions, one would invariably be obliged to retreat. The

doors of the kammers are five feet high, and twenty inches

wide ; and the windows, of which each contains but one,

is only eighteen by twenty-four inches. The walls of all

these rooms, including the public meeting-room, the private

chapels, the saals, and the dormitories, are nearly covered

with ink paintings, or, in other words, with large sheets of

elegant penmanship. Some of these are texts from the

Scriptures, handsomely done in ornamented Gothic letters,

called in the German, "Fractur-schrifften.''

The sheets of paper employed for this purpose were

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manufactured at their own mill, and some being put into

frames, admonish the residents, as well as the casual visiter,

whichever way they may turn their heads. Two very

curious ones still remain in the chapel attached to Saron.

One represents the straight and narrow way, which it

would be difficult to describe. It is very curiously and

ingeniously formed on a sheet of about three feet square,

the w T hole of the road being filled with texts of Scripture,

reminding the disciples of their duties, and the obligations

their profession imposes upon them.

Another is a representation of the three heavens. In

the first, Christ, the Good Shepherd, is represented as

calling his flock together ; in the second, which is one foot

in height, and three feet wide, three hundred figures in the

Capuchin dress appear with harps in their hands, and

behind them the heads of an innumerable host ; in the third

is seen the throne of glory surrounded by two hundred

archangels. Many of these " Fractur schrifften" express

the most enthusiastic sentiments on the subject of celibacy,

and the happiness of a recluse life, whilst others are devo-

tional pieces. The following are transcribed from two

found in the chapel of the sister's convent:

Die Lieb ist unsre Kron und heller Tugend Spiegel,

Die Weisheit unsre Lust, und reines Gottes Siegel ;

Das Lamm ist unsre Schatz dem wir uns anvertrans,

Und folgen seinem Gang als reinste Jungfrauen.

Love is our Crown and clear mirror of virtue,

Wisdom our desire, and the seal of a pure God ;

The Lamb is our treasure, in whom we confide,

And follow His guidance, as the purest virgins.

Unsre Kronen die wir tragen hier in dieser Sterblichkeit,

Werden uns in Truebsals-tagen durch, viel Leiden zubereit,

Da muss unsre Hoffnung bluehen und der Glanbe wachsen auf.

Waun sich Welt und Fleisch bemuehen uns zu schwaechen in dem Sauf,

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Wol dan ! weil wir gezaehlet, zu der reinen Laemmer Heerd

Die dem keuschen Lam vermachlet, und erkanffet von der Erd,

Bleibet schon alhir verborgen, unser Ehren Schmuck und Kron,

Wird uns doch ad Jenem Morgen kroenen, Jesus Gotte's Sohn.

The Crowns which we wear here in our mortal life,

Will prepare us this much suffering for the day of trial —

Then must our hope bloom, and our faith increase,

"While the world and the flesh both strive to divert us from our course.

While then, we are atoned for through the Holy Shepherd,

Who marries the pure lamb and redeems it from the earth,

Let our honour, our ornaments, our crown even remain concealed,

Till that morning when we shall be crowned by Jesus the Son of God.

In the rooms which have been occupied by any departed

sister, a piece, in imitation of a tablet, is framed and put

up, expressive of the character and virtues of the deceased,

or some feeling memorial of love, and pious anticipation of

meeting again in heaven, is inscribed. The following was

found in the kammer which had been occupied by Zenobia,

a very beautiful, amiable, and devout sister.

Zenobia Wird Gruenen und Gedeihen, ihre Arbeit wird nicht vergeb-

lich, noch auch ihre Hoffnung verlohren seyn, ihre Ehre bluehen

mitten unter den Heiligen.

Zenobia will prosper and flourish. Her labours will not be useless,

nor her hopes vain. Her glory will be revealed in heaven.

