THE HISTORY
OF THE
English Baptists,
FROM
The REFORMATION to the Beginning
of the Reign of King George I.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING
Their HISTORY to the RESTORATION
of King CHARLES II.

By THO. CROSBY.

LONDON,
Printed for, and Sold by, the EDITOR, either
at his House in Vine-Street, Minories; or at
his House upon Horse-ly-down, Southwark.

MDCCXXXVIII.
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Appendix Number 1


The commission and warrant for the condemnation and execution of Edward Wightman, at Litchfeild; with an account of his heretical opinions.

Appendix Number 2

A Confession of Faith of seven congregations, or churches of Christ in London, which are commonly, but unjustly called Anabaptists; published for the vindication of the truth, and information of the ignorant; likewise for the taking off those aspersions, which are frequently, both in pulpit and print, unjustly cast upon them. Printed at London, Annon 1646.
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A Confession of the Faith of several congregations of Christ in the county of Somerset, and some churches in the counties near adjacent. Printed at London, Anno 1656.

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Appendix Number 5

The Address of the Anabaptists to King Charles II before his Restoration, with their Propositions annexed, and the Letter sent along with it to his Majesty, then at Bruges, in the year 1657-8.
TO THE READER:

I am well aware, that some things contained in this history may awaken prejudice, censure, or displeasure, and occasion objections and offence, both to the treatise and myself. And I know that some have already declared their opinion, that facts which bring no credit to the persons of whom they are related, ought to be buried in oblivion. But such persons seem to me to be very ignorant of the duty of an historian. In answer to whom I shall only observe, that those heretical persons of the denomination of Baptists, on whom the sword of the magistrate fell so heavy, are yet upon record, and not omitted even by so late an author as the reverend Mr. Neal, and so exposed to the view of men from age to age. Therefore I thought it needful, as well as just, to have these things set in a clear open light, to disabuse all those who may have been imposed upon by false or partial and defective history in this matter, and to remove, or prevent, or allay, scandal, or censure, for time to come; and I am apt to think that many readers now and hereafter would have thought me partial, had I not taken notice of them. Neither do I think that it reflects any odium on the English Baptists, that some of their opinion in the point of Baptism, have been charged with heretical notions and heterodox opinions, Name me that body of Christians in the world, which may not be equally, if not more, chargeable with the same. And yet I doubt not, God hath many faithful servants in this kingdom, amongst all the denominations of Christians, who notwithstanding the imputation of heresy and heterodoxy charged on them by others, will be found among the blessed in the kingdom of glory.

And as it is utterly unreasonable to impute the miscarriages of some, to the rest of that body to which they belong, until they profess and manifest their approbation of them, so it is much more unreasonable to impute the miscarriages and bad principles of persons long since dead, to those, who in some one point, now believe and act as they did, but own not, nor abet either their bad principles, or their practical enormities.

Now though many, even of the learned, and so late an author as Mr. Neal, from whom we might have looked for more Christian treatment, have made it their business to represent the Anabaptists, as they are pleased in contempt to stile them, in odious colours, and to write many bitter things, even notorious falsehoods concerning them, nay, to fasten doctrines upon them, which they never approved; yet, as shall be shown in the sequel of this history, no one sect of Christians in this kingdom have merited more the favour and good esteem of their governors and Christian brethren, by their peaceable carriage and behaviour towards them, than they have done. What sect of Christians have showed the like contentedness under the deprivations which the legislature has seen needful to lay upon the Dissenters in general, than they? Who have been more content with the liberty allowed them by law than they? But not to be tedious in an epistolary way, I shall refer the reader to the work itself, and leave him to judge whether I deserve to be reproached for avoiding partiality.

He that considers the great trouble and pains that must attend the reading so many voluminous books, to take in the compass of so many years included in this history; and the perplexing thoughts and difficulties under which an author labours, whose principal end is to set things in a just and fair light, will, if he be candid, easily pass by small faults and little inadvertencies; but if there shall appear in the course of this history any considerable
mistakes, I shall hold myself obligated to such gentlemen, who shall be pleased to represent them, promising to take the first opportunity that shall present, to retract or amend the same.

Tho. Crosby.
THE PREFACE:

Whoever writes a Book seems by custom obliged to write a preface to it; wherein it is expected, he should show the motives which induced him to write the same.

'Tis now many years since the materials of which a great part of this treatise is formed, came into my hands. Had the ingenious collector (Mr. Benjamin Stinton) of them lived to digest them in their proper order, according to his design, they would have appeared much more beautiful and correct, than now they do. I might here expatiate in his praise, and say a great deal of my own knowledge, both as to his industry and acquirements: But, as I shall hereafter have occasion to mention him, I omit it here: And shall annex to this preface the several opinions of the first rise of the Baptists, which he designed as an introduction to his intended history of them; being the only piece of that work which he had completed.

I was in hopes some able hand would have undertaken to complete what was wanting, in order to finish this work. To render the same less burdensome to such an undertaker, I employed my spare hours, in the best manner I could, to digest the materials in their proper order, and supply the vacancies; till at length, at the request of two worthy Baptist ministers (Mr. Wallin, Mr. Arnold), both since deceased, I communicated them to the Reverend Mr. Neal, who had undertaken to write an History of the Puritans; under which general name, I did apprehend the English Baptists might very well be included: And he had them in his hands some years.

The good character of the gentleman, with the importunity of my two friends aforementioned concurring (though I must confess it was with doubting) yet made me yield so to do. But I was surprised to see the ill use Mr. Neal made of these materials; and the rise and progress of the English Baptists, their confession of faith, their character, and their sufferings, were contained in less than five pages of his third volume; and that too with very great partiality, as shall hereafter be proved.

And it is but too well known, concerning Paedobaptist authors in general, that when they have been necessitated to speak in favour of the opinion of the Baptists, presently a vail has been drawn over the fame, either respecting their persons, principles, or morals; so that it is not an easy thing for strangers to form a right judgment of them; which makes an history of them necessary, without any further apology. Yet, considering the great variety of opinions and humours that are in this kingdom, and the coarse treatment even of the most celebrated authors, upon the most sublime subjects; a man had need have a good share of courage, and a firm assurance of the justice of his cause, that ventures to appear publicly in such a censorious age.
The Editor does presume he is thus supported; and declares, that what he has here written is purely designed to inform the honest and well-meaning Christian, whether Paedobaptist, or Baptist; by whom he hopes it may be candidly received, in proportion to the integrity of his intentions.

Mr. Neal, in his preface (History of the Puritan, Volume III), concludes thus: 'I am sufficiently aware of the delicacy of the affairs treated of in this volume, and of the tenderness of the ground I go over; and, though I have been very careful of my temper and language, and have endeavoured to look into the mysterious conduct of the several parties with all the indifference of a spectator, I find it very difficult to form an exact judgment of the most important events, or to speak freely without offence; therefore, if any passionate or angry writer should appear against this, or any of the former Volumes, I humbly request the reader to pay no regard to personal reflections, or to insinuations of any ill designs against the established religion, or the public peace, which are entirely groundless.'

"In historical debates, says he, nothing is to be received upon trust, but facts are to be examined, and a judgment formed upon the authority by which those facts are supported; by this method we shall arrive at truth: And it shall appear, that, in the course of this long history, there are any considerable mistakes, the world may be assured I will take the first opportunity to retract or amend them".

A noble declaration, indeed! But let us now see how consentaneous his representation of the English Baptists is thereto, especially, considering what materials he was entrusted with.

He allows there were no less than fifty four congregations of them in England in the year 1644 and says (Volume III, p 161):

"Their confession [of faith] consisted of fifty two articles, and is strictly Calvinistical in the doctrinal part, and according to the independant discipline; it confines the subject of baptism to grown Christians, and the mode to dipping; it admits of gifted lay-preachers, and acknowledges a due subjection to the civil magistrate in all things lawful".

He proceeds then to their character; which, in my opinion, is one piece of that tender ground he was to go over: And how careful he was of his temper and language, let the reader judge. For, says he (Ib. p162),

The advocates of this doctrine were, for the most part, of the meanest of the people; their preachers were generally illiterate, and went about the countries making proselytes of all that would submit to their immersion, without a due regard to their acquaintance with the principles of religion, or their moral characters".

What a malicious slander is this! cast upon a whole body of Christians, consisting of fifty four congregations, according to his own acknowledgement! To me it seems unchristian, without ground, a fact unexamined, a judgment formed without any authority produced to support the fact; and consequently the reader left to form his judgment upon Mr. Neal's ipse dixit, repugnant to his noble declaration.

But lest this should not be enough, he concludes their character by adding thus:
The people of this persuasion were more exposed to the public resentments, because they would hold communion with none but such as had been dipped. All, says he, must pass under this cloud before they could be received into their churches; and the same narrow spirit prevails too generally amongst them even at this day.

This is a home stroke; and reaches the present as well as preceding ages. But I am verily persuaded the present English Baptists will not be much affected with this raillery; since our blessed Lord and Saviour himself did not disdain to pass under this cloud, as Mr. Neal is pleased to phrase it.

Dr. Featly, writing against the Baptists in his day, says: 'He could hardly dip his pen in any other liquor, than the juice of gall.' And I find Mr. Neal has not only read the Doctor, because he quotes him two or three times, but learned some of his language too: What of wit he may imagine in such kind of phraseology, I know not; but sure I am, Christ's Ordinances ought to be mentioned with more reverence, by those who profess themselves to be Christians.

The ingenious Dr. Wall, in his elaborate history of infant baptism, speaking of the most ancient rites in baptism, acknowledges dipping to be ordinarily used in baptism. For, says he:

'Their general and ordinary was to baptise by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it were an infant, or grown man or woman, into the water. This, he adds, is so plain and clear, by an infinite number of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such Paedobaptists, as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown, and show a dislike of the profane scoffs which some people give to the English Anti-Paedobaptists, merely for their use of dipping. 'Tis one thing to maintain, that the circumstance is not absolutely necessary to the essence of baptism; and another, to go about to represent it as ridiculous and foolish, or as shameful and indecent; when it was, in all probability, the way by which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians, did receive their baptism'.

And, speaking of the present state of the Anti-Paedobaptists in England, he says:

'They, that are now, are as commendable, as any other sort of men are, for a sober and grave, quiet and peaceable way of living. They profess obedience to Magistrates: And a little further, They are particularly commended for maintaining their poor liberally; as also for passing censures upon such members of their own congregations as live disorderly. This character of obedient subjects, is what they now own and profess, and what I hope is the real sentiment of most of them'.

And I add, it was what they did always own and profess ever since they had a being in this kingdom; and that neither Dr. Wall, nor any other, is able to prove the contrary. His silly story about Mr. Hicks, I find in his latter edition, is recanted; therefore shall say nothing about it.
Bishop Burnet, speaking of the English Baptists (History of his own Time, p. 702), gives them this character:

"The Anabaptists, says he, were generally men of virtue, and of an universal charity".

And I would here observe, that though in the title page of this book, and throughout the same, I use the term Baptist, except in quotations from authors; it is not, as Dr. Wall observes, to cast a reproach on our adversaries; but because I think it the most proper term, by which we can be distinguished from other Christians.

Indeed he says (Dr. Wall, p2, 99): 'As they disown the name of Anabaptists, or Rebaptizers, so I have no where given it to them. As on the contrary, I do not give them the name of Baptists, nor of the baptized people; for that is to cast a reproach upon their adversaries, as concluding that they are not so. Every party, while the matter continues in dispute, ought to give and take such names as cast no reproach on themselves, nor their opponents, but such as each of them own; and such are the names that I use.'

So that this worthy gentleman has taken upon himself to be our godfather, and given us the name of Anti-Paedobaptists: but, as we are not infants, we have an undoubted right to put in our exceptions.

Besides the length of the word, for I do not love hard names, it seems to me no proper name; because the people called Quakers, from whom we differ in judgment, as well as from Paedobaptists, may be included; and therefore I have rejected it. Neither shall I think that he has assumed to himself and party a proper name, till sprinkling, pouring, or any other way of washing besides dipping, is fairly proved to be baptism, either from Scripture or antiquity.

But, to return to Mr. Neal. If he would have us to understand by his ill-natured phrase, narrow spirit, that he means, because we will not receive unbaptized persons to the communion of our churches, therefore we are a people of narrow spirits; then the designed reproach, which he would fix on the English Baptists, fits all the Christian churches in all ages: for it is their declared opinion, that no persons unbaptized ought to be received to the communion of the Christian church, and they practise accordingly.

To omit a cloud of witnesses I might produce, who concur in their testimonies, that this great ordinance of baptism, is not only the sacrament of initiation, but also to be continued in the church unto the end of the world, I shall only add a few general and comprehending testimonies:

1. In the articles of religion, published by his Majesty's special command, Anno 1642. we have the judgment of the church of England, viz.

'Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by
the Holy Ghost, and visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God, &c.'

2. The judgment of the Presbyterians, suitable to which they express themselves in their larger and shorter catechisms, we find in the confession of faith put forth by the assembly of divines, Anno 1658.

'Baptism, say they, is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life: Which sacrament is by Christ's own appointment to continue in his church until the end of the world.'

3. The judgment of the Congregational (commonly called Independent) churches, we have in their confession of faith at the Savoy; where were many of their Elders in October 1658, printed Anno 1659.

'Baptism, say they, is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life: Which ordinance is by Christ's own appointment to be continued in his church until the end of the world.'

4. The English Baptists judgment you have in their confession of faith, Appendix No 2. Art. XXXIX. and No 3. Art. XXIV.

It is certainly commendable to keep the ordinances of Christ pure, as they were delivered; because it prevents the creeping in of the inventions of men in the worship of God. Man is naturally apt to be meddling that way, and mixing something of his own with those sacred institutions which God has with greatest severity prohibited; having not spared any, no not his own people, though what they have done seems not to be out of any wicked intentions, but rather out of an ignorant zeal: Of which there are many instances in Scripture.

The Reverend Mr. Neal would do well to convince the English Baptists, that sprinkling of infants is the baptism which Christ instituted, and the apostles practised. For we grant, that it is praise-worthy for the churches of Jesus Christ to preserve and keep the ordinances of Christ, as they have been delivered by Christ and his Apostles to them. And if, after a full and fair conviction from Scripture, we remain still obstinate, a worse name than that of narrow spirits might be justly fixed on us.

I shall only reply to Mr. Neal in the words of the Reverend Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs; who, though a Paedobaptist, very excellently expresses himself in his book, entitled, Gospel Worship, or the right Manner of Sanctifying the Name of God, p. 8,9, &c. His words are these:

'All things in God's worship must have a warrant out of God's word, must be commanded; it is not enough that it is not forbidden, and what hurt is there in it? but it must be
commanded - When we come to matters of religion, and the worship of God we must either have a command, or some-what out of God's word, by some consequence drawn from some command, wherein God manifests his will; either a direct command, or by comparing one thing with another, or drawing consequences plainly from the words, we must have a warrant for the worship of God, &c. - When any creature is raised in a religious way above what it hath in it by nature, if I have not Scripture to warrant me, I am therein superstitious - we must be willing worshippers, but not will worshippers. You see how severe God was to Nadab and Abihi, for but taking other fire, than that which God appointed, to offer up incense, though there was no direct commandment against it, &c.'

'In the matters of worship God stands upon little things; such things as seem to be very small and little to us, yet God stands much upon them in the matter of worship. For there is nothing wherein the prerogative of God doth more appear than in worship, as princes stand much upon their prerogatives - There are things in the worship of God that are not written in our hearts, that only depend upon the will of God revealed in his word; which were no duties except that they were revealed there. And these are of such a nature as we can see no reason for, but only this, because God will have them - Though men would think it a little matter, whether this fire or that fire, and will not this burn as well as that? but God stands upon it - When Uzzah did but touch the ark, when it was ready to fall, we would think it no great matter; but one touch of the ark cost him his life. There is not a Minim in the worship of God, but God stands mightily upon it - For a man to gather a few sticks on the Sabbath, what great matter was it? but God stands upon it. So when the men Bethshemesh did but look into the ark, it cost the lives of fifty thousand and seventy men, &c.'

He further adds. 'That there is no privileges or dignities of man that can secure them from God's stroke; instancing Nadab and Abihi's case, Moses the man of God being their uncle, Aaron their father, men newly consecrated to the priests office, renowned men that God put much glory upon; yet, if they will venture but to offend God in this little thing, his wrath breaks out upon them, and kills them presently, &c.'

He adds much more to the same effect, and offers several reasons by which he judgeth that Nadab and Abihi were good men; and gives a plain demonstration that they had no wicked design: As,

1. They were young men, newly come to their office, and might not understand all things, as if they had had longer experience.

2. It's observable, for verse 1. 'tis called strange fire which he commanded not, that if there be not a command for our practice, nor such a president as the Scripture approves of, no human pretence can excuse the transgressor from the judgment of God.

Will Mr. Neal admit Roman Catholics, who profane the ordinance of the supper, to the communion of his church? We believe in our consciences that sprinkling children is a profanation of the ordinance of baptism, and so consequently reject it; therefore our spirits will appear no narrower than his own. And if, upon a serious review of this passage last quoted, he will endeavour to be careful of his temper, I may hope in the next edition to see it appear in better language.
With respect to their sufferings Mr. Neal very justly observes, that ministers have a right by preaching to oppose doctrines (such as they believe to be erroneous, I would suppose he means); but unjustifiable at the same time to fight them with the sword of the civil magistrate, and shut them up in prison: And then mentions five or six, with little more than their names, of whom he had a large account, respecting their sufferings, before him. But they were Baptists, and so not worthy of his notice, unless he add something to degrade them.

The first he mentions is Mr. Henry Denne; of whom he only says, he was formerly ordained by the bishop of St. Davids, and possessed of the living of Pyeton in Hertfordshire. Then he mentions Mr. Coppe; and says, he was minister in Warwickshire, and some time preacher to the garrison in Compton House.

The next he mentions is Mr. Hanserd Knollys; who was, says he, 'Several times before the committee for preaching Antinomianism, and Anti-Paedobaptism; and being forbid to preach in the public churches, he opened a separate meeting in great St. Hellens; from whence he was quickly dislodged, and his followers dispersed.'

If Antinomianism be such a brand of infamy, as to put a vail upon the character of so good and pious a man as Mr. Hanserd Knollys; how came it to pass that Dr. Crisp had more than a whole page bestowed on him in encomiums to his praise, which I doubt not but he justly deserved? If I may be permitted to answer without offence, and incurring the censure of an angry writer; it should be, because he was an Independent Paedobaptist.

In the next place he says, 'Mr. Andrew Wyke, in the county of Suffolk, was imprisoned on the same account; and Mr. Oates in Essex tried for his life at Chelmsford assizes for the murder of Ann Martin, because she died a few days after her immersion of a cold that seized her at that time'.

This is so unrighteous a piece of partiality, that no sentence too severe can be passed upon it; because he had before him a full account of that affair; and thereby knew how honourably he was acquitted, notwithstanding the most earnest and pressing endeavours of his Paedobaptist Brethren to bring him in guilty, thereby to fix an odium on the practice of immersion.

I was at a stand why this gentleman's Christian name, Samuel, was left out in Mr. Neal's narration; seeing Mr. Neal had it before him. And I can assign no other reason for it, unless it were to impose on his readers, that they might take him to be Titus Oates, so noticed in our histories with a brand of infamy upon him. But I must leave that to his own conscience; and refer my readers to page 236 (note - in the original book) of this history, where they will find, among others, the same account of these persons mentioned by Mr. Neal as communicated to him, and leave them to judge of his partiality in this matter.

To bring up the rear of the Baptists sufferings; poor Laurence Clarkson, with his recantation at large, is exhibited.
Among the thousands of Baptists in England here is one produced; who, through the severity of the times, and being but an unsteady man in his principles, and one that had not been used to suffer for conscience sake, was tempted to make this recantation, finding he could no other way obtain his liberty.

He had been six months in prison, committed by the Paedobaptist committee of Suffolk, for that so heinous a crime of baptizing by immersion; a crime so great, that all the intercession of his friends, though he had several, could not procure his release; the committee being fully resolved not to let such crimes go unpunished: Nay, though an order came down, either from a committee of parliament, or chairman of it, to discharge, yet they refused to obey it.

Mr. Edwards, who first published this account, did it to expose the sectaries, against whom he had an implacable hatred. But, whether the weakness of this man under his oppression, or the folly and wickedness of his persecutors, were hereby more exposed, let the reader judge.

However, the Paedobaptists gained no great honour by a proselyte made after this manner: For upon his release he turned seeker; and when the Baptists expelled him from their society, as a man that had denied the truth to escape suffering, he writ a small Pamphlet (The Pilgrimage of Saints by Church cast out; in Christ found seeking truth), wherein he endeavours to excuse himself, by saying, That he did not assert the baptism of believers by immersion to be an error, but only intended that it was erroneously practised, there being now no true churches, nor true administrators of that ordinance. And it is no wonder, that a person who would make such a vile submission to his worshipful persecutors, should afterwards make such equivocations, to extenuate his crime.

Bishop Jewel signed the popish articles; and archbishop Cranmer subscribed a recantation. Here are for Mr. Neal two eminent Paedobaptist Recanters, for one poor Baptist: And if he has any more such instances, I will endeavour to supply him at the same rate.

This partiality of Mr. Neal revived my resolution to complete this Treatise, in the best manner I could, for a publication; and what is wanting in it of elegancy of phrase, hath been endeavoured to be supplied in the truth of the relation, which is the only commendation of history, and much preferable to that artificial stuff, which may find better access to some ears.

And therefore to the English reader I would now address myself, because in this land were these actions done; and their forefathers, with bleeding hearts and distilling eyes, were spectators of, and common sufferers under, the insulting paces of tyrannical, arbitrary power, and unlimited prerogative, and had a cup of blood prepared for them; though, blessed be God, it is otherwise with us.

This essay being the first of the kind, that has been published in this kingdom, it is to be hoped some abler hand in time may improve the same, and a more full account be given of the English Baptists.
The design of the reverend Mr. Benjamin Stinton's History being to give an account of the English Baptists only, he thought it might not be improper, and did intend to introduce it with some account of the origin of their opinion, and who have been reported to be the authors of it. And since there are various accounts given of this matter, says he, I shall briefly relate the different opinions about it, as well those held by the Paedobaptists, as those of the Anti-Paedobaptists, concerning their own original, and then leave the reader to judge which has the greatest appearance of truth.

They are generally condemned as a new sect, whose opinion and practice, with relation to baptism, was not known in the Christian church till about two hundred years ago. Bishop Burnet says (Hist. Ref. Part II. p110.), 'At this time [anno 1549] there were many Anabaptists in several parts of England. They were generally Germans, whom the revolutions there had forced to change their seats. Upon Luther's first preaching in Germany, there arose many, who building on some of his principles, carried things much further than he did. The chief foundation he laid down was that the Scripture was to be the only rule of Christians. Upon this many argued, that the mysteries of the Trinity, and Christ's incarnation and suffering, of the fall of man, and the aids of grace, were indeed philosophical subtleties, and only pretended to be deduced from Scripture, as almost all opinions of religion were, and therefore they rejected them. Among these the baptism of infants was one: They held that to be no baptism, and so were re-baptized. But from this, which was most taken notice of, as being a visible thing, they carried all the general name of Anabaptists.'

Mr. Marshal says (Sermon on Infant baptism, p. 5.), 'That the first that ever made a head against it [infant-baptism] or a division of the church about it, was Baltazar Pacammitanus in Germany, in Luther's time, about the year 1527.' This Baltazar is stiled Baltazar Huebmar Pacimontanus (Zuinglius, in the epistle before his answer to his book on Baptism), Dr. in Waldshut, a town near the Helvetians. He was a man of great note for learning, and did by his preaching and writing very much promote his opinion. He was burnt at Viana, in 1528. for which he is esteemed a martyr by his followers.

But, says Mr. Tombs (Examen. p. 22), Bellarmine and Cochleus say, that Erasmus himself had sowed some seeds of it also. And whoever reads his works, will find several things in them favouring the opinion of the Anti-Paedobaptists: As when he saith, in his union of the church, 'It is no where expressed, in the apostolical writings, that they baptized children;' and again (De ratio Conc.), upon Rom. vi. 'Baptizing of children was not in use in St. Paul's time; and that they are not to be condemned, who doubt whether children's baptism was ordained by the Apostles.'

John Gerhard (Tom. 40. of his Common Places), a Lutheran minister, derives the original of this sect from Carolostadius, who was conversant with Luther, Melancthon, and the other reformers, and assisted them in that blessed work. He says, that he is called the father of the Anabaptists, by Erasmus Alberus.

Sleidan, who writ the history of the Anabaptists, does not go so far, but asserts of him, 'that he praised their opinion.'

Osiander affirms, 'that he joined himself to them.'
Melancthon, who was well acquainted, both with the man and his opinions, says of him (Com. I epist. Cor. ix. 24. Page 6.), 'that he endeavoured to promote the gospel, tho' in a wrong course.'

The short history of the Anabaptists, published in 1647, says; 'It is hard to say, whether Caroloftadius, or one Nicholas Stork, was the first founder of baptism.'

Arnoldus Meshovius, another historian of those times, lays it still nearer the door of the first reformers; and says (Hist. Anab. Lib. ii. Sect. ii. Tombe's Examen. p. 22.), 'That the business of Anabaptism began at Wittenburg, anno Christi 1522. Luther then lurking in the castle of Wartburg in Thuringia, by Nicholas Pelargus; and that he had companions at first, Caroloftadius, Philip Melancthon, and others; and that Luther returning from his Patmos, as he called it, banished Caroloftadius, and the rest, and only received Philip Melancthon into favour again.'

These passages make it probable that this question about Infant-baptism was agitated among the reformers themselves, and that some of them were at first for rejecting that practice.

Vicecomes, a learned Papist, has left upon record (De Rit. Bap Lib. ii. c. I. Wall, Part II. p. 179.), that Luther, Calvin, and Beza, were adversaries of infant-baptism: Though the Padeobaptists look upon this only as a slander cast upon them.

