

The Baptist History Series

Number 10



Memorials of Baptist Martyrs

J. Newton Brown

MEMORIALS
OF
BAPTIST MARTYRS



Baptist Martyrs.

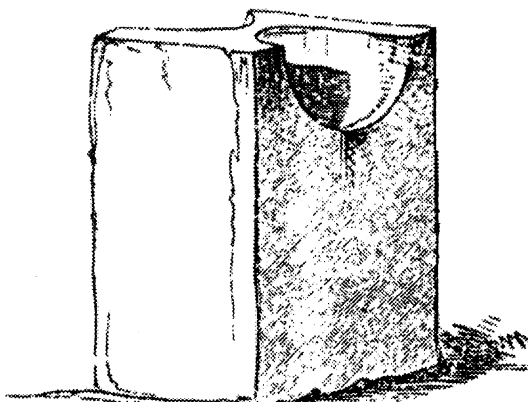
BURNING OF MRS. ELIZABETH GAUNT. PAGE 300.

MEMORIALS

OF

BAPTIST MARTYRS

WITH A PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL ESSAY,
BY J. NEWTON BROWN



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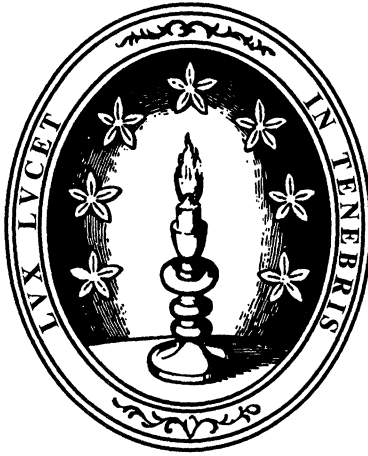
Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth.

-- *Psalm 60:4*

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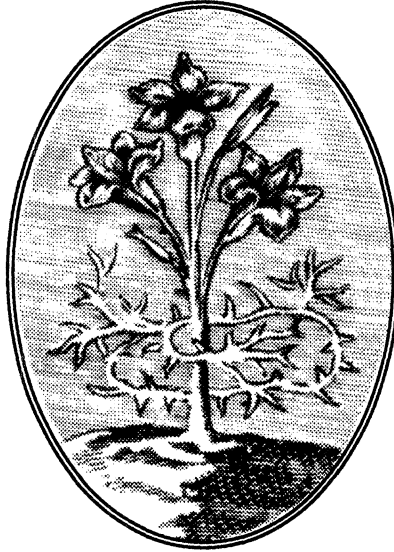


THE WALDENSIAN EMBLEM

lux lucet in tenebris

“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

ISBN #1-57978-916-1



Sicut liliū inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias

On The Cover: We use the symbol of the “lily among the thorns” from Song of Solomon 2:2 to represent the Baptist History Series. The Latin, *Sicut liliū inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias*, translates, “As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.”

PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL ESSAY.

BY J. NEWTON BROWN.

A MARTYR is a witness—a witness for God, for Truth and Righteousness—a witness tried both by action and by suffering, and found faithful to his conscience and to Christ, through every trial. Such, at least, are those who, by the grace of God, are entitled to the name of Christian martyrs. “To you it is *given*,” says Paul to the Philippians, “*in the behalf of Christ*, not only to *believe* on him, but also to *suffer* for his sake.”

By usage, however, this title, which belongs to faithful Christians in general, has come in modern times to be restricted to those who suffer *unto death*. Hence, in our English Bible, the only three examples where the term occurs are of this kind:—Stephen of Jerusalem, Antipas of Pergamos, and the prophetic roll of the “martyrs of Jesus,” with whose blood the mystic “Babylon” is drunken. Acts 22 : 20. Rev. 2 : 13. 17 : 6.

Martyrdom, in this restricted sense, may be said to have begun with the first generation of fallen man. Then in the world’s fresh morning, the blood of righteous Abel, shed by a brother’s hand, cried unto God from the crimsoned earth. The first revealed “heir of the righteousness which is by faith,” was thus a martyr—a Christian martyr—typically, but truly—like John the Baptist in later time, bearing witness unto death to “the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.”

But it is manifest that the testimony of the true martyr must vary *in degree*, though not in kind, *with the measure of Divine Revelation* in different ages, and under different dispensations. Hence, the martyr from the time of Noah to Abraham might die as a witness to the *new* truth revealed to Noah; and from Abraham to Moses for the *new* revelation to Abraham; and from Moses to Christ for the *new* revelation to Moses, or to any one of the successive prophets, by whose anointed lips, "God, in time past spake unto the fathers." The martyrs down to the time of the Maccabees, are examples cited by Paul. Heb. 11 : 35-38.

On the same principle, it is equally clear that, after the coming of Christ, every faithful martyr was liable to suffer *for the new revelations and institutions introduced by Him*; whether in person, or through his Apostles, by the power of the Holy Ghost. (John 15 : 18-27. 16 : 1-4. 12-15.) Of this, Christians, from the beginning, were fully forewarned, and especially Christian ministers, (Matt. 5 : 10-12. 10 : 16-42. 16 : 21-28.) and appropriate cautions, counsels, and consolations were provided for their guidance and support.

It behooves us, therefore, to examine carefully *what those new revelations and institutions are*, belonging especially to the New Testament dispensation, and binding upon the conscience of every disciple of Christ, "even unto the end of the world." For it is not every *sufferer* that is a martyr—*though he may be a Christian*; for it is possible that even a Christian may suffer for his own faults, and not for righteousness' sake, or for Christ's sake. (1 Peter 4 : 15-16.) A single fault in the temper and tongue of the meekest of men, shut him out of Canaan. Moses, the noblest witness for God in his time, yet died for his own fault—a warning to every succeeding generation of God's witnesses. Still more striking is the case of the

young prophet at Bethel; who died for disobeying the plain command of God, through what might be thought a becoming deference to the authority of a "father" in Israel—a warning too little heeded by those who followed "the traditions of the elders" in after times, and the authority of "the early fathers" in the Christian Church. (1 Kings 13: 20–24.) In like manner, Paul in reproving the Corinthians for their abuse of the Lord's supper, says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (1 Cor. 11: 30).