An apartment, denominated the writing-room, was par-

ticularly appropriated to such purposes, and several of the

sisters devoted their whole attention to this labour, and

became highly skilled in it. Others transcribed the writings

of the Founder of the Society, thus multiplying copies for

the wants of the community, before their printing press

came into operation. Two very ingenious sisters, named

Anastasia and Iphigenia, were the principal ornamental

writers. They formed, with immense labour, a large folio

volume of " sample alphabets" of various sizes and different

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styles, though all are alike curious, and exhibit the most

patient application. The letters of the first alphabet are

one foot in length, surrounded by a deep border, in imita-

tion of copperplate engraving, of which each one is different

in style and finish. It was finished in the year 1750, and

is still preserved as a rare curiosity, by the trustees.

Another room was exclusively set apart for the purposes

of transcribing music; hundreds of volumes, each volume

containing five or six hundred pieces, were transferred from

book to book, with almost as much neatness and quite as

much accuracy, as if done with a graver.

The Society at Ephrata, after their printing press came

into operation, published several valuable historical and

religious books. Of these, an edition of the " Bloody

Theatre," an old German work, was nearly all taken by

the American army for cartridges. Several of the members

were decided literary characters of no mean ability.\*

At one time it was in contemplation by three brothers,

named Eckerlin, of whom the eldest was prior, and had the

superintendence of the secular concerns, to make Ephrata

a pb ce of more importance in the world than it could ac-

quire from its character of a religious refuge. They were

natives of Germany, and they had been educated in the

principles of the Catholic faith. They projected the plan

of erecting extensive buildings for manufacturing purposes,

and of entering into extensive mercantile concerns. For

this they had made considerable preparation, such as

cutting and hewing the timbers, and were in readiness to

erect a town. They had likewise sent to Europe, where

they had extensive and powerful connexions, and procured,

\* Those who desire a more particular account of the German Sabba-

tarians, their leaders, literature, and music, may consult the fifteenth

volume of Hazard's Register of Pennsylvania,

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unknown to the Society, a chime of bells, and likewise a

large clock for the tower. These arrived in Philadelphia,

and the bill requiring payment being forwarded to the

Society, made the brotherhood acquainted with the circum-

stances. They determined not to receive them, but had

them sold, and paid the loss. One of these bells, having

upon it, " Sub auspicicio viri venerandi Onesimi societatis

Ephratensis propositi," was purchased for, and is now on,

one of the churches in Lancaster. The clock was sold

to one of the Reformed Lutheran societies in the same

place. This transaction led to an investigation of the con-

duct of the Eckerlins, which resulted in the timely discovery

of a conspiracy they had entered into to possess themselves

of the property, which at that time was extensive and

valuable. This discovery terminated in the expulsion of

Israel, the prior, from his office. The brothers subse-

quently removed to Virginia, where they obtained conside-

rable notoriety in connexion with Indian affairs. The

Society, in its apostolic simplicity, desired no tower, no

bells. They even refused to have a bell to summon them

to the midnight meeting, which was regularly held at that

hour of the night, — Beissel quaintly observing, that the

spirit of devotion ought to be sufficient to insure their

attendance ; and it generally proved to be adequate.

The community at Ephrata were decided Whigs in the

Revolution, although they considered contention with arms

and at law as inconsistent with the Christian character and

profession. In the war of 1756, the doors of the cloister,

including the meeting-room, the chapels, and every other

building, were opened to afford a refuge to the inhabi-

tants of Tulpehocken and the Paxton settlements, then

on the frontiers, as they fled before the murdering and

marauding bands of Indians ; and all were kept and fed

by the Society during the period of alarm and danger.

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Upon hearing of this the royal government despatched

from Philadelphia a company of infantry to protect and

defend the place ; and becoming aware of the character of

the Society, presented them with a pair of large and beau-

tiful communion goblets, which w 7 as the only recompense

they could be prevailed on to receive. At a much earlier

period they attracted the attention of the Penn family,

and Lady Juliana Penn, in England, opened a correspon-

dence with the Society. Governor Penn visited them fre-

quently, and being desirous to bestow upon them a solid

evidence of his regard, bad a large tract of five thousand

acres of land surveyed and convoyed to them as the

Seventh-day Baptist Manor. This, however, they refused

to accept, believing that large possessions tended to en-

gender strife, and that it was inconsistent with the Chris-

tian character to be absorbed in the gains of this world

and the accumulation of temporal property.

