

ESSAYS

by William Cathcart

A collection of essays by William Cathcart, the Baptist historian and editor, addressing various topics in church history, Baptist distinctives, and Christian thought.

6 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 02-NOVATIANISTS
2. 03-DONATISTS
3. 04-ALBIGENSES
4. 05-Henricians
5. 06-Petrobrusians
6. 07-ANABAPTISTS

02-NOVATIANISTS

NOVATIANISTS Novatians, The.-Novatian, the distinguished founder of the community that bore his name, is known among Greek ecclesiastical writers as Novatus. He was not Novatus of Carthage, a presbyter of that city, who sorely vexed the imperious soul of Cyprian, and who came to Rome and united with Novatian in efforts to maintain gospel purity in the churches.

Novatian, before he professed conversion, was a philosopher of remarkable ability, culture, eloquence, and powers of persuasion; he was a natural leader of men. When attacked by a dangerous disease, from which death was apprehended, in accordance with the opinion then commonly held by Christians, it was judged that he should be baptized to make heaven certain, and, as his weakness rendered immersion impossible without risking his immediate death, he was subjected, on his couch, to a profuse application of water. We are not informed that Novatian desired this ceremony himself, without any persuasions from his alarmed friends. The writer was once sent for to see a dying lady, and, after praying with her, was earnestly pressed by a follower of Irish Romanism, the perverted faith of St. Patrick the Baptist, to regenerate her ;" he declined to exercise the powers of the Spirit of God and the functions of a Pedobaptist minister; had he yielded, the lady was in a condition in which she could not beheld responsible for the act. And it is not improbable that this was the situation of Novatian. He was spared by the providence of God for a mighty work in the churches, and when restored to health he became very active in advancing the interests of Christianity in Rome. At that period the church, in the capital of the world, as Eusebius records, had 46 presbyters, 14 deacons and subdeacons, 50 minor ecclesiastical officials, and widows and sick and indigent persons, numbering in all 1500, whose support had to be provided for. And partly to assist in bearing this burden, but chiefly through a lack of faith and of complete consecration to God, the door of the church was kept very wide for the admission of unconverted professors, and when these persons betrayed the Saviour by sacrificing to idols in times of persecution, their conduct was excused by their lax brethren; and the excommunication, necessarily pronounced upon them immediately after their apostasy, was speedily removed.

Cornelius, a Roman presbyter, with an eager eye to the Support to be gathered from restored apostates, strongly advocated their forgiveness by the church. Novatian very strenuously resisted it; and when a successor to Bishop Fabianus was to be elected, Cornelius was properly made a predecessor of a long line of coming popes, who loved gold more than anything in the Christian religion.

Novatian was condemned by Cornelius and by all his episcopal friends; and the bishop of Rome sent letters everywhere, bringing the most grievous charges against him, and giving the names and positions of the bishops who united with him in his efforts to crush the first great reformer.

Novatian had been made a presbyter by Fabianus against the custom of the church, for, as Cornelius says, in Eusebius,* " It was not lawful that one baptized in his sick-bed by aspersion, as he was, should be promoted to any order of the clergy. If, indeed, it be proper to say that one like him did receive baptism." But this only shows his extraordinary talents and influence.

After Cornelius became bishop Novatian was elevated to the same office by three Italian bishops, and at once founded the purer community, for whose advancement he labored with great success until martyrdom removed him from the presence of wicked church members in full ecclesiastical standing.

Among the charges brought by Cornelius against Novatian, a list of which can be found in Eusebius, was an accusation of cowardice for refusing to perform the duties of his ministerial office in a time of persecution.

Novatian set up a new community in defiance of Cornelius and of nearly all the Christian bishops on earth; and in this he showed unusual courage.

Opposition to the treachery, charged upon himself by Cornelius, was the chief instrument which he used to establish his pure church, and it is not in human nature to believe that any man could found a new community in Rome itself by denunciations of a cowardly crime of which he himself had given a conspicuous example. Besides, he left the world as a martyr.

It was customary in the time of Ambrose, when the minister distributed the Lord's Supper to the faithful, to say, "The body of Christ," and the recipient answered, "Amen." + Cornelius, in the same calumnious letter in Eusebius, states that Novatian, when he gave a portion of the Eucharist to a communicant, instead of permitting him to say "Amen," according to the usage no doubt then in existence, seized his hand in both of his hands, before he partook of the symbolic bread, and made him "swear by the body and blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that he would never desert him, nor turn to Cornelius." This story carries its own refutation; the idea that the founder of the purest Christian community then in existence should resort to such an infamous procedure is simply incredible.

Cornelius, in the same connection, makes slanderous statements about the extraordinary ambition of Novatian, which have come down to us through the "Ecclesiastical History" of Eusebius; and his vanity is frequently given as the motive that led to his assumption of the bishop's office, and to the reformation inaugurated by Novatian. The Novatians called themselves Kathari, or Puritans. The corner-stone of the denomination was purity of church membership. Novatian charged Cornelius and his followers with dishonoring the church of God, and destroying its divine character by admitting apostates into its membership. He maintained that those who had sacrificed to the idols to save their lives should never be permitted to come to the Lord's table again. This theory became popular with the saintly heroes and heroines, who suffered terribly at the hands of Christ's persecuting enemies, but whose lives were spared. And all true Christians felt a strong leaning towards the holy religion advocated and exhibited by Novatian and his followers. Socrates, ++ a candid and intelligent Greek historian, says, "Novatus (Novatian), a presbyter of the Romish Church, separated from it because Cornelius, the bishop, received into communion believers who had sacrificed (to idols) during the persecution which the emperor Decius had raised against the church. On being afterwards elevated to the episcopacy by such prelates as entertained similar sentiments, he wrote to all the churches, insisting that they should not admit to the sacred mysteries those who had sacrificed (to idols), but exhorting them to repentance, leave the pardon of their offense to God, who has the power to forgive all sin. . . . The exclusion of those who, after baptism, had committed any deadly sin from the mysteries appeared to some a cruel and merciless course; but others thought it just and necessary for the maintenance of discipline, and

the promotion of greater devotedness of life. In the midst of the agitation of this important question letters arrived from Cornelius the bishop promising indulgence to delinquents after baptism.

• . . Those who had pleasure in sin, encouraged by the license thus granted them, took occasion from it to revel in every species of criminality." The Novatians permanently excluded from their community all who were guilty of deadly sins and second marriages, as well as those who sacrificed to idols to save their lives; and they regarded the church universal as having lost the character of a church of Christ by receiving such persons into her membership. As a result of this conviction they baptized again all who came from the old church to them. Their baptism was immersion, the "pouring around" of Novatian on his sick-bed is the only transaction of that kind in their history now known; and as their leader suffered so much from the unscriptural performance, his followers had little encouragement to imitate such an unfortunate example. The general doctrines of the Novatians were in perfect harmony with those received by the church universal; they only differed from it on questions of discipline, and chiefly on the great subject of consecration to God.