Nor is it every one that *suffers in a true and righteous cause*, though he may die with indomitable courage, that wins the crown of martyrdom; for "though I *give* my body to be burned," says the Apostle, "and have not charity, (*i. e.*, love), it profiteth me nothing." Thousands also have been slaughtered for their connection with Christianity, like the infants of Bethlehem, who were rather *victims to cruelty* than martyrs for *Truth*.

Much less, even in the judgment of charity, are they to be justly regarded as Christian *martyrs*, who die in the diffusion and defence of *antichristian errors*. We grant that this distinction may be, and has been sadly abused for many hundreds of years, by many pretentious parties in Christendom; still within proper limits, and with due allowance for all Christian freedom of thought, it is a sound one, and must not be ignored. The opposite opinion—however disguised under the name of *liberality*—involves absolute contradiction. Though often grievously misapplied, therefore, the old maxim is essentially true, "There are no martyrs out of the Church." But then the Church is no narrow sectarian organization, no self-assumed infallible patron of orthodoxy, no State Establishment, whether episcopal, presbyterial, or congregational; but *the universal body of evangelical believers*

of every age — the body which recognizes and adores Jesus Christ as “God manifested in the flesh,” “the propitiation for our sins,” and the unchanging “head of all principality and power.”

It may be well to state explicitly what we conceive to be the essential and invariable elements of true EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY. There may be others, but the four following we regard as both fundamental and vital. THE SCRIPTURES ONLY, AS THE SUPREME RULE OF FAITH; FREE JUSTIFICATION IN CHRIST ONLY THROUGH FAITH; SPIRITUAL REGENERATION ONLY, AS THE ORIGIN OF FAITH; PERSONAL SANCTIFICATION ONLY, MANIFESTED BY GOOD WORKS, AS THE EFFECT AND EVIDENCE OF FAITH. These propositions are logically and inseparably linked together, and constitute one self-consistent organic system of revealed Truth. This system is “the Gospel of Christ.” No other can be substituted for it. It bears on its front the stamp and seal of the Almighty. It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And of this it is the Apostle says to the Galatians, “If we, or an angel from Heaven, preach unto you any other Gospel, let him be accursed.” The man who intelligently and honestly believes this—lives for it, and dies for it—wherever found, or whatever name he bears, is worthy to be esteemed by all mankind, as he is by Christ himself, a “faithful martyr.”

But we go farther. The above formulas of fundamental truth do not exhaust the distinctive principles of a PURE CHRISTIANITY. There are others that belong to *the institutions of Christ*, under the New Testament economy. Such, for example, are the following. UNIVERSAL FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE ONLY AS A CONDITION OF FAITH; BAPTISM ONLY ON A CONSCIENTIOUS PROFESSION OF FAITH; IMMERSION ONLY, AS THE PRESCRIBED BAPTISM OF FAITH; BAPTIZED BE-

LIEVERS ONLY, AS THE PROPER MATERIALS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH—the living Body of Christ.

These propositions—to add no more—may be safely said to shine on the face of the New Testament, and to inhere in the very substance of the revealed dispensation under which we live. They are all organically and logically connected with each other, and are essential to the normal or regular *visible constitution* of the kingdom of God on earth. They are the characteristic features of that “kingdom which is not of this world;” in distinction from all preceding dispensations; and in contrast with all subsequent forms of religion, founded on human policy, and supported by civil power.

Now what we wish to be remembered is, that any one who, from a good conscience toward God, suffers for *any one of these “words” of Christ*, suffers as a Martyr. He is bound, as a Christian, “to observe *all things whatsoever*” commanded by Christ, even at the hazard of his life, or the loss of it. Unless he thus take up the cross of his crucified Lord, he cannot be a genuine disciple. “He that seeketh to save his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake,” says Christ, “shall keep it unto life eternal.” And “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Hence, our Lord himself—the King of Martyrs—bore testimony to the truth before the Jewish Sanhedrim, although he knew that his death would be the penalty—a death of public infamy, and of unutterable agony. Hence, animated by His Spirit, Peter and John, when summoned before the same council, and forbidden to preach in the name of Christ, made their noble appeal—“Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which

we have seen and heard." Hence, the intrepid Stephen laid down his life, under the hands of violence—praying like his dying Saviour, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Hence, John the Baptist, for his faithful remonstrance against sin, and James, the son of Zebedee, that fearless "son of thunder," both fell under the bloody steel of Herod. Thus began, with names never to be forgotten, the long bright roll of New Testament Martyrs. And thus, from year to year, and from age to age, that illustrious roll received accessions, from the violence of Jewish or Heathen persecutors, for three centuries.

But, with only one known exception, all this time, these Christian Martyrs were BAPTISTS. Neither Christ, nor his Apostles have left us a single precept or example of Infant Baptism. This is a conceded fact. The very first Pedobaptists in history—Cyprian of Carthage and his clergy, (A. D. 253,) did not plead any law of Christ, or Apostolical tradition, for infant baptism. They put the whole thing upon analogy and inference—upon the necessity of infants on the one hand, and the unlimited grace of God on the other. Their own language is an implied and absolute confession that their "opinion," as they call it, had no basis in any New Testament law or precedent. It confesses, in a word, that in advocating the baptism of literally new-born babes, they were introducing *an innovation into the Church of Christ*—and they defend it only on the ground of *necessity*.

In stating this historical fact, we are perfectly aware of the views of Dr. Wall, in favor of a different conclusion. And we are perfectly aware of the special pleadings by which he has darkened the clear light of history on this point. Honest, but prejudiced to the last degree, he has propagated for a century and a half a host of delusions among his confiding followers. He has started wrong at

the beginning ; and beguiled his own strong intellect by the most unfounded assumptions. His hereditary idea of a State Church is the first grand error—perhaps the real root of all the rest. Then came the convenient argument of Jewish Proselyte Baptism as the model of Christian Baptism—involving a whole series of false assumptions. Then, the language of Christ and his Apostles is tortured, to draw from it meanings it never can have by any fair interpretation.* Then the language of the early Christian Fathers must be put upon the rack, for the same purpose. Could Clement of Rome, Hermas, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, or Origen himself, rise from the tomb, they would protest with solemn indignation at the *force* that has been put upon their words, and the absolute perversion of their testimony.† Then follows Dr. Wall's ingenious *supposition* to account for the language of Basil, and Cyril—his grand mistake of the testimony of Augustine and Pelagius—and his miserable attempts to set aside the fact, that every distinguished Christian writer of the first four centuries, whose baptism is recorded, was baptized in adult years, on his own confession of faith—a fact that also holds true of every Christian emperor in the fourth century, from Constantine to Theodosius.