A few days after the battle of Brandywine, Sept. 11th,

1777, the whole establishment was opened to receive the

wounded Americans, great numbers of whom were brought

there in wagons, a distance of forty miles ; and that long

train of various conveyances, that came slowly up the valley

where the field had been contested — the train that bore those

whose shattered limbs seemed to defy all surgical aid, or whose

contagious disease was like the pestilence that wasteth at

noonday, was received by the brothers of Ephrata as if it

bore forward the gathered harvest of summer. And those

sisters, — did they shrink from that dreadful exhibition of

human suffering ? did they turn pale, and sicken at

the view of bruised and mangled limbs, clotted gore, and

the sound of deep heart-rending groans ? Oh no ; their

sympathy was of the practical kind. It prompted them to

assuage and relieve. And with the kindest and tenderest

feelings they garnered up the sick, the wounded, and the

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dying, in their rooms, their chapels, and their edifices, de-

voted to public worship or domestic duties, with a welcome

and care that only religion could dictate, and that only

true patriotism could have evinced. Of the five hundred

w r ho were brought there one hundred and fifty died, not-

withstanding the attendance of Doctors Scott, Yerkel, and

Harrison. The dead were buried with all the decencies of

friendship, and with all the ceremonies of military pro-

priety. They were principally from the Eastern States

and Pennsylvania. The place where they lay is enclosed ;

and in the autumn of 1845, the corner stone of a

monument, bearing a suitable inscription, was laid by

Governor Shunk, in presence of a great multitude of

people who had assembled to witness the ceremonies. In

the burying-ground which belongs to the Society are the

tombs of the ancient fathers, with suitable marble monu-

ments erected to their memories. A large stone, marked

with German letters, covers the grave of their founder.

At present many of the buildings are in ruins, particu-

larly those which were first erected. A short distance

from the enclosure containing the old meeting-house and

cloister, there is a small building, with a steeple, which was

formerly the residence of the physician. Near by stands

another dwelling, which was the parsonage. Above this

stands a large building. Without, it presents a very singu-

lar and unique appearance. In entering it we pass a small

portico, and the door is so low that it is necessary to stoop

in passing ; but the objects within witness at once to the

vision that it is the house of God. Six tables are arranged

so as to reach nearly the whole length of the room, with

convenient seats, as many as are necessary. On one side

of the room appear a stand and table, slightly elevated, for

the accommodation of the speaker. Several of those large

ornamented writings, already described, are hanging on

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the walls. The room is perhaps forty feet square. It was

formerly the sisters' dining and prayer room. At present

it is the meeting-room of the Society. A part of the same

building is used for domestic and culinary purposes, and

is furnished accordingly. Near this is a stone building

appropriated to other domestic offices. The house at pre-

sent occupied by the sisters is contiguous to the meeting-

room, and is inhabited by five aged ladies, who are the only

remaining members of the convent. They have many relics

of antiquity, which are preserved as objects of curiosity.

Some of the caps worn by the sisters in the early days of

the institution are carefully preserved. Adjoining the

turnpike, in a corner of the yard, stands the academy, — a

new building, with a steeple, clock, and bell. It is two

stories high, and contains several apartments, in which

both male and female schools are taught. These buildings,

with one hundred and twenty acres of land, and a grist and

saw mill, are the property of the Society.

Another community, every way similar to that of Ephrata,

is situated at Snowhill, in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.

Its location is in that beautiful and fertile valley which is

embosomed in the Blue Ridge Mountains, extending from

Northern Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley, in Vir-

ginia. This section was early settled by a German popu-

lation, and their immediate neighbourhood with the Dunker

Baptists, of which there is now a large society. Belonging

to this Dunker Society was one Andrew Snowberger, from

whom the Snowhill Society takes its cognomen, berg, in

German, signifying a hill, — his name is literally Snowhills.