It is creditable to the piety of the centuries during which the Novatians existed that great numbers of Christians adopted their sentiments and their fold; though hated, wickedly calumniated, and fiercely persecuted for a long time, they spread, and they found adherents not only in rural regions, but in great cities and in the palaces of the emperor. Speaking of the law of Constantine the Great by which heretics were forbidden to meet "in their own houses of prayer, in private houses, or in public places, but were compelled to enter into communion with the church universal," Sozomen says, "The Novatians alone, who had obtained good leaders, and who entertained the same opinions respecting the divinity as the Catholic Church, formed a large sect from the beginning, and were not decreased in point of numbers by this law. The emperor, I believe, related the rigor of the enactment in their favor... . . . Acesius, who was then the bishop of the Novatians in Constantinople, was much esteemed by the emperor on account of his virtuous life."* Novatian himself was a man of fervent piety; and his life after his conversion was above reproach, unless when accusations came from a calumniator whose charges were incapable of proof. He was the author of works on "The Passover," "Circumcision," "The Sabbath," "High-Priests,"

"The Trinity," and on other subjects. He had many distinguished men among his disciples. His community spread very widely, and enjoyed special prosperity in Phrygia; but declined rapidly in the fifth century. The Novatians, as a people, were an honor to Christianity, and their teachings and example exercised a powerful restraint upon the growing corruptions of the old church. The Novatians commenced their denominational life when the baptism of an unconscious babe was unknown outside of Africa; and there it had a limited, if not a doubtful, existence. Indeed, if a celebrated letter of Cyprian, about a council of bishops, said to have been held in Carthage half a dozen years after Novatian set up his banner of church purity, be a forgery, and the supposition is by no means an improbable one, unconscious infant baptism has no proof of its existence in the literature of the world. The infant rite, according to the letter of Cyprian just referred to, had Cyprian for its patron, and as he had shown the utmost hostility to Novatian, he and his followers would not be very eager to adopt a ceremony of which his letter, if genuine, shows that he was the special friend. These considerations, together with the holiness of life demanded by Novatian churches, have led many persons to regard them as Baptists. Of the truth of this opinion in the early history of this people there can be no doubt; and that the majority of their churches baptized

only instructed persons to the end of their history is in the highest degree probable.

- source: Cathcart's Baptist Encyclopedia

03-DONATISTS

DONATISTS In North Africa, during the fierce persecution of Dioclesian, many Christians courted a violent death. These persons, without the accusation, would confess to the possession of the Holy Scriptures, and on their refusal to surrender them, they were immediately imprisoned and frequently executed. While they were in confinement they were visited by throngs of disciples, who bestowed upon them valuable gifts and showed them the highest honor.

Mensurius, bishop of Carthage, disapproved of all voluntary martyrdoms, and took steps to hinder bloodshed. And if he had gone no farther in this direction he would have deserved the commendation of all good men. But by zealous Christians in North Africa he was regarded as unfriendly to compulsory martyrdom, and to the manifestations of tender regard shown to the victims of tyranny. And by some he was supposed to be capable of a gross deception to preserve his own life, or to secure the safety of his friends. When a church at Carthage was about to be searched for copies of the Bible, he had them concealed in a safe place, and the writings of heretics substituted for them. This removal was an act of Christian faithfulness, but the works which he put in the church in their stead were apparently intended to deceive the heathen officers. Mensurius seems to us to have been too prudent a man for a Christian bishop in the harsh times in which he lived. In his own day his conduct created a most unfavorable opinion of his religious courage and faithfulness among multitudes of the Saviour's servants in his country. Secundus, primate of Numidia, wrote to Mensurius, giving utterance to censures about his conduct, and glorifying the men who perished rather than surrender their Bibles. Caecilian was the arch-deacon of the bishop of Carthage, and was known to enjoy his confidence and share his opinions.

Mensurius, returning from a visit to Rome, became ill, and died in the year 311. Caecilian was appointed his successor, and immediately the whole opposition of the enemies of his predecessor was directed to him. In his own city a rich widow of great influence, and her numerous friends, assailed him; a synod seventy Numidian bishops excommunicated him for receiving ordination from a traitor (one who had delivered up the Bible to be burned to save his life); and another bishop was elected to take charge of the church of Carthage. The Donatist community was then launched upon the sea of its stormy life.

Bishop Donatus, after whom the new denomination was named, was a man of great eloquence, as unbending as Martin Luther, as fiery as the great Scotch Reformer, whose principles were dearer to him than life, and who was governed by unwearied energy. Under his guidance the Donatists spread all over the Roman dominions on the African coast, and for a time threatened the supremacy of the older Christian community. But persecution laid its heavy hand upon their personal liberty, their church property, and their lives. Again and again this old and crushing argument was applied to the Donatists, and still they survived for centuries. Their hardships secured the sympathy of numerous hand of armed marauders called Circumcelliones, men who suffered severely from the authorities sustained by the persecuting church, "free lance" warriors who cared nothing for religion, but had a wholesome hatred of tyrants. These men fought

desperately for the oppressed Donatists. Julian the Apostate took their side when he ascended the throne of the Caesars, and showed much interest in their welfare, as unbelievers in modern times have frequently shown sympathy with persecuted communities in Christian lands.

There were a few Donatist churches outside of Africa, but the denomination was almost confined at that continent. They suffered less from the Vandals than their former oppressors, but the power of these conquerors was very injurious to them; and the victorious Saracens destroyed the remaining churches of this grand old community. The Donatists were determined to have only godly members in their churches. In this particular they were immeasurably superior to the Church Universal (Catholic), even as represented by the great Augustine of Hippo. Their teachings of this question are in perfect harmony with our own. They regarded the Church Universal as having forfeited her Christian character by her inconsistencies and iniquities, and they refused to recognize her ordinances and her ministry. Hence they gave the triple immersion a second time to those who had received it in the great corrupt church. Their government was not episcopal in the modern sense. Mosheim is right in representing them as having at one time 400 bishops. The Roman population on the North African coast would not have required twenty diocesan bishops to care for this spiritual wants. Every town, in all probability, had its bishop, and if there were two or more congregations, these formed but one church, whose services were in charge of one minister and his assistants. These church leaders were largely under the control of the people to whom they ministered. The Donatists held boldly the doctrine that the church and the state were entirely distinct bodies.

Early in their denominational life, Constantine the Great, for the first time in earthly history, had united the church to the Roman government, and speedily the Donatists arose to denounce the union as unhallowed, and as forbidden by the highest authority in the Christian Church. No Baptist in modern times brands the accursed union between church and state with more appropriate condemnations than did his ancient Donatist brother. Their faith on this question is well expressed in their familiar saying, "What has the emperor to do with the church?" Soul liberty lived in their day.

It is extremely probable that they did not practice the baptism of unconscious babes,-- at least in the early part of their history. It is often urged that Augustine, their bitter enemy, would not fail to bring this charge against them if they had rejected his favorite rite. His works now extant do not directly bring such an accusation against them, and it is concluded that they followed his own usage. This argument would have great weight if it were proved that all the Catholics of Africa baptized unconscious babes. But there is no evidence of such universal observance. Outside of Africa, in the fourth century, the baptism of an unconscious babe was a rare occurrence. Though born in it of pious parents, Augustine himself was not baptized till he was thirty- three years of age. His words are bristling with weapons to defend infant baptism; they are the arsenal from which its modern defenders have procured their most effective arms, and if the custom had been universally accepted, he would have seen no cause to keep up such a warfare in its defense. The frequency with which Augustine treats of infant baptism is striking evidence that its observance in his day and country was often called in question, and that had he directly pointed out this defect in the observances of the Donatists he would have been quickly reminded that he had better remove the opposition to infant baptism from his own people before he assailed it among the Donatists. This fact would account for the supposed silence of Augustine on this question. The second canon of the Council of Carthage, where the principles of Augustine were supreme, "Declares an anathema

against such as deny that children ought to be baptized as soon as they are born." (Du. Pin. i. 635. Dublin.) If this curse is against the Donatist, it shows that they did not practice the infant rite; if it is against other Africans, it gives a good reason why Augustine should be cautious in bringing charges against the Donatists on this account. Augustine wrote a work "On Baptism, Against the Donatists," in which, speaking of infant baptism, he says, "And if any one seek divine authority in this matter, although, what the whole church holds, not as instituted by councils, but as a thing always observed, is rightly held to have been handed down by apostolical authority." (Et si quisquam in hac re auctoritatem divinam quaeret. -- Patrol. Lat., vol. xlii. p. 174, Migne Parisiis.) This book is expressly written against the views of baptism held by the Donatists; it was designed to correct their errors on that subject. And he clearly admits that some of them doubted the divine authority of infant baptism, and he proceeds to establish it by an argument from circumcision. Augustine was a powerful controversialist; to have charged the Donatists directly with heresy for rejecting infant baptism would have been an accusation against many in his own church, and he prudently assails his enemies on this point, as if only some of them regarded infant baptism as a mere human invention; and he boastfully and ignorantly, or falsely speaks of it as always observed by the whole church, while one of his own African councils pronounces a curse upon those who "denied that children ought to be baptized as soon as they are born."