'Tis certain that Zuinglius, that holy and learned reformer, who flourished about the year 1520, was for some time against it, as he ingenuously confesses, in these words (De Bap. Tom. II. p. 63.): 'When this opinion was every where so rashly and without consideration received, That all men believed that faith was confirmed by signs, we must necessarily expect this sad issue, that some would even deny baptism to infants; for how should it confirm the faith of infants, when it is manifest that they as yet have no faith? Wherefore (Baxter's Scripture Proofs, p. 291.) I myself, that I may ingenuously confess the truth, some years ago, being deceived with this error, thought it better that children's baptism should be delayed, till they came to full age: Though (adds he) I never broke forth into that immodesty and importunity, as some now do.'

If some of the other reformers were at first of this opinion, as his Words imply, yet they might think it impracticable to carry their reformation so far at once, and that it might overthrow what they had already so happily done: And when some of this opinion afterwards had brought a scandal upon the Protestants, and occasioned such confusions all over Germany, they might be tempted to renounce this opinion, and write with so much zeal and anger, as they did against those who maintained it.

'Tis still more evident, that these first reformers looked upon sprinkling as a corruption of baptism, and endeavoured to introduce the primitive rite of dipping, as is practised by the English Baptists.

Luther has, in several places, fully declared his opinion in this matter:
'Baptism, saith he (Duveil on Acts viii. 38.), is a Greek word; it may be termed a dipping, when we dip something in water, that it may be wholly covered with water: And although that custom be now altogether abolished among the most part, for neither do they dip the whole children, but only sprinkle them with a little water, they ought altogether nevertheless to be dipped, and presently to be drawn out again; for the etymology of the word seems to require that.'

In another place he says; 'Washing from sins is attributed to baptism; it is truly indeed attributed, but the signification is softer and slower than that it can express baptism, which is rather a sign both of death and resurrection. Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are to be baptized, to be altogether dipped into the water, as the word doth sound, and the mystery doth signify.'

And that this was the opinion and practice of the chief leaders in the reformation, appears by something remarkable, that happened in those times concerning the matter.

Johannes Bugenhagius Pomeranius, who was a companion of Luther, had succeeded him in the ministry at Wittenburg, a very pious and learned divine, tells us, in a book he published in the German tongue, Anno 1542,

'That he was desired to be a witness of a baptism at Hamburgh, in the year 1529. That when he had seen the minister only sprinkled the infant wrapped in swathling clothes on top of the head, he was amazed; because he neither heard nor saw any such thing (Among the Protestants I suppose he meant), nor yet read in any history, except in case of necessity, in bed-rid persons. In a general assembly therefore of all the ministers of the word, that was convened, he did ask of a certain minister, John Fritz by name, who was some time minister of Lubec, how the sacrament of baptism was administered at Lubec? Who for his piety and candour did answer gravely, that infants were baptized naked at Lubec, after the same fashion altogether as in Germany. But from whence and how that peculiar manner of baptizing hath crept into Hamburgh, he was ignorant. At length they did agree among themselves, that the judgment of Luther, and of the divines of Wittenburg, should be demanded about this point' Which being done, Luther did write back to Hamburgh, that this sprinkling was an abuse, which they ought to remove. Thus plunging was restored at Hamburgh.'

But notwithstanding this, Dr. Featly and many others will have it, that Anabaptism took its first rise at Munster; and that Nicholas Stork, Thomas Muncer, John of Leyden, Mark Stubner, Knipperdoling, Phiffer, and such like, were the first teachers of this doctrine, and founders of the sect.

These men denied the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the authority of magistrates, the lawfulness of taking oaths, and almost all the Christian doctrines; and were guilty of several gross enormities, such as poligamy, rebellion, theft and murder: They seized the city of Munster, proclaimed John of Leyden their king, committed abundance of violence, and caused tumults and rebellions in several places.
The extravagant doctrines and seditious practices of these men, are every where charged upon the opposers of infant-baptism, to render them odious, and a dangerous and seditious sect, not fit to be tolerated in any nation, whose principles have so bad a tendency, and whose beginning was so scandalous.

In return to all which, the Baptists allege in their own defence, that the Papists improve this story after the like manner, against the new begun reformation itself, and represent it as the consequence of letting men have the Scriptures to read, and the liberty of judging for themselves in matters of religion.

That there is great reason to suspect the truth of many things reported of this people, is evident: For in a time of war, and popular tumults, it is not easy to come to a certain knowledge of what is transacted; and if a design miscarries, it is generally censured, how just or good soever it was. The Roman Catholics charge the Vaudois, and Albigeois, and sometimes the Lutherans, with crimes almost as black as they do the Anabaptists: And as for the Protestants of those times, they persecuted this sect with so much cruelty, and wrote against them with so much bitterness, that it discredits very much what they say of them, at least makes it probable they took up some reports concerning them upon very slender evidence.

Neither do the histories of those times agree in the accounts they give of them; for some charge them with more crimes, and much greater, than others do; some accuse them with those things which are directly contrary to what is affirmed of them by others; and some with things so incredible, that their adversaries themselves look upon them to be but slanders.

They say also, that there is no just reason to lay those wars and tumults in Germany at the door of the Anabaptists; for it is plain, in the histories of those times (Bishop Jewel's Defence, P. I. c. 4.), that Papists, as well as Protestants, and of these the Paedobaptists as well as Anabaptists, were concerned in them.

And the chief occasion of their rising, was the defence of their civil liberties (Dupin's Ecc. Hist. Cent. 16. Lib. i. p. 79.). When they drew up a manifesto of their demands, in twelve heads, and presented it to the magistrates, who had promised to hear their complaints, and do them justice, there is but one article, that directly regards religion; which was, that they might have liberty to choose the ministers of their churches, and depose them afterwards, if they saw occasion.

The confusions at Munster (Spanhemius Hist. Anab. p. 12. Hook's Apol. p. 11. Sleidan.), where the blackest part of this tragedy was acted, were begun by a Paedobaptist minister of the Lutheran persuasion, one Bernard Rotman, preacher at the church of St. Maurice in that city; and were carried on by him, with several other Lutherans, for some time, before any Anabaptist appeared to have a hand in it.

And though Muncer and Phiffer are said to have denied infant-baptism, and to have instilled the same opinion into others, yet they had not received or professed this principle till some time after these insurrections were begun in several parts of Germany. If these men were as
vile as they are represented to be, and guilty of all those crimes of which they are accused, this could not have proceeded from their opinion about baptism, which can have no such tendency: Nor is there any colour of justice, in charging those crimes upon other Christians of that denomination, who abhor their erroneous tenets, and behave themselves after the most inoffensive manner. If all the errors which have been maintained, and all the thefts, murders, adulteries, and rebellions, which have been committed by Paedobaptists, were to be made the consequence of that opinion, it would soon appear a very bloody and dangerous tenet indeed, and render those who held it much more odious than Anabaptists.

But that which is more material to our enquiry after the first rise of this sect is, that these men did not advance this tenet concerning baptism, as a thing entirely new, but what was taught by others, who rejected the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, as well as themselves; and affirmed it to have been the opinion of the Waldenses and Petrobrusians, who had gone before them.

They did not set up themselves upon this account as the heads and founders of a new sect, or religion, as enthusiastic persons are too ready to do, if there be but the least room for it.

Dupin, a person well acquainted with ecclesiastical history, calls this (Vol. I. Cent. 16. Lib. v. p. 45.) the revival of the error.

There was before, and about this time, many people of their opinion concerning baptism, who had made a declaration of much better principles, and under better leaders.

Bishop Burnet says (Hist. reform. Vol. II. p. 110.), 'There were two sorts of these [Anabaptists] most remarkable: The one was of those who only thought that baptism ought not to be given but to those who were of an age capable of instruction, and who did earnestly desire it - These were called the gentle, or moderate Anabaptists: But others, who carried the name, denied almost all the principles of the Christian doctrine, and were men of fierce and barbarous tempers - These being joined in the common name of Anabaptists, with the other, brought them also under an ill character.'

Monseuir Bayle, speaking of the many martyrs that the Anabaptists boast of, and their martyrology, being a large book in Folio, says (Dictionary, Anabaptists, Letter F, 2d. Edit):

'Could it only produce those that were put to death for attempts against the government, its bulky martyrlogy would make but a ridiculous figure. But it is certain, that several Anabaptists, who suffered death courageously for their opinions, had never any intention of rebelling. Give me leave to cite an evidence, which cannot be suspected; it is that of a writer (Guy de Bres), who has exerted his whole force in refuting this sect: He observes, that its great progress was owing to three things: The first was, That its teachers deafened their hearers with numberless passages of Scripture: The second, that they affected a great appearance of sanctity, the third, that their followers discovered great constancy in their sufferings and deaths. But he gives not the least hint, that the Anabaptist martyrs suffered death for taking up arms against the state, or stirring up the people to rebellion.'
Monseiu Bayle being a Papist, and the author he cites a Protestant, made this remark upon it:

'Observe by the way, says he, that this author refutes his adversaries, just as the Catholics refute the Protestants: And then shows how the arguments used against the one, are of equal force against the other.'

George Cassander, who lived in those times, had disputed with the Anabaptists, and visited some of their ministers in prison, does in his epistle to the duke of Gullick and Cleve, give a very good character of them who dwelt in Belgick and lower Germany, even when some others were guilty of such extravagancies at Munster and Battenburgh. He says,

'That they discovered an honest and pious mind; and they erred from the faith, through a mistaken zeal, rather than an evil disposition; that they condemned the outrageous behaviour of their brethren of Munster; that they taught that the kingdom of Jesus Christ was to be established only by the cross. They deserve therefore, adds he, to be pitied and instructed, rather than to be persecuted.'

The learned Beza also gives a very honourable account (Hornbeek's Sum. Con. p. 364.) of many of them in his epistle to the Gallo-Belgic churches at Embden, and says:

'Many of the Anabaptists are good men, servants of God, and our most dear brethren.'

These authors had more justice than to condemn the innocent with the guilty, and to asperse the whole for the errors and disorders of a small part.

The great number of Anabaptists that were about this time in several parts of Germany, and other countries, make it improbable, that these frantic men at Munster should be the founders of this sect, or so much as the first that revived the question, about children's baptism in those times.

Those stirs at Munster did not begin till the year 1532 (Spanhemius, p. 13.), nor did they come to any great height, or any Anabaptists appear in that city till the year 1533. And yet we find great opposition made against Anabaptists before this in several parts, both by disputations and writings, and some severe laws made against their opinion.

They were opposed at Augsburg about the year 1516 by Regius: In Saxony by Luther, 1522. In Thuringia by Micerus, 1525. In Switzerland, at Zurick, there were three public disputations held between Zuinglius and the heads of the Anabaptists, in Jan., March, and Nov. 1525. Oecolampadius also disputed with these heretics, as he calls them, the same year at Bazil; and again in the Years 1527, and 1529.

This opinion prevailed so fast, that to prevent the growth of it, the magistrates of Zurick published a solemn edict against it in 1525 requiring all persons to have their children baptized, and forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined, banished, or imprisoned. Another was put forth in 1530 making it punishable with death.
'In the year 1528 (Hooke's Apology, p. 29.), Hans Shaeffer, and Leonard Freek, for opposing infants baptism, were beheaded at Schwas in Germany; and Leopald Suyder at Augsburg for the same.'

'At Saltzburg eighteen persons of the same faith were burnt; and twenty five at Waltsen the same year.'

'Anno 1529, twenty of them were put to death in the Palatinate; and three hundred and fifty at Altze in Germany. The men for the most part beheaded, and the women drowned.'

'Anno 1533, Hugh Crane, and Margaret his wife, with two more, were martyred at Harlem; the woman was drowned; the three men were chained to a post, and roasted by a fire, at a distance, till they died. This was the very same year that the rising was at Munster.'

'Likewise in the Protestant Cantons in Switzerland (lb. p. 30.), they were used as hardly, about the same time.'

'Anno 1526, one Felix Meniz, a Baptist minister, was drowned at Zurich.'

'Anno 1530, two of the baptized brethren were burnt.'

'Anno 1531, six more of the congregation of Baptists were martyred in the same place.'

'Anno 1533, two persons, Lodwick Test, and Catherine Harngen, were burnt at Munster.'

There is part of a letter, preserved in an author not to be suspected (Colomesius's Collection, ep. 30.), that was written to Erasmus, out of Bohemia, dated October 10, 1519, in which an account is given of a sect then in being, and which had been in that country for above ninety years, who by the character given of them, appear to be Anabaptists; and were not only long before Stork and Muncer, but also before Luther and Calvin, who set themselves to oppose the church of Rome. The letter describes them thus (Wall's Hist. Bapt. Part II. p. 200.): 'These men have no other opinion of the Pope, cardinals, bishops, and other clergy, than as manifest antichrists. They call the Pope sometimes the beast, and sometimes the whore, mentioned in the Revelations. Their own bishops and priests they themselves do choose for themselves; ignorant and unlearned laymen, that have wife and children. They mutually salute one another by the name of brother and sister. They own no other authority than the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament: They slight all the Doctors, both ancient and modern, and give no regard to their doctrine. Their priests, when they celebrate the offices of the mass [or communion] do it without any priestly garments; nor do they use any prayer or collects on this occasion, but only the Lord’s prayer, by which they consecrate bread that has been leavened. They believe or own little or nothing of the sacraments of the church: Such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew, in mere water. They make no blessing of salt, nor of water; nor make any use of consecrated oil. They believe nothing of divinity in the sacrament of the Eucharist, only that the consecrated bread and wine do by some occult signs represent the death of Christ; and accordingly, that all that do kneel down to it, or worship it, are guilty of idolatry. That sacrament was instituted by Christ to no other purpose but to renew the memory of his passion, and not to be carried about, or held up by the priest to be gazed on. For that Christ himself, who is to
be adored and worshipped with the honour of Latreia, sits at the right hand of God, as the Christian church confesses in the creed. Prayers to saints, and for the dead, they count a vain and ridiculous thing; as likewise auricular confession and penance, enjoined by the priest for sins. Eves and fast-days are, they say, a mockery, and the disguise of hypocrites. They say, the holy days of the virgin Mary, and the Apostles, and other saints, are the invention of idle people; but yet they keep the Lord’s-day, and Christmas, and Easter, and Whitsontide, &c.’

This description does almost in everything fit the modern Anabaptists, especially those in England. Their saluting one another by the name of brother and sister; their choosing their own ministers, and from among the laity; their rejecting all priestly garments, and refusing to kneel at the sacrament; their slighting all authorities but that of the Scriptures, but especially their baptizing again all that embraced their way, does certainly give the Baptists a better right than any other Protestants, to claim these people for their predecessors.

’Tis true, some zealous Paedobaptists, who would willingly have none thought sober and religious, who deny baptism to children, have insinuated that these Pyghards, and followers of Hus in Bohemia, did not baptize such as came over to them, from any dislike of infant-baptism, but of those ceremonies which the church of Rome used in it. And Ottius does positively affirm this to be the reason of it.

But there is no proof from any authentic histories that those early Protestants, who retained infant-baptism, did any of them, upon their departing from Popery, reject their baptism in that church, and receive a new baptism.

Walden, who lived in those times, and writ against the Hussites in Bohemia above an hundred years before Ottius, affirms (Tom. III. Tit. v. c. 53.), ‘That some of them maintained this heresy (Marshall against Tombs, page 67), that believers children were not to be baptized; and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them.’

We must therefore look for a more early beginning of this sect and opinion than the insurrection at Munster, or the reformation in Germany. And we find there are some of the Paedobaptists (Cassander, Dupin. Cent. 16. Lib. v. page 45.), and those of no small repute, who affirm, that the Albigenses were the first who dared positively to declare against infant-baptism, and call the preaching of this opinion, by Muncer, Stork, &c. only a reviving of that error.

Of this sect there was a great number, in divers parts of France and Bohemia, above three hundred years before Luther’s and Calvin’s reformation. They went under different names, either from the places that were fullest of them, or the persons who were their principal leaders (Fox, Vol. l. p 299.): But the name of Albigenses and Waldenses were the titles most commonly given to them; the one from Albi, a place so called in Languedoc, in which were great numbers of them; the other from one Waldus, the supposed founder of that sect, who was a rich and learned citizen of Lyons, and began there to oppose the errors and superstitions of the church of Rome, about the year 1160.
The Papists impute a great many heinous crimes to these people; a method which they generally take with all who have dissented from their church. And yet Reinerus (Danvers, page 344.), a zealous opposer of them, gives a very honourable account of this sect.

'They are, says he, in their manner composed, and modest; no pride in apparel, because they are therein neither costly nor sordid. They transact their affairs without lying, fraud, and swearing, being most upon handicraft trades: Yea, their doctors or teachers are weavers and shoemakers, who do not multiply riches, but content themselves with necessary things. These Lyonists are very chaste and temperate, both in meats and drinks; who neither haunt taverns, or stews: They do much curb their passions; they are always either working, teaching, or learning, &c. very frequent in their assemblies and worships, &c. They are very modest and precise in their words, avoiding scurrility, detraction, levity, and falsehood.'

Those who write against the Baptists, charge them with abundance of heresies, and monstrous doctrines; so that it is not easy with certainty to come at their opinions.

As to the matter of Baptism, some represent those they write against, as denying all baptism. Others speak of some that allowed baptism to the adult, but denied it to infants. Others again accuse them of no error at all about baptism. But there is an expedient found out to reconcile this historical difference, which both parties agree to, and seems to be the truth, viz. That there were several sects, who went under this general name of Waldenses or Albigenses, like as there are of Dissenters in England. That some of these did deny all baptism, and others only the baptism of infants. That many of them were of this latter opinion, is affirmed in several histories of this people, as well ancient as modern. I will for brevity-sake only mention one, whose authority is the rather to be taken, because he was not only a Paedobaptist, but also set himself with great care to find out the truth of this matter. 'Tis that of Chassanian, who in his history of the Albigeois says (Stennet against Ruffen, p. 81.):

'Some writers have affirmed that the Albigeois approved not of the baptism of infants: Others, that they entirely slighted this holy sacrament, as if it was of no use, either to great or small. The same has been said of the Vaudois; though some affirm, that they have always baptized their children. This difference of authors kept me for some time in suspense, before I could come to be resolved on which side the truth lay. At last considering what St. Bernard says of this matter, in his 66th Homily on the second chapter of the Song of Songs, and the reasons he brings to refute this error, and also what he wrote ad Hildesonsum comitem Sancti AEgidii, I cannot deny that the Albigeois, for the greatest part, were of that opinion. And that which confirms me yet more in the belief of it, is, that in the history of the city of Treves, which I have mentioned before, at the end of the fourth chapter, 'tis said, that at Ivoi, in the diocese of Treves, there were some who denied that the sacrament of baptism was available to the salvation of infants: And one Catherine Saube, who was burnt at Montpelier, in the year 1417 for being of the mind of the Albigeois, in not believing the traditions of the Romish church, had the same thoughts concerning infant-baptism, as 'tis recorded in the register of the town-house of the said city of Montpelier; of which we shall speak at the end of the fourth book. The truth is, they did not reject this sacrament, or say it was useless; but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, or capable of giving evidence of their faith. That which induced them, as I suppose,
to entertain this opinion, is what our Lord says: He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.'

Cassander, who has examined the question about infant-baptism with much care, and is said to have writ with more impartiality concerning the Anabaptists than any other author, makes Peter de Bruis, and Henry, who lived four hundred years before all this, to be the first that taught this opinion, and practised according to it. For, speaking of these pretended heretics, he affirms of them (Cassander's Infant-bapt. Pref.); 'That they first openly condemned infant-baptism, and stiffly asserted that baptism was fit only for the adult; which they both verbally taught, and really practised in their administration of baptism.'

And after him, Dr. Wall says (History of Infant-baptism, Book II. p. 184.): 'I take this Peter Bruis, and Henry, to be the first Antipaedobaptist preachers that ever set up a church, or society for men holding that opinion against infant-baptism, and re-baptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;' and calls them, in the contents, the two first Antipaedobaptist preachers in the world.

But lest these early reformers should bring any reputation to the Anabaptists, he relates several infamous stories and malicious slanders cast upon them by the Papists, without any endeavours to clear them: A method that he would have hardly have taken with the first leaders of the reformation, either in England or Germany.

These were both Frenchmen, and began to propagate their doctrines, and found the sect, who after their names were called Petrobrusians and Henricians, in Dauphine, about the year 1126.

They had both of them been in priests orders, and had each of them a place or employment in that office: The former having been a minister of a parish-church, but he was turned out: The latter a monk, but had deserted the monastry, upon the change of his principles; for which reason they were called apostates, as well as heretics.

Peter began first; and after he had for some time published his opinions, and drawn many followers after him, Henry became his disciple, and afterwards his successor.

The errors they are said to defend, are digested into six articles.

1. That infants are not to be baptized.
2. That temples or altars ought not to be built; and, if built, to be pulled down again.
3. That crosses are not to be worshipped, but rather broken, or trodden under foot.
4. That the mass is nothing, and ought not to be celebrated.
5. That dead men receive no benefit from the prayers, sacrifices, &c. of the living.
6. That it is a mocking of God, to sing prayers in the church.
Their opinion concerning Baptism, is all that needs here to be enquired into.

Peter, abbot of Clugny, writ an epistle to three bishops of France, against these heretics and their followers, in the year 1146, the time when they chiefly prevailed. He accuses them of all these tenets, and makes their denying of infant-baptism the first, and expresses it thus (Wall’s History of Infant-baptism, Part II. p. 173.).

The first Proposition of the new heretics.

'They say, Christ sending his disciples to preach, says in the gospel, Go ye out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. From these words of our Saviour, unless he believe, and be baptized; that is, have both christian faith and baptism; for not one of these, but both together, does save: so that infants, tho' they be by you baptized, yet since by reason of their age they cannot believe, are not saved. It is therefore an idle and vain thing, for you to wash persons with water, at such a time when you may indeed cleanse their skin from dirt in a human manner, but not purge their souls from sin: But we do stay till the proper time of faith; and when a person is capable to know his God, and believes in him, then we do, not as you charge us, re-baptize him, but baptize him; for he is so to be accounted, as not yet baptized, who is not washed with that baptism, by which sins are done away.'

This account of their practice does perfectly agree with the modern Baptists: And the author who relates it, says also,

'That they were reported to renounce all the Old Testament, and all the New, except the four gospels. But this he says he was not sure of; and would not impute it to them, for fear he might slander them.'

So it appears that he took some care in reporting their opinions, and can hardly be supposed to accuse them so positively of that which he only had by hearsay, or at least to make it the first article of their heresy.

A year after this author had written against them, St. Bernard, abbot of Clareval, was desired by the Pope to accompany some bishops, whom he had sent to stop the spreading of these doctrines, and reduce those who had been led into them. When they came nigh to the territory of the earl of St. Giles, Bernard writes a letter to the said earl (Wall’s Hist. Bapt. Part II. p. 175.), in whose country the aforesaid Henry was at this time harboured; in which he recounts what mischiefs that heretic, as he calls him, had done.

The churches, says he, are without people; the people without priests, &c. God's holy place is accounted profane; the sacraments are esteemed unholy, &c. Men die in their sins; their souls carried to that terrible judicature, alas! neither reconciled by penance, nor strengthened by the holy communion. The infants of Christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them: Nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, tho' our Saviour compassionately cries out in their behalf, saying, Suffer little children to come to me, &c.'
The same St. Bernard published a little after several sermons; in one of which he complains of a sort of heretics, who pretended to derive their doctrines from the Apostles, supposed to be these Petrobrusians and Henricians: Concerning whom he says (Sermon in Cant. 66.), they laugh at us for baptizing infants, for our praying for the dead, and for desiring the prayers of the saints: They believe no fire of purgatory after death, but that the soul when it departs the body presently passes either into rest or damnation.'

'Tis true, that both these authors give them but an ill character, and impute many errors and vile practices to them: But, of these, the Paedobaptists themselves are willing to clear them.

The truth is, says Mr. Marshall (Infant-bapt. p. 66.), 'These two men did, for twenty years together, so much spread the doctrine of the Waldenses, and so plague the bishops mitres, and the monks bellies, that I wonder not, though they charged any thing upon them, which might make them odious to the people.'

Their new doctrine did strangely spread in a little time; and tho' it began only in Dauphine, it soon obtained in most of the provinces of France; and from being buzz'd about in deserts, and little villages, it began quickly to be owned by great crowds of people, and entertained in populous towns and cities: Which greatly enraged the popish clergy, and occasioned a very hot persecution. Peter was in the year 1144 taken in the territory of St. Giles, and according to the laws of those times burnt to death. Henry escaped for some time after this, and went on to propagate the same doctrines in several places; but at length he was taken also, and delivered in chains to the bishop of Ostia: But what was done with him is not said, tho' it may easily be supposed; for the men of that character don't use to be guilty of letting heretics escape out of their hands.

These persons lived in the 12th century after Christ, and had a great number of followers who kept themselves clear of many gross errors, with which the church of Rome was corrupted in that dark time. And yet there were two famous persons, who lived and attempted a reformation of some corrupt doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, about the year 1035, among which the practice of baptizing infants was one. Of this there are two witnesses produced, which Dr. Wall acknowledges to have great appearance of truth, notwithstanding his endeavours to render it suspicious.

One proof that these men were against infant-baptism, is from a letter written by Deodwinus, bishop of Leige, to Henry I, king of France; in which are these words (Wall's Hist. c. vii. Part II. p. 159.): 'There is a report come out of France, and which goes thro' all Germany, that these two,' viz. Bruno and Berengarius, 'do maintain that the Lord's body [the host] is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body. And that they do disannul lawful marriages; and, as far as in them lies, overthrow the baptism of infants.'
The other proof produced, is from Guitmund, who wrote against Berengarius, towards the latter end of his life. This author, after he had taken notice of the afore-mentioned letter, and the opinions therein laid to their charge, says (Ibid. Part II. p. 160.): 'That Berengarius finding that those two opinions [of marriage, and baptism] would not be endured, by the ears even of the worst men that were, and that there was no pretence in Scripture to be brought for them, betook himself wholly to uphold the other [viz. that against transubstantiation] in which he seemed to have the testimony of our senses on his side, and against which none of the holy fathers had so fully spoken, and for which he picked up some reasons, and some places of Scripture misunderstood.'