The infatuation of Dr. Wall is sad enough ; but it is outdone by a writer in the *North American Review* for January, 1854 ; who has the weakness to affirm in the

* Even the great Schleiermacher says, "He that will find infant baptism in the New Testament, *must first put it there.*" So, in effect, say Neander, Hahn, Hagenbach, Bunsen, and the *North British Review*.

† The reader will find the clearest evidence of this in the articles of Dr. Sears, in the *Christian Review*, for March and June, 1838 ; and still more fully in those of Dr. Chase, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, for November, 1849, and in the *Christian Review*, for April, 1854.

face of the world—in a lame criticism on Bunsen's Hippolytus—that the evidence for infant baptism “amounts to *historical demonstration!*” The words of the Apostle to Timothy seem here truly applicable: “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth. But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.” The accomplished scholars of the North British Review, in several recent numbers, have frankly confessed the want of scriptural and early authority for infant baptism; and have intimated that even the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, appears to be on this point undergoing a process of “*historical conversion.*”*

But there is one *decisive* evidence that the primitive Martyrs for three centuries were Baptists. We refer to the document prepared by Eusebius of Cæsarea, the ecclesiastical historian, for the signature of all the bishops of the General Council of Nice, (A. D. 325). It is found in his own report of the proceedings, addressed to his flock at Cæsarea, as given by Socrates and Theodoret. We subjoin it in Dr. Cave's translation.

“The form *proposed by us*, and which was read in the presence of the most sacred emperor, and seemed to be liked *and approved by all*, was in this manner:—The exposition of our faith, as we have received it from the bishops, who were our predecessors, *both when we were first instructed in the rudiments of the faith, and when afterwards baptized into it*; as we have learned from the Holy Scriptures, and both believed and taught, not only when we sustained the office of presbyter, but since we came to the episcopal station, so do we still believe, and produce this as the account of our faith: We believe in one God,” &c.†

Here is a testimony from the “Father of Ecclesiastical History,” produced on the most public occasion, in the pre-

* North British Review for August, 1852.

† Cave's *Lives of the Fathers*, Vol. II. p. 112, Oxford, 1840.

sence of 318 bishops of the Catholic Church, besides near 2000 other delegates, presbyters and laymen, convened from all parts of the world—in the most solemn form and for the most solemn purpose conceivable—that according to Christ's Commission, *instruction in the principles of Christianity, in all cases preceded baptism.*

We have said that there was *one exception.* Cyprian of Carthage, the father of pedobaptism, was a man of God and a martyr. But we affirm, without fear of contradiction, and invite correction if we are wrong, that *he is the only one recorded in the first three centuries.* Indeed, that the "opinion" of this distinguished man in favor of the baptism of babes before the eighth day from their birth, refers *only to cases of immediate danger of death*, is clear, not only from his own words, but also from the fact that Eusebius does not even deem the opinion worthy of mention in his Ecclesiastical History. And, as we have seen, the custom was unknown seventy-two years afterwards, at the Council of Nice. Yet how often is this "opinion" of Cyprian quoted now, as if it were evidence of the *universal prevalence* of pedobaptism in the first ages!

As now, it appears that pedobaptism had "no recognized existence," even in the so-called Catholic Church, until after the Council of Nice, (nor indeed until the time of Gregory Nazianzen, A. D. 363,) so we have no proof whatever that it ever existed in the Pure Churches, or *Cathari*, who separated from the Catholics in the preceding century, in the time of Novatian, A. D. 251. This large body of Dissenters from the Catholic communion, were called Novatians by their adversaries; but as the historian Socrates testifies, they called themselves in Greek, *Cathari*, (in Latin, *Puritani*,) signifying *the pure*; and the name was designed by them to announce the fundamental principle of their separation, which was the preservation

of a pure church membership, communion, and discipline. They held that the Catholics had so departed from the original constitution of the Church in this respect, as to have forfeited their claim to that honor; and hence invariably baptized all who joined them from the Catholic churches. Hence they are the first in history who were called *Anabaptists*, that is, *rebaptizers*; although, of course, they denied the propriety of the appellation, as they believed the baptism administered by a corrupt church to be null and void.*

Much stress has been laid on the fact, that no catalogue of heresies from Irenæus to Epiphanius, (A. D. 180, to A. D. 380,) enumerates any sect as deniers of infant baptism. The facts already established furnish the answer: there was then no such Catholic custom as infant baptism to be denied. Tertullian (A. D. 200), *did* oppose the *innovation of Quintilla*, who would have given baptism to children too young to give proper evidence of piety; and his voice was not, what it has been strangely misrepresented to be, even by Dr. Schaff, “a solitary voice, without an echo;” it was the voice of the then Catholic church,

* Dr. Wall says, they did not complain of the Catholics for infant baptism: but, as we have seen, for a very good reason, namely, that it did not come into common use for ages after, among the Catholics themselves. Neither do the Donatists—who seceded from the Catholics about sixty years after the Novatians, and for very similar reasons—make any such complaint; although they chiefly resided in North Africa, where Cyprian lived and died, and might be supposed to sympathize with him in opinion and practice. Dr. Wall takes this for proof that they were all Pedobaptists—a consequence of his own previous assumptions. All the positive evidence he adduces, is the canon of a Council which belongs to the *fifth* century; when some of them may be supposed to have fallen in with the prevailing practice of the State Church, though contrary to the distinctive spirit and tendency of their own secession.

*against which none replied.** How could they indeed, when the catechumenical course was universally established, as necessary before baptism?