*SOURCE CITED CATHCART'S BAPTIST ENCYCLOPEDIA

04-ALBIGENSES

ALBIGENSES Cathcart wrote: The Albigenses received this name from the town of Albi, in France. in and around which many of them lived. The Albigenses were called Cathari, Paterines, Publicans, Paulicians, Good Men, Bogomiles, and they were known by other names. They were not Waldenses. They were Paulicians, either directly from the East, or converted through the instrumentality of those who came from the earlier homes of that people. The Paulicians were summoned into existence by the Spirit of God about A.D. 660 Their founder was named Constantine. The reading of a New Testament, left him by a stranger, brought him to the Saviour. lie soon gathered a church, and hiis converts speedily collected othor8. Armenia was the scene of his labors. They were denounced as Manicheans, thoughthey justly denied the charge. They increased rapidly, and in process of time persecution scattered them. In the ninth century many of them were in Thrace, Bulgaria and Bosnia; and, later still, they became very numerous in these new fields, especially in Bosnia.* Indeed, such a host had they become that in 1238 Coloman, the brother of the king of Hungary entered Bosnia to destroy the heretics. Gregory IX. congratulated him upon his success, but lived to learn that the Bogomiles were still a multitude. A second crusade led to further butchery, but the blood of martyrs was still the seed of the church, and they continued a powerful body until the conquest of their country by the Turks, in 1463. There was direct communication between these Bogomiles and the Albigenses in France.

Matthew Paris++ tells us that the heretic Albigenses in the provinces of Bulgaria, Croatia, and Dalmatia elected Bartholomew as their pope, that Albigenses came to him from all quarters for information on doubtful matters, and that he had a vicar who was born in Carcassone, and who lived near Thoulouse. At an early period the Paulicians entered Italy and established powerful communities, especially in Milan. They spread over France. Germany, and other countries. In the eleventh century they were to be found in almost every quarter of Europe. St. Bernard, in the twelfth century, says of them, "If you interrogate them about their faith nothing can be more Christian. If you examine into their conversation nothing can be more blameless, and what they say they confirm by their deeds. As for what regards life and manners, they attack no one, they circumvent no one, they defraud no one."

Reinerius Saceho belonged to the Cathari (not the Waldenses, he was never a member of that community) for seventeen years. He was afterwards a Romish inquisitor, and he describes his old friends and the Waldenses, in 1254, in these words:

"Heretics are distinguished by their manners and their words, for they are sedate and modest in their manners. They have no pride in clothes, for they wear such as are neither costly nor mean. They do not carry on business in order to avoid falsehoods, oaths, and frauds, but only live by labor as workmen. Their teachers also are shoemakers and weavers. They do not multiply riches, but are content with what is necessary, and they are chaste, especially the Leonists. They are also temperate in meat and drink. They do not go to taverns, dances, or other vanities." The Leonists were the followers of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, the Waldenses, as distinguished from his own old

sect, the Albigenses. Reinerius then proceeds to charge these men who shun business to avoid falsehoods with hypocrisy. No body of men could receive a better character than St.

Bernard and the inquisitor give these enemies of the Church of Rome, and no community could be more wickedly abused by the same men than these identical heretics. For some centuries the Albigenses figured universally in history as externally the purest and best of men, and secretly as guilty of horrible crimes, such as the pagans charged upon the early

Christians.

Reinerius mentions several causes for the spread of heresy. His second is that all the men and women, small and great, day and night, do not cease to learn, and they are continually engaged in teaching what they have acquired themselves. His third cause for the existence and spread of heresy is the translation and circulation of the Old and New Testaments into the vulgar tongue. These they learned themselves and taught to others. Reinerius** was acquainted with a rustic layman who repeated the whole book of Job, and with many who knew perfectly the entire New Testament. He gives an account of many schools of the heretics, the existence of which he learned in the trials of the Inquisition. Assuredly these friends of light and of a Bible circulated everywhere were worthy of the curses and tortures of men like Reinerius and lordly bigots like St.

Bernard. In a council held at Thoulouse in 1229 the Scriptures in the language of the people were first prohibited. The Albigenses surviving the horrid massacre of the Pope's murderous crusaders were forbidden to have the "books of the Old or New Testament, unless a Psalter, a Breviary, and a Rosary, and they forbade the translation in the vulgar tongue." No doubt many of the members of the council supposed that the Breviary and Rosary were inspired as well as the Psalter.

Reinerius gives a catalogue of the doctrines of the Cathari, which corresponds with the list of heresies charged against them for two hundred years before he wrote by popes, bishops, and ecclesiastical gatherings, the substance of which has no claim upon our credulity, though some of the forms of expression may have been used by certain of these venerable worthies.

Reinerius+++ says that the Cathari had 16 churches, the church of the Albanenses, or of Sansano, of Contorezo, of Bagnolenses, or of Bagnolo, of Vincenza, or of the Marquisate, of Florence, of the Valley of Spoleto, of France, of Thoulouse, of Cahors, of Albi, of Slavonia, of the Latins at Constantinople, of the Greeks in the same city, of Philadelphia, of Bulgaria, and of Dugranicia. He says, "They all derive their origin from the two last." That is, they are all Paulicians, originally from Armenia.

He says that "the churches number 4000 Cathari, of both sexes, in all the world, but believers innumerable." By churches we are to understand communities of the Perfect devoted to ministerial and missionary labor. The Believers in the time of Reinerius were counted by millions.

Upon infant baptism the Albigenses had very decided opinions. A council*** held in Thoulouse in 1119, undoubtedly referring to them, condemns and expels from the church of God those who put on the appearance of religion and condemned the sacrament of the body and the blood of the Lord and the baptism of children. At a meeting of "archbishops, bishops, and other pious men" at Thoulouse, in 1176, the Albigenses were condemned on various pretexts. Roger De Hoveden, a learned Englishman, who commenced to write his "Annals" in 1189++++, gives a lengthy account

of this meeting. He says that Gilbert, bishop of Lyons, by command of the bishop of Albi and his assessors, condemned these persons as heretics; and the third reason, according to Hoveden, given by Gilbert for his sentence was that they would not save children by baptism. He also preserves a Letter of Peter, titular of St.

Chrysogonus, Cardinal, Priest, and Legate of the Apostolic See, written in 1178, in which, speaking of the Albigenses, he says. "Others stoutly maintained to their faces that they had heard from them that baptism was of no use to infants."

Collier**** gives the meaning of Hoveden correctly when he represents him as stating, in reference to the Albigenses, "These heretics refused to own infant baptism." Evervinus, in a letter to St. Bernard, speaking evidently of Albigenses, in Cologne, in 1147, and consequently before the conversion of Peter Waldo, says, "They do not believe infant baptism, alleging that place of the gospel, 'Whosoever shall believe and be baptized shall be saved.'" Eckbert, in 1160, in his work against the Cathari, written in thirteen discourses, says in the first, "They say that baptism profits nothing to children who are baptized, for they cannot seek baptism by themselves, because they can make no profession of faith." The Paulicians received their name because they were specially the disciples of the Apostle Paul. They were established as a denomination by a gift of the Scriptures to their founder, through which he received Christ, became a mighty teacher, and gathered not converts simply, but churches. At the great trial in Thoulouse in 1176 they (the Albigenses) would not accept anything as an authority but the New Testament. Throughout their wide-spread fields of toil from Armenia to Britain, and from one end of Europe to the other, and throughout the nine hundred years of their heroic sufferings and astonishing successes, they have always shown supreme regard for the Word of God. If these men, coming from the original cradle of our race, journeying through Thrace, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Italy, France, and Germany; and visiting even Britain, were not Baptists, they were very like them.