This seems to be agreeable to the method of the first authors of the present reformation in England and Germany. They set out with a design to rescue both the sacraments from their corruptions and abuses, as has been proved; yet finding the common people uncapable of receiving so great an alteration at once, dropped the business of baptizing children, and bent their chief endeavours against Transubstantiation.

These were two famous champions for the truth, against popish errors and superstitions; especially the latter: and for above an hundred years after, all that stood up for the purity of the Christian religion, were called Berengarians. And so many were his followers, that Matthew Paris says, he drew all France, Italy, and England, to his opinion.

If any still doubt, whether there were in this age several who opposed the baptism of infants, let them read Dr. Alix's remarks on the ancient church of Piedmont, and particularly what he says concerning one Gundulphus, and his followers in Italy; divers of whom were examined by the bishop of Cambray and Arras, in the Year 1025, who represents them to have given the following reason against infant baptism (Stennet against Russen, p. 85.), viz.

'Because to an infant, that neither wills nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare; in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, or confession of faith; the will, faith, and confession of another man, seems not in the least to appertain.'

Thus do the most learned of the Paedobaptists themselves make the first rise of the sect, they in contempt term Anabaptists, to be at least five hundred years before the confusions at Munster, where others would fix their origin. Nor do some stop here; but go still farther back, to find out the authors and founders of this sect, even to the fourth century. For Mr. Long, Prebendary of St. Peter's, Exon, says (History, Donatists, p. 60.):

'For, though there were great feuds between the Donatists, and others, that separated from them, on the like pretences as they separated from the Catholics, as Maximinianists and Luciferians, who were professed Anabaptists.'

Now the Donatists flourished about the year 400, as appears by several edicts published against them about that time: And, though the name Anabaptist is given in several ancient writers to the Donatists, and Arians in general, this was not because they objected against the baptism of infants, but for their baptizing those again, who had been baptized before by the Catholics, either in infancy, or at age.
But now, concerning the Luciferians, Mr. Long asserts (Ib. p. 103.):

'That they did not only rebaptize the adult, that came over to them, but refused to baptize children, contrary to the practice of the church, as appears, says he, by several discourses of St. Augustine.'

These, by his account, were the most moderate of those separated from the Catholic Church in those times: That they were called Luciferians from Lucifer Calaritanus, bishop of Sardinia, once a zealous defender of the Catholic faith against the Arians, for which he was banished by them, when they had the Power; and that his separation from the Catholics was occasioned by their showing too much countenance to the Arians, and admitting (History, Donatists, p. 102.) them upon too easy conditions, not only into their communion, but into ecclesiastical dignities.

He was a man greatly esteemed and commended on many accounts by the Catholics; great numbers were of his persuasion, and followed him, and stood independent on the Donatists congregations, or any of the other factions.

Mr. Philpot the martyr, in a letter (Ib. p. 103.) of his to his fellow-sufferer, who scrupled infants baptism, finds out another about this time, on whom he fathers the first rise of this opinion.

One of his fellow-sufferers for the Protestant religion, being in doubt about the lawfulness of infant baptism, writ a letter to him about it. In Philpot's answer to this, he says (Case of Infant Baptism, p. 96.),

'That Auxentius one of the Arians sect, with his adherents, was one of the first that denied the baptism of children; and next after him, Pelagius the Heretic, and some other that were in St. Bernard's time, as it appears by his writings.

This Auxentius (Socrates, Ecclesi. Hist. Lib. IV. Ch. XXV. Greek Copy, Ch. XXX.) was bishop of Milan, and departed this life in the year 378, being succeeded in his bishopric by St. Ambrose, who is remarkable for his being elected a bishop before he was baptized.

Others have followed this opinion; as Bullinger (Tom. III. Sect VIII.), George Phillips (Answer. to Lamb. p. 137.), Holms (Animad. on Tom. p. 93.), and the Athenian Oracle (Vol. III. p. 245.).

I shall not enquire into the truth of these representations: Both the Donatists and Arians are termed Anabaptists in several ancient authors (Wall's Hist. Vol. II. Ch. IV. Sect. III.); but the occasion of giving them that title is disputed. However, since they were accused of gross heresies, and the authors of a dreadful schism in the church, some writers against the Baptists are willing enough to represent these as their predecessors.

But, if this be doubtful, there is still a more early opposer of infant baptism produced by others; of which there is such authentic proof, as not to be denied by any; and that it Tertullian, who flourished about the year 200, and was very famous in the Christian Church, leaving many learned writings behind him.
This man is the first Christian writer, who expressly mentions such a practice as baptizing of infants, and at the same time condemns it, as an unwarrantable and irrational practice.

Chassanian, a learned Frenchman, and zealous Paedobaptist, in his history of the Albigeois, having proved that they rejected the baptism of infants, tho' he thinks that they erred in this matter, yet endeavours to excuse them, by alledging (Stennet against Russen, p. 83.), 'That they were not the first who were of this opinion, seeing Tertullian was for deferring baptism, till persons came to years of discretion.' Dr. Wall, who in one place calls Peter Bruis and Henry the two first Antipaedobaptist preachers in the world, yet in another place acknowledges there was (Wall's Hist. Bapt. Part I. p. 82.), in the first four hundred years, one Tertullian, who advised it to be deferred till the age of reason; and one Nazianzen till three years of age, in case of no danger of death. Mr. John Goodwin the independent, being engaged in this controversy, says (Catabap. p. 74.), 'That Tertullian seems to have been the first who persuaded Christians to delay baptism, especially the baptism of their children, until afterwards.' Mr. Stokes (Remarks on Dr. Gale, p. 53.) also calls Tertullian the first Antipaedobaptist in the world.

Both parties in this controversy cite Tertullian's words, as making for them. The Paedobaptists, to prove there was such a practice as baptizing infants in the Christian church, as early as Tertullian's time: The Baptists, to improve what he says against it; and to show that the first writer that makes any mention of such a custom, dislikes and condemns it. For thus he expresseth himself (Tertull. de Bapt. c. 18.):

'They whose duty it is to administer baptism are to know, that it must not be given rashly, give to every one that asketh thee, has its proper subject, and relates to almsgiving: But the command rather is here to be considered (Wall's Hist. Bapt. p. 1, 26.); Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine; and that, lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens faults. Therefore, according to every ones condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children; for what need is there, that the godfathers should be brought into danger, because they may either fail of their promises by death, or they may be mistaken, by a child's proving of wicked disposition. Our Lord says, indeed, forbid them not to come unto me; therefore let them come when they are grown up; let them come when they understand, when they are instructed, whither it is that they come; let them be made Christians, when they can know Christ: What need their guiltless age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins? Men will proceed more warily in worldly things; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him, yet shall have heavenly; let them know how to desire this salvation, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh.'

Here then is a Baptist as early as the year 200, and if, by that term, we only understand an opposer of infant baptism, he bids very fair for being the first; because that supposes such a practice to be introduced, or at least attempted. We cannot expect, that any should expressly declare themselves against infants baptism before such an opinion was broached, or that any could separate till such a practice was introduced. But, if that term be used to signify such as hold the doctrine, on which infant-baptism is rejected, viz. That a personal profession of repentance and faith is necessary from those who are admitted to baptism, this was taught and practised by persons of greater authority than Tertullian, and who lived
long before his time; as will appear by the next account, which some have given concerning
this matter, viz.

That the baptism of infants was, in the primitive times, left as an indifferent thing; being by
some practised, by others omitted.

Some Paedobaptists, of no small reputation, finding themselves so hardly pressed in the
business of antiquity, are willing to halve the matter with their brethren.

I find several men of great learning, and diligent searchers into antiquity, to go this way; as
Grotius, Daillee, bishop Taylor, and Mr. Baxter. What they say to this purpose is worth
observing.

Grotius, who his adversaries acknowledge, had a vast stock of learning, and was well read in
antiquity, says to this purpose in his Annotations on Matt. xix. 14. taken partly from Wall,
and partly from Poole.

It does not appear (Wall, par. ii. p. 23.), that infant-baptism did universally obtain in the
primitive times, but was more frequent in Africa than any where else. In the councils of the
ancients, one shall find no earlier mention of Paedobaptism than in the council of Carthage.

In Tertullian’s time it appears (Tertullian on Baptism, Ch. xviii.), there was nothing defined
concerning the age in which they were to be baptized, that were consecrated by their
parents to Christian discipline; because he dissuades, by so many reasons, the baptizing of
infants.

Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of those who die without baptism, mentions among the rest
those that were not baptized by reason of infancy; and he himself, though a bishop’s son,
and educated a long time under the care of his father, was not baptized till he became a
youth, as is related in his life. And Chrysostom, though according to the true opinion born of
Christian parents, and educated by Miletus a bishop, was not baptized till past twenty one
years of age.

But most of all, the canon of the synod of Neo Cesarea, held in the year 315, is worthy our
notice; which determines, that a woman with child may be baptized when she will; for in
baptism the mother communicates nothing to the child, because, in the profession at
baptism, every one declares his own resolution: How much soever interpreters draw it to
another sense, it is plain, that the doubt concerning baptizing women great with child was
for that reason; because the child might seem to be baptized together with its mother, and
a child was not wont to be baptized, but upon its own will and profession; and so Balsamon
explains it (Com. Cant. Tit. 4.), that cannot be enlightened or baptized; and also Zonaras, the
child in the womb has then need of baptism, when it shall be able to deliberate and choose;
and many of the Greeks, says Grotius, from the beginning to this day, observe the custom of
detaining the baptism of their infants, until they are able to make profession of their own
faith; and then concludes, by saying, he has not brought this to overthrow the baptism of
infants, but to show the liberty, antiquity, and difference of the custom.
But notwithstanding this last clause, wherein he endeavours to excuse what he had said, the Paedobaptists are very angry with him, for what he has published against their practice. One says (Rivet's Apology), 'That he was perverted by cardinal Perron, who in his answer to King James, pleaded the cause of the Anabaptists with all his might.' Another (Marshal, Def. p. 29.) accuses him with an intention herein to gratify both the Socinians and the Papists. And a third says (Wall's Hist. Bap. par. 11. p. 22.) upon this, 'That he was naturally inclined to trim all controversies in religion that came in his way; and using that vast stock of learning which he had, as princes that would hold the balance, do their power, to help the weakest side.'

The learned bishop Taylor gives the same account, not only when he is representing the arguments of the Anabaptists, but when he gives his own sentiments in the case. His words are these, as quoted by Mr. Wall:

'In the first age, says he (Disswasive from Popery, par. ii. lib. ii. sect. iii. p. 117.), they did, or they did not, according as they pleased; for there is no pretence of tradition that the church, in all ages, did baptize all the infants of Christian parents: It is more certain that they did not do it always, than that they did it in the first age. St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Austin (Wall's Hist. Bap. par. ii. p. 24.), were born of Christian parents; and yet not baptized until the full age of a man, or more.'

And a little after: 'That it was the custom so to do in some churches, and at some times, is without question; but that there is a tradition from the Apostles so to do, relies on but two witnesses, Origen and Austin; and, the latter having received it from the former, it wholly relies on one single testimony; which is but a pitiful argument to prove a tradition Apostolical. He is the first that spoke it; but Tertullian, that was before him, seems to speak against it; which he would not have done, if it had been a tradition apostolical.'

Rigaltius, another writer who was very conversant with the works of the fathers, gives the same account (Annot. in Cypriani, Ep. ad Fid.):

'From the age of the Apostles, says he, to the time of Tertullian, the matter continued in ambiguo, doubtful or various; and there were some, who, on occasion of our Lord's saying, suffer little children to come to me, though he gave no order to baptize them, did baptize even new-born infants; and, as if they were transacting some secular bargain with God Almighty, brought sponsors and bondmen to be bound for them, that when they were grown up, they should not depart from the Christian faith; which custom Tertullian did not like.'

Monsieur Daille also (De ufo Patrum, lib. ii. ch. vi.), who must be reckoned amongst the men of no small learning, was of the same opinion. He says (Wall's Hist. Bap. par. ii. p. 25.),

'In ancient times, they often deferred the baptizing both of infants, and of other people, as appears by the history of the Emperors, Constantine the great, of Constantius, of Theodosius, of Valentinian, and Gratian, out of St. Ambrose; and also by the orations and homilies of Gregory Nazianzem, and of St. Basil on this subject: And some of the Fathers too have been of opinion that it is fit it should be deferred.'
And one would wonder to find, even Mr. Baxter (Baxter’s Life, book I. p. 140.), though he had writ so zealously for infant-baptism, and cast such bitter reflections upon those that deny it; yet at length to center in this opinion, and speak more favourably of them.

'And for the Anabaptists themselves, says he, as I found that most of them were persons of zeal in religion, so many of them were sober, godly people, and differed from others but in the point of infant-baptism, or at most in the points of predestination, and free-will, and perseverance. And I found in all antiquity, that though infant-baptism was held lawful by the church, yet some, with Tertullian and Nazianzen, thought it most convenient to make no haste; and the rest left the time of baptism to every one’s liberty, and forced none to be baptized. Insomuch, as not only Constantine, Theodosius, and such others, as were converted at years of discretion, but Augustine, and many such as were the children of Christian parents, one or both, did defer their baptism much longer, than I think they should have done. So that in the primitive church some were baptized in infancy, and some at ripe age, and some a little before their death; and none were forced, but all left free.'

At another time, he says (Wall’s Hist. Bap. par. ii. p. 26.), 'In the days of Tertullian, Nazainzen, and Austin, men had liberty to be baptized, or to bring their children, when, and at what age they pleased; and none were forced to go against their consciences therein.'

The last account we have of this matter is, that in the first ages of Christianity, no infants were baptized; but that this practice was brought in, after a certain term of years, without any precedent from Christ, his Apostles, or those apostolical men that lived next after them. And this is not only the opinion of the Baptists, but many of the Paedobaptists, who have searched antiquity about this matter, do ingenuously confess the same. Many instances might be produced of this; I will only give three or four.

Walafridus Strabo (Ib. p. 10.), who lived about the year 750, is very express in this point: 'It is to be noted, says he, That in the primitive times, the grace of baptism was wont to be given to those only, who were arrived to that maturity of body and mind, that they could know and understand what were the benefits of baptism, what was to be confessed and believed; and, in a word, what was to be observed of those that are regenerated in Christ. But when the diligence about our divine religion increased, the Christians understanding that the original sin of Adam did involve guilt, not only those who had added to it by their own wicked works, but those also, who having done no wickedness themselves. The orthodox Christians, I say, understanding this, lest children should perish, if they died without the remedy of the grace of regeneration, appointed them to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Sternet against Russen, p. 86.).'

Ludovicus Vives, in his notes on Augustine, de Civitate Dei, says, 'No person was formerly brought to the sacred baptistery, till he was of adult age, and both understood the meaning of that mystical water, and requested once and again to be washed in it.'

Suicerus says (Ib. p. 86.) the same thing, but is more positive as to the same. 'In the two first ages, says he, no person was baptized till he was instructed in the faith, and tinctured with the doctrine of Christ, and could testify his own faith; because of those words of Christ, He that believeth, and is baptized. Therefore believing was first.'
Curcellaeus does not only confess the same, but fixes the time of bringing in infant-baptism. His words are these (Ib. p. 87.):

‘Paedobaptism was not known in the world the first two ages after Christ. In the third and fourth it was approved by a few. At length in the fifth, and following ages, it began to obtain in divers places. And therefore we observe this rite indeed as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolical tradition.’

And in another place, according to Mr. Stennet, he says: 'The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ; and there appears not the least footstep of it, in the two first centuries.'

I will only add to these an English writer, whose great learning, and diligent search into antiquity, are well known. I mean the reverend Dr. Barlow, afterwards bishop of Lincoln.

This famous gentleman, before his great preferment in the established church had either biased his opinion, or tempted him to conceal it, frankly acknowledged, that both Scripture and antiquity were on the side of the Baptists.

'I believe and know,' says he (Danvers, Cent. 4. p. 63.), in a letter to Mr. Tombs, 'that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for Paedobaptism, nor any just evidence for it for about two hundred years after Christ. Sure I am, that in the primitive times they were Catechumeni, then illuminati, or baptizati. The truth is, I do believe, Paedobaptism, how or by whom I know not, came into the world in the second century, and in the third and fourth began to be practised, though not generally; and defended, as lawful, from the text grossly misunderstood, John iii. 5. Upon the like gross mistake of John vi. 53. they did, for many centuries, both in the Greek and Latin church, communicate infants, and give them the Lord's Supper: And I do confess, says he, they might do both, as well as either.'

When this letter was published, and improved by the Baptists, the advocates for Paedobaptism would not let the bishop rest, till he had either denied the letter, or writ a recantation. At length Mr. Wills extorted a letter from him, and leave to publish it. In this the bishop acknowledges his writing as above; but is so far from proving he was mistaken, or had misrepresented the history of those times, that he does not affirm any such thing; only tries to excuse himself, by saying, that he writ it twenty years ago, when he talked more, and understood less; and that whatever objections he had against infant-baptism, he never disturbed the peace of the church, nor declined the practice.

Thus have I traced this matter, till we are brought up to the beginning of Christianity itself: And this last opinion is that wherein the controversy resteth.

I shall only add some brief remarks on the account given of the different times assigned by the learned for the first rite of the Baptists, and the several persons whom they represent to have been the founders of that sect.

1. That the most common opinion concerning the first rite of the Baptists, and that which would reflect the greatest odium upon them, has the least appearance of truth in it, and is sufficiently confuted by the Paedobaptists themselves: viz. That they sprung from those
mad and heretical people at Munster in Germany, a little after the reformation. The most learned of their adversaries, and those that have examined the histories of this people with the greatest care and diligence, make them to be much ancien ter, and assign no less than seven other different periods of time for their origin; any one of which being true, will wipe away that scandal.

2. That as tradition is generally acknowledged to be the best and chief support of infant-baptism; so even this appears, from their own accounts, to be very precarious and uncertain.

There are but two ways, by which they can pretend to justify this practice; viz. from Scripture, and from antiquity.

Now the most learned and ingenious of the Paedobaptists themselves do confess, that there is no express mention of any such thing in Scripture; and that arguments from thence are, at most, but probable. Their most usual way therefore is to recur to ecclesiastical history, and the writings of the Fathers: But how uncertain and contradictory their accounts are from hence, does sufficiently appear by this collection.

3. We may see here also, that the advocates of infant-baptism do themselves confess and prove, that in all ages of Christianity almost, there have been some who have opposed that practice, as an human tradition, and unwarrantable custom.

The writings of the first two hundred years are wholly silent about it: The first that mentions it, condemns it; and very many of those, who stood up afterwards to oppose the corruptions and abuses brought into religion, declared their dislike of it.

Now for all this to be granted, and proved too, by the adversaries of the Baptists, is no small argument in their favour; and may convince the world, that their scruples in this case are not wholly groundless, nor a mere novelty.

4. In this variety of opinions, and these different accounts from ancient history, those who either want ability or opportunity to search those writings themselves; have most reason to depend on their account, who say, that there are no footsteps of infant-baptism in the first ages of Christianity; and that it appears to have been introduced a considerable time after Christ and his Apostles.

These, I say, supposing them to be men of equal learning and probity with the others, have most reason to be relied on; because it made against their own practice, and what they appeared desirous to support and maintain. Men are too apt to be partial to their own side, and to conceal or let pass any thing that would reflect upon their own practice in religion: He that appears so fair therefore, as to relate what makes against him as well as for him, is freest from suspicion.

Again: Those who appear too angry with them, for making these concessions to the Baptists, have not yet been able to confute them, by producing any direction from Christ or his Apostles to baptize infants, nor one instance of baptizing any such for the first two hundred years. And if it be said, those who talk thus are but few, in comparison of the great number
that oppose them; it is answered, that truth is not always on the side of the greatest number; and that their number is not inconsiderable, when we add to them all the learned among the Baptists, and a great number of learned men in the church of Rome, who assert the same thing (Vid. Stennet against Russen, p. 173.).

5. This diversity of opinions among the learned about tradition, and the practice of the Fathers, tends to confirm the Baptists in their opinion; That the holy Scriptures are to be the only rule of our faith and worship; and that we are to practice nothing, as an institution of Christ, which is not therein contained. Supposing it could be proved, by sufficient evidence, that the churches did immediately after the apostles practise infant-baptism, it would not necessarily follow from thence that it was instituted by Christ, and practised by the Apostles; because the most ancient churches were subject to err, and those christians who lived in the very next age after the Apostles, made several additions, both in doctrine and worship. Their writings may therefore prove fact, but not right: And the grand question would still remain; Whether this practice was derived from Christ, and his Apostles, or begun by some others after his death?

The writings of the Fathers therefore could only furnish them with probable arguments: and we must, after all, refer to Scripture for certainty in this, and all other controversies about points of revealed religion. But how defective are they, even in these probable arguments; and how miserably are they divided, in their opinions on this account? It is easy to discern from this collection, that they are much more successful in confuting each other, than in defending themselves: What one calls orthodox, another represents as heresy; and a practice highly applauded by one, is severely censured by another. And in ecclesiastical history there is a very great uncertainty, even as to facts.

But, in the midst of these confusions, we have a sure word; whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place (2 Pet. i. 19.). To the law therefore, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. viii.20.).
CHAPTER 1: From the time of Wickliff, to the end of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth

THOUGH the English have, above most nations, been always very zealous of their natural rights and privileges; yet the spirit of persecution has often prevailed in this land, and under the mark of religion, the properties of men have been invaded, liberty of conscience taken away, and the most cruel and barbarous actions committed. And whenever it has been thus, those who were branded with the name of Anabaptists have been sure to feel the sharpest part of these things.

The Martyrology of the foreign Anabaptists is a large book in Folio; and the account it gives of the number of their martyrs and confessors, as well as of the cruelties that were used towards them, very much exceeds anything that has been done in England. However, according to their number in this land, and the degree to which persecution has at any time arisen, they have always had their full share of it.

John Wickliff (Edw. III. An. Dom. 1371.) was the first person of any note, who in England opposed the corruptions of the pope and his clergy, and who met with any considerable success in so doing. He began this work in the reign of king Edward III.

There were indeed before him several who showed their dislike of many things in the established church, and frequently spoke against the superstitious clergy; but these were very few, and persons of no great character, such as did but little towards opening the eyes of the people. But this man having good natural abilities, the benefit of a liberal education, and several good friends at court to encourage and support him, and above all, being extraordinarily qualified and assisted by God, gave the first considerable check to the errors and superstition of those times. And though the Reformation was not established till about 187 years after, yet the first seeds of it were sown by him; for which reason the best historians of the Reformation in England, begin their account from the days of Wickliff.

The famous Martyrogolist Mr. John Fox, begins the second part of his history thus: 'Although it be manifest and evident enough, that there were divers and sundry before Wickliff's time, which have wrestled and laboured in the same cause and quarrel that our countryman Wickliff hath done, whom the Holy Ghost hath from time to time raised and stirred up in the church of God, to vanquish and overthrow the great errors which daily did grow and prevail in the world; yet notwithstanding, for so much as they are not many in number, neither yet very famous or notable, we will begin the narration of this our history with Wickliff, at whose time the furious fire of persecution seemed to take its original and beginning (Book of Martyrs, first edition. p. 85.).'
Bishop Burnet also begins his account of the Reformation with him, saying, 'From the days of Wickliff there were many that disliked most of the received doctrines in several parts of the nation (History of Reformation. vol. I. p. 23.).'

We find no mention of him in history till his being a graduate in Merton college in Oxford (Fuller's Church Hist. lib. iv. p. 130.); so that no account can be given of his parentage, place of birth, or manner of education. His great abilities soon advanced him to a professorship in the university, and a living, in which he had the cure of souls. When he was convinced, by the word of God of the idolatry and superstition of the times, and resolved upon a reformation, these two places gave him great advantages for the promoting his design: for by the one he was frequently engaged in disputations with the learned; and by the other, in preaching to the common people. He considered with himself that old customs and principles, that had been long rooted in the minds of the people, could not presently, and all at once, be removed; and therefore resolved to proceed gradually in his design, finding fault first with lesser things, in order to come to the greater; beginning with some logical and metaphysical mistakes, and so proceeding till he came to the doctrine of transubstantiation, and other abuses of the church. He endeavoured to expose the vicious lives and insolent behaviour of the clergy (Fox, vol. I, p. 556.) ; and especially their assuming the civil power, encroaching upon the prince's prerogative, exacting great sums from the people. This procured him the favour of the court, and particularly the duke of Lancaster (the king's son) and the Lord Piercy, which proved a great protection to him afterwards, when persecuted by the bishops.

'He translated the Bible (says Burnet - Hist. Reformation. vol. I. p. 23.) out of Latin into English, with a long preface before it, in which he reflected severely on the corruptions of the clergy, and condemned the worshipping of saints and images, and denied the corporal presence of Christ's body in the sacrament, and exhorted all people to study the Scriptures. His Bible, with this preface, was well received by a great many;' and tended greatly to open the eyes of the people, and is the first English Bible that ever was.

What was done by this famous man, towards removing those corruptions in doctrine and worship which were then in the English church, exposed him to the persecution of the Romish clergy, who exercised all the rage and power they durst against him.

First, he was deprived of his benefice at Oxford, and silenced by Simon Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury. After this he was summoned to appear before a synod, which sat at St. Paul's church, to answer for his errors before his ordinary; but his two great friends and encouragers, the duke of Lancaster and Lord Piercy, appearing with him, nothing was done against him at this time.

An account of his errors and proceedings being sent to pope Gregory, there was quickly a bull sent to Oxford, enjoining the university and clergy to apprehend him; and a letter from the pope to the king, requiring his majesty to join with and assist the clergy in prosecuting of him.