It is time that men of learning and candor abandoned all such unhistorical positions, and inconsequential reasonings. Infant baptism is an error from beginning to end; corrupt in theory, and corrupting in practice; born in superstition, cradled in fear, nursed in ignorance, supported by fraud, and spread by force; doomed to die in the light of historical investigation, and its very memory to be loathed in all future ages by a disabused Church † In the realms of despotism it has shed the blood of martyrs in torrents; that blood cries against it to heaven; and a long-suffering God will yet be the terrible avenger. The book before us is a swift witness against it.

Down to the time of Constantine, with the solitary exception of Cyprian, as we have shown, all the martyrs—and their number has been computed at three millions—were BAPTISTS; though with various shades of error gradually gathering over them from the beginning of the third century—perhaps earlier. Already the corruption in Rome, and Carthage, had become so great—not in the *ordinances*, so much as in the *membership*—as to

* This whole subject of infant baptism, and the true theory of the sacraments, in Dr. Schaff's otherwise admirable History, needs, and will, we trust, yet receive from its esteemed author, a thorough revision.

† In no boastful spirit, but in the spirit of a martyr before God—stung by the solemn conviction of duty, after thirty-five years of earnest and impartial investigation on this subject—to speak out “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth”—we nail these THESES to the door of every Pedobaptist Church in Christendom; and challenge all the Christian scholarship of the age, not to ignore, evade, or deny them, but to face the inevitable trial, summon the witnesses, sift the evidence, and, if it can, disprove all, or any one of them. And may God help the right.

have led to two great Secessions, for the sake of purity, namely, the Novatians, and the Donatists.* When Constantine and Licinius first came into power, (A. D. 312,) they gave equal religious toleration to all their subjects. But the attempt to settle the controversy in North Africa, between the Catholics and Donatists by imperial intervention, (A. D. 316,) was a departure from this impartial protection and equality before the law; and from that fatal moment, persecution began under the Christian name. The Emperors, whether Orthodox or Arian—the Bishops armed with imperial commissions, whether Orthodox or Arian—became the persecutors of their brethren of the opposite faith. The Pure Churches, (*Cathari*),—confessedly orthodox in all things else—refused all the attempts to bring them into the ROMAN CATHOLIC IMPERIAL CHURCH, organized and established by Constantine; and although for a long time honored and protected by the Catholics themselves, for their virtues, began in the fifth century to feel the heavy hand of Catholic intolerance. Socrates, in his Ecclesiastical History, (A. D. 445,) though he records their sufferings from the Arians in the fourth century, tells us that Innocent I., Bishop of Rome, in the reign of Honorius, “was the first persecutor of the Novatians at Rome, many of whose churches he took away.” The same course was pursued by Celestinus, (A. D. 421,) as well as by Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, (A. D. 412).

If, now, we inquire into the cause of this persecution, we shall find it mainly owing to *the increased zeal for infant baptism*, awakened by the writings of Augustine in this age. Other causes, doubtless, combined with this; but no one who reads the canons of the Council of Carthage at which Augustine presided, (A. D. 414,) one of

* See *Mosheim's Commentaries*, &c., for a careful examination of these Secessions. Also, *Lardner*, *Robinson*, and *Neander*.

which runs in the following terms : “ WE WILL that whosoever DENIES THAT LITTLE CHILDREN BY BAPTISM ARE FREED FROM PERDITION AND ETERNALLY SAVED, that they be ACCURSED,” can question this. Other evidence in confirmation, if necessary, might be adduced from the letters of Augustine himself. From this influence came, also, the edict of Honorius, and Valentinian III. (A. D. 413,) forbidding *re-baptism*, (as it was termed,) throughout the Roman empire, under the penalty of death. This edict, though aimed especially at the Donatists—whose numerous and flourishing churches were nearly ruined by its rigorous enforcement—was soon applied to the Novatians, whose practice it had always been to baptize those who came over to them from the Catholic churches. *From this time, therefore, THE PURE CHURCHES, became the victims of perpetual persecutions from the hands of the Roman Catholics.*

“The first result of the protectorate of the Christian Emperors,” says the Chevalier Bunsen, “was, that in their codes they converted church ordinances, (that about baptism, for instance,) into statute laws. Thus Justinian, in the beginning of the sixth century, ordered new-born infants to be baptized, under a penalty for neglecting it; *a law which still passes for a Christian principle in the code of many a Christian State.* Evangelical and Christian freedom thus received its death-blow, from the same police crutch which was given it for support.”*

Under Roman laws like these, enforced as they were in the Middle Ages, with new and most sanguinary edicts in all the States of Europe, what multitudes must have become MARTYRS, may be conjectured from what occurred at the Reformation, when Baptist martyrs were counted by tens and even hundreds of thousands.

We are now gravely told by historians that, from the

* Bunsen's Hippolytus, Vol. III., p. 249.

sixth century, the *Cathari* began to decline; and we are told or led to infer, that they ceased to maintain their pure distinctive principles, and gradually merged in the Roman Catholic Church. Not a shadow of proof is offered for this assertion or inference, but that they disappear from the notice of Roman Catholic writers. But the northern "barbarians," (as they are called,) who broke the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms, for a long time refused subjection to the Bishop of Rome, and gave religious toleration to their subjects. Especially was this the case with the Ostrogoths in Italy, under the long and happy reign of Theodoric the Great—when all Italy flourished like a garden. (A. D. 491–527.)

Afterwards, in the East, the Saracens did the same thing, especially to that branch of the succession of the pure churches which went under the name of PAULICIANS. These last maintained themselves, even under the Greek-Roman emperors, amid the fires of persecution, for at least six hundred years, (from A. D. 653, to A. D. 1260,) indeed till lost to view by the conquest of the empire by the Turks. The Free Cities of Europe generally—the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages—the Moors in Spain—and the Princes of Provence, or Southern France—all these at times, and even for long periods, gave protection to the persecuted Baptists; who were known alike by their original name of *Cathari*, THE PURE; and by the subsequent names of Paulicians, Paterines, and Poor Men of Lyons, down to the beginning of the twelfth century—as appears from the successive edicts issued against them.* At this point of time they were joined by some illustrious

* We do not quarrel with Neander for his lamentably distorted and contradictory account of the "Catharists," and some other denominations, of the Middle Ages. He was not satisfied with it himself. His candor would have set all right; but he wanted the real key to the problem.

reformers from the Church of Rome, such as PETER DE BRUIS, (A. D. 1104 to 1124,) HENRY and JOSEPH, his disciples, (A. D. 1116 to 1148,) and ARNOLD OF BRESCIA, A. D. 1135 to A. D. 1156,) with whom the present volume begins its "Memorials of Baptist Martyrs."