If all the wicked slanders about them were discarded it would most probably be found that some of them had little in common with us, but that the majority, while redundant and deficient in some things as measured by Baptist doctrines, were substantially on our platform. This position about the Paulicians of the East is ably defended by Dr.

L.P. Brockett in "the Bogomils."

*Evan's Bosnia, pp 36. 37, 42 ++Matthew Paris, at A.D. 1223 **Bibliotheca Patrum, tom 4 p. ii, Coll. 746 +++Du Pin's Eccles. Hist., ii. 456. Dublin.

***Du Pin, ii. 392.

++++Annals of Roger De Hoveden, i. 427, 480. London, 1853.

****Collier's Eccles. list., II. 358. London, 1840. source: Cathcart's Baptist Encyclopedia

05-Henricians

HENRICIANS Henry, a monk in the first half of the twelfth century, became a great preacher. He was endowed with extraordinary powers of persuasion, and with a glowing earnestness that swept away the greatest obstacles that mere human power could banish, and he had the grace of God in his heart.

He denounced prayers for the dead, the invocation of saints, the vices of the clergy, the superstitions of the church, and the licentiousness of the age, and he set an example of the sternest morality. He was a master-spirit in talents, and a heaven-aided hero, a John Knox, born in another clime, but nourished upon the same all-powerful grace. When he visited the city of Mans the inferior clergy became his followers, and the people gave him and his doctrine their hearts, and they refused to attend the consecrated mummeries of the popish churches, and mocked the higher clergy who clung to them. In fact, their lives were endangered by the triumph of Henry's doctrines. The rich and the poor gave him their confidence and their money, and when Hildebert, their bishop, returned, after an absence covering the entire period of Henry's visit, he was received with contempt and his blessing with ridicule. Henry's great arsenal was the Bible, and all opposition melted away before it.

He retired from Mans and went to Provence, and the same remarkable results attended his ministry; persons of all ranks received his blessed doctrines and forsook the foolish superstitions of Rome and the churches in which they occupied the most important positions. At and around Thoulouse his labors seem to have created the greatest indignation and alarm among the few faithful friends of Romanism, and Catholics in the most distant parts of France heard of his overwhelming influence and his triumphant heresy with great fear. In every direction for many miles around he preached Christ, and at last Pope Eugene III, sent a cardinal to overthrow the heretic and his errors. He wisely took within him, in 1147, the celebrated St. Bernard. This abbot had the earnestness and the temper of Richard Baxter, whom he resembled in some respects. He was a more eloquent man, and he was probably the most noted and popular ecclesiastic in Europe. He speaks significantly for the state of things which he found in Henry's field: "The churches (Catholic) are without people, the people without priests, the priests with due reverence, and, in short, Christians are without Christ; the churches were regarded as synagogues, the sanctuary of God was not held to be sacred, and the sacraments were not reckoned to be holy, festive days lost their solemnity, men died in their sins, souls were snatched away everywhere to the dread tribunal, alas! neither reconciled by repentance nor fortified by the communion. The life of Christ was closed to the little children of Christians, whilst the grace of baptism was refused, nor were they permitted to approach salvation, although the Saviour lovingly proclaims before them, and says, 'Suffer the little children to come to me'"

Elsewhere, St. Bernard, speaking of Henry and other heretics, says, "They mock us because we baptize infants, because we pray for the dead, because we seek the aid of {glorified} saints" That Henry had a great multitude of adherents is beyond a doubt, and that he was a Bible Christian is

absolutely certain, and that and his followers rejected infant baptism is the testimony of St. Bernard and of all other writers who have taken notice of the Henricians and their founders. We include to the opinion of Neander that Henry was not a Petrobrusian. We are satisfied that he and his disciples were independent witnesses for Jesus raised up by Baptists, and their founder perished in prison.

06-Petrobrusians

PETROBRUSIANS Peter de Bruys was the Catholic priest of an obscure parish in France, which he left, early in the twelfth century, when he became a preacher of the gospel. How he unlearned the gospel of the Seven Hills and was instructed in that of Calvary we cannot tell, but he was educated in both directions. Many Romanists, like Staupitz or Fenelon, have received the saving knowledge of Jesus and retained their connection with the papal church; but Peter abhorred popery.

He taught that baptism was of no advantage to infants, and that only believers should receive it, and he gave a new baptism to all his converts; he condemned the use of churches and altars, no doubt for the idolatry practised in them; he denied that the body and blood of Christ are to be found in the bread and wine of the Supper, and he taught that the elements on the Lord's table are but signs of Christ's flesh and blood; he asserted that the offerings, prayers, and good works of the living could not profit the dead, that their state was fixed for eternity the moment they left the earth; like the English Baptists of the seventeenth century, and like the Quakers of our day, he believed that it was wrong to sing the praises of God in worship; and he rejected the adoration of crosses, and destroyed them wherever he found them.

It is said that on a Good-Friday the Petrobrusians once gathered a great multitude of their brethren, who brought with them all the crosses they could find, and that they made a large fire of them, on which they cooked meat, and gave it to the vast assemblage. This is told as an illustration of their blasphemous profanity. Their crucifixes, and along with them probably the images of the saints, were the idols they had been taught to worship, and when their eyes were opened they destroyed them, just as the converted heathen will now destroy their false gods. Hezekiah did a good thing in destroying the serpent of brass, which in the wilderness had miraculous powers of healing, when the Israelites began to worship it as a god.

Peter's preaching was with great power; his words and his influence swept over great masses of men, bending their hearts and intellects before their resistless might. "In Provence," says Du Pin, "there was nothing else to be seen but Christians rebaptized, churches profaned or destroyed, altars pulled down, and crosses burned. The laws of the church were publicly violated, the priests beaten, abused, and forced to marry, and all the most sacred ceremonies of the church abolished."

Peter de Bruys commenced his ministry about 1125, and such was his success that in a few years in the places about the mouth of the Rhone, in the plain country about Thoulouse, and particularly in that city itself, and in many parts of "the province of Gascoigne" he led great throngs of men and women to Jesus, and overthrew the entire authority of popes, bishops, and priests. Had the life of this illustrious man been spared the Reformation probably would have occurred four hundred years earlier under Peter de Bruys instead of Martin Luther, and the Protestant nations of the earth would not only have had a deliverance from four centuries of priestly profligacy and widespread soul destruction, but they would have entered upon a godly life with a far more

Scriptural creed than grand old Luther, still in a considerable measure wedded to Romish sacramentalism, was fitted to give them.

Peter and his followers were decided Baptists, and like ourselves they gave a fresh baptism to all their converts. They reckoned that they were not believers when first immersed in the Catholic Church, and that as Scripture baptism required faith in its candidates, which they did not possess, they regarded them as wholly unbaptized; and for the same reason they repudiated the idea that they rebaptized them, confidently asserting that because of the lack of faith they had never been baptized.

Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, was born in 1093, and died in 1157.

He was distinguished by scholarship, acuteness of mind, and Biblical knowledge. He and St. Bernard were the two leading ecclesiastics of France. Peter would rebuke a pope if he deserved it without hesitation, and no other human being was above his authority. The abbot had assailed the Jews and the Saracens in two distinct works. And such was the extraordinary success of the Petrobrusians, and the great difficulty of refuting their arguments from the Scriptures, that Peter felt compelled to come forth and defend the deserted ecclesiastics and the church threatened with ruin. We shall quote somewhat freely from the abbot to show the doctrines of these grand old Baptists. At the beginning of his pamphlet he states the five heads of the heresy of the Petrobrusians. In the first he accuses them of "denying that little children under years of responsibility can be saved by the baptism of Christ; and that the faith of another (*alienam fidem*, the faith demanded from popish sponsors when a child was christened) could benefit those who were unable to exercise their own (faith); because, according to them, not another's faith, but personal faith, saves with baptism, the Lord saying, 'He who shall believe, and be baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.'" This is the abbot's first and heaviest charge against these ancient Baptists. This accusation means that the Petrobrusians refused to baptize children because they were destitute of faith. The charge is repeated frequently by the abbot of Cluny.