This gave fresh encouragement to the clergy; who having exhibited certain conclusions against him, cited him to appear again before a convocation of bishops at Lambeth, with a
full resolution to condemn both him and his errors; but a message came from the court, which put a stop to their proceedings.

Several other attempts were made against him; but they could not proceed till the duke of Lancaster was removed from the king, and then he was condemned at Oxford: yet he died peaceably in his bed in the year 1385, though forty one years after his body was taken up and burnt.

As to his opinions, it is very difficult now to have a certain account of them; because they who took so much care to burn his bones, did not neglect to destroy his books, which of the two were like to do them the most hurt. And to do this the more effectually, not only the prelates of England and Bohemia, but also a general council condemned all his books, and commanded them to be burnt; strictly forbidding any person to read or conceal any of them, under the penalty of being proceeded against as maintainers of heresy: so that in the year 1410, by diligent inquisition about two hundred of them were gathered together in Oxford and Bohemia, and committed to the flames. We are now therefore forced to take the account of his opinions from his enemies; and if any credit may be given to their account, he was for carrying the reformation much further than it was in the reign of Q. Elizabeth, or since. For

1. He not only denied the pope's supremacy (Fuller a Wald. p. 131.), but was against any person's assuming the title and authority of being the head of the church; asserting (Art. I.), 'That it is blasphemy to call any head of the church, save Christ alone.'

2. He condemned episcopacy as being a creature of princes setting up. For he asserted (Art. 14.), 'That in the time of the apostles there were only two orders, viz. priests and deacons; and that a bishop doth not differ from a priest.'

3. He was for having ministers maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people, and not by tythes settled on them by law; saying (Art. 24.), 'That tythes are pure alms, and that pastors are not to exact them by ecclesiastical censures.'

4. He was not for giving the church a power to decree rites and ceremonies, and to determine controversies of faith. For it is said (Art. 26, 26.), 'That he slighted the authority of general councils, and affirmed, that wise men leave that as impertinent which is not plainly expressed in Scripture.'

5. He was also against prescribed forms of prayer, but especially against imposing of them. For he saith (Art. 30.), 'To bind men to set and prescript forms of prayers, doth derogate from that liberty God hath given them.'

I am inclined to believe Mr. Wickliff was a Baptist, because some men of great note and learning in the church of Rome, have left it upon record, that he denied infant-baptism. Thomas Waldensis (De Bapt. Sac. Tit. 5. chap. liii.) chargeth him expressly with this opinion; and calls him one of the seven heads that came out of the bottomless pit, for it; saying, 'That he doth positively assert, That children are not to be sacramentally baptized.'
The same saith Joseph Vicecomes (De Rit. Bapt. lib. ii. chap. I.): ‘As to adult baptism, no one ever doubted thereof, witness the monuments or writings of all the holy fathers and ecumenical councils, as well as the Scriptures themselves, especially the Acts of the Apostles; but as for infants baptism, he tells us, that Vincentius Victor, Hincmarus of Laudun, the Henrici and Apostolici, John Wickliff, &c. did all of them witness against it in their times.’

Besides, they charge him with several of those which are called Anabaptistical errors; such as the refusing to take an oath (Art. 41. condemned by the Council of Constance.), and also that opinion, that dominion is founded in grace (Fuller, Art. 51.). Upon these testimonies, some Protestant writers (Jan Van Bright. Danvers.) have affirmed that Wickliff was a Baptist, and have put him in the number of those who have born witness against infant-baptism. And had he been a man of scandalous character, that would have brought a reproach upon those of that profession, a less proof would have been sufficient to have ranked him among the sect.

But in defence of so great and learned a reformer, it is said, that those are only lies and slanders, cast upon him by the Papists, his enraged enemies; and that Vicecomes has also reckoned Luther, Calvin and Beza, among the adversaries of infant-baptism; which is, say they, a most evident falshood: that if this had been his opinion, the Council of Constance, who condemned 45 of his supposed errors, would not have omitted objecting this against him, for in such cases, they commonly over did it: that there is a treatise still extant of Wickliff’s, called Dialogus, in which he speaks of the baptizing of infants, as being according to Christ’s rule; and the parents intention of doing it, as a good intention.

All this does indeed render it doubtful whether he was of that opinion. Yet it is to be considered, on the other hand, that the Papists were the best capable of giving an account of persons who lived in those times; that though they often cast slanders upon those who opposed their superstitions, it follows not, that all must be false which they said of them. Fox (28, 35, and 45.), who has related his opinions, has left out one of those condemned in the convocation at London, and three of the 45 condemned in the Council of Constance, as appears by his first edition; which must be concealed for some design, not known. And although when Wickliff wrote his Dialogus, he held the baptizing of infants; yet it does not hence follow, that he might not afterwards be of another mind, and write against it in some of those two hundred books of his that were burnt; of which, as Mr. Fuller saith (Church-History, p. 135.), not a tittle is left.

Several of the Romish errors are asserted in that book; as purgatory, adoration of angels, the authority of the church, &c. which it is plain he afterwards denied. Very few who set themselves to reform religion, see all the abuses in it at first; but most commonly add new opinions, consequent to those they at first maintained; and so an honest historian (Fuller, p. 131.) supposes Wickliff to have done.

The heretical opinions charged upon Wickliff in the latter part of his life, and after his death, are much more numerous than those he was accused of at the beginning of his prosecution.
Pope Gregory charged him with 18 errors; Thomas Arundel archbishop of Canterbury with 24; the Council of Constance with 45; Thomas Waldensis computeh 80; John Luke, D.D. in Oxford, brings up the account to 266; and last of all, John Cocleus raises the number to 303.

But whether he denied infant-baptism, or not, it is certain he was the first reformer of any note, that spread those tenets among the English which tend to overthrow the practice of baptizing infants. And if he did not pursue the consequence of his own doctrines so far, yet many of his followers did, and were made Baptists by it.

He taught, that no rule or ceremony ought to be received in the church, which is not plainly confirmed by the word of God: and therefore said, 'That wise men leave that as impertinent, which is not plainly expressed in Scripture (Fuller, p. 132.).

Now, the following of this rule in reformation, must needs tend to the casting out of infant-baptism; the Paedobaptists themselves granting, that there is no direction for such a practice in the word, nor one example of it, as will be hereafter shown.

Bishop Burnet observes, it was the pursuing this principle, that gave rise to the Anabaptists in Germany; Luther (Hist. Ref. vol. II. p. 110.) having laid it down as a foundation, that the Scripture was to be the only rule of Christians; that many building upon this, carried things further than he did, and denied divers things which he held, and amongst the rest the baptism of infants.

Another Tenet of Wickliff's was this (Fuller, p. 133.): 'That those are fools and presumptious, which affirm such infants not to be saved, which die without baptism, and he denied, that all sins are abolished in baptism.'

Now, it was the opinion that baptism washed away original sin, and by a secret virtue regenerated the person, and that the infant dying without it, was in danger of damnation, that began and established this practice; therefore this foundation being removed, that practice falls of course.

Nay further, it is affirmed to be a doctrine of Wickliff's (Fuller a Wald. Art. 35.), 'That baptism doth not confer, but only signify grace, which was given before.'

And in his Dialogus, although that was written while he retained divers popish errors, he asserts (Trialogus, lib. iv. chap. II. a Baxter.), 'That children may be saved without Baptism; and that the baptism of water profiteth not, without the baptism of the Spirit.' Which shows, that even then he was inclinable to the opinion of the Baptists; and makes it very probable, that when he afterwards threw off many of the errors mentioned in that book, he did also reject the baptism of infants, as it is charged upon him by his adversaries.

Amongst the followers of this great man, both in Bohemia and England, we find many Baptists. The Reformation which began so early in Bohemia, and spread so quickly through most parts of Germany, was in great measure owing to our Wickliff.

Some have thought that he fled into those parts to escape the rage of the English clergy for some time, and then returned again, and so had propagated his principles secretly there.
But the account Mr. Fox gives (Martrol. vol. i. p. 606.) us seems the most probable; which is, that a certain young gentleman of Bohemia happening to be at Oxford, upon his returning back to the university of Prague, took with him several of Wickliff's books, and communicated them to Mr. John Hus, who was a man of great learning, a fruitful wit, and of extraordinary piety, by reading these books imbibed the same sentiments of religion which Wickliff had, and openly defended both Wickliff and his doctrines; and so became the first reformer there, and founder of that sect which were called by some Pyghards, and by others Hussites.

Now concerning this people, and their sentiments of religion, we have a very particular account in a letter written to Erasmus out of Bohemia, by Johannes Slechta Costelecius, dated October 10, 1519. which makes the rise of that sect to be above 97 years before that insurrection at Munster; which some would make the first rise of the Baptists, and many years before Luther and Calvin.

In the account he gives of them, he says, they mutually salute one another by the name of Brother and Sister; they own no other authority than the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; they believe or own little or nothing of the sacraments of the church; such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in mere water, &c.

Now though the account in this letter agrees almost in every thing, with the opinions and practice of the English Baptists; yet the advocates of infant-baptism would fain persuade us to the contrary, by suggesting that they did not re-baptize those that embraced their opinion, as judging baptism in infancy invalid; but judging all baptism received in the corrupt was of the church of Rome to be so. And in confirmation of this, Dr. Wall cites Ottius (Hist. Anabapt. anno. 1521.), who affirms this to be the reason of it.

But when the Paedobaptists argue after this manner, they don't consider that they hereby cast the same odium upon the Protestant religion in general, which they have so often endeavoured to fix upon the Baptists only; viz. That they can have no right administrator of baptism amongst them, and consequently no true baptism. For as bishop Burnet observes (Vol. ii. p. 113.), at the beginning of the Reformation, all had been baptized in the corrupt way of the church of Rome. If that baptism was nothing, then there was none truly baptized in being. Now it did not seem reasonable, that men who were not baptized themselves, should go and baptize others; and therefore the first heads of the Reformation, not being rightly baptized themselves, seemed not to act with any authority, when they went to baptize others.

If, on the other hand, they affirm, that the baptism received in the church of Rome is valid; then these people must be real Anabaptists, who baptized every one anew that came over to their sect.

Nor do we find any that believed infant-baptism to be lawful, who upon departing from the church of Rome, did look upon the baptism they had there received as invalid, and so received a new baptism upon their becoming Protestants. They all abhorred indeed the superstitious use of oil of chrism; yet seeing there was in that baptism the element of water applied, the right words of institution used, and both these administered, as they
thought, to a proper subject, they judged it had the essentials of a true baptism, and accordingly contented themselves with it.

'Tis therefore most reasonable to conclude, that those persons were Baptists, and upon that account baptized those that came over to their sect, who professed the true faith, and desired to be baptized into it.

As for Ottius, it is no wonder he asserts the contrary. For he writ with a great deal of warmth to expose the mad Anabaptists, who had made such confusion in Germany, and therefore would not allow any sober and religious people to be of their opinion in any thing. But Waldensis, who lived above an hundred years before Ottius, and writ against the Wickliffites and Hussites, affirms, 'that some of them maintained this heresy (Walden. Tom. III. Tit. v. c. 53. Marshall, p. 65.), that believers children were not to be baptized, and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them.'

But to return to England: Let us see how the doctrines of Wickliff prevailed there, and what was taught and practised, in the point of baptism, by his English disciples.

As in Bohemia the followers of Wickliff went under the name of Waldenses, Pyghards, and Hussites; so in England they were many years called Lollards.

Under this name were the several statutes made against them; their supposed heresies were condemned under the name of Lollardy, and the prison in London, to which they were sent, was called the Lollards Tower. Some think they derived this name from Walter Lollard, one of the Waldensian preachers in Germany, who came to England about the year 1315 and propagated several opinions, agreeing with those afterwards maintained by Wickliff. Others suppose they were so called from the Latin word lolium, which signifies tares, or hurtful weeds among the corn, and so were termed Lollards, quasi lolia, in ara Domini.

The first followers of Wickliff according to Dr. Burnet (Hist. Ref. vol. I. p. 23.), were generally illiterate and ignorant men, who were led into his opinions, rather by the impressions which common sense and plain reason made upon them, than by any deep speculations or study. 'There were, says he, some few Clerks joined to them, but they formed not themselves into any body or association, and were scattered over the kingdom, holding these opinions (against worshipping saints and images, and the corporal presence) in private, without making any public profession of them. Generally they were known by their disparaging the superstitious clergy, whose corruptions were then so notorious, and their cruelty so enraged, that no wonder the people were deeply prejudiced against them.'

In the 5th year of Richard II. (at which time Wickliff himself was alive) a bill for the suppressing of heretics passed in the house of Lords, and was assented to by the King, and published for an act of Parliament, though the bill was never sent to the house of Commons. By this pretended law, says Burnet, 'it appears, that Wickliff's follwers were then very numerous; that they had a certain habit, and did preach in many places, both in churches, church-yards, and markets, without licence from the ordinary; and did preach several doctrines, both against the faith and the laws of the land, as had been proved before the Archbishop of Canterbury, the other bishops, prelats, doctors of divinity, and of the civil
and canon law, and others of the clergy; that they would not submit to the admonitions, nor censures of the church, but by their subtil ingenious words, did draw the people to follow them and defend them by a strong hand, and in great routs. Therefore it was ordained, that upon the bishops certifying into the chancery the names of such preachers and their abettors, the chancellour should issue forth commissions to the sheriffs, and other the king's ministers, to hold them in arrest and strong prison, till they should justify them according to the law and reason of holy church.'

The popish party made use of this pious fraud; and though the next parliament disowned and condemned that pretended law, yet they found means to get this new act suppressed, and went on to prosecute the Lollards with all the fierceness and severity the former law would permit; and several of their most noted preachers were apprehended, imprisoned and harassed, by vexatious suits in the ecclesiastical courts, for as yet there was no law that reached to life.

But when the crown was usurped by Henry IV. in gratitude to the clergy, who assisted him in coming to it, he granted them a law, to their hearts content, for the burning of heretics; which passed both houses in the second year of his reign. And to the eternal infamy of the romish clergy, who procured this bloody law, upon the authority of which so much cruelty was afterwards acted, it was entered in the rolls, Petitio Cleri contra haereticos (Fox, vol. I. p. 773.).

The first who was put to this cruel death in England, merely for religion, was William Sawtre, who was burnt in London, An. Dom. 1400. He had been some-time minister of the parish of St. Margaret, in the town of Lynn; but having entertained the opinions of the Lollards, was first convicted of heresy by the bishop of Norwich, and afterwards brought to make a public recantation of the same, and so escaped for that time: but coming to London, and retaining still a zeal for the true religion, he petitioned the parliament that he might be heard in some matters relating to religion, which he believed would be for the benefit of the whole kingdom.

The clergy suspecting his design, which must have been to get the established religion reformed, or a toleration for such as dissented, got the matter to be referred wholly to them in convocation; who soon condemned him as an obstinate heretic, and procured a decree from the king for his burning.

This Proto-Martyr of the English nation (Hook's Apology, Preface.) is thought by some to have been a Baptist; because the Lollards, who lived in the diocese of Norwich, where this man first received and professed his notions, were generally of that opinion (Martyrol. vol. I. p. 673.): and Mr. Fox, in relating the errors of which he was accused by the Papists, uses the same partiality that he had done before in Wickliff's case; for of the ten errors of which he was convicted by the bishop of Norwich, he conceals the two last, as may be seen in the scroll and recantation.

Fox was doubtless so honest as historian, as not to record any thing he knew to be false; yet it is plain, by these and several other instances, he endeavoured to conceal many things that
would make against the religion established in his time, or that he thought would be a disparagement to his martyrs.

The cruel and ignominious death of this good man struck a great terror into the rest of Wickliff's followers, and made them more cautious how they divulged their opinions for the future; yet such was the craft and diligence of the clergy, that they found out means to discover many of them, and by virtue of the statute ex officio, which they had now obtained, persecuted them with great cruelty, so that the prisons were full of them, many were forced to abjure, and those that refused were used without mercy (Fuller, p. 164.).

And as this persecution began in the diocese of Norwich, so it was carried on with the greatest heat and violence.

Mr. Fox gives an account of an hundred and twenty, who were hereupon accused, and committed to prison for Lollardy in about three years time; that is, from the year 1428, to 1431 (Fuller, vol. I. p. 867, &c.). Of these, some through fear either denied or abjured their opinions; others suffered cruel penance, and others were burnt alive: as Father Abraham, William White, John Wadden, and others.

As to the opinions that were held by these Lollards, or disciples of Wickliff, in England, 'tis agreed by all, that they denied the pope's supremacy, the worshipping of images, praying for the dead, and the like popish doctrines. Whether they rejected the baptism of infants or not, has been doubted by some; but that they generally did so, is more than probable, from what is left upon record concerning them.

For the better discovering who were Lollards, there were certain articles drawn up, upon which the Inquisitors were to examine those who were suspected, and if they saw need, oblige them to abjure. Among these the 12th article was (Fox, vol. I. p. 687.), 'That the infant, though he die unbaptized, shall be saved.'

Waldensis, who wrote against the Wickliffites and Hussites, about the year 1410. affirms, that Wickliff's followers in Scotland, and some in the bishop of Norwich's diocese did hold (Marshal def. Inf. Bapt. p. 65.), that the children of believers are not to be sacramentally baptized; and that they judged it unprofitable to give children ecclesiastical baptism (Baptists Answer to Wills, p. 7.), saying they were sufficiently clean and holy, because they were born of holy and christian parents.

The Dutch martyrology gives an account of Sir L. Clifford, who had formerly been a Lollard, but had departed from their opinions, who informed the archbishop of Canterbury, that the Lollards would not baptize their new-born children. And our English martyrrologist tell us (Fox, vol. I. p. 868.), that the Lollards were accused of holding these errors concerning baptism, viz. 'That the sacrament of baptism, used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents be baptized before them.'
Fox indeed endeavours to excuse them in these things; and supposes they were only slanders cast upon them by their persecutors.

It is certain they did not deny water-baptism itself, as these accusations suppose; but because they denied that baptism washed away sin, and conferred grace, they charge them with saying, that it was a light matter, and of small effect: Because they held, it was the blood of Christ that saved us, and not water, they accuse them of this error, that christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and because they rejected the baptizing of infants, as a needless ceremony, they condemn them as such that affirmed, that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents were baptized before them.

The persecution of the Lollards rather increasing their number than diminishing them, I shall not take notice of the particular sufferers in succession; but proceed to the reign of Henry VIII. where I find their principles about baptism more fairly stated.

Bishop Burnet says (Hist. Reform. vol. I. p. 27.), 'That in the reign of K. Henry VIII. on the 2d day of May, in the year 1511, six men and four women, most of them being of Tenderden, appeared before Archbishop Warham, in his manour of Knoll, and abjured the following errors:'

1. That in the sacrament of the altar is not the body of Christ, but material bread: 2. That the sacraments of baptism and confirmation are not necessary, nor profitable for men's souls: 3. That confession of sins ought not to be made to a priest: 4. That there is no more power given by God to a priest than to a layman: 5. That the solemnization of matrimony is not profitable nor necessary, for the well of a man's soul: 6. That the sacrament of extreme unction is not profitable nor necessary for a man's soul: 7. That pilgrimages to holy and devout places be not profitable, neither meritorious for man's soul: 8. That images of saints be not to be worshipped: 9. That a man should pray to no saint, but only to God: 10. That holy water, and holy bread, be not the better after the benediction made by the priest, than before. And as they abjured these opinions, so they were made to swear, that they would discover all whom they knew to hold these errors, or who were suspected of them, or that did keep any private conventicles; or were sutors, or comforters of them that published such doctrines. Two other men of Tenderden did that day in the afternoon abjure most of these opinions. The court sat again the fifth of May, and the archbishop enjoined them penance, to wear the badge of a faggot in flames on their clothes during their lives, or till they were dispensed with for it; and that in the procession, both at the cathedral of Canterbury, and at their own parish-churches, they should carry a faggot on their shoulders, which was looked on as a public confession that they deserved burning. The same day another of Tenderden abjured the same doctrines. On the 15th of May the court sat at Lambeth, where four men and one woman abjured. On the 19th, four men more abjured. On the 3d of June, a man and a woman abjured; another woman the 26th of July; another man the 29th of July; two women on the 2d of August; a man on the 3d, and a woman on the 8th of August; three men on the 16th of August; and three men and a woman on the 3d of September. In these abjurations, some were put to abjure more, some fewer of the former doctrines: and in some of their abjurations, two articles more were added. First, that the images of the crucifix of our lady and other saints, ought not to be worshipped, because they were made with men's hands, and were but stocks and stones. Second, that money
and labours spent in pilgrimages were all in vain. All these persons (whether they were unjustly accused, or were overcome with fear, or had but crude conceptions of those opinions, and so easily frightened out of them) abjured, and performed the penance that was enjoined then. Others met with harder measure; for on the 29th of April, in the same year 1511. one William Carder of Tenderden, being indicted on the former articles, he denied them all but one: That he had said, it was enough to pray to Almighty God alone, and therefore we needed not to pray to saints for any mediation; upon which witnesses were brought against him, who were all such as were then prisoners, but intended to abjure, and were now made use of to convict others. They swore, that he had taught them these opinions. When their depositions were published, he said he did repent, if he had said any thing against the faith, and the sacraments, but he did not remember that he had said any such thing. Sentence was given upon him as an obstinate heretic, and he was delivered up to the secular power. On the same day a woman, Agnes Grevil, was indicted upon the same articles. She pleaded not guilty; but by a strange kind of proceeding, her husband and her two sons were brought in witnesses against her. Her husband deposed, that in the end of the reign of K. Edw. IV. one John Ive had persuaded her into these opinions, in which she had persisted ever since. Her sons also deposed, that she had been still infusing these doctrines into them. One Robert Harrison was also indicted, and pleading not guilty, witnesses did prove the articles against him; and on the 2d of May, sentence was given against these two, as obstinate heretics; and the same day the archbishop signed the writs for certifying these sentences into the chancery, which conclude in these words: Our holy mother the church, having nothing further that she can do in this matter, we leave the forementioned heretics, and every one of them, to your royal highness, and to your secular council.

'And on the 8th of May, John Brown and Edward Walker, being also indicted of heresy, on the former points, they both pleaded not guilty; but the witnesses deposing against them, they were judged obstinate heretics, and the former a relapse, for he had abjured before cardinal Morton, and on the 19th of May sentence was given. When or how the sentences were executed, I cannot find: sure I am, there are no pardons upon record for any of them; and it was the course of the law, either to send a pardon, or issue out the writ for burning them. Fox mentions none of these proceedings; only he tells, that John Brown was taken for some words said in discourse with a priest, about the saying of masses for redeeming of souls out of purgatory; upon which he was committed for suspicion of heresy. But Fox seems to have been misinformed about the time of his burning, which he says was An. Dom. 1517; for they would not have kept a condemned heretic six years out of the fire. I never find them guilty of any such clemency.' Thus far Bp. Burnet.

It may very well be supposed, that most of the aforementioned persons were opposers of infant-baptism; else why were they obliged to abjure the opinion of baptism, as being neither necessary nor profitable? But if it be said, that these ten articles were esteemed heretical opinions and errors by the church in that day, therefore if they found any person guilty of one, they obliged them to abjure the whole; then I say, it is evident there were opposers of infant-baptism at that time, and that the rite of the Baptists is not of such late date as some would have it.
The king becoming sensible of his error, in being wholly ruled by the Clergy, called his high court of Parliament in the year 1528 (Baker’s Chron. p. 296.). The Commons complained sharply of their grievances against the clergy (Mart. Hist. kings of England, p. 282.); especially in six things, the third of which was, that spiritual men became farmers of great granges and farms, to the prejudice of husbandmen and grangers (Hist. Eng. in 2 Eliz. p. 1186.).

The fourth was, because many abbots, priors, and other spiritual men, kept tanhouses, and sold wool, cloth, and other wares, as temporal merchants.

I mention this, to show that the clergy of the church of Rome have been employed in mechanic exercises; and I shall have occasion hereafter to make it appear that this has been the case of those of the other denominations among protestants, as well as the Baptists; though they have all joined in warm reflections on them on this account, as if they only were chargeable with this practice.

But to proceed, though we find not in history among the martyrs, many who are taken notice of as opposers of infant-baptism, the historians themselves being Paedobaptists; yet there is ground sufficient to believe, that many of them were Baptists.

James Bainham, Knt. (Fox, vol II. p. 298.) who was burnt in Smithfield, Apr. 30, 1532. seems by what he said upon his examination before the bishop of London, Dec. 15, 1531. to have been an opposer of infant-baptism.

In the year 1533. Mr. John Frith (Wall. Hist. Bap. Vol. II. p. 207.), who was burnt in Smithfield, wrote a short tract, which he called a Declaration of Baptism. 'Tis published with his other works, Lond. 1573.

King Henry having renounced the pope, and married Anne of Bulloign, she being a special favourer of the gospel, no great persecution nor abjuration was in the church of England during her time; saving, that ten Anabaptists, which the registers of London make mention of, were put to death in sundry places of the realm, An. Dom. 1535. Other ten saved themselves by recantation.

Note again, that two more, albeit the definite sentence was read, yet notwithstanding were pardoned by the king, which was contrary to the pope's law (Fox, vol. II. p. 325.).

About this time was Thomas Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury very busy in projecting the most effectual means for promoting a reformation in doctrine (Burnet's Hist. Ref. vol. I. lib. 3. p. 195.). He moved in Convocation, that they should petition the king for leave to make a translation of the Bible; but Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and all his party opposed it, both in Convocation and in secret with the king.

It was said, that all the heresies and extravagant opinions which were in Germany, and from thence brought over into England, sprang from the free use of the Scriptures. And whereas in May, 1535. nineteen Hollanders were accused of some heretical opinions, denying Christ to be both God and Man, or that he took flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, or that the sacraments had any effect upon those that received them. In which opinions fourteen of
them remained obstinate, and were burnt by pairs in several places. It was pretended, that all these drew their damnable errors from the indiscreet use of the Scriptures. These, or however some of them, are supposed to be Anabaptists, because Fuller mentions some under that name who suffered that year.