It is seldom, however, that adventitious names correspond

with localities. The establishment called Snowhill is located

in a small vale of a large valley, in latitude 39° N., about

seven miles from Hagerstown, Maryland. In the convent

resided an old sister, in 1849, nearly one hundred years of

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age, who was the daughter of Andrew Snowberger, and

who gave the following account of the origin of the Society.

Her father, by a diligent study of his German Bible, be-

came convinced that the seventh day of the week was the

only divinely appointed Sabbath, and in consequence he

became firmly determined to keep it as holy time. This

caused much difficulty in his family and among his neigh-

bours ; but he was not to be deterred from acting accord-

ing to the dictates of his conscience by any difficulties.

Believing in prayer, and that faith and patience will over-

come all things, he persevered in the path of duty. At

length, to his inexpressible delight, the way became smooth

before him, his family complied with his regulations, and

subsequently embraced his views. In this lonely situation

as to society of his own faith, Andrew instituted and main-

tained the worship of God in his own house. He desired

to remain in communion with his first-day brethren, but

they, after a long consideration of the subject, determined

upon his expulsion from the church. This, to his feelingly

sensitive mind, was extremely painful ; but he observed,

"that he could better bear the frown and disowning of

men, than to disobey God and feel that he incurred His

displeasure."

Notwithstanding the many trials and difficulties, Andrew

continued firm in his attachment to the Sabbath, and some

time after, his faith was greatly increased by the following

circumstance. The country, in many parts, was still a

dense and unbroken forest, and much of the labour of these

early settlers was to clear away the superabundant wood.

In this employment Andrew was engaged one first-day,

when his neighbours were all gone to the Dunker meeting.

He was piling and burning brush, which, at that time,

formed the material of all the fences, upon his own and

the contiguous estates. After he had been at work for

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some time, the wind rose to a smart breeze, and the fires

in a very few minutes became unmanageable. On they

went, crackling and roaring ; the fence on one side of the

lot took fire, whence it spread with rapidity, and was in a

fair way to communicate to the home establishment of his

neighbour. Andrew saw plainly enough that notwith-

standing all his efforts to the contrary, the whole must

inevitably be burned before human help could be obtained,

unless Providence would interpose. In this extremity he

threw himself upon his knees, his face and hands blackened

with smoke and ashes, and cried out in the deepest torn-

supplication, " Oh Lord, if it be from thee that I keep the

seventh day for a Sabbath, and labour on this day, accord-

ing to thy law, do thou stop this fire." While he thus

prayed the wind veered suddenly, and took the fire in alto-

gether another direction, so that it became easily manage-

able. The skeptic may sneer at this, but the Christian

will remember that God is omniscient, that He holds the

winds in his fist, and moreover that He has promised to

hear and answer prayer. This remarkable circumstance

Andrew improved, by vowing unto the Lord to be stead-

fast in his law, and to make his house for ever a house

devoted to the servants and the service of God, — a vow

which the Almighty seems to this time to have accepted.

But for years after this, Andrew was the only master and

minister in his house devoted to God ; but he steadily

maintained divine worship upon the Sabbath, and not

without success, for he had the happiness of seeing some

of his neighbours, one at a time, come and unite with him

in serving God.

After several years, Elder Lehman, from Ephrata, made

them a visit, and proposed to raise an establishment simi-

lar to that at the former place. To this Andrew cheerfully

acceded, and accordingly, as soon as circumstances would

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permit, the estate and buildings were formally conveyed to

the Society. It was not a gift, however. Andrew had a

large family dependent upon him for support. The land

had been brought into a state of cultivation by their mutual

efforts, and strict justice required that the interests of all

should be considered in its alienation. Everything was

fairly appraised, and time given to the Society to pay the

appraisement to him and his heirs. This arrangement was

followed by the happiest consequences. Andrew^ and his

family were amply provided for, and he lived to see his

children and his children's children become members of the

Society which had arisen through his means. He and his

companion in life went down to the grave in a good old

age, and are now doubtless raising their voices with that

company who were redeemed from the earth.