"The second capitulum says that temples or churches should not be built, and that those existing should be torn down; that sacred places for praying were unnecessary for Christians, since God when addressed in supplication heard equally those who in a warehouse and in a church deserved his attention, in a market-place and in a temple, before an altar or before a stable." By this we understand that the Petrobrusians did not believe in the sanctity of bricks and mortar, and probably thought that as Romish churches were nests of idols and scenes of blasphemous superstition, their destruction would be no crime.

"The third capitulum requires holy crosses to be broken and burned, because that frame, or instrument, on which Christ, so fiercely tortured, was so cruelly slain, is not worthy of adoration, or veneration, or of any supplication; but to avenge his torments and death, it should be branded with disgrace, hacked to pieces with the sword, and consumed in the flames." The Petrobrusians detested the worship of the crucifix, and prayers offered to it. and, like the Scotch Covenanters, they urged its destruction as a Christ-dishonoring idol, "The fourth capitulum denied not only the reality of the body and blood of the Lord, as offered daily and constantly in the sacrament (Eucharist) in the church; but judged that it was absolutely nothing, and should not be offered to God." In this opinion all Protestants concur.

"The fifth capitulum holds up to ridicule sacrifices, prayers, charitable gifts, and the other good works performed by the faithful living for the faithful departed." Peter then states that he had answered "these five heads," or heresies, "as God had enabled him." He might have added a sixth capitulum, that the Petrobrusians wanted Scripture for everything and not the sayings of the fathers. This is admitted in his discussion of their errors. The creed given by Peter to these Baptists is excellent as far as it goes. It is the faith of their brethren to-day. The abbot then proceeds to refute these imaginary heresies separately. And under the heading, "Answer to the Saying of the Heretics that Little Children should not be Baptized (*Responsio contra id quod dicunt haeretici parvulos non posse baptizari*) he commences his attack on the first capitulum. Peter assumes without evidence that the Petrobrusians believed that baptism was essential to salvation; and he takes up their declaration that faith was necessary to baptism, and that not the faith of another but the faith of the subject of baptism, and then he proceeds with great ingenuity to show how the faith of others "saved" persons, as he says, in the Saviour's day. Among the cases which he brings forward is that of the paralytic let down through the roof of the house to the Saviour who was inside, and Peter quotes the gospel narrative. "And when he (Jesus) saw their faith he said—Thy sins are forgiven."

Peter then says, "What do you say to these things? Behold, I relate this not from Augustine (the godfather of infant baptism, whose arguments have been its defensive weapons for ages, and were very useful to the abbot) but from the Evangel, which you say you trust most of all. At length either concede that some can be saved by the faith of others (*aliorum fide alios tandem posse salvari concedite*), or deny if you can that the cases I brought forward are from the Evangel." This and several similar instances of healing in the New Testament where the faith of another exercised an influence in securing healing, make the abbot jubilant over the Petrobrusians. But the paralyzed man had faith himself, as well as those who brought him to Jesus. This theory is probably borrowed entirely from Augustine. In his day the baptism of adults demanded faith continually, and when he put forth enormous efforts to change the subjects of baptism, he still insisted upon faith, the faith of sponsors for unconscious babes.

Hence he says, "A little child is benefited by their faith by whom 'he is brought to be consecrated' (in baptism) (*prodesse parvulo eorum fidem a quibus consecrandus offertur*)*(**Ausustini Opera Omnia*, i. 1304.); "a little child believes through another (the sponsor) because it sinned through another" (Adam) (*~parvulus] credit in altero quia peccavit in altero+*). Again, speaking of a little child, he says, "It has the needful sacrament of the Mediator, so that what could not as yet be done by its faith is performed by the faith of those 'who love it' (*necessarium habet Mediatoris sacramentum, ut quod per ejus fidem nondum potest, per eorum qui diligunt, fiat*++). Speaking of baptism, Augustine says, "

Mother-church loans them (little children) the feet of others that they may come (to it), the heart of others that they may believe, and the tongue of others that they may make confession" (*accommodat illis mater ecclesia aliorum pedes ut veniant, aliorum cur ut credant, aliorum linguam ut fateantur****). Augustine 'was in arms to compel all Christendom to adopt infant immersion, He was almost constantly declaring, "Without baptism little children can have no life in themselves" (*sine quo [baptismo] nee parvuli possunt habere vitam in semetipsis*||); and as Peter the Venerable is fighting a similar battle with the Petrobrusians, he stores his memory with Augustine's arguments, No doubt it was this that led him to say about the faith of those who carried the palsied

man to Juseus, "Behold, I relate this not from Augustine, but from the Evangel."

Another common Pedobaptist argument is presented Peter, the abbot, in these words, "The unbelieving husband is saved by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is saved by the believing husband." This he gives as a quotation from I Cor. vii., and commenting upon it, he says, "If the unbelieving wife is saved by the faith of the husband, and unbelieving husband is saved by the faith of the wife, why should not the child be saved by the faith of husband and wife together?" This is a very natural question. But unfortunately for the abbot. Paul does not speak of either husband or wife as being saved by the faith of the other. He represents the one as being SANCTIFIED by the other. And the sanctification he refers to after its work is done leaves its subject an unbeliever. It is time legal righteousness of their wedded relations and the legitimacy of their children of which the apostle is speaking. If indeed a Christian lady could give not only her own heart but the love of Christ and the heavenly inheritance to her unbelieving husband, and allow him still to remain in unbelief and sin, it would make a union with her an unheard-of attraction. And the same would be true of the believing husband. But Peter misquotes the Vulgate, the only copy of the Scriptures which he had. It has not his salvatur, but sanctificatus and sanctificata est. In ancient times, after the heresy sprang into existence that water baptism was necessary to salvation, it was believed that martyrdom, or a baptism in one's own blood, would supply the place of the saving immersion. Peter turns this to ingenious account. He says, "If the martyrs by a personal faith are saved without baptism (in water), why may not little children, as I have said, be saved by baptism without a personal faith?" Or we might add, Why may they not be saved like the martyrs without any baptism? Treating of the commission of the Saviour, the baptismal creed of the Petrobrusians, he says, "'He who believeth not shall be damned.' You think, forsooth, that little children are held by this chain, and because they are not able to believe, that baptism will profit them nothing. But it is not so; the sacred words themselves show this; they do not show it to the blind, but to those who see; they show it to the humble, not to the haughty. 'Go,' says the Lord, 'into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned.' These words terrify the rebellious; they do not condemn the innocent, they strike iniquity; they do not strike irresponsible infancy, they destroy despisers of grace; they do not condemn the simplicity of nature (innocent children) - . . . Restrain, therefore, the excessive severity which you assume, and do not aim to appear more just than him, all whose ways are mercy and truth, nor shut out little children from the kingdom of heaven (by refusing to baptize them), in reference to whom he has said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' " Peter's interpretation of the commission is correct; it does not condemn any who cannot believe. But his inference from it that infants should be baptized is childishness for the imaginary advantage of infants. All infants are saved 'without baptism, as the Petrobrusians believed. The commission has only to do with believers and their baptism, and the penalty of unbelief when persons have heard the gospel in years when faith is possible. Peter proceeds to take up the old argument which Augustine uses, and which has such a modern and familiar sound: "For thus afterwards Christ the Lord placed holy baptism in his church, the sacrament of the New Testament for the circumcision of the flesh." (Sic etiam postquam Dominus Christus in ecclesia sua sacramentum Novi Testamenti pro circumcisione carnis sanctum baptismum dedit. Augustini Opera Omnia, ii. 1087. Migne, Parisiis 1842.) And he says, "For it is very disgraceful and impious that we should refuse that to the little children of Christians which we grant to the little children of Jews, . . . for neither does time law prevail over the gospel nor Moses