The proceedings of the convocation, and the articles of religion therein agreed upon, and published with the king's authority in 1536. show, that the opinion of the Baptists was then increasing in England.

This convocation sat down in June, and after some affairs relating to the king's divorce were debated, the lower house sent to the upper house, a collection of many opinions that were then in the realm. There are sixty seven set down, and are the tenets of the old Lollards, new Reformers, and Anabaptists; and after much consultation and debating, certain articles were agreed upon, and published with the king's authority.

By these articles, which are expressed at large by Fuller and Burnet, it may be seen what sort of men the whole body of the clergy condemned as heretics in those days.

But it will be sufficient here to insert only those concerning baptism.

As touching the holy sacrament of baptism, say they, 'We will that all bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach our people committed by us unto their spiritual charge, that they ought and must of necessity believe certainly all those things which have been always by the whole consent of the church approved, received and used, in the sacrament of baptism. That is to say,

'I. That the sacrament of baptism was instituted and ordained in the New Testament by our Saviour Jesus Christ, as a thing necessary for the attaining of everlasting life; according to the saying of Christ, nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua & Spiritu Sancto, no potest intrare in regnum coelorum.

'Item, That it is offered unto all men, as well infants as such as have the use of reason, that by baptism they shall have the remission of sins, and the grace and favour of God; according to the saying of St. John, Qui crediderit & baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit.

'Item, That the promise of grace and everlasting life, which promise is adjoined unto the sacrament of baptism, pertaineth not only such as have the use of reason, but also to infants, innocents and children; and that they ought therefore, and must needs be baptized: and that by the sacrament of baptism, they do also obtain remission of their sins, the grace and favour of God, and be made thereby the very sons and children of God; insomuch as infants and children, dying in their infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby, or else not.

'Item, That infants must needs be christened, because they be born in original sin, which sin must needs be remitted; which cannot be done but by the sacrament of baptism, whereby they receive the Holy Ghost, which exerciseth his grace and efficacy in them, and cleanseth and purgeth them from sin, by his most secret virtue and operation.

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

'Item, that men or children having the use of reason, willing and desiring to be baptized, shall by the virtue of that holy sacrament, obtain the grace of the remission of all their sins, if they shall come thereunto perfectly and truly repentant and contrite, of all their sins before committed, and also perfectly and constantly confessing and believing, all the articles of our faith, according as it was mentioned in the articles before; or else not. And finally, if they shall also have firm credence and trust in the promise of God, adjoined to the said sacrament; that is to say, that in and by this sacrament which they shall receive, God the Father giveth unto them, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, remission of all their sins, and the grace of the Holy Ghost, whereby they be newly regenerated, and made the very children of God, according to the saying of Christ and his apostle St. Peter, Poenitentiam agite, & baptizetur unusquisque vestrum, in nomine Jesu Christi, in remissionem peccatorum, & accipietis donum Spiritus Sancti; and according also to the saying of St. Paul, ad Titum. 3. Non ex operibus justitiae quae fecimus nos, sed secundum suam misericordiam, salvos nos fecit, per lavacrum regenerationis & renovationis Spiritus Sancti, quem effudit in nos opulenter per Jesum Christum servatorem nostrum, ut justificati illius gratia heredes efficiamur, juxta spem vitae eternae.'

Dr. Wall would insinuate, that there were no Baptists in England at this time; but that the King and Convocation, hearing of some in Germany, made and published these articles only by way of prevention, lest such opinions should be brought over hither. But is it probable they would have made so much stir about opinions that were not among them? Besides, the preface put to the articles in the King's name, does plainly contradict this insinuation; for therein it is said by the King: 'We being of late, to our great regret, credibly advertised of such diversity in opinions, as have grown and sprongen in this our realm, as well concerning certain articles necessary to our salvation, as also touching certain other honest and commendable ceremonies, rites, and usages, now a long time used and accustomed in our churches, have caused our Bishops, and other the most discreet and best learned men of our Clergy of this our whole realm, to be assembled in our Convocation, for the full debatement and quiet determination of the same.'

After these articles of religion were published, Bishop Burnet tells us (Hist. Ref. vol. I. lib. iii. p. 218.): 'That those that desired reformation were glad to see so great a step once made, and did not doubt but this would make way for further changes. They rejoiced to see the Scriptures and the ancient creeds made the standards of the faith, without mentioning tradition, or the decrees of the church.'

But what little cause the Baptists had to rejoice with them, will appear by what follows:

For in October 1538. 'There was a commission, says Burnet (lb. vol. III. lib. iii. p. 159.), sent to Cranmer, Stokesly, Sampson, and some others, to enquire after Anabaptists, to proceed against them, to restore the penitent, to burn their books, and to deliver the obstinate to
the secular arm; but I have not, says the bishop, seen what proceedings there were upon this.'

On the 16th of November, the King put forth a proclamation, in which he condemns all the books of the Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and appoints those to be punished who vented them; and in December following he sent a letter to all the Justices in England, in which, after many other things, they are earnestly pressed to take care, that all the injunctions, laws and proclamations, against Sacramentarians and Anabaptists, be duly executed. Which letter may be seen at large in Burnet (History of Reformat. vol. III. lib. iii. col. No. 63.).

In this year also there was an act of grace passed; in which, besides other particular exceptions, all Anabaptists and Sacramentarians were excepted, and all those that affirmed, there was a fate upon men, by which the day of their death was unalterably determined.

Mr. Fuller tells us (Church Hist. lib. iv. p. 229.), 'That in this year a match being made by the lord Cromwell's contrivance between King Henry and the lady Anne of Cleve, Dutchmen flocked faster than formerly into England, and soon after began to broach their strange opinions, being branded with the general name of Anabaptists. These Anabaptists, he adds, for the main are but Donatists new dipt; and this year their name first appears in our English chronicles. I read, says he (Stow's chron. p. 576.), that four Anabaptists, three men and one woman, all Dutch, bare faggots at Paul's cross; and three days after, a man and a woman of their sect were burnt in Smithfield.'

This, Mr. Fuller calls (Index, letter A,) the beginning of the Anabaptists in England; but he is very much mistaken in his account, both as to their beginning, and the first appearance of their name in the English chronicle, as is plain from what has been said before; but however an epitome thereof may not be improper in this place (Fuller, p. 217.).

In the articles of religion, set forth by the king and Convocation, An. Dom. 1536. the sect of the Anabaptists are mentioned and condemned; and their opinion, that infants are not to be baptized, is particularly opposed and censured as a detestable heresy (Fox, vol. II. p. 325.).

The registers of London mention certain Dutchmen counted for Anabaptists, ten whereof were put to death Anno Dom. 1535. another ten repented and were saved.

Bishop Burnet says (Hist. Ref. vol. I. lib. iii. p. 195.), That in May 1535. nineteen Hollanders were accused of some heretical opinions; among which this, denying, 'That the sacraments had any effect on those that received them: Fourteen of them remained obstinate, and were burnt by pairs in several places.'

Now both these were three years before Fuller begins his account of the foreign Anabaptists that came into England. But besides this, we have mentioned instances of much longer standing, as that of Waldensis, which faith, that the Lollards, who were Wickliff's followers in Scotland, and some in the bishop of Norwich's diocese, did hold, that the children of Believers are not to be sacramentally baptized, and that they judged it unprofitable to give
children ecclesiastical baptism; saying, that they were sufficiently clean and holy, because they were born of holy and christian parents. Agreeable to this, is the account which Mr. Fox gives of some faithful christians, who were burnt at Norwich about the year 1428. For he says, though he endeavours to excuse them therein, that they say, that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents be baptized before them; that christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect.

There were about 120 of this opinion; three whereof were burnt alive. These were martyrs of the Anabaptists opinion in England, above an hundred years before Mr. Fuller's date of their beginning.

But to return to the persecution of the Baptists. We find in Mr. Fox certain injunctions, given out in the 30th year of the reign of King Henry VIII. on the 6th of Nov. An. Dom. 1539. the fourth whereof was this (Fox, vol. II. p. 440.): 'That those that be in any errors, as Sacramentaries, Anabaptists, or any other that sell books having such opinions in them, being once known, both the books and such persons shall be detected, and disclosed immediately unto the king's majesty, or one of his privy council, to the intent to have it punished without favour, even with the extremity of the law.'

By this injunction it appears, that there were some in those days, who were for reforming the Sacrament of the supper from the abuses of the church of Rome; that the former were then called Sacramentarians, the latter Anabaptists (Dutch martyr. lib. ii. p. 123.).

In this year sixteen men and fifteen women were banished, for opposing infant-baptism; who going to Delf in Holland, were there pursued and prosecuted before the magistrates for Anabaptists, and put to death for the same; the men beheaded, and the women were drowned. Mr. Barnes, who was burnt in Smithfield, Anno Dom. 1540. in his speech to the people at the stake, clearing himself from being an Anabaptist, of which he was accused, says (Fox, p. 610.), 'Which sect (meaning the Anabaptists) I detest and abhor; and in this place there hath been burned some of them, whom I never favoured, neither maintained.'

Greatly did the clergy oppose one another at this time, even to the disturbance of the peace of the king himself; as appears by his speech to the parliament, Decemb. 24, 1545. where recommending love and unity to his subjects, he saith (Fox, vol II. p. 571.), 'St. Paul saith, to the Corinthians, in the 13th chapter, Charity is gentle, charity is not envious, charity is not proud, and so forth, in the said chapter. Behold then what love and charity is amongst you, when the one calleth the other Heretic and Anabaptist, and he calls him again Papist, Hypocrite, and Pharisee: Be these tokens of charity among you? I see, and hear daily, that you of the clergy preach one against another, teach one contrary to another, inveigh one against another, without charity, or discretion; some be too stiff in their old Mumpsimus, others be too busy and curious in their new Sumpsimus.'

This part of the King's speech intimates to us, that when the reformation began under his reign, there were many of his subjects went under the name of Anabaptists.
Yet after all, the popish clergy prevailed with the king, and obtained a proclamation for the suppressing and abolishing of such English books as might help to explain the Scripture; such as the books of Wickliff, Frith, Tindal, Barnes, &c. but within four months after this proclamation was issued out, the king died, and providence thereby disappointed them, by bringing his son Edward VI. to the throne; who restored the holy Scriptures in the mother tongue, abolished the masses, and received home such as were banished.

He was but nine years of age; yet proved a most happy patron to the gospel (Fox, vol. II. p. 653.).

Carolus, the Emperor made request to him and his council, to permit lady Mary to have Mass in her house, without prejudice of the law. Whereunto the King being required by the council to give his consent, would in no case yield to it, notwithstanding they laid before him what danger might ensue to him by breach of amity with the Emperor. And they being more urgent upon him, the king seeing their importunate suit, in the end his tender heart bursting out into bitter weeping and sobbing, desired them to be content: and so refused to yield unto the Emperor's request in that behalf.

In the second year of his reign, the new Liturgy, first agreed upon by the clergy, was confirmed by parliament; wherein Bishop Burnet tells us (Hist. Reform. vol. II. lib. i. p. 77.), they give the following direction about baptism.

"In baptism, says he, there was, besides the forms which we still retain, a cross at first made on the child's forehead and breast with an adjuration of the devil to go out of him, and come at him no more. Then the priest was to take the child by the right hand, and to place him within the font. There he was to be dipped thrice; once on the right side, once on the left, and once on the breast, which was to be discreetly done. But if the child were weak, it was sufficient to sprinkle water on his face. Then was the priest to put a white vestment or chrisome on him, for a token of innocence, and to annoint him on the head, with a prayer for the unction of the Holy Ghost."

In his reflections upon this part of the book (Hist. Reform. vol. II. lib. i. p. 80.), when he is pleading for the first reformers continuing the use of the cross in baptism, he tells us, they did not use it, as thinking there was that virtue followed the use of it which the Papists thought: 'For in baptism, says he, as they [the Papists] used the sign of the cross, they add an adjuration to the evil spirit not to violate it, and in the making it, said, Receive the sign of the cross, both in thy forehead and in thy heart, and take the faith of the heavenly precepts, &c.'

Fox says (Acts and Mon. p. 685. first Edit.), 'during the whole time of the six years of this king, much tranquillity, and as it were a breathing time, was granted to the whole church of England; so that the rage of persecution ceasing, and the sword taken out of the adversaries hand, there was now no danger to the godly, unless it were only be wealth and prosperity, which many times brings more damage, in corrupting mens minds, than any time of persecution or affliction.'
'Briefly, during all this time, neither in Smithfield, nor any other quarter of this realm, any was heard to suffer for any matter of religion, either Papist or protestant, either for one opinion or the other, except only two; one an English woman, called Joan of Kent; and the other a Dutchman, named George, who died for certain articles, strange and dissonant from the affection of the church, which here I omit to speak of, for causes reasonable.'

These two having denied infant-baptism, and being the only persons who suffered for their sentiments in religion in this reign, I shall give that account of them and their sufferings which I find in Bishop Burnet (Hist. Reform. vol. II. part ii. p. 110, &c.).

'At this time, says the Bishop, there were many Anabaptists in several parts of England; they were generally Germans, whom the revolutions there had forced to change their seats. Upon Luther's first preaching in Germany, there arose many, who building on some of his principles, carried things much further than he did. The chief foundation he laid down was, that the Scripture was to be the only rule of Christians. Upon this many argued, that the mysteries of the Trinity, and Christ's Incarnation and Sufferings, of the Fall of Man, and the aids of Grace, were indeed philosophical subtleties, and only pretended to be deduced from Scripture, as almost all opinions of religion were, and therefore they rejected them. Amongst these the baptism of infants was one. They held that to be no baptism, and so were re-baptized. But from this, which was most taken notice of, as being a visible thing, they carried all the general name of Anabaptists.'

'On the 12th of April there was a complaint brought to the council, that with the strangers that were come into England, some of that persuasion had come over, and were disseminating their errors, and making proselytes: so a commission was ordered for the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Ely, Worcester, Westminster, Chichester, Lincoln, and Rochester; Sir William Petre, Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. Cox, Dr. May, and some others, three of them being a quorum; to examine, and search after all Anabaptists, Heretics, or contemners of the common-prayer. They were to endeavour to reclaim them, to enjoin them penance, and give them absolution; or, if they were obstinate, to excommunicate and imprison them, and to deliver them over to the secular power, to be further proceeded against. Some Tradesmen in London were brought before these commissioners in May, and were persuaded to abjure their former opinions.' I shall only mention the last of them; which was, that the baptism of infants was not profitable.

'One of those who thus abjured, was commanded to carry a faggot next Sunday at St. Paul's, where there should be a sermon, setting forth his heresy. But there was another of these extreme obstinate, Joan Bocher, commonly called Joan of Kent. She denied that Christ was truly incarnate of the virgin, whose flesh being sinful, he could take none of it; but the Word, by the consent of the inward man in the virgin, took flesh of her; these were her words. They took much pains about her, and had many conferences with her; but she was so extravagantly conceived of her own notions, that she rejected all they said with scorn. Whereupon she was adjudged an obstinate heretic, and so left to the secular power. This being returned to the council, the good King was moved to sign a warrant for burning her, but could not be prevailed upon to do it. He thought it a piece of cruelty, too like that which they had condemned in Papists, to burn any for their consciences; and in a long discourse he had with Sir John Cheek, he seemed much confirmed in that opinion.'
'Cranmer was employed to persuade him to sign the warrant. He argued from the law of Moses, by which blasphemers were to be stoned. He told the King, he made a great difference between errors in other points of divinity, and those which were directly against the apostles Creed; that these were impieties against God, which a prince, as being God's deputy, ought to punish, as the King's deputies were obliged to punish offences against the King's person.'

'These reasons did rather silence than satisfy the young King; who still thought it a hard thing, as in truth it was, to proceed so severely in such cases; so he set his hand to the warrant with tears in his eyes, saying to Cranmer, that if he did wrong since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer for it to God. This struck the archbishop with much horror, so that he was very unwilling to have the sentence executed; and both he and Ridley took the woman then in custody to their houses, to see if they could persuade her: but she continued by jeers and other insolencies to carry herself so contemptuously, that at last the sentence was executed on her the 2nd of May next year, bishop Scorey preaching at her burning. She carried herself then as she had done in the former parts of her process, very undecently, and in the end was burnt.'

In the year 1550, about the end of December, the same author assures us (Hist. Reform. vol. II. lib. i. p. 143.), that after many cavils in the state, an act passed for the king's general pardon; wherein the Anabaptists are excepted. 'Last of all, says the Bishop, [that is, of the acts made by this parliament] came the king's general pardon; out of which those in the tower or other prisons, on the account of the state, as also all Anabaptists, were excepted.'

This exception does plainly intimate, that there were at this time some of this opinion kept in the prisons, though they were not charged with any crimes against the state, but for the principles of religion; and that there was so much of the popish spirit of persecution remaining among those Reformers, as to exclude Anabaptists from the benefit of the king's pardon.

In the same year a visitation was made of the diocese of London, by Ridley, their new bishop. Among the other articles which he put to the inferior clergy, this was one (Hist. Ref. 158.); 'Whether any Anabaptists, or others, used private conventicles, with different opinions and forms than those established;' and with other questions about baptism and marriages. Burnet says these articles are in bishop Sparrow's collection.

'(Hist. Ref. 158.) About the end of this year, or the beginning of the next, there was review made of the Common-prayer book. Several things had been continued in it, either to draw in some of the bishops, who by such yielding might be prevailed on to concur in it, or in compliance with the people, who were fond of their old superstitions. So now a review of it was set about.' Martin Bucer [whose opinion was highly esteemed both by the king, and Cranmer the archbishop, and who had a great hand in all the changes that were made in religion in those times in England] 'was consulted in it, and Aleffe the Scotch divine translated it into Latin for his use,' [and with it was sent over into Germany] 'upon which Bucer writ his opinion, which he finished the fifth of January the year following.'
In this he advised to a further reformation in many things. 'He wished that there was a strict discipline to exclude scandalous livers from the sacrament.'

'He wished that the old habits might be laid aside, since some used them superstitiously, and others contended much about them. He did not like the half office of communion, or second service to be said at the altar, when there was no sacrament. He was offended with the requiring the people to receive at least once a year, and would have them pressed to it much more frequently. He disliked that the priests generally read prayers with no devotion, and in such a voice that the people understood not what they said. He would have the sacrament delivered into the hands, and not put into the mouths of the people, &c.'

As to baptism, 'He complained that baptism was generally in houses, which being the receiving infants into the church, ought to be done more publicly. The hallowing of the water, the chrisme, and the white garment [then used in baptizing] he censured as being to scenical. He excepted to the exorcising the devil, and would have it turned to a prayer to God; the authoritative way of saying I adjure, not being so decent. He thought the godfathers answering in the child's name, not so well as to answer in their own, that they should take care in these things all they could.'

Some of these things which he excepted to, were corrected afterwards, but others were kept, and are to this day; though the same things are still objected against by most of the nonconformists, and are one great occasion of their dissenting from the established church.

Having thus cast out many of those corruptions that were formerly in their worship, and got most of the sees filled with such bishops as were for the Reformation they set about the purging out those corruptions that were doctrinal; and most of the year following was spent in preparing articles which should contain the doctrines of the church of England. These were generally said to be framed by Cranmer and Ridley. They were agreed upon by the bishops, and other learned men, in the Convocation held at London in the year 1552 and consisted of forty two articles. As there were three articles more than there are at present, so they expressed several things different from what they are now. All that is proper to be taken notice of here is the eighth, which is concerning original sin. The Anabaptists are particularly meant, as affirming, that it conflicts in the following of Adam; for thus it begins.

'Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, and at this day is affirmed by some Anabaptists; but it is the fault and corruption of every man, &c.'

'Tis probable some of those who opposed infants-baptism in those times, had embraced the opinions of the Pelagians about original sin. But the Paedobaptists did generally charge them with his opinion, because they held that infants dying without actual sin, were not damned; and that they need no baptism to wash away original sin, but were saved without it. However, ten years after, when the articles were again reviewed and corrected in many things, they thought it proper to leave this clause out, and only charged this heresy upon the Pelagians. The 28th article concerning Baptism was the same that now it is, except the last clause, which relates to infant-baptism, which they laid down in these words: 'The custom of the church for baptizing young children, is both to be commended, and by all means to be retained in the church.'
It seems by this, that the first Reformers did not found the practice of infants-baptism upon Scripture; but took it only as a commendable custom, that had been used in the christian church, and therefore ought to be retained. This new alteration made in the Common-prayer and articles of faith, caused the Papists to say (Burnet's Hist. Ref. vol. II. lib. i. p. 190.), 'That the Reformation was like to change as often as the fashion did, since they seemed never to be at a point in any thing, but new models were thus continually framing; to which it was answered, that it was no wonder that the corruptions which they had been introducing for above a thousand years were not all discovered or thrown out at once.'

The length of time taken up in altering the Common-prayer and articles, obliges me to place the following story somewhat out of course.

Two years after the burning of Joan of Kent, says Bishop Burnet (Hist. Reform. vol. II. lib. i, p. 112.), 'One George Van Pare, a Dutchman, being accused for saying, that God the Father was only one God, and that Christ was not very God; he was dealt with long to abjure, but would not. So on the 6th of April, 1551 he was condemned in the same manner that Joan of Kent was, and on the 25th of April was burnt in Smithfield. He suffered with great constancy of mind, and kissed the stake and faggots that were to burn him. Of this Pare I find a popish writer saying, that he was a man of most wonderful strict life, that he used not to eat above once in two days, and before he did eat would lie some time in his devotion prostrate on the ground. All this they made use of to lessen the credit of those who had suffered formerly; for it was said, they saw now, that men of harmless lives might be put to death for Heresy, by the confession of the Reformers themselves: and in all the books published in Q. Mary's days, justifying her severity against the Protestants, these instances were always made use of. And no part of Cranmer's life exposed him more than this did: It was said, he had consented, both to Lambert's and Ann Askew's death in the former reign; who both suffered for opinions which he himself held now, and he had now procured the death of these two persons; and when he was brought to suffer himself, it was called a just retaliation on him. One thing was certain, for what he did in this matter flowed from no cruelty of temper in him, no man being farther from that black disposition of mind; but it was truly the effect of those principles by which he governed himself.'

Then Burnet goes on to give an account of the moderate Anabaptists, and says (Hist. Reform. vol. II. p. 112.), 'For the other sort of Anabaptists, who only denied infants baptism, I find no severities used to them, but several books were written against them, to which they wrote some answers. It was said, that Christ allowed little children to be brought to him, and said, of such was the kingdom of heaven, and blessed them. Now if they were capable of the kingdom of heaven, they must be regenerated; for Christ said, none but such as are born of water and of the Spirit could enter into it. St. Paul had also called the children of believing parents holy, which seemed to relate to such a consecration of them as was made in baptism; and baptism being the seal of Christians in the room of circumcision among the Jews, it was thought the one was applicable to the children, as the other. And one thing was observed, that the whole world in that age, having been baptized in their infancy, if that baptism was nothing, then there were none truly baptized in being; but all were in the state of mere nature. Now it did not seem reasonable, that men who were not baptized themselves, should go and baptize others, and therefore the first heads of that sect not being rightly baptized themselves, seemed not to act with any authority when they
went to baptize others. The practice of the church so early begun, and continued without dispute so many ages, was at least a certain confirmation of a thing which had (to speak moderately) so good foundations in Scripture for the lawfulness, tho' not any peremptory, but only probable proofs for the practice of it.'

The same author informs us (Hist. Ref. part II. lib. i. p. 202.): 'That in the year 1552 a proposal was made for the correcting the great disorders of clergymen, which were occasioned by the extreme misery and poverty to which they were reduced. That some motions were made about it in parliament; but they took not effect: So one writ a book concerning it, which he dedicated to the lord Chancellor, then the bishop of Ely. He showed, that without rewards or encouragements, few would apply themselves to the pastoral function; and that those in it, if they could not subsist by it, must turn to other employments; so that at that time, says he, many clergymen were carpenters and taylors, and some kept alehouses.'

I mention this, because it is often cast upon the Dissenters, and particularly those called Anabaptists, that they encourage tradesmen and mechanics. Now it is plain from their articles, they are for maintaining of ministers, that they may be entirely bent to their sacred office; but if, in case of necessity, they are obliged to follow trades, for the maintenance of themselves and families, it is no more that what the clergy, both Papists and Protestants, have done, till they could get sufficient allowance by law to free them from it.

But to return; these sad instances of persecution practised by the Protestants in this king's reign against the Anabaptists, are in Fox's Latin book of martyrs, but left out in his English, out of a tender regard, as is supposed, to the reputation of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days.

The same is translated by Mr. Pierce. It being short, I will oblige the reader therewith, and with Mr. Pierce's remarks upon it (Answ. to Nichols, p. 33.)

'In King Edward's reign some were put to death for heresy. One Joan Bocher, or Joan of Kent. Mr Strype tells us, her heresy was, that she believed the Word was made flesh in the virgin's belly, but not that he took flesh of the virgin. Now, says Mr. Fox, when the Protestant bishops had resolved to put her to death, a friend of Mr. John Rogers, the divinity-reader in St. Paul's church, came to him, earnestly desiring him to use his interest with the archbishop, that the poor woman's life might be spared, and other means used to prevent the spreading of her opinions, which might be done in time: urging too, that though while she lived, she infected few with her opinions, yet she might bring many to think well of it, by suffering death for it. He pleaded therefore that it was better she should be kept in some prison, without an opportunity of propagating her notion among weak people, and so she would do no harm to others, and might live to repent herself. Rogers on the other hand pleaded, she ought to be put to death. Well then, says his friend, if you are resolved to put an end to her life together with her opinion, choose some other kind of death, more agreeable to the gentleness and mercy prescribed in the gospel; there being no need, that such tormenting deaths should be taken up, in imitation of the Papists. Rogers answered, that burning alive was no cruel death, but easy enough. His friend then hearing these words, which expressed so little regard to poor creatures sufferings, answered him with great
vehemence, and striking Roger's hand, which before he held fast, said to him, Well, perhaps, it may so happen, that you yourselves shall have your hands full of this mild burning. And so it came to pass; and Rogers was the first man who was burnt in Queen Mary's time.'