The estate consists, at present, of 165 acres of land, in

a high state of cultivation, and is very productive. It is a

stiff loam, upon a limestone bottom, and is, therefore, well

adapted to grass and the cereal grains. They are abun-

dantly supplied with farm buildings. The principal barn,

situated on a hillside, built of stone and brick, is 50 feet

wide and 102 feet long, with a roomy overshoot on the

lower side ; the lower, or under-ground story, contains

several stables for the accommodation of the domestic

animals ; the yard is well supplied with pure water, and

everything bears the marks of thrift, industry, and eco-

nomy. There are two flourishing orchards, well supplied

with a choice variety of fruit, and two neatly cultivated

gardens. Much of the wearing apparel is manufactured

by the sisters, and the visiter who passes the building

appropriated to that industrious use, will be strongly re-

minded of a classical quotation from the Odyssey, where

Calypso is represented as

21\*

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" With voice celestial, chanting to the loom,"

and her damsels,

"Who cull,

With hands of rosy white, the purple wool."

The sisters lighten and enliven their industrious pursuits

with music ; and many a strain that would draw tears of rap-

ture from listening multitudes, is blended, and even made

more pastoral and effective by the sound of the shuttle,

and the noise of the spinning wheel. There are likewise a

blacksmith's shop, and a cooper and cabinet-maker's shop,

where the brothers pursue their mechanical occupations.

There is also a flouring mill, where, beside custom work,

two thousand barrels of flour are annually produced.

This is situated on a perennial stream that flows through,

and abundantly waters the estate. It is an arm of

the Antetum River, a tributary of the Potomac. The

dwelling-house is most pleasantly situated about six

paces from the stream on its south bank. This dwelling

is a convent or religious house, and is styled " The

Nunnery," by the country people. It presents a singular

and unique appearance, being about one hundred and fifty

feet long, by thirty feet wide, and three stories high ; the

lower story is built of blue limestone, and the others of

brick. The lower story is even with the ground on the

south side, before which, and between the two orchards,

there is a small grassy lawn. There are three front en-

trances, of which the middle entrance communicates with

the dining hall, where a company of sixty or seventy

guests might be conveniently accommodated. On the

north side, projecting from the middle of the main build-

ing, with an entrance into the dining hall, are the rooms

appropriated to domestic and culinary purposes. Over

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the dining hall, in the second story, is the family chapel,

where worship is regularly performed both in the morn-

ing and at evening. Above this, in a small cupola, is

the convent bell, whence a rope passes through each

floor into the centre of the dining hall. The west end

of the building, from the dining hall round, contains ex-

clusively the apartments of the brethren connected with

the establishment ; the east end of the building, beginning

with the same division, contains exclusively the apart-

ments of the sisters. In each department there are spare

rooms for company, with sleeping rooms on the north side

in both stories. In the centre of the cellar there is a

beautiful fountain of clear spring water, incessantly flow-

ing in an abundant stream. This is distributed in every

convenient manner to the different parts of the establish-

ment. Along the north side of the building, there stretches

a luxuriant meadow, about one hundred paces across, which

is abundantly watered by two streams ; one, the creek be-

fore mentioned, the other, a brooklet of smaller dimensions.

These are crossed by two wooden bridges, and a well-worn

path leads to the meeting-house, situated on the north side

of the meadow, adjoining the public road, which runs

through the estate. The meeting-house, which is sixty by

fifty feet, is built of stone, without a gallery. The adjoin-

ing, building of smaller dimensions communicates with it

on the west end, which exactly resembles an English

vestry, although it is in reality a kitchen. About twenty-

five paces from the convent, near the eastern border of the

meadow, is the waste-gate for the mill. Here there is a

bend in the creek, and at this point is formed their bap-

tistery, well supplied at all seasons with pure water. Three

steps lead down into this beautiful fount. In this place

we were forcibly reminded of that exquisitely beautiful

hymn,

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" The Lord my shepherd is ;

He maketh me to lie

In pastures green ; he leadeth me

The pleasant waters by."