From the rapid review we have now taken of the history of Baptist Martyrs from the beginning, we gather some interesting conclusions :

1. That the Baptists have no difficulty whatever in tracing up their principles and their churches to the Apostolic age. It has been often said by our enemies, that we originated in the German city of Munster, in 1534. Lamentable must be the weakness or ignorance of such an assertion, come from whom it may. It were easy to cite eminent Pedobaptist historians, to refute this calumny—especially Limborch and Mosheim, of the last century. But we prefer to quote two historians of the present century, selected by the King of Holland to draw up a history of the "Origin of the Dutch Baptists," for the use of the government. Dr. Ypeig, professor of theology at the University of Groningen, and Dr. J. J. Dermont, chaplain to the king—both of the Dutch Reformed Church—in the authentic volume thus prepared, and published at Breda, in 1819, come to the following deliberate conclusions :

"The Mennonites are descended from the tolerably pure evangelical Waldenses, who were driven by persecution into various countries ; and who, during the latter part of the twelfth century, fled into Flanders, and into the provinces of Holland and Zealand, where they lived simple and exemplary lives—in the villages as farmers, in the towns by trades—free from the charge of any gross immoralities, and professing the most pure and simple principles, which they exemplified in a holy conversation. *They were therefore in existence long before the Reformed Church of the Netherlands.*" Again : "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses ; and who have long in the history of the Church, re-

ceived the honor of that origin. ON THIS ACCOUNT THE BAPTISTS MAY BE CONSIDERED AS THE ONLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY WHICH HAS STOOD SINCE THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES; AND AS A CHRISTIAN SOCIETY WHICH HAS PRESERVED PURE THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH ALL AGES. The perfectly correct external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination, tends to confirm the truth, disputed by the Romish Church, that the Reformation brought about in the sixteenth century, was in the highest degree necessary; and at the same time goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics, that their communion is the most ancient.*

Let it be remembered that the learned men who say this, and say it aloud in the ear of majesty, after diligent investigation, are not themselves Baptists. It is a confession of the rarest candor. "Their rock is not as our rock, our enemies themselves being judges."

But what it has cost the Baptists thus to keep their churches pure, through all ages, amidst abounding corruption, heresy, schism, tyranny and persecution, this book of Baptist Martyrs will in some measure show.

2. Baptist principles have always flourished wherever the ruling powers have allowed them toleration. Baptists, it is true, have often lighted up the darkness of history by the flames of their martyrs, and compelled the notice of Chronicles and of Councils, by the very vastness, variety, and intensity of their sufferings. Again and again, as in the primitive times, has the blood of the martyrs been the seed of the Church; but when a little breathing space has been given them in any quarter of the world, they have sprung up like the grass from the scythe of the mower; or, rather, as the oak which has bowed its lofty head beneath the axe, again renews its branches, its towering trunk, its verdure and its strength. Witness

* It is an interesting fact that as a consequence of this, the government of Holland offered to the Mennonite churches the support of the State. It was politely, but firmly declined, as inconsistent with their fundamental principles.—See Ward's Farewell Letters, 1821.

their rapid growth in the East, in the seventh century—in Italy and France in the twelfth—in all Europe in the sixteenth—under the English Commonwealth in the seventeenth—and in the United States from the period of the American Revolution.*

3. The Baptists have not only their own Martyrs, but it is clear that from the time of Christ down, they have furnished the purest, the most magnanimous, and the most numerous martyrs of all Christendom. This is true from the days of the Apostles, and throughout the Middle Ages. Hear what a Roman Catholic prelate, Cardinal Hosius, president of the Council of Trent, says on this subject, to the Protestants of the Reformation :

“If you behold their cheerfulness in suffering persecution, the Anabaptists run *before all* the heretics. If you have regard to the number, *it is likely that in multitude they would swarm above all others, if they were not grievously plagued, and cut off with the knife of persecution* : If you have an eye to the outward appearance of godliness, both the Lutherans and the Zuinglians must needs grant that they *far pass them* : If you will be moved by the boasting of the word of God, these be no less bold than Calvin to preach ; and their doctrine must stand aloft above all the glory of the world, *must stand invincible above all power*, because it is not their word, but the Word of the living God.”†

4. We see another fact, which gives a peculiar and glorious feature to our denomination. Much as the Baptists have suffered from others, *they have never retaliated*—never, when in power, pleaded for the principle of persecution, or put it in practice ; but have stood forth, among persecuting sects, solitary and alone, as the fearless champions and examples of liberty of conscience. This they have done, too, on settled Scriptural principles, peculiar to

* Those who think to do battle against the Baptists as a modern, reactionary, ephemeral sect, will find themselves greatly mistaken.

† Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty, p. 88.

their views of baptism ; and hence have pleaded for liberty of conscience to the fullest extent. Witness the periods of their power in Italy—in Armenia, Syria and Asia Minor—in Southern France—in the Mediæval Roman Republic—in Poland in the sixteenth century—in England, Ireland, and especially Rhode Island, in the seventeenth—in the United States at the formation of the American Constitution ; and since then in the new Constitutions of the States—in several of which States they were a clear majority as a denomination. No sect, whose origin dates back two centuries, can share with them this glory. The Quakers, the Moravians, and the Methodists, are of more recent origin. The principle of religious liberty—a distinguishing principle of the Baptists in all ages—we are however happy to add, is now universally adopted by other denominations in the United States—and is fast spreading over the world.