over Christ the little children of the Hebrews were circumcised by divine command on the eighth day, and purged from original sin. Where, then, was the faith of the boys? What was their understanding of the sacrament which they received? What was their knowledge of divine things? Where are you who condemn Christian little children? The little children of Jews are saved by the sacrament of circumcision, and shall not the little children of Christians be saved by the sacrament of baptism? The Jew believes, and his son is cleansed from sin; the Christian believes, and shall not his child be freed from similar guilt? There is no faith in the little children of Christians, but neither is there any faith in the little children of Jews, yet they are saved by the faith of another when circumcision is received, and these (little children) are saved by the faith of another (the sponsors) when baptism is received."* We have made these quotations to show how vigorously the Petrobrusians denounced baptism on the "faith of another" and insisted on personal faith. Much more might be introduced from the celebrated assault of the abbot of Cluny, but from what has been placed before the reader from Peter the Venerable, it is clear that the Petrobrusians were very decided Bible Baptists, Baptists ready for anything on earth except a renunciation of their Scriptural principles. The other four charges of Peter are quite as favorable to the general orthodoxy of these ancient brethren. Their immense strength to resist the church and make converts is seen in the extraordinary pains Peter takes to arm himself with all the weapons of Augustine and with such as he had made himself, and in the extremely skillful use which he makes of them. It is refreshing to read a treatise written seven hundred and thirty-six years ago against a powerful body of Baptists by a very able theologian. Augustine directed the most subtle argument against the men who held Baptist principles in his day; but our people, when crushed, have only been overcome for a time, and then received fresh life again; and beyond a doubt our doctrines will finally seize the whole race and bless all nations.

* Patri. Lat., clxxxix. pp. 722, 729, 752, 754, 755, 757, 758.

Migne, Paris, 1854. source: Cathcart's Baptist Encyclopedia

07-ANABAPTISTS

ANABAPTISTS The name "Anabaptist" was originally a reproachful epithet applied to those Christians in the time of the Reformation who, from rigid adherence to the Scriptures as the infallible and all sufficient standard of faith and practice, and from the evident incompatibility of infant baptism with regenerate church membership, rejected infant baptism and inaugurated churches of their own on the basis of believers' baptism.

While reproached by their enemies with rebaptizing those that had been already baptized in the established churches, they maintained that the baptism of believers, such as was administered by themselves, was the only Christian baptism, the baptism of infants being unworthy of the name.

Anabaptists, The German and Swiss.-The Anabaptist Reformation was nothing more than a consistent carrying out of the principles at first laid down by the Reformers, Luther and Zwingli, who both proposed, at the outset, to make the Bible the only standard of faith and practice. Many men of great religious earnestness, filled with this idea, could not bear to see the godly and the ungodly living together in the church, the latter as well as the former partaking of the Lord's Supper. The necessity of a separation of Christians from the ungodly was, therefore, the most fundamental thing with the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, as it is with Baptists today. If only the regenerate are to be members of this body, it follows, necessarily, that those baptized in unconscious infancy, or later in life without faith, are not truly baptized. They understood the Scripture to make faith a prerequisite to baptism; and they found in Scripture no precept nor example for infant baptism. They rejected infant baptism as a matter of course and baptized anew all that came to them.

Hence the name of reproach-" Anabaptist." Luther was as uncompromising as Baptists in making personal faith prerequisite to valid baptism. He reproached the Waldenses for baptizing infants, and yet denying that such infants have faith, thus taking the name of the Lord in vain. Not baptism, Luther held, but personal faith, justifies. If the infant has not personal faith, parents lie when they say for it "I believe." But Luther maintained that through the prayers of the church the infant does have faith, and he defied his adversaries to prove the contrary. This was more than the average man could believe. Hence he would be likely to accept the principle and to reject the application. Luther attached great importance to baptism; Zwingli very little. Hubmaier and Grebel both asserted that, in private conversation with them, Zwingli had expressed himself against infant baptism. His earlier writings show that for a time he doubted the scripturalness of infant baptism, and preferred to postpone baptism until the subject should be able to profess his faith. We have indisputable evidence that almost every other leader in the Reformation, Melancthon, (Ecolampadius, Capito, etc., had a struggle over the question of baptism.

It seems equally certain that they were deterred from rejecting infant baptism by the manifest consequences of the Baptist position. It appeared to them impossible that any movement should succeed which should lose the support of the civil powers, and should withdraw the true Christians from the mass of the people. Endless divisions, the triumph of the papists, and the entire

overthrow of the Reformation, seemed to them inevitable. Hence their defense of infant baptism, and their zeal in the suppression of the Anabaptists. Those that rejected infant baptism believed that Zwingli thought as they did, but held back from unworthy motives. We may divide the Anabaptists into three classes: (1) The fanatical Anabaptists. (2) The Baptist Anabaptists. (3) The mystical Anabaptists. Great injustice has been done to many that fall under the name Anabaptist by failing to make this distinction. Was a certain party fanatical? The stigma is attached to all. Were a few mystics Anabaptists? All classes are blamed for it.

Anabaptists, The Fanatical,-These were for the most part a result of Luther's earlier writings. It is remarkable that fanatical developments occurred in connection with Lutheranism, and not in connection with

Zwinglianism.

Thomas Munzer and the Zwickau Prophets.- Thomas Munzer was never really an Anabaptist. Though he rejected infant baptism in theory, he held to it in practice, and never submitted to rebaptism himself nor re-baptized others. Yet he is usually regarded as the forerunner of the movement, and he certainly was influential in that direction. Having studied previously at Halle, he came to Wittenberg, where he came under Luther's influence, and where he received his Doctor's degree. Like Luther, Munzer was a great reader of the German Mystics, and when Luther came forward as a Reformer, Munzer became one of his most decided and faithful supporters. On Luther's recommendation he came to Zwickau in 1520 as parish priest. Here he entered into controversy with the Erasmic rationalistic Erasmus. The common people, especially the weavers, took sides with Munzer. Chief among these was Nicholas Storch, a Silesian, probably a Waldensian. Munzer was naturally inclined to fanaticism, and this controversy, together with the zealous support he received from the common people, did much to bring it out. He regarded Luther's movement as a half-way affair, and demanded the establishment of a pure church. He denounced Luther as an incapable man, who allowed the people to continue in their old sins, taught them the uselessness of works, and preached a dead faith more contradictory to the gospel than the teachings of the papists. While he held to the inspiration of the Scriptures, Munzer maintained that the letter of Scripture is of no value without the enlightenment of the Spirit, and that to believers God communicates truth directly alike in connection with and apart from the Scriptures. The excitement among the common people became intense, and Storch and others began to prophesy, to demand the abolition of all papal forms, and objects, and to speak against infant baptism. Munzer had gone to Bohemia to preach in 1521. Here he published an enthusiastic address to the people in German, Bohemian, and Latin, denouncing the priests, and declaring that a new era was at hand, and that if the people should not accept the gospel they would fall a prey to the Turks. Meanwhile, Storch's party attempted to carry out their ideas by force, and proclaimed that they had a mission to establish the kingdom of Christ on earth. They were suppressed by the authorities, and some of them thrown into prison; but Storch, Stubner, and Cellarius escaped and fled to Wittenberg. Stubner, a former student of the university, was entertained by Melancthon, who for a time was profoundly impressed by the prophets. Carlstadt especially was brought under their influence. Storch traveled widely in Germany and Silesia, disseminating his views mostly among the peasants. He seems to have been a man of deep piety, great knowledge of Scripture, and uncommon zeal and activity in propagating his views. In Silesia, he is said to have labored for some time in connection with Lutheranism, which had just been planted there, withholding his

peculiar views until he had gained a sufficient influence to preach them effectively. Then he brought large numbers to his views. Here also the attempt to "set up the kingdom of God on earth" was accompanied with tumult, and Storch was driven from Glogau.