This Society keeps no journal, has no written history,

nor humanly composed creed. However, they have a

charter, obtained from the state legislature, in which they

are known as Seventh-day Baptists. By this charter they

are authorized to hold and govern the estate and the house,

by by-laws of their own formation and adoption, which are

represented and defended by five trustees elected by a

plurality of the votes of all the male members of the

Society. In these by-laws it is made a condition of admis-

sion, that the inmates of the house shall be single persons ;

however, they are not disqualified by a state of widowhood.

They must also be conscientious observers of the seventh

day, and must have shared in the ordinances of baptism,

and possess- reputed piety. Their application for admis-

sion must be made to the trustees, who are the authorized

judges of their eligibility. No vow, no promise of uncon-

ditional and continued celibacy is ever required, but if they

subsequently wish to marry, which is sometimes the case,

no unkind treatment ensues ; on the contrary, they leave

the house like a sister going from the family of her kindred,

when every one is attentive to her future wants. No person

entering the Society can retain independent estate or per-

sonal property ; but should they bring property with them,

it is subjected to a fair appraisement, and a certificate of the

same given ; and should the person subsequently leave, the

same or its value is restored without interest. If the in-

mate dies in the convent, or a recognised inmate of the

same, all the property accrues permanently to the esta-

blishment. No one receives wages, but all participate in

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the comforts of the house ; and the charter secures the

whole of the estate and its incomes to the single brethren

and sisters as their property. The labours of the esta-

blishment are shared alike by all ; the brethren under the

direction of the prior, and the sisters under the direction

of the prioress. In no respect, however, is there any pre-

eminence of authority or class ; their offices are designed

to subserve good order — nothing more. They are in truth

a band w T here fraternal regard and equality of right regu-

late all their conduct.

In 1847, there were nine brothers and fourteen sisters

who were inmates of the convent. The other members of

the Society have no personal rights in the property of the

estate ; and there is no more community of interests among

them than there is among other denominations of Christians.

In church discipline and government they are decidedly

congregational. Their officers are elected by a majority

of the votes of the members. They are averse to paying

their pastors a stated salary ; but believe that he should

be assisted voluntarily according to his necessities. The

convent and all the buildings are exceedingly neat and

well-kept ; the furniture being plain and convenient with-

out any superfluities or finery. The venerable pastor,

Andrew Fahnestock, having lost his wife, made a distribu-

tion of his property among his children, and took up his

residence in the convent some time since. All visiters are

likewise requested to make the convent their home, parti-

cularly during the public meetings, and are furnished in it

with private apartments. Their yearly meetings are at-

tended by many who reside in distant parts, these, as they

arrive, are most hospitably welcomed ; the brothers salu-

ting the visiting brothers with a holy kiss; the sisters

saluting the visiting sisters in the same manner, but the

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brothers and sisters only shaking hands. When the meet-