5. The Baptists—though for the most part of the poor of this world, rich in faith only, and unknown to fame, as were the primitive Christians—have yet, in almost all ages, had of their number men of the most eminent learning and ability, who died as martyrs to the faith. From the time of Novatian, indeed, it has been customary with their adversaries to call the whole body by the name of its most distinguished leader—as if they were only a new sect, of which he was the originator. Thus the *Cathari* were called Novatians—then Paulicians—then Petrobrusians, Henricians, Josephists—then Arnoldists—Waldenses—Lollards—Mennonites ; nor were they ever permitted to bear their present name of BAPTISTS, until after their legal toleration, in England, in 1688. Yet to them, as we have seen, belong all the inspired writers of the New Testament—the sources of our Christian literature—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, James, Jude, Peter, and Paul himself,

the accomplished pupil of Gamaliel. To them belong all the Christian writers of the second century, including Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and in the next age, Hippolytus, and even Origen himself. And from the time of the Pure Secession, in A. D. 251, they can produce names among the noblest. Novatian himself had no superior in his own time—as his remaining writings show. But most of their writings have perished. The same persecutions that robbed them of their churches, liberty, and lives, suppressed their schools, and their books—leaving them only that one Book from which they would never part—the foundation of their principles, the guide of their practice, and the support of their hope, amid the terrors of martyrdom—THE BIBLE. Churches supported by the State, with stereotyped creeds, canons, and forms, could afford to do without the Bible; but the Pure Churches, in their sublime dissent and protest, could not.

6. We learn that the Baptists have A GLORIOUS PAST, whose history is yet almost unwritten; and that, rising from the deep roots of the Past, and spreading with the spread of the Scriptures, and of spiritual religion, aided by historical investigation, and by universal liberty, they have in reserve A GLORIOUS FUTURE. All they want now, in every country on earth, is that same freedom which they have ever given, and rejoice to give, to ensure the ultimate triumph of their principles. As surely as many shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased—as surely as the light of the moon, according to the beautiful figure of the prophet, shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, even as the light of seven days—as sure as the time shall come that the saints shall possess the kingdom—and the spirits of the martyrs shall live again in their successors on earth, and reign with Christ for a

thousand years—so sure, judging from all the past, and all the present, is the final triumph of Baptist principles. Based on the book of God, in a fair field nothing can stand before them. Already they are winning from all others in the United States, in a steady stream of success*—they are reforming more thoroughly the Reformation in Europe—in Africa, and Asia, in the isles of the ocean, and indeed at every point where earnest piety is pressing on to the conversion of the world, they are gaining power—and the prospect now is, that they will soon be spread over the entire East, including India, Burmah, Siam, and China—nations comprising more than half the population of the globe. So, O Lord, let thy kingdom come!

7. But if these things be so, Baptists have a sacred duty to perform; first to themselves, and then to all Christendom. They must seek among themselves to revive THE MARTYR SPIRIT—“not the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” They must present their bodies, with their souls, their hearts and all their substance, a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable, which is their reasonable service. They must not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of their mind and practice in a more eminent degree. They must better estimate the worth of their own Scriptural principles, the glory of their past history,

* It is recorded by Luke, as an evidence of the triumph of Christian Truth in the days of the Apostles, that “the disciples multiplied greatly, and a great company of the *priests* were obedient to the faith.”

A competent writer has affirmed recently, that the number of *members* received into the Baptist churches, for some years past, from other denominations, exceeds 2000 *annually*; and that the number of *ministers* so received by change of conviction, is *equal to one for every week in the year*. This great movement is in principle the very reverse from that of Bishop Ives and the Puseyites. And it is in addition to about 50,000 converts yearly. See *Christian Review*, January, 1854.

and the grandeur of their position and destiny. They must examine, and cultivate themselves more perfectly, by the help of the Holy Spirit—"that they may know what is the hope of their calling, and what is the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints." They must more fully honor, love and pray for the Lord's people of every name; and study to do them good, to profit by all the grace that is in them, and seek to supply what is yet lacking in their knowledge, faith, or practice. They must more fully display that charity which suffereth long and is kind; which envieth not; which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly; which seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; which beareth, believeth, hopeth, endureth all things. This is the true spirit of Martyrdom—without which we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned, and it profiteth us nothing.

This was the spirit of the BAPTIST MARTYRS, whose memorials will be found in this book. No memorial of this kind has before appeared in this country, or even in England. Though confessedly far from complete—embracing no sufferers for Christ, but those who suffered unto death—going back only to the Middle Ages in time, and limited to Europe as its field, and on that limited theatre preferring the principle of *selection* to that of accumulation—it will be found to embrace a great variety of the most authentic and heart-touching, as well as pure, noble and triumphant examples of the principles of our faith and the power of the Gospel. It gives us names in which, for Christ's sake, Baptists may justly glory, and which the world itself "will not willingly let die." To specify no more—here is ARNOLD OF BRESCIA, the brightest name of Italy in the Middle Ages—JEROME OF PRAGUE, the most

accomplished man of his time—and HUBMEYER OF RATISBON, the friend of Erasmus, the fellow-laborer of the first Reformers, classed by the Romanists themselves with Luther, Zuingle, and Calvin, as one of the four great leaders of the Reformation. Inferior in rank and learning, but not in interest, is the wise and good HANS OF OVERDAM—the bright youthful JACQUES DOSIE of Leuwarden—the loving but faithful JERONIMUS SEGERSON of Antwerp—and the sturdy, outspoken, English yeoman, RICHARD WOODMAN of Sussex, whose mind seems as strong as the iron that he worked in his daily toil. Of the softer sex, nere is the gentle but heroic ELIZABETH OF LEUWARDEN—MARIA OF MONJOU, happier than a bride in the hour of her martyrdom—ANNE ASKEW, of the noblest blood of England, but still nobler by her Christian faith and fortitude—and ELIZABETH GAUNT, the never to be forgotten martyr to evangelical Christian Charity, whose name has been embalmed by Bishop Burnet.

Richard Baxter somewhere says, that he “could as soon die for Charity, as for any article of the Creed.” While he was *uttering* this just and beautiful sentiment, Elizabeth Gaunt was *exemplifying it in the flames*, at Tyburn. The picture of her martyrdom forms the appropriate frontispiece of this volume; which is also embellished by engravings of the drowning of Maria of Monjou, and of the examination of Anne Askew in the Tower of London, and of her suffering at the stake in Smithfield.