Driven from place to place, he established Anabaptist communities in various places, in the villages, and among the peasants. From Silesia Storch went to Bavaria, where he fell sick and died. But he left behind him many disciples, and two strong men who became leaders: Jacob Hutter and Gabriel Scherding. From Silesia and Bavaria many Anabaptists fled into Moravia and Poland, where they became very numerous, and although they were afterwards persecuted severely they continued to exist for a long time. The followers of Storch practiced in many instances community of goods, and under persecution manifested some fanaticism. But we do Storch some injustice in classing him among the fanatics. Inasmuch, however, as he, was closely connected with Munzer at the beginning, and inasmuch as our information about him is not definite, we class him here with the expression of a probability that he repudiated much of Munzer's proceedings, and was in most respects a true preacher of the gospel. In 1523, Munzer became pastor at Alstedt. Here he married a nun, set aside the Latin -Liturgy and prepared a German one. In this he retained infant baptism. About the beginning of 1524 he published two tracts against Luther's doctrines with regard to faith and baptism. He had become convinced of the unscripturalness of infant baptism, yet continued to administer it, telling the people that true baptism was baptism of the Spirit. Munzer's ministry in Alstedt was brought to a close by the iconoclastic zeal of his followers. His preaching all along was of a democratical tendency, for he longed to see all men free and in the enjoyment of their rights. During this year he went to Switzerland, where he attempted to persuade (Ecolampadius and others of the right of the people to revolt against oppression. Here also he probably met the men who soon became leaders of the Swiss Anabaptists: Grebel, Manz, Hubmaier, etc. His main object in this tour seems to have been to secure co-operation in the impending struggle for liberty. Returning to Muhlhausen he became chief pastor and member of the Council. The whole region was soon under his influence. Luther visited the principal towns and attempted to dissuade the people from revolution. He also attempted to induce the rulers to accord to the peasants their rights. But in neither respect did he succeed. When the peasants revolted, Luther, although he knew that they had cause for dissatisfaction, turned against them and counseled the most unmerciful proceedings. Munzer showed no military capacity. The peasants had no military discipline, and were deceived by Munzer into reliance upon miraculous divine assistance. The result was that they were massacred in large numbers. Munzer was taken prisoner and afterwards beheaded.

Melchior Hoffman, born in Sweden, accepted Luther's doctrine about 1523, preached with great zeal in Denmark and Sweden, laboring with his hands for his support. In the same year he came under the influence of Storch and Munzer. Like these, he believed that the last day was at hand, and with great earnestness warned men to turn from their sins. His interpretation of Scripture, especially the prophetic parts, which he freely applied to his own time, and his constant effort to arouse men to flee from the wrath to come, led to his being hunted from place to place by Lutherans as well as by papists. In 1526, King Frederick of Denmark came to his aid and gave him a comfortable stipend and freedom to preach the gospel throughout Holstein.

Here Hoffman remained about two years, and might have remained longer had he not declared in favor of the Carlstadt-Zwinglian view of the Lord's Supper. This led to controversy, which caused

his expulsion and the confiscation of his goods. In company with Carlstadt he took refuge in Switzerland, and in 1529 went to Strassburg. Here he was joyfully received by the Zwinglians, but his preaching soon disgusted them, the difficulty here, as elsewhere, being that he claimed a special inspiration of God to interpret Scripture, and did this in a manner that tended to produce an unwholesome popular excitement. Hoffman now came to see that there was a wide breach between him and the other evangelical preachers. Their apprehension of Scripture, he thought, was an apprehension of the letter, his, of the spirit. Their religion was of the understanding, his, of the heart. Their religion admitted of pride and pomp, his, only of humility. The Anabaptists had by this time become numerous in Southern Germany. When Hoffman came to know them it is not strange that he should have been led to unite with them. In 1530 he declared his acceptance of their views on baptism, justification, free-will, church discipline, etc.; and as most of the Anabaptist leaders had either suffered martyrdom or died of the pestilence, Hoffman became a leader among them, and led many to his own fanatical and false views. Under Hoffman's influence the opinions of the Anabaptists, which had been in great part sound and biblical, underwent many changes. Hoffman believed that Christ did not receive his body from the virgin. This view was perpetuated by the Mennonites (a sort of Manichean view). His Millenarian views also became common among the Anabaptists. Through him the Anabaptist movement spread over all the Netherlands, and he came to be regarded as a great prophet. At Embden, in Friesland, the Anabaptists became so strong that they were able to baptize openly in the churches and on the streets. The most influential leader in the Netherlands (after Hoffman) was Matthiesen. In 1532 Hoffman was thrown into prison in Strassburg. Here he became more and more fanatical. Several men and women began to have visions and to interpret them with reference to current events. Hoffman they called Elias ; Schwenkfeldt was Enoch, etc. The enthusiasm spread, and the Anabaptist movement made rapid conquests. Persecution was probably the cause, and certainly a means of promoting the fanaticism. Hoffman died in prison, January, 1 1543, after more than ten years confinement. The Munster Uproar.-The episode in the history of the Reformation that did most to make the Anabaptists abominable in the eyes of the world, and from the effects of which Baptists long suffered in England and America, and even now suffer in Germany, was the Munster kingdom.

Doubtless the preaching of Hoffman, and still more that of his followers, had something to do with this event. Yet the idea that this preaching constitutes the chief factor is utterly unfounded. In 1524-25, Munster shared in the communistic movement (Peasants' War), but the magistrates and clergy had been strong enough to crush out the communism and Lutheranism together. After this the Reformation gained scarcely any visible ground there until 1529. About this time, Bernard Rothmann, an educated and eloquent young man, as chaplain in the collegiate church at St. Mauritz, near Munster, began to preach Protestant sermons. Despite the determined opposition of magistrates and clergy, the Munster people forsook the parish churches and flocked to St. Mauritz. In 1533 the Protestants obtained in Munster the right to the free exercise of their religion, and six parish churches came into their hands. Soon they obtained the supremacy in the Council, and began to carry out their principles of reform. The bishop and Romish clergy were driven away, and an army was equipped for the protection of Lutheranism. Thousands of insurrectionary spirits assembled from the surrounding regions, and among them many of the Hoffmanite Anabaptists. It was natural that, when these latter saw the papal party crushed, they should have supposed that the kingdom of Christ was about to be set up at Munster. In 1532, Rothmann, the recognized leader of the Lutheran party at Munster, became an Anabaptist. As a Lutheran, Rothmann is said

to have been dissolute. When he became an Anabaptist he adopted an almost ascetical mode of life. He exhorted the people to the practice of charity and humility, and warned them against yielding to the senses and passions. He also declared that the millennium had come, and that the end of the world would come a thousand years later. The Anabaptists gained the ascendancy just as the Lutherans had done before them. Once in full power, their fanaticalism increased until a king was set up, polygamy was introduced in accordance with pretended revelations of the Spirit, and many other abominations were practiced. After a few months the Munster kingdom was overthrown and the leaders executed. This affair has commonly been looked upon as a natural culmination of Anabaptism. The fact is, that Lutheranism was responsible for it far more than Anabaptism, and that the rigor with which evangelical Christianity was suppressed in Munster until 1531 was the most potent cause of all. The Baptist Anabaptists--While none of the Anabaptists were free from what we regard as errors, the great body of the Swiss Anabaptists made a very close approach to our position and if we take into consideration the circumstances under which they were placed, we shall not be inclined to judge them harshly in the things wherein they seem to have gone astray.

Fundamentally they were Baptists, but it required time for them to reach a complete development. Roubli, when expelled from Basle, came to Wyticon, near Zurich, and under his influence the parishioners almost all refused to have their children baptized, as early as 1524. Roubli did not yet insist on rebaptism, but simply set forth the unscripturalness of infant baptism. In 1524, Grebel, Manz, and others began to manifest their dissatisfaction with the state of ecclesiastical affairs at Zurich. They pressed upon Zwingli the necessity of a further reformation of the churches, and reproved him for tardiness and coldness in the matter.