ing is over, and these visiters are preparing to depart, the

same affectionate observance is again tendered to all. At

these meetings a supper is spread in the meeting-house,

which is the anciently celebrated Agapa, or love-feast, held

in imitation of the Last Supper, of which the Redeemer

partook with his disciples, before he was led out like a

lamb to the slaughter, and in connexion with the institu-

tion of the Eucharist. At this supper everything is pre-

viously prepared, and there is no cooking done except to

make coffee. Here appears the use of the vestry kitchen,

adjoining the meeting-house, with its cellar and well-stored

larder. In this apartment arc vessels over fixed furnaces

prepared for heating water, coffee, and the like. The

meeting-house has two front entrances, and is seated with

the males on one side, and the females on the other. It

is furnished with settees and long narrow tables, which

serve for their books during worship, and for meals during

the love-feasts. About midway of the house, on the back

end, is one about eight feet, appropriated to the ministry,

there being no other pulpit in the house. The tables at

the love-feasts are furnished with a good supply, and a

sufficient variety of all the necessary aliments of life, with-

out any superfluities ; and all are invited to partake. This

being over, and the things cleared away, the communion

table is furnished for the Lord's Supper. The holy rites

are begun by singing and prayer ; the thirteenth chapter

of John is then read, and the officiating ministers discourse

upon it, when these servants of the church lay aside their

coats, go to the kitchen vestry, gird themselves with long

towels, and each one taking a small wooden tub half filled

with tepid water, return to the brethren's side of the house,

and commence the ceremony of washing each other's feet,

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repeating meanwhile the words of our Saviour : " There-

fore if I, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, so

ye ought also to wash one another's feet." The same is

performed on the female side of the house by two aged

sisters. This being ended, all again sit down, and every

one appears absorbed in silent prayer and meditation for a

few minutes. The officiating ministers then take the bread

of the communion, and one of them, after giving thanks,

and imploring the divine favour, carries the plate before

the others, so as to stand before two of the communicants.

He then breaks one of the pieces of the bread into two

parts, giving half to one and the other half to the other,

saying, " Take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for

you ; this do in remembrance of me." This formulary is

repeated at each time of breaking the bread, until all the

communicants have received a portion. In distributing the

wine, the ministers, instead of the deacons, carry the goblets.

The whole concludes with singing. They are all masters

in music, and, what appears to me extremely appropriate,

their hymns in German were all composed by members of

their own order, and have never been given to the world.

Many of them exhibit considerable poetic talent. The

same is true of their music, which is perfectly unique ; but

so soft, solemn, soul-stirring, and melodious, that the listener

half forgets its reality, and holds his breath for fear of

breaking the enchantment. They have three volumes, of

which a small edition has been printed for their own use,

and there is not a light or jigging beat in the whole collec-

tion. They frequently make additions in manuscript, and

take great pleasure in making new books with the pen, of

which many have very richly ornamented pages. While

listening to their melting melodious strains, one cannot

fail to revert in imagination to that new song which was

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sung before the Lamb, and before the beasts, and the

elders, and which no man could learn but those who were

redeemed from the earth. Their style of singing, though

altogether different from that of modern congregations, is

extremely effective, and such, as I believe, few persons of

taste and sensibility could listen to, without shedding tears

of silent rapture. They have no choir, but all, both young

and old, sing, being directed in this exercise by a leader.

There is perhaps no ordinance of the Christian church

more highly interesting to a casual observer, and more

fraught with hallowed associations to a devout mind, than

the rite of baptism, when it is administered in the man-

ner corresponding with the Word of God. This is parti-

cularly the case at Snowhill, where everything is in such

perfect keeping and character. The candidates for bap-

tism being previously examined and accepted as suitable

subjects for that holy ordinance by the pastors, an an-

nouncement to that effect is made to the congregation.

They are then suitably attired, and all repair, forming a

procession, to the baptistery, where a thronging multitude

is generally assembled. Here the scene is extremely solemn

and affecting, and all nature appears to sympathize in the

deep solemnity. Even the sunlight, as it bathes the ver-

dant hillside, the smooth meadow, and the golden orchards

in a flood of glory, seems to partake a softer radiance. A

hundred snowy clouds appear here and there on the blue

heaven above, and it requires no great stretch of the imagi-

nation to fancy that behind or upon them the waving wings

of seraphs have been furled, and that forms of ineffable

beauty are bending there, and watching with interest the

dedication of souls to God. A flood of hallowed associa-

tions comes rushing into the mind. We think of Jordan,

of the multitudes who gathered upon its banks, and who

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were baptized " confessing their sins." The venerable