This Rogers, says Mr. Pierce, was a Nonconformist, and a very excellent man, and died nobly in the cause of Christ; but this barbarity of his deserves to be exposed: and the rather, because God in his providence seems to have shown his great displeasure against it. I am apt to think Roger's friend was no other than Fox himself. As to the other instance, Mr. Strype tells us, that in the year 1552, Sept. 27. a letter was sent to the archbishop, to examine a sect newly sprung up in Kent. He says, it appears not what this sect was; he supposes they might be the Family of love, or David George's sect; but these conjectures of his have no good foundation. I am persuaded this sect was no other than some good honest Dissenters, who having been grieved to see so much of Popery still retained, attempted a further Reformation themselves, which would be a very displeasing thing to our bishops, who expect all men should wait their leisure. Now this I ground upon a story which Mr. Fox immediately subjoins to what I just now mentioned from him.'

'Much such another instance is reported concerning Humphry Middleton (who was afterwards burnt in Queen Mary's days). That when he, with some others, had been kept prisoners in the last year of king Edward, by the archbishop, and had been dreadfully teazed by him, and the rest in commission with him, were now just upon being condemned in open court, he said unto him, well, reverend sir, pass what sentence you think fit upon us: but that you may not say you was not fore-warned, I testify that your own turn will be next. And accordingly it came to pass; for a little while after King Edward died, upon which they were set at liberty, and the bishops cast in prison. This Middleton was afterwards in Queen Mary's days, burnt at Canterbury; so that the commission which Mr. Strype mentions, agrees in time and place with this story.' Thus far Mr. Pierce.

Mr. Hugh Latimer, in his Lent sermons preached before King Edward VI says (Pag. 56.),

'The Anabaptists, that were burnt here in divers towns in England, as I heard of credible men, I saw them not myself, went to their death even intrepid, as ye will say, without any fear in the world, cheerfully.'

In the said sermon, he further saith,

'I should have told you here of a certain sect of heretics that speak against this order and doctrine; they will have no magistrates, no judges on earth; here I have to tell you, what I have heard of late, by the relation of a credible person, and worshipful man, of a town of this realm of England, that hath above five [hundred] heretics of this erroneous opinion in it, as he said.'

That the Baptists were very numerous at this time, is without controversy: and no doubt, many of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days were such, though historians seem to be silent with respect to the opinions of the martyrs about baptism; neither can it be imagined, that the Papists would in the least favour any of that denomination which they so much detested and abhorred: for in the examination of Mr. Woodman, before the bishop of Winchester, in
the church of St. Mary Overies, Southwark, the bishop said (Fox, p. 1578. first Edit.), 'Hold him a book, if he refuse to swear, he is an Anabaptist, and shall be excommunicated.'

Again, in the examination of Mr. Philpot before the lords of Queen Mary's council, Nov. 6, 1555 Rich saith unto him (Ibib. p. 1407.), 'All heretics do boast of the Spirit of God, and every one would have a church by himself; as Joan of Kent, and the Anabaptists.'

Another instance of their hatred and cruelty towards the Anabaptists, Spanhemius gives us an account of. David George, of Delph in Holland, being driven from his own country by persecution, fled to the city of Bazil, where he lived for some time in great reputation, and by his modest dress, liberal table, honest attendance, and prudent conversation, gained the favour both of high and low: he died in the year 1556, and was honourably buried in St. Laurence church. Some time after his death, it was discovered, that he was an Anabaptist; upon which his house, and those of his followers were searched, a certain number of divines and lawyers appointed to examine them, his opinions were condemned by an ordinance, his picture carried about and burnt, and his corpse taken up three years after buried, and burnt, &c.

During the life of this bloody queen, which was but short, two hundred and eighty four persons were put to most cruel kinds of death for religion: but he that wrote the preface to bishop Ridley's book de Coena Domini, says, that in the two first years of the queen's persecution, there were above eight hundred persons put to death for religion: so that Mr. Fox has come very short in his account, as bishop Burnet observed.

We come now to the reign of Queen Elizabeth; who, upon her accession to the crown, ordered all that were imprisoned on the account of religion to be set at liberty. Upon which, 'one, says bishop Burnet (Abridgment, lib. iv. p. 340.), that used to talk pleasantly, told her the four Evangelists continued still prisoners, and that the people longed much to see them at liberty. She answered she would talk with themselves, and know their own mind.'

Sir Francis Walsingham wrote a long letter to a Frenchman, given him an account of all the severities of the queen's government, both against Papists and Puritans. The substance of which is, says bishop Burnet (Ibid. p. 382.), 'that the queen laid down two maxims of state: the one was, not to force consciences; the other was, not to let factious practices go unpunished, because they were covered with the pretences of conscience. At first she did not revive those severe laws passed in her father's time, by which the refusal of the oath of Supremacy was made treason; but left her people to the freedom of their thoughts, and made it only penal to extol a foreign jurisdiction. She also laid aside the word supreme head; and the refusers of the oath were only disabled from holding benefices or charges during their refusal. Upon Pius the Vth's excommunicating her, though the rebellion in the north was chiefly occasioned by that, she only made a law against the bringing over, or publishing of Bulls, and the venting of Agnus Dei's, or such other love-tokens, which were sent from Rome on design to draw the hearts of her people from her, which were no essential parts of that religion; so that this could hurt none of their consciences. But after the 20th year of her reign, it appeared that the king of Spain designed to invade her dominions, and that the priests that were sent over from the seminaries beyond sea, were generally employed to corrupt her subjects in their allegiance; by which treason was carried in the clouds, and
infused secretly in confession. Then pecuniary punishments were inflicted on such as withdrew from the church; and in conclusion, she was forced to make laws of greater rigour, but did often mitigate the severity of them to all that would promise to adhere to her in case of a foreign invasion. As for the Puritans, as long as they only inveighed against some abuses, as pluralities, non-residence or the like, it was not their zeal against those, but their violence, that was condemned. When they refused to comply with some ceremonies, and questioned the superiority of the bishops, and declared for a democracy in the church, they were connived at with great gentleness: but it was observed, that they affected popularity much, and the methods they took to compass their ends were judged dangerous, and they made such use of the aversion the nation had to popery, that it was visible they were in a hazard of running from one extreme to another. They set up a new model of church-discipline, which was like to prove no less dangerous to the liberties of private men, than to the sovereign power of the prince. Yet all this was born with, as long as they proceeded with those expressions of duty which become subjects. But afterwards, when they resolved to carry on their designs, without waiting for the consent of the magistrate, and entered into combinations; when they began to defame the government, by ridiculous pasquils, and boasted of their number and strength, and in some places break out into tumults; then it appeared that it was faction, and not zeal, that animated them. Upon that the queen found it necessary to restrain them more than she had done formerly. Yet she did it with all the moderation that could consist with the peace of the church and state. And thus from this letter, says Burnet, an idea of this whole reign may be justly formed.'

The share the Baptists had in the severities of this reign, will appear by the following instances. Dr. Wall says (Hist. Bap. lib. ii. p. 212.), 'About the 16th year of Queen Elizabeth, a congregation of Dutch Antipaedobaptists was discovered without Aldgate in London, whereof twenty seven were taken and imprisoned. And the next month one Dutchman and ten women were condemned.' Marius de Assigny tells us (Mystery of Anabaptism, p. 368.), that it was at easter, An. Dom. 1575, which must have been the 17th of Elizabeth, that four of the former recanted at St. Paul's cross, the 25th of May; and that the rest were banished.

Their abjuration was in these words:

'Whereas, we being seduced by the devil, the spirit of error, and by false teachers, have fallen into these most damnable and detestable errors, that Christ took not flesh of the substance of the virgin Mary; that the infants of the faithful ought not to be baptized; that a christian man may not be a magistrate, or bear the sword and office of authority; and that it is not lawful for a christian man to take an oath: Now, by the grace of God, and by the assistance of good and learned ministers of Christ's church, I understand the same to be most damnable and detestable heresies; and do ask God, before his church, mercy for my said former errors, and do forsake, recant, and renounce them; and I abjure them from the bottom of my heart, protesting I certainly believe the contrary. And further, I confess, that the whole doctrine, established and published in the church of England, and also that is received in the Dutch church in London, is found true and according to God's word: Whereunto in all things I submit myself, and will be most gladly a member of the said Dutch church; from henceforth utterly abandoning and forsaking all and every anabaptistical error.'
This abjuration was taken from these Walloon Anabaptists by Dr. De Laune, who was then minister of the Dutch church in Augustin Friars in London. In the 18th year of Queen Elizabeth, An. Dom. 1575, Mr. Fuller saith (Ch. Hist. cent. xvi. p. 104.), 'Now began the Anabaptists wonderfully to increase in the land; and as we are sorry that any countrymen should be seduced with that opinion, so we are glad that the English as yet were free from that infection. For on Easter-day was disclosed a congregation of Dutch Anabaptists, without Aldgate in London, whereof seven and twenty were taken and imprisoned, and four bearing faggots at Paul’s Cross, solemnly recanted their dangerous opinions. Next month, one Dutchman and ten women were condemned; of whom one woman was converted, to renounce her errors; eight were banished from the land; two more so obstinate, that command was issued out for their burning in Smithfield. But to reprieve them from so cruel a death, a grave divine sent the following letter to Queen Elizabeth.' The letter was wrote in Latin, I shall give only the English translation thereof.

Most serene and happy princess, most illustrious queen, the honour of our country, and ornament of the age. As nothing hath been further from my thoughts and expectation, than ever to disturb your most excellent majesty by my troublesome interruption; so it grieves me very much, that I must break that silence which has hitherto been the result of my mind. But so it now happens, by I know not what infelicity, that the present time obliges me, contrary to my hope and opinion, to that which of all things in the world I least desired, and tho' hitherto I have been troublesome to nobody, I am now contrary to my inclination, constrained to be importunate, even with my princess; not in any matter or cause of my own, but thro' the calamity brought upon others; and by how much the more sharp and lamentable that is, by so much the more I am spurred on to deprecate it. I understand there are some here in England, tho' not English, but come hither from Holland, I suppose both men and women, who have been tried according to law, publicl...
For so it is perhaps a folly in me; but I speak the truth, that I can hardly pass by a slaughter-house where cattle are killing, but my mind shrinks back, with a secret sense of their pains. And truly, I greatly admire the clemency of God in this, who had such respect to the mean brute creatures, formerly prepared for sacrifices, that they must not be committed to the flames, before their blood had been poured out at the foot of the altar. Whence we may gather, that in inflicting of punishments, tho' just, we must not be over rigorous, but temper the sharpness of rigour with clemency. Wherefore if I may be so bold with the majesty of so great a princess, I humbly beg of your royal highness, for the sake of Christ, who was consecrated to suffer for the lives of many, this favour at my request, which even the divine clemency would engage you to, that if it may be, and what cannot your authority do in these cases, these miserable wretches may be spared; at least that a stop may be put to the horror, by changing their punishment into some other kind. There are excommunications, and close imprisonment; there are bonds; there is perpetual banishment, burning of the hand, and whipping, or even slavery itself. This one thing I most earnestly beg; that the piles and flames in Smithfield, so long ago extinguished by your happy government, may not now be again revived: that if I may not obtain this, I pray with the greatest earnestness, that out of your great pity you would grant us a month or two, in which we may try whether the Lord will give them grace to turn from their dangerous errors; lest with the destruction of their bodies, their souls be in danger of eternal ruin.

After this, Fuller goes on and saith, 'This letter was written by Mr. John Fox, from whose own hand I transcribed it; very loath that Smithfield, formerly consecrated with martyrs ashes, should now be profaned with heretics; and desirous that the Papists might enjoy their own monopoly of cruelty, in burning condemned persons.'

'But tho' Queen Elizabeth constantly called him her Father Fox; yet herein she was no dutiful daughter, giving him a flat denial (As to the saving of their lives, if after a month's reprieve and conference with divines, they would not recant their errors, à Stow, ut prius.). Indeed damnable were their impieties, and she necessitated to this severity, who having formerly punished some traitors, if now sparing these blasphemers, the world would condemn her as being more earnest in asserting her own safety, than God's honour. Hereupon the writ De haeretico comburendo, (which for seventeen years had hung only up in terrorem) was now taken down, and put in execution, and the two Anabaptists burnt in Smithfield, died in great horror, with crying and roaring.'

Great were the hardships and sufferings of the Puritans (of whom it may be reasonably supposed, that some of them were Baptists, tho' they had not as yet formed themselves into distinct societies) by the cruelty of the bishops, instigated by the queen's hatred of them. 'She had high notions of the sovereign power of princes, and of her own absolute supremacy in church-affairs; and being of opinion that all methods of severity were lawful to bring her subjects to an outward uniformity, she countenanced all the engines of persecution, as spiritual courts, high commission (Neal's Hist. puritans, p. 602. vol. I.), and star-chamber, and stretched her prerogative to support them beyond the laws, and against the sense of the nation.'

That the Baptists had no small share in the sufferings of these times, we may gather from the supplication of the justices of the peace of the county of Norfolk, who upon complaint
made to them of the cruelty of the bishop of Norwich, with respect to the long and illegal imprisonment of some of the Brownists, their worships were pleased to move the bishop in their favour; with which his lordship was so dissatisfied, that he drew up twelve articles of impeachment against the justices themselves, and caused them to be summoned before the Queen and Council to answer for their misdemeanours. Notwithstanding his lordship's citation of them before the council, they writ again to their honours, praying to interpose in behalf of the injuries that were offered to divers godly ministers. And in their supplication they say, 'We serve her majesty and the country as magistrates and justices of peace, according to law; we reverence the law and law-maker; when the law speaks we keep not silence; when it commandeth we obey; by law we proceed against all offenders (Neal's Hist. purit. p. 388. v. I.); we touch none that law spareth, and spare none that the law toucheth; we allow not of Papists, of the Family of Love, of Anabaptists or Brownists: No, we punish all these; and yet we are christened with the odious name of Puritans, a term compounded of the heresies above-mentioned, which we disclaim.'

In the year 1589, Dr. Some, a man of great note in those times, writ a treatise against Barrow, Greenwood, Penry, and others of the Puritan sect; wherein he endeavoured to show what agreement there was between the opinions of the English Anabaptists and these men.

His method is first to show, what was the opinion of the Anabaptistical Recusants, as he terms them; then wherein these men did agree with, or differ from them; and then undertakes to confute their supposed errors.

The opinions he charges the Anabaptists with, when they are stripped of his dress, are only to this purpose:

That the ministers of the gospel ought to be maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people:

That the civil power has no right to make and impose ecclesiastical laws:

That people ought to have the right of choosing their own ministers:

That the high-commission court was an antichristian usurpation:

That those who are qualified to preach, ought not to be hindered by the civil power:

That tho' the Lord's-prayer be a rule and foundation of prayer, yet not to be used as a form; and that no forms of prayer ought to be imposed on the church:

That the baptism administered in the church of Rome is invalid:

That a true constitution and discipline is essential to a true church; and that the worship of God in the church of England is in many things defective.

He touches but briefly on their opinion of baptizing believers only; and brings up the rear with saying, they count it blasphemy for any man to arrogate to himself the title of Doctor
of Divinity; that is, as he explains it, to be called Rabbi, or lord and master of other mens faith.

He acknowledges, that there were several anabaptistical conventicles in London, and other places; that some of this sort, as well as the Papists, had been bred at our universities; and tells a story of one T. L. who at a conventicle in London, took upon him to expound the Scriptures, conceive long prayers on a sudden, and to excommunicate two persons, who were formerly of that brotherhood, but had now left them.

If this be what their adversaries had chiefly to charge them with; what account might we have expected, had they been allowed to publish their own faith, and to transmit their own history down to posterity? And tho' this gentleman seems to deal more favourably with this sect than many others, yet he uses the unfair method which I suppose they thought lawful, in writing against heretics; that is, to assert they hold such opinions, without producing any proof of it, or referring to any of their works, lest they should publish them, and people should have opportunity to enquire what they say for themselves.

He likewise discovers too much of the spirit of persecution, that reigned in these times, and endeavours to excite the civil power to be more severe against the sectaries. 'If, says he, every particular congregation in England might set up and put down at their pleasure, popish and anabaptistical fancies would overthrow this land; the consequence would be dangerous, viz. the dishonour of God, the contempt of her majesty, the overthrow of the church and universities, and the utter confusion of this noble kingdom. Queen Elizabeth, and her honourable counsellours do see, and will prevent this mischief; it is more than time to look unto it.'

With such false representations as these, the clergy have been used to frighten the court into the practice of persecution.

But to close this reign, Queen Elizabeth having by her proclamation commanded all Anabaptists and other heretics to depart the land, whether they were natives or foreigners, under the penalties of imprisonment or loss of goods; all that were of this opinion were obliged either to conceal their principles, or fly into some other country, where they might enjoy the liberty of their religion.

Upon which many of the dissenters went over to Holland: among whom there were not a few Baptists, as well English as Dutch; so that there was now no great number of Dissenters of any denomination, that dared openly to appear. 'Queen Elizabeth however, with all her blemishes, says Mr. Neal (Hist. Puritans, p. 602. vol I.), stands upon record, as a wife and politic princess; for delivering the kingdom from the difficulties in which it was involved at her accession; for preserving the Protestant reformation against the potent attempts of the Pope, the Emperor, and King of Spain abroad, and the Queen of Scots and her Popish subjects at home; and for advancing the renown of the English nation beyond any of her predecessors. Her majesty held the balance of Europe; and was in high esteem with all foreign princes, the greatest part of her reign: and tho' her Protestant subjects were divided about church affairs, they all discovered a high veneration for her royal person and
government; on which account she was the glory of the age in which she lived, and will be the admiration of posterity.'
KING James the First next ascends the throne. 'He (Rapin, book xviii. p. 159.) was born of Roman Catholic parents; but being taken from his mother in his infancy, had been educated in the Protestant religion, and always professed it. On the other hand, the religion he had been brought up in, tho' Protestant, differed a little from the religion established in England, if not in doctrine, at least in discipline, and some other points of external worship, which were considered by the two churches as very important. In a word, it was the Presbyterian or Puritanical religion. In fine, this prince had shown on numerous occasions, that he was far from being an enemy to the Romish religion. All this formed a certain contrast, which bred an universal suspense. The Catholics hoped to meet under his government with gentler treatment, and more indulgence, than under Elizabeth; nay, they carried their expectation much farther. The Presbyterians flattered themselves, that James, who had been educated in their religion, would promote the reforming of the church of England upon the plan of that of Scotland; and hoped shortly to see the downfall of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Finally, the Church-of-England-men thought to have reason to expect that the new king would conform to their religion, since it was established by law. But after all, the hopes of the three parties could not but be mixed with fears, since the king had not yet declared.

'He must, says Rapin, at the time I am now speaking of, have conceived a larger notion than had been hitherto formed of the power of an English king; since when he came to Newark, he ordered a cut-purse to be hanged, by his sole warrant, and without trial.'

It cannot be expected I should be very particular with respect to the sufferings of the Baptists during this reign and the former part of the next, because they were involved in all the persecutions that befell the Nonconformists, under the general name of puritans: for those who refused to conform to the church of England, were counted among the Puritans. Those who have read the correspondence that passed between our bishops and the foreign Protestant divines, may observe a great deal of good temper and good judgment in their desires to have had the church reformed from all remains and footsteps of Popery, and satisfaction given to scrupulous and tender consciences; but the stiffness of Queen Elizabeth, and that fondness for pomp and magnificence in worship among the generality, hindered the reformation from going any farther.
Calderwood tells us (Hist. of the Reform. Scot. p. 474.), that on the 12th of Jan. 1604, the bishops were called 'upon by his majesty, and were gravely desired to advise upon all the corruptions in doctrine, ceremonies and discipline, as they will answer it to God in conscience, or to his majesty upon their obedience; that they should return the third day. On that day they returned, and answered, they found all well; and when his majesty with great fervency brought instances to the contrary, they with great earnestness, upon their knees, craved that nothing might be altered, lest Romish recusants, punished by the statutes for their disobedience, and puritans, punished by deprivation from callings and livings for Nonconformity, should say, they had cause to insult them, as men who had travailed to bind them to that, which by their own mouths was now confessed to be erroneous. Thus, by a most dishonourable resolution, they prefer their own fame and reputation to the peace of the church; and because they have once oppressed them, will always do so, rather than seem to own themselves fallible men (Hist. account of further attempts for reformation, p. 34.).'

Now what could be expected from such men, who had drawn a weak king over to their interest, and who were resolved to continue in their errors rather than confess themselves fallible? And what Christian, or what Englishman, can, without the utmost concern and resentment, read the histories of those times, and observe the cruel usage, great hardships and sufferings of not a few, but a great multitude; who for their firmness in the propagation of a rational religion, their constancy in piety, and all christian virtue, and their aversion to all methods of cruelty and uncharitableness, have been branded with the names of Puritans, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, &c, whereby the unthinking multitude have been spirited up to hatred against all persons under those denominations, and more particularly to those of the last denomination.

When King James first came into England, he not only went over to the church of England, but even laboured to force the Puritans to conform, to be revenged on them for what the Presbyterian Synods had made him suffer in Scotland.

The Puritans presented a petition to him, not only for a toleration, but also to pray for him, that sundry articles of the church of England, with which they could not comply, might be reformed.

The bishops strenuously opposed this petition, and entreated the king to leave religion as he found it at his accession to the crown, without any innovation. The king, not to appear at first too partial, and to make believe he would not be determined without hearing the arguments on both sides, appointed a conference between the two parties, wherein he would be moderator himself; and published a proclamation, commanding both sides to be quiet, till matters were regulated as he should judge proper. This conference was held at Hampton-Court, in the year 1604, and lasted three days. The Puritans soon saw what they were to expect.

Dr. Wellwood says (Notes on Wilfon, p. 665. Comp. Hist. Notes on Rapin, p. 162.), 'This conference was but a blind to introduce episcopacy in Scotland; all the Scotch noblemen then at court being designed to be present, and others, both noblemen and ministers, being called up from Scotland by the king's letter to assist at it.'
The king's conduct was so agreeable to the bishops and their friends, that besides other palpable flatteries, Whitgist, archbishop of Canterbury, unwilling to miss so fair an opportunity to flatter him, said (Rapin, vol. II. p. 162.), 'He verily believed the king spoke by the Spirit of God.'

In conclusion, both parties being present, the king said (Ibidem, p. 162.), 'For the bishops I will answer, that it is not their purpose presently and out of hand to enforce obedience, but by fatherly admonitions and conferences to induce such as are disaffected: but if any be of an opposite and turbulent Spirit, I will have them enforced to a conformity - I will - that a time be limited by the bishops of every diocese to such, and they that will not yield, whatsoever they are, let them be removed; for we must not prefer the credit of a few private men to the general peace of the church.'

Soon after this, Whitgist died, and was succeeded by Richard Bancroft, a prelate who never ceased to incense the king against the puritans, and do them all the mischief he could. Herein he was but too closely imitated by the rest of the bishops, who found a double advantage in destroying the Puritans. In the first place, they made their court to the king, who hated them mortally. 2dly, they preserved their hierarchy, which the Puritans were desirous to overthrow.

The persecution which the Puritans suffered whilst Bancroft was at the head of the clergy, induced many families to withdraw from the kingdom, to enjoy elsewhere liberty of conscience, denied them at home. A proclamation is now published by the king, commanding all Jesuits and other Priests, having orders from any foreign power, to depart the kingdom: which was soon followed by another, enjoining the Puritans to conform to the worship of the established church.

'There was not seen here, says Rapin (Hist. of England, vol. II. p. 163.), the same care to justify the king's conduct, with respect to this sort of persecution. The king intimated in the first, that he would have regard to the tender consciences of such Catholics as could not comply with the received doctrines of the church of England; but in this there was not the least indulgence for the tender consciences of the Puritans. These were all a set of obstinate people, who deserved to have no favour shown them.'

Bishop Burnet observes (History of his own time, vol. I. p. 12.), 'that from the year 1606 to his dying-day, he continued always writing and talking against popery, but acting for it.'

The persecution growing still more violent against the Puritans, great numbers of them resolved to go and settle in Virginia. Accordingly some departed for that country: but Bancroft, seeing many more ready to take the same voyage, obtained a proclamation, enjoining them not to go without the king's express license. The court was apprehensive this sect would in the end become too numerous and powerful in America; and was not so well affected to the Puritans, as to the Papists.

The Puritans were considered as enemies to the king, and to monarchy; but the Papists as hearty wishers, that the king might meet with no opposition to his will. This was sufficient to
induce the court to countenance the latter, and cause the former to endure continual mortifications.

In the year 1608, one Enoch Clapham wrote a small piece (Errors on the right-hand) against the several sects of the Protestants in those times. In which he represents, by way of dialogue, the opinions that each sect held, and somewhat of their state and condition at that time. He takes notice of their flying out of their own nation, to plant a church among the people of another language; and that they alleged in their defence, Elias's flying in time of persecution, and our Saviour’s advice to his disciples, if they were persecuted in one city, to fly into another; and complain of those who remained in England for leaving the public assemblies, and running into woods and meadows, and meeting in bye stables, barns, and haylofts, for service.

He distinguishes the Anabaptists from Puritans and Brownists on the one hand, and from the Arians and Socinians on the other; and makes all these zealous opposers of each other.

The Anabaptists, according to his account, held, that repentance and faith must precede baptism; that the baptism both of the church of England and of the Puritans was invalid, and that the true baptism was amongst them. He says further, that they complained against the term Anabaptist, as a name of reproach unjustly cast upon them. He also takes notice, that some of this opinion were Dutchmen, who, besides the denial of Infant-baptism, held, that it was unlawful to bear arms: that Christ did not receive his human nature of the virgin, but brought it down with him from heaven; and agreed with the Roman Catholics in the doctrines of reprobation, free-will, and justification. That there were others who went under this denomination that were Englishmen, to whom he does not so directly charge the former opinions, only the denial of their first baptism, and separating both from the established church, and other Dissenters; and says, that they came out from the Brownists, and that there was a congregation of them in Holland.