Zwingli urged that the unregenerate had been retained in the churches, on the ground that "he that is not against us is for us;" and that in the parable it is commanded to let the tares grow with the wheat. They objected also to the dependence of religion on the civil magistracy. They were answered that the magistracy, while not free from human elements, was not merely not opposed to the Word of God, but gave protection to the preaching of the same. They soon began to accuse Zwingli of sacrificing willfully the truth in order to maintain the favor of the civil rulers.

They now began to absent themselves from the churches, to hold secret meetings, in which they discussed freely the desirableness of setting up pure churches. During this year the writings of Carlstadt and Munzer became known to them, and they instituted a correspondence with these men.

How far the Zurich Anabaptists were influenced by Munzer it is not possible to ascertain. It is certain that they read his writings against Luther and admired them, before September, 1524. It is equally certain that they were not first led to their views of thorough reform by these writings, but were only strengthened and encouraged thereby in their already progressing work. The letter of Grebel, Manz, and others to Munzer, Sept. 5, 1524, shows that they had already advanced far beyond Munzer in their true views of reform, and that they felt themselves competent to pronounce judgment upon Munzer's inconsistencies and upon his revolutionary utterances. They expostulate with him for having translated the mass instead of abolishing it. They claim that there is no precept or example in the New Testament for the chanting of church services. They insist that what is not expressly taught by word or example is the same as if it were forbidden. No ceremonies are

allowable in connection with the Lord's Supper, except the reading of the Scriptures bearing upon this ordinance. Common bread and common wine, without any idolatrous ceremonies, are to be employed in the Supper. The ordinance is declared to be an act of communion, expressive of the fact that communicants are truly one body. Inasmuch as the ordinance is a communion, no one is to partake of it alone on a sickbed. It should not be celebrated in temples, on account of superstitious associations. It should be celebrated frequently.

They exhort Munzer to abandon all non-scriptural usages, insisting that it is better that a few should believe and act in accordance with the Word of God than that many should believe in a doctrine mingled with falsehood.

They are pleased with his theoretical rejection of infant baptism, but grieved that he should continue to practice what he has shown to be unwarranted. Moreover, they have heard that he has been preaching against the magistracy, and maintaining the right of Christians to resist abuses with the sword. They set forth their conviction that neither are we to protect the gospel nor ourselves with the sword. Thus the Swiss Anabaptists were from the outset free from fanaticism, and they appear even in 1524 not as disciples, but as teachers of Munzer. The opposition to the established church had by this time become so formidable, that the Council appointed a public disputation for Jan. 17, 1525; but there was no intention on the part of the Council or of Zwingli to decide the matter fairly in accordance with the weight of the arguments, and the decision of the Council was, therefore, against the Anabaptists; and a mandate was at once issued requiring the baptism within eight days of every unbaptized child, on pain of the banishment of the responsible parties. This action was soon followed by a prohibition of the assemblies of the radicals.

Grebel and Manz were exhorted to leave off their disputing against infant baptism and in favor of regenerate church membership. In order to insure quiet, Roubli, Hatzer, and others, foreigners, were warned to leave the canton within eight days. This only led to greater boldness on the part of the Anabaptists, and soon George Blaurock, having first been baptized by Grebel, baptized a number of others. From this time the cause of the Anabaptists, notwithstanding the severe persecution to which they were subjected, made rapid progress. The breaking out of the Peasant's War in 1525 tended to increase the apprehensions of the Swiss authorities, and the rigor towards Anabaptists now became greater. Many, both men and women, were thrown into prison, and released only on the payment of heavy fines and the promise to desist from their heresy, or, in some cases, to leave the canton. The penalty of returning from banishment was drowning.

Grebel, Manz, Hubmaier, and Blaurock were imprisoned and banished. Manz was finally drowned. Though continually harassed, these noble witnesses for Christ were very active, traveling from place to place, preaching at night in private houses to the people, who were anxious to hear. Some preachers baptized hundreds, if not thousands, of persons. From Zurich they spread throughout Switzerland, Southern Germany, the Netherlands,

Moravia, etc.

Doctrines of the Swiss Anabaptists.-Although most of the leaders held some views peculiar to themselves, they may be said to have been agreed on the following points, as exhibited in the Confession of 1527, which also forms the basis of Zwingli's "Refutation" of 1527. (1) Baptism of believers. The form of baptism was not commonly discussed, the chief object was to secure

believing subjects.) (2) Discipline and exclusion of unworthy members. (3) Communion of baptized believers. (4) Separation from the impure churches and the world. This involved a refusal to have any social intercourse with evil-doers, to attend church services with unbelievers and those in error, to enter into marriage relations with them, etc. This absolute separatism gave them as much trouble, perhaps, as any other single doctrine. (5) They condemned the support of pastors by taxation of the people. The pastors, when they required support, were rather to be supported by voluntary offerings of the members. (6) As to magistracy, they maintained that true Christians, as being entirely subject to the laws of Christ, have no need of magistracy. Yet they did not deny that magistracy is necessary in the ungodly world; neither did they refuse obedience to magistracy in whatever did not come athwart their religious convictions. (7) They rejected oaths on the ground of Christ's command, "Swear not at all." They distinguished, however, between swearing as a promise with an oath to do or be something in the future, and testifying with regard to things past or present. The latter they did not condemn. The Mystical and Speculative Anabaptists.- Here may be classed a large number of able and learned men, some who allied themselves with the Anabaptists and were active in evangelical work, as Denk and Haetzer; others who contented themselves with the theoretical rejection of infant baptism, but who either cared so little for ordinances in general as to be unwilling to make rejection of infant baptism a prominent feature of their creed, as Schwenkfeldt, Sebastian, Frank, etc., or else were so occupied with graver doctrinal controversies that their Anabaptist views attracted comparatively little attention, as Michael Servetus, Faustus Socinus, etc.

Almost all the Antitrinitarians were rejecters of infant baptism, and several who diverged very widely from accepted views with regard to the person of Christ were especially noted as Anabaptists. With many the unspeakable love and mercy of God came to be a favorite theme. Such being the case, the propitiatory character of Christ's death came to be viewed by some as unnecessary and contrary to God's character. There being thus no need of an infinite sacrifice, many came to deny the absolute eternity of the Son and his absolute equality with the Father. On the other hand, it was perfectly natural that those who went so far as to call in question the great doctrinal formulae should call in question such practices as infant baptism, for which there is no New Testament authority whatever. We are to make a clear distinction between men who were led into error by excessive Mysticism, as Denk, Haetzer, etc., and those who were professed rationalists as Laelius and Faustus Socinus.. (See Denk and Haetzer.) Anabaptists, The Dutch.-We give separate consideration to the early Dutch Anabaptists, on account of their relation to the Mennonites, who still constitute an important party. We shall have space only for the following remarks. 1. A considerable number of moderate Swiss Anabaptists when persecuted at home took refuge in the Netherlands and made many converts before the time of Hoffman and Matthiesen. 2. Most of these were absorbed by the much more vigorous movement in which Hoffman's influence preponderated (1529-34). 3. A small number of Dutch Anabaptists maintained their moderation even in the time of the Munster uproar. 4. A still larger number were restored to their senses after the suppression of the Munster kingdom. 5. Menno Simon, a Roman Catholic priest, was led through a profound religious experience, gradually and almost independently of the influence to the rejection of infant baptism and the restoration of believer's baptism. After the Munster uproar, the better element of the Anabaptists in the Netherlands repudiated all connection with the Munster men, and with Menno Simon as their leader (1536 onward) soon became an exceedingly strong party. They suffered persecution under the Inquisition, and thousands died at

the stake, but they finally secured toleration, and have maintained themselves to the present day. Their doctrines are, in the main, the same as those held by earlier Anabaptists. They reject infant baptism, oaths, the magistracy, the sword, marriage with unbelievers, and communion with the unregenerate. They adopted Hoffman's view as to Christ's body.

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