appearance of the Baptist, that first preacher of the king-

dom of God. And then the Great High Priest of our Sal-

vation, who came hither to set an example for his servants

in all coming time. But this pleasing revery is broken by

the voice of the pastor. A hymn is given out ; and then

from the midst of the company arises a deep, full, melo-

dious swell of harmony. It is unlike singing; it seems

the very soul of heavenly music breathing out an ecstasy of

thanksgiving. The music ceases ; a low soft echo breathes

through the air, so lately living with sweet sounds, and

over the waters ; again all is silent. The pastor now

stretches out his hands, and lifts his eyes to heaven : " Let

us pray." Some kneel, others remain standing, but all

assume the look and action of devout humility. The prayer

ended, the pastor descends into the pool; the candidate,

assisted by a brother or sister, descends after him. Reach-

ing the lower step, he takes her, if a sister, by the left arm,

and leads her down to a suitable depth, where she kneels

in the water. She applies water to her face, and he does

the same to the back of her head, waiting a moment for

her to recover her thoughts and acquire a frame of mind

suitable for the occasion. Then, laying his left hand upon

the forepart of her head, and his right hand upon the back

between the shoulders, he says, U I baptize thee in the

name of the Father," and imrners.es the candidate, face

foremost ; then, raising her up to her former position, he

gives time for a like recovery of self-possession, and adds,

" and the Son," and immerses her in the same manner a

second time ; then, giving a like time for recovery, he con-

tinues, " and the Holy Ghost," and proceeds as before.

Then while she is yet kneeling in the water, he lays both

hands upon her head, and offers a short invocation for the

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Spirit of God to seal this obedient handmaid as a child of

God. During all this time, the multitude exhibits a deep

interest, and maintains a perfect silence ; the candidate

manifests the greatest composure, and all appear to feel

that the Saviour is near.

The German Seventh-day Baptists profess to have no

other guide than the inspired Word of God ; and to this

they profess to exactly conform, omitting nothing enjoined,

and adding nothing to the observances there given. Their

simplicity is truly remarkable, and I believe, truly pure.

They are non-resistant in sentiment, but they plainly

preach the righteousness of the kingdom of God. They

are likewise remarkably amiable in their intercourse with

each other. There is a similar society in Bedford County,

under the pastoral care of Elder King, but I have been

unable to make myself acquainted with any incidents con-

nected with its history.

There is one subject connected with the history of this

people, which, from deference to my country and its insti-

tutions, I would willingly pass over in silence ; justice,

how T ever, compels me to do otherwise. These societies,

harmless and inoffensive as the members are, have, for a

number of years past, been very much annoyed and dis-

turbed at their annual meetings by a number of wicked

and licentious persons. Being entirely averse to litiga-

tion of any kind, they patiently bore with all. This only

seemed to encourage increased disturbance, until the 17th

of May, 1845, when it became so outrageous at their annual

meeting, that an individual who was not a member, insti-

tuted a prosecution against several persons for a riot.

This resulted in the condemnation and punishment of

sixteen individuals, whose friends, from malicious and

revengeful motives, immediately commenced suits against

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these Seventh-day Christians for labouring on the first

day.

To this they plead guilty, and cheerfully paid their fines

and the costs ; but in consequence of the great inconve-

niences to which they were subjected, they petitioned the

legislature for relief, though without effect.\*

\* It may be interesting to posterity to know that in the United States

of America, and about the middle of the nineteenth century, Plymon

Seaver, of Vermont, was confined in jail for a long time, for attending

to secular concerns upon the first day of the week. About the same

time, or August 26, 1845, Obed Snowberger was fined four dollars, for

being engaged in worldly employment upon the first day of the week.

Mr. Snowberger was a worthy member of the German Seventh-day

Baptist fraternity in Pennsylvania, and the prosecution was carried on

in Quincy Township, Franklin County, and before Samuel Sibbet, as

justice of the peace. Subsequently nine others of the same people

were subjected to prosecution and fines for the same reasons.

THE END.

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