When the Anabaptist is asked what religion he is of, he is made to answer; of the true religion, commonly termed Anabaptism, from our baptizing.

When he is asked concerning the church or congregation he was joined to in Holland; he answers, there be certain English people of us that came out from the Brownists.

When the Arian says, I am of the mind that there is no true baptism upon earth; the Anabaptist replies, I pray thee, son, say not so; the congregation I am of can, and doth administer true baptism.

When an enquirer after truth offers, upon his proving what he has said, to leave his old religion; the Anabaptist answers; you may say, if God will give thee grace to leave it; for it is a peculiar grace to leave Sodom and Egypt, spiritually so called.

When the same person offers to join with them, and firmly betake himself to their faith; the Anabaptist replies: the dew of heaven come upon you; tomorrow I will bring you into our sacred congregation, that so you may come to be informed in the faith, and after that to be purely baptized.
Now this account being given by one that writ against them, may be the better depended upon. And he assures the reader, in his preface to these dialogues, that the characters which he gives of each sect, were not without sundry years experience had of them all.

The Dissenters that were driven into Holland by the severity of the persecutions in England, having there liberty there, set up several churches, which they formed as they thought most agreeable to the word of God.

There was one church of English exiles at Leyden, whereof Mr. John Robinson was pastor; another at Amsterdam, which had Mr. Ainsworth for their pastor; and soon after these were set up, Mr. Johnson's and Mr. John Smith's churches, the latter of which went under the name of Anabaptists: so that to do justice to the history, we must now follow them into those parts; but I shall confine myself to the English only.

It was in the beginning of this reign, that the aforesaid Mr. John Smith left England. He had been for some time a minister of the established church; but disliking several things both in her discipline and ceremonies, he went over to Holland, and joined himself to the English church of Brownists at Amsterdam, of which Mr. Ainsworth was then the minister; and so greatly was he esteemed for his piety and learning, that he was accounted one of the grandees of the separation (Pagit’s Heresiography, p. 62.).

But when his search after truth, and resolution to reform religion according to the primitive constitution and practice, had led him to entertain some principles different from his brethren, particularly that of baptizing believers only, they set themselves violently to oppose him, they cast him out of the church, representing him as one that had proclaimed open war against God's everlasting covenant, and that would murder the souls of babes and sucklings, by depriving them of the visible seal of salvation; they published several books, wherein they endeavoured to expose both him and his principles to the world.

Mr. Ainsworth wrote two books; the one called A Defence of Scripture; the other, A Censure of a Dialogue of the Anabaptists.

Mr. Johnson, who stiles himself pastor of the ancient English church sojourning at Amsterdam, writ a third, entitled A Christian Plea.

Mr. Robinson, minister of the English congregation at Leyden, published a fourth. But his most violent adversaries were Mr. Clifton and Mr. Jessop. The one writ an answer to one of his books, which was called, The Christian Plea; the other, who acknowledges he sometime walked with them, published a piece against him, entitled, A Discovery of the errors of the English Anabaptists; which he presented to King James; and 'tis easy to guess with what design that was done. In these they lay several accusations against him: as that he fought to deprive the church of the use of the holy Scriptures; that he looked upon no translation of the Bible to be properly the word of God, the original only being so in opinion; that upon renouncing his Infant-Baptism, he baptized himself, supposing there was no true administrator of baptism to be found. But they wrote against him with so much warmth, and appearance of prejudice, that it greatly discredits what they say (Wall's baptism anatomized, p. 109. 111.). They call him a man of a wolfish nature, one whom God had
struck with blindness, a brute beast, and the like. But in these things they exposed themselves more than Mr. Smith, and brought the whole body of Dissenters under reproach.

I cannot forbear observing, what improvement a certain author (Preface, Anabaptists mystery of iniquity unmasked, 1623. By I. P.), who wrote against the Separatists quickly after, made of such persecuting measures, tho' he was as great an adversary to the Anabaptists as they could be. 'Let us, I beseech you, says he, look among the separated congregations, and consider their manifold divisions, both in judgment and practice; and there we cannot but see even a babel of confusion, separating each from other, even for some small differences in judgment, excommunicating holier and better men than themselves, yea, even such as they cannot legally tax either with fornication, covetousness, idolatry, railing, drunkenness, extortion, or the like; and that only for not submitting in every thing to their judgments, contrary to the Apostles direction (1 Cor 5:11).'

Mr. Smith writ several defences of himself and his opinions; as his Character of the Beast, his Reply to Mr. Clifton, his Dialogue of Baptism, &c, none of which have I yet been able to obtain, but by the quotations that his opponents take out of them, which were certainly the worst part, he does not appear to have been a man of such enthusiasm and odd opinions, as they would represent him.

The Brownists in those parts fell into divisions amongst themselves a little after; and writ with as much bitterness and sharp reflections against one another, as they had done against him. And whereas they could only charge him with mistaken opinions, they themselves were charged with gross immoralities; some of which were proved upon oath before the magistrates at Amsterdam: as may be seen in Mr. White's discovery of Brownism and Pagit's Heresiography.

However it was, Mr. Smith's opinions prevailed greatly, especially that of denying infant-baptism; and he soon had proselytes enough to form a distinct church of that persuasion, even among the English exiles.

Mr. Johnson, the pastor of the English church, at the same place and time, was one of the first that writ against him. His book was published in the year 1617. And he, having spoken largely in defence of infant-baptism, apologizes for his so doing in these words: 'of which point, and of sundry objections thereabout, I have treated the more largely, considering how great the error is in the denial thereof, and how greatly it spreadeth both in these parts, and of late in our own country, that is England.'

Mr. Pagit says (Heresiography, p. 64.), 'that Mr. Smith and his disciples do at once, as it were, swallow up all the separation besides.'

But the business of his baptizing himself, and the reasons of it, if he did so, must be more particularly enquired into; because the Paedobaptists make great improvement of it, and would from hence render all the baptizings among the English Baptists to be invalid, supposing them to be his successors, and that he was the first administrator of it among them. Upon the revival of their opinion in these latter times, Mr. Thomas Wall calls him
(Plain Discovery, p. 44. and preface.) the beginner of baptism by dipping, and the captain of
this and other errors: and saith (Baptism anatomized, p. 107.), 'that when the Anabaptists
had framed so many devices to deny all infants baptism, they were confounded in
themselves, what to do, to begin baptizing in their way of baptizing adult persons only - but
one John Smith - being more desperately wicked than others, baptized himself, and then he
baptized others, and from this man the English Anabaptists have successively received their
new administration of baptism on men and women only.'

The same author also asserts (Plain discovery, p. 45.), that he heard when he lived in
London, that one Mr. Spilsbury should go to Holland, to be baptized of this Smith; so he
brought it into England. And, says he, 'If you can find no better an administrator, your
ministry will be found to come out of the bottomless pit, as Rome's ministry did.'

'Tis certain, that when some of the English Protestants were for reviving the ancient practice
of immersion, they had several difficulties thrown in their way about a proper administrator,
to begin that method of baptizing.

Those who rejected the baptism of infants, at the beginning of the reformation in England,
had the same objection made against them; as Bishop Burnet observes (Hist. Ref. vol. II. part
ii. p. 113.).

'One thing, says he, was observed, that the whole world in that age, having been baptized in
their infancy, if that baptism was nothing, then there was none truly baptized in being, but
all were in the state of mere nature. Now it did not seem reasonable, that men who were
not baptized themselves, should go and baptize others; and therefore the first heads of that
sect, not being rightly baptized themselves, seemed not to act with any authority, when
they were to baptize others.'

In the like same manner did they now argue against the reviving of the practice of
immersion, which had for some time been disused: if immersion be the essential form of
that ordinance, then there is none truly baptized: and can an unbaptized person be a proper
administrator; or can a man be supposed to give that to another, which he has not first
received himself?

This difficulty did not a little perplex them; and they were divided in their opinions how to
act in this matter, so as not to be guilty of any disorder or self-contradiction. Some indeed
were of opinion, that the first administrator should baptize himself, and then proceed to the
baptizing of others. Others were for sending to those foreign Protestants that had used
immersion for some time, that so they might receive it from them. And others again thought
it necessary to baptism, that the administrator be himself baptized, as least in an
extraordinary case; but that whoever saw such a reformation necessary, might from the
authority of Scripture lawfully begin it.

I do not find any Englishman among the first restorers of immersion in this latter age
accused of baptizing himself, but only the said John Smith; and there is ground to question
the truth of that also.
Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Jessop, and some others, do indeed charge him with it; but they writ, as has been already observed, with so much passion and resentment, that it is not unlikely such men might take up a report against him upon slender evidence, and after one had published it, the others might take it from him without any enquiry into the truth of it.

The defences which he wrote for himself are not to be met with; and in the large quotations that his adversaries take out of them, I do not find one passage, wherein he acknowledges himself to have done any such thing, or attempts to justify such a practice: which surely, had there been any such, would not have escaped their notice.

There is one passage (Wall's Baptism anatomised, p. 111, 112) indeed which Mr. Clifton quotes from a treatise of Mr. Smith's, which some would make a proof out of his own mouth that he baptized himself: but being examined, it rather confirms the contrary. He is justifying, to the Brownists, his authority to begin a new form of baptizing, from the same principles by which they justified their beginning of new churches. And his words, according to their quotations, are these: 'There is as good warrant for a man churching himself; for two men singly are no church, jointly they are a church; so two men may put baptism on themselves. Again, saith Mr. Smith, a man cannot baptize others into a church, himself being out of the church, or being no member.'

Here are two principles laid down by Mr. Smith, which contradict the account they give of him: that upon the supposition of the true baptism's being lost for some time, through the disuse of it, 'tis necessary there should be two persons who must unite in the revival of it, in order to begin the administration thereof: and that the first administrator be a member of some church, who shall call and empower him to administer it to the members thereof.

Now it is reasonable to conclude, that his practice was conformable to this. And I find mention made of one Mr. Helwisse, and Mr. John Morton, that were of Mr. Smith's opinion, and joined with him in this reformation of baptism; and according to the rules he lays down, their method must be this: that first they formed a church of their opinion in the point of baptism; then the church appoints two of these ministers to begin the administration of it, by baptizing each other; after this one, or both these, baptize the rest of the congregation.

But enough of this. If he were guilty of what they charge him with, 'tis no blemish on the English Baptists; who neither approved of any such method, nor did they receive their baptism from him.

The two other methods that I mentioned, were indeed both taken by the Baptists, at their revival of immersion in England; as I find acknowledged and justified in their writings.

The former of these was, to send over to the foreign Anabaptists, who descended from the ancient Waldenses in France or Germany, that so one or more receiving baptism from them, might become proper administrators of it to others. Some thought this the best way; and acted accordingly; as appears from Mr. Hutchinson's account, in the epistle of his treatise of the Covenant and Baptism, where he says,
'When the professors of these nations had been a long time wearied with the yoke of superstitious ceremonies, traditions of men, and corrupt mixtures in the worship and service of God; it pleased the Lord to break these yokes, and by a very strong impulse of his Spirit upon the hearts of his people, to convince them of the necessity of reformation. Divers pious and very gracious people, having often sought the Lord by fasting and prayer, that he should show them the pattern of his house, the goings-out and comings-in thereof, &c, resolved, by the grace of God, not to receive or practice any piece of positive worship, which had not precept or example from the word of God. Infant-baptism coming of course under consideration, after long search and many debates, it was found to have no footing in the Scriptures, the only rule and standard to try doctrines by; but on the contrary a mere innovation, yea, the profanation of an ordinance of God. And though it was purposed to be laid aside, yet what fears, tremblings, and temptations did attend them, lest they should be mistaken, considering how many learned and godly men were of an opposite persuasion? How gladly would they have had the rest of their brethren gone along with them? But when there was no hopes, they concluded, that a christian's faith must not stand in the wisdom of men; and that every one must give an account of himself to God; and so resolved to practise according to their light. The great objection was, the want of an administrator; which, as I have heard, says he, was removed, by sending certain messengers to Holland, whence they were supplied.'

This agrees with an account given of the matter in an ancient manuscript, said to be written by Mr. William Kiffen, who lived in those times, and was a leader among those of that persuasion.

This relates, that several sober and pious persons belonging to the congregations of the Dissenters about London, were convinced that believers were the only proper subjects of baptism, and that it ought to be administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water, in resemblance of a burial and resurrection, according to 2 Colos. ii. 12. and Rom. vi. 4. That they often met together to pray and confer about this matter, and consult what methods they should take to enjoy this ordinance in its primitive purity: that they could not be satisfied about any administrator in England to begin this practice; because tho’ some in this nation rejected the baptism of infants, yet they had not, as they knew of, revived the ancient custom of immersion: but hearing that some in the Netherlands practised it, they agreed to send over one Mr. Richard Blount, who understood the Dutch language: that he went accordingly, carrying letters of recommendation with him, and was kindly received both by the church there, and Mr. John Batte their teacher: that upon his return, he baptized Mr. Samuel Blacklock, a minister, and these two baptized the rest of their company, whose names are in the manuscript, to the number of fifty three.

So that those who followed this scheme did not receive their baptism from the aforesaid Mr. Smith, or his congregation at Amsterdam, it being an ancient congregation of foreign Baptists in the Low Countries to whom they sent. But the greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this as needless trouble, and what proceeded from the old Popish doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession, which neither the church of Rome, nor the church of England, much less the modern Dissenters, could prove to be with them. They affirmed (Persecution for religion judged and condemned, p. 41.) therefore, and practised accordingly, that after a
general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation.

Mr. Spilsbury, who was falsely reported to have gone over to Holland to receive baptism from John Smith, declares expressly against a man’s baptizing himself, and judges it to be far from any rule in the gospel so to do; but observes (Treatise of baptism, p. 63, 65, 66.), that where there is a beginning, some one must be first. 'And because, says he, some make it such an error, and so, far from any rule or example, for a man to baptize others, who is himself unbaptized, and so think thereby to shut up the ordinance of God in such a strait, that none can come by it but thro' the authority of the Popedom of Rome; let the reader consider who baptized John the Baptist before he baptized others and if no man did, then whether he did not baptize others, he himself being unbaptized. We are taught by this what to do upon the like occasions.'

'Further, says he, I fear men put more than is right due to it, that so prefer it above the church, and all other ordinances besides; for they can assume and erect a church, take in and cast out members, elect and ordain officers, and administer the Supper, and all a-new, without any looking after succession, any further than the Scriptures: but as for baptism, they must have that successively from the Apostles, tho' it comes thro' the hands of pope Joan. What is the cause of this, that men can do all from the word but only baptism?'

Now it is probable that this man should go over sea to find an administrator of baptism, or receive it from the hands of one who baptized himself?

The learned Mr. Tombes does very excellently defend this last method of restoring the true baptism. 'If, says he (Add. to. Apo. p. 10.), no continuance of adult baptism can be proved, and baptism by such persons is wanting, yet I conceive what many Protestant writers do yield, when they are pressed by the Papists to show the calling of the first reformers; that after an universal corruption, the necessity of the thing doth justify the persons that reform, tho' wanting an ordinary regular calling, will justify in such a case, both the lawfulness of the minister’s baptizing, that hath not been rightly baptized himself, and the sufficiency of that baptism to the person so baptized. And this very thing, says he, that in a case where a baptized minister cannot be had, it is lawful for an unbaptized person to baptize, and his baptism is valid, is both the resolution of Aquinas, and of Zanchius, an eminent Protestant. Suaeritur an is possit baptizare eos, quos ad Christum convertit, ut ipse ab alio ex illis a se conversis baptizetur. Ratio est, quia minister est verbi, a Christo extraordinem excitatus, eoque ut talis minister potest cum illius ecclesiolaee consensu, symmiam constituer, & ab eo, ut baptizetur curare. Whereby, says Mr. Tombes, you may perceive that this is no new truth; that an unbaptized person may in some case baptize another, and he baptize him, being baptized of him.'

I will only add farther what is said on this head by the honourable Henry Laurence Esq; another learned Baptist, who has excellently defended the true baptism, and the manner of reviving it in these later times. 'It cannot reasonably be objected, says he (Treatise of Baptism, p. 407.), that he that baptizeth should necessarily be himself a baptized person: for tho' ordinarily it will be so, yet it is not necessary to the ordinance; for not the personal baptism of him that administers, but the due commission he hath for baptizing, is alone
considerable to make him a true minister of baptism. And here that expression holds not, one cannot give what he hath not, as a man cannot teach me, that wants knowledge himself; because no man gives his own baptism, but conveys, as a public person, that which is given us by Christ. A poor man, that hath nothing of his own, may give me gold, that is, money of another man, by virtue of being sent for that purpose. So if a man can show his commission, the writing and seal of him that sent it, it is enough here. Else what would become of the great baptizer, John the Baptist, who had a fair commission to baptize, but was not himself baptized that we read of: or if he should be, which cannot be affirmed; yet the first baptizer, whoever he was, must at the time of his first administration of that ordinance be unbaptized.'

Tho' these things were published at different times, I have put them together, to end this matter at once. It was a point much disputed for some years. The Baptists were not a little uneasy about it at first; and the Paedobaptists thought to render all the baptizings among them invalid, for want of a proper administrator to begin their practice: but by the excellent reasonings of these and other learned men, we see their beginning was well defended, upon the same principles on which all other Protestants built their reformation.

King James, to show his zeal against heresy, had now an opportunity to exercise it upon two of his own subjects; who, in the year 1611, were burnt alive in Smithfield for heretical opinions.

One was Bartholomew Legate, of the county of Essex, of whom Mr. Fuller gives this character (Book x. p. 63.). That he was a man of a bold spirit, and fluent tongue, excellently skilled in the Scriptures, and of unblameable conversation: but showing his dislike of the Nicene and Athanasius's creeds, and denying the plurality of persons in the Godhead, and the divinity of Christ, was for these errors frequently summoned before the bishops in their consistory, and kept prisoner some time in Newgate. He very boldly defended his opinions, and would not be brought to desist from it, tho' the king himself had him often brought before him, and endeavoured to recover him. At length, in an assembly of bishops he was condemned as a contumacious and incorrigible heretic. This was on the 3rd of March, and on the 18th of the same month, about noon, he was brought to Smithfield, and there burnt to ashes before a vast number of spectators.

The other (Fuller, book x. p. 64.) was one Edward Wightman, a Baptist, of the town of Burton upon Trent; who on the 14th day of December was convicted of divers heresies before the bishop of Coventry and Litchfield; and being delivered up to the secular power, was burnt at Litchfield the 11th of April following.

Many of the heresies they charge upon him are so foolish and inconsistent, that it very much discredits what they say. If he really held such opinions, he must either be an idiot or a madman, and ought rather to have had their prayers and assistance, than be put to such a cruel death (Vid. Commission and Warrant for his burning, in the Appendix, No I.).

That they may be sure to accuse him with enough, he is condemned for holding the wicked heresies of the Ebionites, Cerinthians, Valentinians, Arians, Macedonians, of Simon Magus, Manes, Manichaeus, Photinus, and of the Anabaptists: and lest all these hard names should
not comprehend every error held by him, 'tis added, and of other heretical, execrable, and unheard of opinions. From this general account of his heresies, they proceed to mention fifteen particulars. In one they make him say, that Christ is not the true natural Son of God in respect of his Godhead: in another, that he is only man, and a mere creature; and yet, in the next, he took not human flesh of the substance of his mother. One while he is represented as making himself to be Christ; at another time saying, that God had ordained and sent him to perform his part in the work of the salvation of the world, by his teaching; as Christ was ordained and sent to save the world, and by his death to deliver it from sin, and reconcile it to God.

Three of the articles are such, that I cannot but wonder to find them amongst those heresies for which a man is burnt alive by Protestants, viz, that the baptizing of infants is an abominable custom: that the Lord's-Supper and Baptism are not to be celebrated as they are now practised in the church of England: that Christianity is not wholly professed and preached in the church of England, but only in part.

The first who was put to this cruel death in England was William Sawtre, supposed upon very probable grounds to have denied infant-baptism; and this man, the last who was honoured with this kind of martyrdom, was expressly condemned for that opinion: so that this sect had the honour both of leading the way, and bringing up the rear of all the martyrs who were burnt alive in England, as well as that a great number of those who suffered this death for their religion in the two hundred years betwixt, were of this denomination.

This burning of heretics did much startle the common people. Mr. Fox, in his excellent Martyrology, had so exposed the Papists for this kind of cruelty, that it was generally disliked and condemned and thought unaccountable that Protestants should be guilty of the same practice. The barbarity of the punishment moved compassion towards the sufferers; and to see men with so much firmness and constancy seal their opinions with their blood, rather promoted their doctrines, than put a stop to them.

King James chose therefore for the future only to seize their estates, and waste away their lives privately in nasty prisons, rather than honour them with such a public martyrdom, which would unavoidably go under the name of persecution.

In the Spring, Anno 1614, some Presbyterian families resolved to go and settle in New-England, to enjoy there that peace they could not find at home. 'The author, says Rapin (Hist. Engl. vol. II. p. 185.), I just mentioned concerning the Earl of Northampton, says, these people were notorious Schismatics of several sects, known by the general name of Puritans. As it was not impossible, by the increase of Presbyterian families, the English plantations might become nurseries for Nonconformists, the court gave orders not to let them depart; but afterwards such as desired to remove beyond the sea, being examined, some were allowed to pursue their voyage, and others were detained as sureties for those that went away.'

That some of these were Baptists, appears from Mr. Cotton Mather (Eccl. Hist. New-Engl. lib. i. c. 2.), where I find the first settlement of the English in this part of America was in the year 1620. They were certain pious Nonconformists, who had left their native country to
avoid persecution, and dwelt for some time in Holland, being members of the English church at Leyden, of which Mr. John Robinson was pastor; but not liking that country, obtained leave of King James to enjoy the liberty of consciences under his gracious protection in America, where they would endeavour the advancement of his majesty's dominions, and the interest of the gospel. They set sail from Southampton in England, August 5. 1620. and arrived at Cape-Cod about the 9th of November following. Among these some few were Antipaedobaptists. So that Antipaedobaptism is as ancient in those parts as Christianity itself.

Leaving then England at present, let us follow these Baptists, and see how it fared with them there.

Mr. Cotton Mather says thus (Eccl. Hist. New-Engl. lib. vii. p. 26.): 'Having done with the Quakers, let it not be misinterpreted, if into the same chapter we put the inconveniences which the churches of New-England have also suffered from the Anabaptists; albeit they have infinitely more of Christianity among them than the Quakers, and have indeed been useful defenders of Christianity against the assaults of the Quakers. Yea, we are willing to acknowledge for our brethren as many of them as are willing to be so acknowledged. - All the world knows, says he, that the most eminent reformers, writing against the Anabaptists, have not been able to forbear making their treatises like what Jerom says of Tertullian's polemical treatises, Quot verba, tot Fulmina. And the noble martyr Philpot expressed the mind of them all, when he said, The Anabaptists are an inordinate kind of men, stirred up by the devil to the destruction of the gospel, having neither Scripture, nor antiquity, nor anything else for them, but lies and new imaginations, feigning the baptism of children to be the Pope's commandment. Nevertheless it is well known, that of later time there have been a great many Antipaedobaptists who have never deserved so hard a character among the churches of God. Infant-baptism hath been scrupled by multitudes in our days, who have been in other points most worthy Christians, and as holy, watchful, fruitful and heavenly people as perhaps any in the world. Some few of these people have been among the planters in New-England from the beginning, and have been welcome to the communion of our churches, which they have enjoyed, reserving their particular opinion unto themselves.'

'But at length it came to pass, that while some of our churches used it may be a little too much of cogency towards the brethren, which would weakly turn their backs when infants were brought forth to be baptized in the congregation, there were some of these brethren who in a day of temptation broke forth into schismatical practices, that were justly offensive unto all the churches in this wilderness.'

'Our Anabaptists, when somewhat of exasperation was begun, formed a church at Boston, on May 28. 1665. besides one which they had before at Swanzey. Now they declared our infant-baptism to be a mere nullity; and they arrogate unto themselves the title of Baptists, as if none were baptized but themselves.'

'The General Court, says Mr. Mather, were so afraid lest matters might at last, from small beginnings, grow into a new Munster tragedy, that they enacted some laws for the restraint of Anabaptistical exorbitances (Eccles. Hist. New-Engl. lib. vii. p. 27.): which laws, tho' never executed unto the extremity of them, yet were soon laid by, as to any execution of them at
all. There were in this unhappy schism several truly godly men, whom it was thought a very uncomfortable thing to prosecute with severe imprisonments, on these controversies. And there came also a letter from London, to the governor of the Massachusetts's colony, subscribed by no less persons than Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Owen, Mr. Nye, Mr. Caryl, and nine other very reverend ministers, wherein were these among other passages.'

'We shall not here undertake in the least to make any apology for the persons, opinions, and practices of those who are censured amongst you. - you know our judgment and practice to be contrary unto theirs, even as your’s, wherein, God assisting, we shall continue to the end: neither shall we return any answer to the reason of the Rev. Elders for the justification of your proceedings, as not being willing to engage in the management of any the least difference with persons whom we so much love and honour in the Lord. - but the sum of all which at present we shall offer to you, is, that tho' the court might apprehend that they had grounds in general, warranting their procedure in such cases, in the way wherein they have proceeded; yet that they have any rule or command, rendering their so proceeding indispensably necessary under all circumstances of fines or places, we are altogether unsatisfied. And we need not represent unto you how the case stands with ourselves, and all your brethren and companions in the services of these latter days in these nations. We are sure you would be unwilling to put an advantage into the hands of some who seek pretences and occasions against our liberty, and to reinforce the former rigour. Now we cannot deny, but this hath already in some measure been done, in that it hath been vogued (Sic origine), that persons of our way, principles, and spirit, cannot bear with dissenters from them. And as this greatly reflects on us, so some of us have observed how already it has turned unto your own disadvantage.'