There are many noble names, of Baptist Martyrs, that we miss here; but we cannot have everything, in a single volume of the size of this. We doubt not this excellent book will be warmly welcomed by every genuine Baptist in the Union.

PHILADELPHIA, May 1, 1854.

PREFATORY NOTE.



THE contents of this volume have been principally drawn from the old works on martyrdom : such as, “FOXES *Acts and Monuments*,” and “BRAGHT’S *Dutch Martyrology*,” together with the more modern sources of CROSBY, IVIMEY, MANN, JONES, BENEDICT, UNDERHILL, TAYLOR, TONNA, PUDDICOMBE, etc., etc. The selections have been made to secure as much of interesting incident, evangelical truth, and enlightened opposition to error, as could be comprised in a moderate sized volume ; and the object kept constantly in view has been to stimulate to holy and energetic action the Christians, and especially the Baptists, of these United States.

It will be observed by the careful reader of this volume, that considerable pains have been taken to authenticate its statements, both general and denominational. We believe that no reasonable doubt can exist in reference to any of the principal facts here stated, or as to each and every one of these holy martyrs belonging to the Baptist body

Generally speaking, the evidence of this last fact is overwhelming. To a New Testament Baptist, it must afford no small gratification, and the highest ground of thanksgiving to God, that our scriptural principles have been so fully tested, and have come out pure from "the fiery trial."

To the Historical Essay which precedes the work itself, and which was written by the esteemed Editorial Secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society, the attention of the reader is earnestly requested. He will there find the enunciation of facts and principles which may well lead to serious reflection and persevering action.

The labor given to this volume will not have been lost, if, under the Divine blessing, the spiritual interests of individual readers, and the highest prosperity of our beloved country, are, in any degree, advanced by its instrumentality.

B.

Philadelphia, 1854.

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Flung to the heedless winds,
Or on the waters cast,
Their ashes shall be watched,
And gathered at the last :
And from that scattered dust,
Around us and abroad,
Shall spring a plenteous seed
Of witnesses for God.

Jesus hath now received
Their latest dying breath ;
Yet vain is Satan's boast
Of victory in their death.
Still, still, though dead, they speak,
And, triumph-tongued, proclaim
To many a wakening land
The one availing Name.

BAPTIST MARTYRS.



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

A CERTAIN class of men who have risen up within the last forty years, and whose direct object seems to be, if possible, to lead Christians back to Rome, have spoken lightly of the martyrs of past ages. Over such perversion of mind in such men, we can scarcely wonder, but must deeply grieve; for, as a recent writer on this subject has well said, "If ever men have won for their memories the meed of honest praise, it was those self-devoted and lion-hearted martyrs for the truth, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves, but stood their ground in the forefront of the battle, valiant for the truth even till they fell, and in falling conquered."

Manifold indications show us that both in this country and in Europe, a war of principles—a great moral contest between Protestantism, so called, and Popery, is at hand; and that the opposing parties are likely to engage in the conflict with great energy. We earnestly hope that the friends of truth will show a warm adherence to its simple and powerful principles, and that they will look to heaven for the strength and wisdom they need.

Among the means employed to animate the Christian warrior in the battle, and to impress the minds of surrounding spectators, the presentation of the examples of the "great cloud of witnesses" for the truth, who have sung the praises of God in the prison, calmly submitted to the agonies of the rack, or gone with cheerfulness to the stake for the glory of Christ, has always produced a mighty effect. It is true that science, yes, and false religion, also, have had their martyrs, who thus gave evidence of their sincerity; but did they ever compel the profligate persecutor to admit the truth, and to admire the spirit of ardent piety? Did they ever compel those who had till then been unbelievers in the Gospel, to seek the pardon of their sins, and bring them forward to be baptized in the room of the dead? Look at the results of the death of Stephen on its immediate spectators, and on the Church and the world ever since; and see how, in all ages, the blood of the martyrs has increased, purified, and elevated the body of Christ.

We cannot read the accounts of martyrs, to which the reader is now introduced, without a conviction that wherever religion flourishes in the soul of a man, there is the spirit of martyrdom, evincing itself in his temper and conduct. Self-denial, and readiness to bear the cross, will always be essential to a true Christian character. There may be martyrdom without the rack, the prison, or the stake; but the spirit cannot exist unless there be a readiness to endure these things, if need be. "I am ready," said one of our missionaries, at his or-

dination, "I am ready, if called, to die in the missionary field; unless I enter it I can have no peace; engaged in the labor, I can die in triumph." Such is the spirit which becomes those who are acknowledged by Jesus Christ as his brethren.

It cannot but afford high gratification to every devoted Baptist, that the body to which he belongs has in every age furnished most zealous adherents to the cause of Christ, and that multitudes have literally "glorified God, in the fires." Cardinal Hosius, one of the Pope's presidents at the Council of Trent, says, "if the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be surer than that of the Baptists; since there have been none for these twelve hundred years past that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully undergone, and even offered themselves to the most cruel sorts of punishments, than these people."

"Anabaptists," says old Bishop Latimer, afterwards himself a martyr, "were burned in different parts of the kingdom, and went to the stake with good integrity."

In reading the records of the martyrs as handed down to the present age, by writers of different persuasions, the Baptist Christian usually meets with some difficulty in recognizing his own brethren and sisters. On the one hand, some of the principles which peculiarly distinguished the old Baptists, such as the sovereignty of Christ in his

Church, the sufficiency of the Scriptures to guide men into all truth, the right of private judgment in all matters of religion, and the entire freedom of every man to act for himself, under his responsibility to God, have, in whole or in part, been embraced by some who were not immersed; and on the other, very many Baptists have died without their practical testimony to the purity of Christian ordinances being recorded. Good old "Father Foxe," in his "Actes and Monuments," conceals, where he can, the views of our fathers on their peculiarities; and when he cannot do this, he labors to extenuate and excuse what the good old man personally considered "the errors of the anabaptists." Still, however, the facts are sometimes developed, even by himself, and in other instances by contemporary writers; so that no small difficulty presents itself in making a selection from the great number of those who died not only for the Gospel, but also to keep in the Church "the ordinances as they were delivered."