'We leave it to your wisdom to determine, whether under all these circumstances, and sundry others of the like nature that might be added, it be not advisable at present to put an end unto the sufferings and confinements of the persons censured, and to restore them to their former liberty. You have the advantage of truth and order; you have the gifts and learning of an able ministry to manage and defend them; you have the care and vigilancy of a very worthy magistracy to countenance and protect them, and to preserve the peace; and above all, you have a blessed Lord and master, who hath the keys of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, living forever, to take care of his own concernments among his saints: and assuredly you need not be disquieted, tho' some few persons, through their own infirmity and weakness, or through their ignorance, darkness and prejudices, should to their disadvantage turn out of the way in some lesser matters, into by-paths of their own. We only make it our hearty request to you, that you would trust God with his truths and ways, so far as to suspend all rigorous proceedings, in corporal restraints or punishments, on persons that dissent from you, and practise the principles of their dissent without danger or disturbance to the civil peace of the place.'

Dated March 25. 1669.

'I cannot say, says Mr. Mather, that this excellent letter had immediately all the effect which it should have had; however at length it has had its effect.'
One Roger Williams (Eccl. Hist. New-Engl. p. 7.), a preacher, who arrived in New-England about the year 1630 was first an assistant in the church of Salem, and afterwards pastor. This man, a difference happening between the government and him, caused a great deal of trouble and vexation. At length the magistrates passed the sentence of banishment upon him; upon which he removed with a few of his own sect, and settled at a place called Providence. 'There they proceeded, says Mr. Mather, 'not only unto the gathering of a thing like a church, but unto the renouncing their infant-baptism.' After this, he says (Ibid. p. 9.), he turned Seeker and Familist, and the church came to nothing; yet acknowledges, that after all this, 'he was very instrumental in obtaining a charter for the government of Rhode-island, which lay near and with his town of Providence, and was by the people sometimes chosen governour, and in many things acquitted himself so laudably, that many judicious persons judged him to have had the root of the matter in him: that he used many commendable endeavours to christianise the Indians in his neighbourhood, and printed a relation of their language, tempers, and manners: that he also with much vigour maintained the main principles of the Protestant Religion against the Quakers, of which he has published a large account in a book entitled, George Fox digged out of his burrows. Mr. Mather also acknowledges that there was a good correspondence always held between him and many worthy and pious people in the colony from whence he had been banished; and that some of the English nobility had writ letters in his commendation.'

Mr. Baxter calls (Plain Script. pr 146.) this man the Father of the Seekers in London.

Several of the Indians bordering upon the English colonies in New-England, were, by the endeavours of several pious ministers, brought to receive the Christian faith, and had the Bible translated into their language, and several churches gathered among them. Mr. John Gardiner, in his letter, giving an account of the Christian Indians of Nantucket, says, 'There are three societies or churches, two congregational, and one of the Baptists; but their number is small.'

Mr. Benjamin Keach was used frequently to say, 'that when the Indians had embraced Christianity, and got the New Testament translated into their language, they were surprised that they found no directions there to baptize children, nor any instance of such a practice, therefore enquired of the English the ground of that practice, whereupon they rejected it as an human invention.'

The controversy about the baptism of children, and the care that was to be taken of them afterwards, grew to such an height (Mather's Eccl. Hist. New-Engl. lib. v. p. 63.), that an assembly of the principal and most able ministers of both colonies was called by the magistrates on June 4, 1657 to answer the questions that were in agitation about these matters; who accordingly presented their elaborate answer to twenty one questions relating to this affair, which was afterwards printed in London, under the title of, A disputation concerning church-members, and their children. But this did not put an end to the controversy; therefore a synod was convened at Boston in the year 1662 in which this was the first and chief question to be determined, who are the subjects of baptism?

'There have at several times, says Mr. Mather (Ibid. lib. iii. p. 7.), arrived in this country more than a score of ministers from other parts of the world, who proved either so erroneous in
their principles, or so scandalous in their practices, or so disagreeable to the church-order, for which the country was planted, that I cannot well crowd them into the company of our worthies. I confess there were some of those persons whose names deserve to live in our book for their piety, altho' their particular opinions were such, as to be disserviceable unto the declared and supposed interests of our churches. Of these there were some godly Anabaptists; as namely, Mr. Hanserd Knollys, of Dover, who afterwards removing back to London, lately died there, a good man in a good old age; and Mr. Miles of Swanzey, who afterwards came to Boston, and is now gone to his rest. Both of these have a respectful character in the churches of this wilderness.

Having mentioned the several congregational churches at Boston, he adds (Lib. i. p. 27.): 'And besides these, there is another small congregation of Antipaedobaptists, wherein Mr. Emlin is the settled minister.'

In his account of New-Plymouth Colony, he says (Ib. p. 14.): 'Moreover there has been among them one church that have questioned and omitted the use of infant-baptism; nevertheless, there being many good men among those, that have been of this persuasion, I do not know that they have been persecuted with any harder means than those of kind conferences to reclaim them.'

The learned Mr. John Tombes, being acquainted with a law made in New-England, and the proceedings against those that denied the baptism of infants, was prevailed upon to send a copy of his examen before it was printed, thither, designing thereby to put them upon the study of this matter more exactly, and to allay the vehemency of their spirits and proceedings against those that dissented from them; and therewith he sent this short epistle (Apology, p. 13.).

To all the elders of the churches of Christ in New-England, and to each in particular by name: To the pastor and teacher of the church of God at Boston, there, these present.

Reverend Brethren,

'Understanding that there is some disquiet in your churches about paedobaptism, and being moved by some that honour you much in the Lord, and desire your comfortable account at the day of Christ, that I would yield that a copy of my examen of master Marshall his sermon of infant-baptism might be transcribed, and be sent to you; I have consented thereto, and do commend it to your examination, in like manner, as you may perceive by the reading of it, I did to master Marshall. Not doubting but that you will, as in God's presence, and accountable to Christ Jesus, weigh the thing; remembering that of our Lord Christ, John vii. 24. Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. To the blessing of him who is your God and our God, your judge and our judge, I leave you, and the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, and rest,'

Your brother and fellow-servant in the work of Christ,

John Toombes (From my study at the Temple in London, May 25th, 1645.)
That the Baptists have very much increased in those parts since they have enjoyed tranquillity, I find by a letter from Philadelphia in the province of Pensilvania, wrote by Mr. Abel Morgan, pastor of a Baptist church there, giving an account of the state and number of the Baptized churches in that province, Aug. 12, 1714, wherein he says, 'We are now nine churches, having for the better assisting one the other, four general meetings. 1st at Welsh Tract, where all the Pensilvania churches resort to in May. The 2d is at Cohansy, for conveniency of those parts, where Philadelphia assists. The 3d is at Middleton, where also Philadelphia assists. The 4th is at Philadelphia, in the month of September, where all do resort, and where most of the public matters are settled to be decided by messengers from every particular church.'

'In these churches, says he, there are above five hundred members, but greatly scattered on this main land; our ministers are necessitated to labour with both hands. We hope, if it please God to supply us with more help, we shall be more churches in a little time. Most churches administer the sacrament once a month; the ministers are all found in the faith, and we practise most things like the British churches.'

To return to England: Bancroft was succeeded by Dr. George Abbot, bishop of London; 'a divine, says Mr. Neale (Hist. Purit. vol. II. p. 93.), of a quite different spirit from his predecessor: He was a sound Protestant, a thorough Calvinist, an avowed enemy to Popery, and even suspected of Puritanism, because he relaxed the penal laws; whereby, says lord Clarendon, he unravelled all that his predecessor had been doing for many years.'

'If Abbot's moderate measures, says Mr Neal, had been pursued, the liberties of England had been secured, Popery discountenanced, and the church prevented from running into those excesses which afterwards proved its ruin.'

Anno 1615. The more moderate or orthodox Baptists published a small treatise (Persecution judged, and condemned.), wherein they endeavoured to justify their separation from the church of England, and to prove, that every man has a right to judge for himself in matters of religion; and that to persecute any on that account, is illegal and antichristian, contrary to the laws of God, as well as to several declarations of the king's majesty. They also assert their opinion concerning Baptism, and show the invalidity of that Baptism which was administered either in the Established Church, or among the other Dissenters, and clear themselves of several errors unjustly cast upon them. It appears to be written, or at least approved of, by the whole body of Baptists who then remained in England; because at the end of the preface they subscribe themselves Christ's unworthy ministers, and his majesty's faithful subjects, commonly, but most falsely called Anabaptists.

From hence therefore we may know what was in general the opinions of that denomination, from themselves; which is certainly the fairest way of judging.

They acknowledge magistracy to be God's ordinance; and that kings, and such as are in authority, ought to be obeyed in all civil matters, not only for fear, but also for conscience-sake (Persecut. judg'd and condemn'd, p. 5.).
They allow the taking of an oath to be lawful; and declare, that all of their profession were willing, in faithfulness and truth, to subscribe the oath of allegiance (Ibid. p. 23).

They protest against the doctrine of the Papists, that princes excommunicated by the pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects; calling it a damnable and accursed doctrine, which their souls abhor; and also against the error of the Familists, who to avoid persecution, can comply with any external form of religion.

They confess, that Christ took his flesh of the virgin Mary; and for their orthodoxy in these and other points, refer the reader to their confession of faith, published four years before this, which must be in the year 1611.

They acknowledged, that many called Anabaptists, held several strange opinions contrary to them; but lament it, and clear themselves from deserving any censure upon this account, by showing that it was so in the primitive church, and yet Christ did not condemn all for the errors of some.

But that which they chiefly inveigh against, is the pride, luxury, and oppression of the lord bishops, or pretended spiritual power, whereby they were exposed to great hardships and cruel persecutions (Persecution judged, &c. p. 27.)

In their preface, having mentioned that text, The kings of the earth shall give their power unto the beast; 'If it be granted, say they, that the kings of this nation formerly have given their power to the Romish beast, it shall evidently appear, that our lord the king, and all the magistrates under him, do give their power unto the same beast, tho' the beast be in another shape.' - and presently after; 'Our most humble desire of our lord the king is, that he would not give his power to force his faithful subjects to dissemble, to believe as he believes, in the least measure of persecution; tho' it is no small persecution to lie many years in filthy prisons, in hunger, cold, idleness, divided from wife, family, calling, left in continual miseries and temptations, so as death would be to many less persecution.'

Again, showing how near the prelatical power and usurpation came to the bloody spiritual power of the Roman Catholics, they say: 'How many, only for seeking reformation in religion, have been put to death by your power in the days of Q. Elizabeth? and how many, both then and since, have been consumed to death in prisons? Yea, since that spiritual power hath been set up, hath not hanging, burning, exile, imprisonments, and all manner of contempt been used, and all for religion, altho' some for grievous errors, and yet you see not this to be a bloody religion!'

'Let, say they in another place, Mr. Fox, or any others who have described the spiritual power of Rome, let but their description thereof be compared with the spiritual power, in all their laws, courts, titles, pomp, pride, and cruelty, and you shall see them very little differ, except in their cruelties, which, glory be to God, the King's Majesty, who thirsteth not after blood, hath somewhat restrained. Altho' it is most grievous cruelty to lie divers years in most noisome and filthy prisons, and continual temptations of want, their estates overthrown, and never coming out, many of them till death; let it be well-weighed, and it is little inferior to the cruel sudden death in times of the Romish power in this nation.'
But after all this, they conclude with an hearty prayer for their enemies, 'That the Lord would give them repentance, that their sins may not be laid to their charge, even for Christ's sake.'

Notwithstanding this, their sufferings were rather increased than lessened: they were not only railed against in the pulpits under the names of heretics, schismatics, and Anabaptists, and harassed in the spiritual courts; but the temporal sword was used against them; their goods seized, their persons confined for many years in stinking gaols, where they were deprived of their wives, children, and friends, till the Divine Majesty was pleased to release several of them by death.

In the year 1618, there came forth a book (A plain and well-grounded treatise concerning baptism.), vindicating the principles of the Baptists. This was translated from the Dutch, and is thought to be the first that was published in English against the baptizing of infants. The argument of this book is laid down in the following eight propositions:

'1. That Christ commanded his apostles, and servants of the Holy Ghost, first of all to preach the gospel, and make disciples, and afterwards to baptize those that were instructed in the faith, in calling upon and confessing the name of God.'

'2. That the apostles and servants of the Holy Ghost have, according to the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ, first of all taught, and then afterwards those that were instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of God were baptized, upon the confessing of their faith.'

'3. That after the apostle's time, by the ancient fathers in the primitive church, who observed and followed the ordinance of Christ, and the example of the apostles, the people were commonly instructed in the mysteries of faith; and after that they were taught, they were baptized upon confession of the same.'

'4. That by the ancient fathers in the primitive church, the children both of the faithful and others, were commonly first instructed in the faith, and afterwards, upon acknowledging and confessing of the same, they were baptized.'

'5. That according to the institution of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostles and ancient fathers right use, the teachers required faith with baptism, and that he that was baptized must himself acknowledge and confess the same, and call upon the name of the Lord.'

'6. That Christ neither gave commandment for baptizing of children, nor instituted the same; and that the apostles never baptized any infants.'

'7. That the baptism of infants and sucklings is a ceremony and ordinance of man, brought into the church by teachers after the apostle's time, and instituted and commanded by councils, popes, and emperors.'

'8. That young children or infants ought not to be baptized; and that none ought to be brought, driven, or compelled thereunto.'
All which the author endeavours to prove, either from several passages of Scripture, or large quotations out of the fathers.

I do not find this book received any answer till about thirty years after. Then Mr. Thomas Cobbet, of New-England, published A vindication of childrens church-membership, and right to baptism.

I do suppose the book was concealed as much as possible, till the civil wars produced liberty of conscience; which occasioned it to go long unanswered.

Those who dissented from the established church at this time, were persecuted by the laws made in this and the former reign against them; and those deemed Anabaptists had of all others the least favour shown them, fines and imprisonments being usually their lot.

In the year 1620, they presented an humble supplication to K. James, the parliament then sitting; wherein they first acknowledge their obligation, by virtue of a divine command, to pray for kings, and all that are in authority; and appeal to God that it was their constant practice so to do. They set forth, that their miseries were not only the taking away of their goods, but also long and lingering imprisonments for many years, in divers counties in England, in which many have died, leaving their widows and several small children behind them, and all because they dared not join in such worship as they did not believe to be according to the will of God.

They challenge their enemies to accuse them of any disloyalty to his Majesty, or of doing any injury to their neighbours; and declare their readiness to be obedient to all the laws that were or should be made for the preservation of his Majesty's person, and security of his government in all civil or temporal things: but that further than this they could not go, because God was the Lord of mens conscience, and only law-giver in matters of religion.

That if they were in error, these cruel proceedings did no ways become the charity and goodness of the Christian religion; but were the marks of Antichrist, for what they themselves condemned in the Papists.

That such methods might indeed tempt men to become hypocrites; but that it was not in their power to command belief, or compel the heart.

And therefore they humbly beseech his Majesty, his nobles and parliament, to consider their case, and that according to the direction of God's word, they would let the wheat and tares grow together in the world, until the harvest.

To this they subjoin ten short chapters; wherein they endeavour to prove, that the sacred Scriptures are the rule of our faith, and not any church, council, or potentate whatsoever:

That the most necessary doctrines therein contained are sufficiently plain, so that every one that searches with a sincere and obedient mind may understand them:
That the knowledge of God's will, and practise of true religion, has commonly been found among those that have been poor and despised in this world, while the great and learned have been in error, and the chief persecutors both of the truth and its professors:

That to persecute men for their conscience-sake, is contrary to the law of Christ, as well as to several declarations that had been made by the king's majesty, and other famous princes:

That both ancient and modern writers, both Protestants and Papists, do condemn it as a great iniquity; and that to grant men liberty in matters of religion, can be no prejudice to any commonwealth, neither does it deprive princes of any power given them of God.

And then they conclude the whole with prayer for the king's majesty, for his royal highness the prince, and the honourable assembly of parliament; calling God, the searcher of all hearts to witness, that they were loyal subjects to his majesty, not for fear only, but for conscience-sake; subscribing themselves, those who are unjustly called Anabaptists.

But notwithstanding the odium cast upon them, and the severities used against them, they kept up their separate meetings, and had many disciples who embraced their opinion, as is declared by those who writ against them.

Among the many proselytes which they had at this time, there was one at London, who being severely reflected upon for his separating from the church, and divers false reasons for his so doing being reported, thought fit to write a letter to his friends, to acquaint them with the real occasion of it; and that he might recommend his present principle and practice to them with the more advantage, he got one of the elders of the Baptists to draw it up for him. But before this letter came to the persons designed, it fell into the hands of one in the communion of the church of England, who immediately published it, together with an answer thereto.

This letter, discovering something of the principles and spirit of the Baptists of those times, and the arguments by which they did then maintain their opinions; I shall here insert the copy thereof (Anabap. Mystery of Iniquity unmasked, by J. P. An. 1623.).

Beloved Friends,

'The ancient love that I have had towards you, provoketh me to testify that I have not forgotten you, but am desirous still to show my unfeigned love to you in any thing I may. I make no question but you have heard divers false reports of me, altho’ among the same some truths; and that you may be truly informed of my state, I thought good to write a few words unto you, hoping you will not speak evil of that you know not, nor condemn a man unheard. The thing wherein I differ from the church of England, is, they say at their washing or baptizing their infants, they are members, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. This I dare not believe, for the Scriptures of God declare, that neither flesh, nor washing the flesh, can save. Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God; for that which is flesh is flesh; and we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, except we be born again. They that have prerogative to be the sons of God, must be born of God, even believe in his name; and the washing off the filth of the flesh is not the baptism that saveth; but a
good conscience maketh requests to God. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The consequence of this is, that infants are not to be baptized, nor can be Christians; but such only as confess their faith, as these Scriptures teach. There is neither command, example, or just consequence for infants baptism, but for the baptizing of believers. There is besides, of the church of God, to be considered what it is; it will plainly appear, that infants cannot be of it; they that know the language from whence the word church is taken, can witness that it signifieth a people called out, and so the church of Christ is a company called out of their former estate, wherein they were by nature; out of Babylon, wherein they have been in spiritual bondage to the power of Antichrist, and from having fellowship in spiritual worship with unbelievers and ungodly men: from all, whosoever cometh out, they are fit timber for his spiritual building, which is a habitation of God by the Spirit, and the household of faith. Those thus come out of nature, Egyptian bondage, and the fellowship of the children of Belial, being new creatures, and so holy brethren, are made God's house, or church, through being knit together by the Spirit of God, and baptized into his body, which is the church. This being undeniable the church of Christ, infants cannot be of it, for they cannot be called out, as aforesaid. Known wicked men cannot be of it, because they are not called out, nor antichrists spiritual bondage cannot be of it, because that is a habitation of devils, and all God's people must go out of that.'

'What can be objected against this? Are not all the sons of God by faith? If any be in Christ, or a Christian, must he not be a new creature? I pray you, do not take up that usual objection which the Antichristians have learned of the Jews, "What tellest thou as of being made Christians only be faith in the Son, and so being made free? we are the children of Abraham, and of believers; we are under the promise, I will be the God of thee and thy seed: thus are we and our children made free, when as they neither do nor can believe in the Son." This is a Jewish antichristian fable. For Abraham had two sons, which were types of the two seeds, to the which two covenants are made: the one born after the flesh, typing out the fleshly Israelites, which were the inhabitants of material Jerusalem, where the material temple, and the performance of those carnal rites which endured unto the time of reformation: the other by faith, typing out the children of the faith of Abraham, which are the inhabitants of the spiritual Jerusalem, the New Testament, in which the spiritual temple, the church of the living God, and the performance of all those spiritual ordinances which Christ Jesus, as prophet and king thereof, hath appointed, which remains, and cannot be shaken or altered.'

'Now if the old covenant be abolished, and all the appertainings thereof, as it is, as being similitudes of heavenly things; even the covenant written in the book, the people, the tabernacle or temple, and all the ministering vessels; and a better covenant, established upon better promises, and better temple and ministering vessels came instead thereof, procured and purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, who is the new and living way: let us draw near with a true heart, in assurance of faith, sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience, and baptized in our bodies with pure water: let us keep this profession of hope without wavering, and have no confidence in the flesh, to reap justification or christianity thereby; but let us cast it away as dung and dross: for if ever any might pledge privilege of being the child of the faithful, the Apostle Paul might, as he saith; - read the place (Phil. iii. 3.) - but it was nothing till he had the righteousness of God through faith, then was he baptized into Christ Jesus for the remission of his sins.'
This covenant, that we as children of Abraham challenge, is the covenant of life and salvation by Jesus Christ, made to all the children of Abraham, as is made to Abraham himself; to them that believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. As also, the children of the flesh are not they; they must be put out, and must not be heirs with the faithful: if they that are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect. Therefore it is by faith, that it might come by grace, and the promise might be sure to all the seed that are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. They are his children; the promise of salvation is not made with both Abraham's seeds, but with his own seed, they that are of the faith of Abraham.'

'These things may be strange to those that are strangers from the the life of God, thro' the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts. God hath written them as the great things of his law; but they are counted of many as a strange thing: but wisdom is justified of all her children, and they that set their hearts to seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for treasure, they shall see the righteousness of those things as the light, and the evidence of them as the noon-day. They that be wise will try these things by the true touchstone of the holy Scriptures, and leave off rejoicing in men, to hang their faith and profession on them; the which I fear not to supplicate God day and night on the behalf of you all. To whose gracious direction I commit you, with a remembrance of my hearty love to every one; desiring but this favour, that for requital I may rejoice your loving answer.'

'Your's to be commanded always in any Christian service,'

H.H. (Lond. 10 May 1622).

'P.S. I have sent to my friends a testimony of my love; one book to Master Stroud, one to Goodman Ball, one to Mrs. Fountaine, one to Rogor Seely, one to Samuel Quash, and one to your self. I beseech you read, consider, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.'

The person who published this letter, with an answer thereto, observes, that they separated from the church, and writ many books in defence of their principles, and had multitudes of disciples (Anabapt. Mystery of iniquity unveiled, p. 61.): that it was their custom to produce a great number of Scriptures to prove their doctrines (Advertisement to the reader.): that they were in appearance more holy than those of the established church (Unmasking the man of sin, p. 113.): that they dissuaded their disciples from reading the churchmens books, hearing in their assemblies, or conferring with their learned men (Advert. to the reader.): that besides the denial of infant-baptism, they denied also the doctrine of predestination, reprobation, final perseverance, and other truths; but of their opposing these he gives no express proof, but says (Anabapt. Myst. p. 42, 65.), 'Tho' their letter question them not, yet I suppose their seeds are sown among you, so well by their apostles as books.'

This indeed has ordinarily been their treatment, to be accused only upon supposition, and have their whole party branded with the errors or miscarriages of a few.

The said author further observes from this letter (Ibid. p. 38.), that the Baptists do allow of just consequences from Scripture as a sound way of arguing: and as for express command or
example for baptizing of infants, he does not pretend to bring any; but rather attempts to justify that practice from human authority.

He reckons that the age in which a person is to be baptized, the place of washing, whether in a river or an artificial font; the manner of washing, whether the whole body, or but a part; whether by sprinkling, or rubbing with the hand; and whether after washing, to wipe the body with a cloth, &c. are things which Christ hath left to the disposing of the church (Ibid. p. 136.)

He says, moreover, in his advertisement to the reader, 'if there were not a warrant in holy Scripture, in direct words, or plain consequence, for baptizing infants; yet insomuch, as it is an ordinance of man, which crosseth not any command of God, it is to be obeyed by Christians, and that by command of God: for he that is not against Christ, is for Christ.' It must however be granted, that this controversy is set in a much clearer light, and managed after a more accurate manner on both sides, in the present age, than it was in those times.

In the year 1624, there came forth much greater champions in defence of infant-baptism.

The famous Dod and Cleaver (The patrimony of Christian children.) united their strength, and joined together in publishing a small treatise against the erroneous positions of the Anabaptists, as they termed them.

In the preface they apologize for their engaging in this controversy, by alleging, that those of the contrary opinion were very industrious, and took great pains to propagate their doctrine: that divers persons of good note for piety had been prevailed upon by them: that several had entreated their help and assistance, and that they had been engaged already in private debates about this matter.

This pamphlet being scarce, very few have or can now obtain a sight of it; I shall therefore observe two or three things in it that are uncommon.

In the preface they represent the Baptists of those times as agreeing with the Arminians only in some opinions.

When they answer the objections of the Baptists, which they say (page 22.) are recited out of their own books verbatim, they politically conceal both the names of the authors, and the titles of the books, except one; which if it was done to prevent examining the truth of their quotations, keep the knowledge of such writings from the world, hinder persons from reading their arguments at length, and with their connection, or that they might the better charge the whole party with the opinion of some particular persons; all these must be owned very unfair in disputants.

They charge it upon the Baptists as a great error held by them, that no infants dying in infancy are damned with the wicked in hell, which salvation they have by the merits of Christ (Page 49.).

When they also charge upon them, the denial of original sin, as the occasion of their error in baptism, they themselves run into as a great an error, to avoid the force of the others
arguments, viz. that the soul of man is by propagation; affirming, that Adam was the father of men, in respect of their souls as well as their bodies; that as other creatures beget the whole of their offspring, so do men; and that when God is called the father of spirits, and men the fathers of our flesh, it does not denote any different original of soul and body (Page 73, 74.). Besides these, I do not find anything but what is common upon the controversy.

But to close this reign, Mr. Neal says (Hist. Purit. vol. II. p. 151.), 'That it is hard to make any judgment of King Jame's religion: For one while he was a Puritan, and then a zealous Church-man; at first a Calvinist and Presbyterian, afterwards a Remonstrant or Arminian; and at last a half, it not an entire doctrinal Papist.'

Rapin says (Hist. Eng. vol. II. p. 236.), 'he was neither a sound Protestant, nor a good Catholic; but had formed a plan of uniting both churches, which must effectually have ruined the Protestant interest; for which indeed he never expressed any real concern.'