It will be seen by the reader, as he proceeds in the perusal of this volume, that the spirit of martyrdom is distinguished by a supernatural principle, which the apostle Paul calls *faith*, and upon which he suspends the purity, the self-denial, and the sufferings of the illustrious patriarchs, the noble army of martyrs, the persecuted Church of God, from the beginning to the hour when he sat down to write to the Hebrew Christians. This principle does not spring from any known natural source, but is superior to human philosophy, per-

suasion, and conviction. It is the full and entire belief of God's own testimony, produced in the heart by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Hence, the spirit of Christian martyrdom rests on a supernatural support. God is present to give special help. Hence Latimer, who had long been bowed down by the infirmities of age, stood upright and firm at the stake; and hence the timid and delicate female has forgotten her feebleness, and shown, as the fire has burnt around her, indomitable courage and strength.

This spirit, too, is associated with a supernatural prospect. It embodies, and realizes, and appropriates the invisible things of an eternal world. It presents even the Deity himself present to the mind, who fills from his fullness all its faculties. Like Moses, the martyr endures "as seeing Him who is invisible;" and this makes the present state shrink before the soul into comparative insignificance. Such men have always been "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

How different from all this is the spirit of persecution. In all ages "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution;" but who can survey the monster and his triumphs without the profoundest horror and indignation? The offspring of Satan, the birth-place of persecution was hell. Vile in its own nature, and in its objects, it is cherished by those who delight to scatter arrows, firebrands, and death, wherever they go. Persecution preys only on the virtuous; it grasps after victims of no other kind; and, as

though tired of its own existence, it aims with one effort to devour them all, and thus like the anaconda, with one mighty meal, to finish its work, and procure its own death. It is driven from the dwellings of sincerity and truth, and is cherished only by hypocrisy and falsehood. It converts the world, as far as it prevails, into a moral aceldama; but it often defeats its own purposes by exhibiting its odious features and its execrable allies too publicly. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh" at the designs of this enemy; He holds it "in derision," and overrules its operations to purposes of his own glory.

Many who have filled the seat of government, and who have supposed that their subjects were bound to submit to their rule, however arbitrary and opposed to the liberty which is the birthright of every man, have made the religion of the cross itself a mere instrument of accomplishing their tyrannical purposes; thus forgetting their responsibility to God and man. They have linked the Church to the State, and have sought to make every will bow to their caprice, or determined to subdue the opposer by their frown.

It is a wise arrangement of Divine Providence that persecution is allowed to delight in *public* cruelty, and to rejoice in what it esteems to be the disgrace of its victims. A professor of the religion of Jesus could not, in the times of papal persecution, recant, as, under the influence of the dread of suffering, some did, without carrying the badge of it about his dress till his dying day. The

records of persecution describe to us those who abjured the faith of Christ, and who were condemned to bear a fagot during their lives. These persons were fastened to a stake by the neck with towels, and their hands held fast, while they were marked on the cheek with a hot iron, which was called *branding*; after which they were compelled to wear a fagot of sticks, indicating their near escape from burning, worked or painted on the left sleeve of their outer garment, and if at any time they laid it aside the law adjudged them to be burnt.* What must be the character of the religion which sanctions all this; and which lays claim to its reception by the whole world!

It cannot be otherwise than gratifying to my

* It may not be without its use to copy a list of the *expenses* of martyrdom, two or three centuries ago, in our fatherland. The thoughtful reader will not merely regard it as a *curiosity*, but will devoutly thank God that, whatever may be in the future, we have not the immediate prospect of the public money being spent in this manner in our own happy country.

When Strype wrote his "*Memoirs of Archbishop Cranmer*," in the year 1693, he found the book in which the expenses of the martyrs, during their residence in Oxford, were entered by the bailiffs of the city, was in existence; and it is probably still preserved among the manuscripts of that University. The sums paid for the burning of Archbishop Cranmer and his two fellow-sufferers, Ridley and Latimer, appear in the book as follows:—"For one hundred of wood fagots, 6s.; for one hundred and a half of furze fagots, 3s. 4d.; to the carriage of them, 8d.; to two laborers, 1s. 4d.; to three loads of wood fagots to burn Ridley and Latimer, 12s.; one load of furze fagots, 3s. 4d.; for carriage of these four loads, 2s.; a post, 1s. 4d.; for chains, 3s. 4d.; for staples, 6d.; for laborers, 4d." The above are exact transcripts from the bills by the person who had charge of the funeral piles.

readers, that these introductory remarks should close with the following lines, by the Earl of Surrey, who was called to suffer in the reign of the capricious tyrant, Henry VIII., and who wrote them in prospect of that solemn event, over which, however, he could happily triumph. We may call it

THE MARTYR'S HYMN.

My life's a shade, my days
 Apace to death decline ;
 My Lord is *Life*, he'll raise
 My dust again, e'en mine.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

My peaceful grave shall keep
 My bones till that sweet day
 I wake from my long sleep,
 And leave my bed of clay.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

My Lord—his angels shall
 Their golden trumpets sound,
 At whose most welcome call,
 My grave shall be unbound.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

I said, sometimes with tears,
 Ah me! I'm loth to die ;
 Lord, silence thou those fears ;
 My *Life's* with thee on high.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

What means my trembling heart
 To be thus shy of death ?
 My Life and I sha'n't part,
 Though I resign my breath.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

Then welcome, harmless grave ;
 By thee to heaven I'll go,
 My Lord—his death shall save
 Me from the flames below.
 Sweet truth to me,
 I shall arise,
 And with these eyes
 My Saviour see.

“A HISTORY of the Baptists should be understood in its objects and aims; and cleared, in the beginning, of misapprehension and perversion. It is not the history of a nationality, a race, an organization, but of people, *traced by their vital principles and gospel practices*. The unity to be exhibited and demonstrated was not brought about by force, by coercion of pains and penalties, by repressive and punitive Acts of Conformity; but by the recognition and adoption of a common authoritative and completely divine standard... the WORD OF GOD.”

Dr. J. L. M. Curry (1825-1903)

President of Howard College,

Professor of English & Philosophy at Richmond College,

Trustee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and

United States Ambassador to Spain

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