

# History Of The Baptists In Great Britain

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## PART I

### FROM THE FIRST AGES TO THE END OF THE 16TH CENTURY

1. The church formed in Jerusalem (A.D. 34) was composed of those who received the Word with joy, and were, on their professed belief, immersed into Christ's name. All other churches were formed after this model (I Thess. 2:14; I Cor. 11:2). This was the parent institution, and became the pattern to after ages. We have reason to believe that the early British churches bore a striking resemblance to it (Bp. Burgess). "No persons were admitted to baptism," says Mosheim, "but such as had been previously instructed

in the principal points of Christianity, and had also given satisfactory proofs of pious dispositions and upright intentions."

The gospel is said to have made considerable progress in this island about A.D. 167, and the churches then planted were preserved for a long time from errors so common in the East. In the fourth century (A.D. 303), professors abounded there. Their steadfastness was severely tried by the edicts of Diocletian (A.D. 306). While thus obnoxious to the civil powers, they attended their privileges with little pomp. By Constantine's favour, they emerged from obscurity, and became worldly and corrupt. The sentiments of Pelagius rent the island (A.D. 315). Two divines from the continent succeeded in reclaiming the wanderers (A.D. 410), and these were rebaptized in the river Allen, near Chester.

Britain, about this time (440) presented an awful state of immorality, which occasioned the pious to retire into woods; but this did not shelter them from the cruelty of the barbarians. The old corrupt professors united their Christianity with the druidism of the natives (Warner). Those who retained their purity retired chiefly into Cornwall and Wales, "where they kept their footing a good while;" though it appears the main body of the Christian church was at this time (A.D. 550) in Wales (Fuller).

2. This was the awful state of things in this land, when Austin, the Romish monk, reached Britain (A.D. 597). By various representations, he succeeded in draw-

(Continued on page 5, column 5)

## Baptists, Great Britain

(Continued from page one)

ing over to that church ten thousand persons, who were baptized in the river Swale, near York, on Christmas Day, 598. In this business there was no compulsion; each one was left to act voluntarily.

Austin sent into Wales to the original pastors and churches, but, after conferences with him, they declined his proposal "to baptize young children," (rather minors). In less than two years (A.D. 602), many of the Welsh churches, which had maintained their apostolic character, were destroyed by military force. A fierce controversy followed, not as to doctrine, but baptism, between the ancient British Christians, and Augustine's converts, which lasted about a century. This debate was not on the number of immersions, since one or three dipping were equally valid at Rome (Du Pin); not on the mode, because all immersed in rivers, ponds, etc.; but on the subjects.

At this period, A.D. 600, baptism in the Roman church had descended to minors of seven years of age (all minors were called infants, Mabilion), where it stayed for centuries (Robinson). Conformity to this custom was required, and refused. The ancient British church did not practice immersion of minors (Ency. Metropol.). Their conformity to the "mother church," Acts 2:41, forbade it.

Neither Constantine the Great, who was born in Britain, was baptized in childhood, though his mother Helena was a zealous Christian, and his father favourable to Christianity, if not a professor of it; nor were Sexted and Seward, sons of Sebert, the Christian king of the East Saxons. "Men were first to be instructed into the knowledge of the truth," says Bede, "then to be baptized, as Christ hath taught, because without faith it is impossible to please God."

In the first baptisms of Austin, none were compelled, but the multitude was with faith to go into the water two-and-two, and, in the name of the Trinity, to dip one another (Camden). Bede's history of the first baptism in England is an exact counterpart of the histories of baptisms in the East; the first teachers made disciples, and immersed in rivers or the sea. There is no proof in Gildas or Bede of infant baptism for the first six centuries.

One of the first references to the rite, A.D. 680, states, that the infant brought to the church was asked if Sergius was his father; the infant (minor) said No (Fabian). Only two synods out of seventy-nine refer to the rite. The council of Nice made no reference to it; while later councils were full of it. But to end this controversy, Ina made a law, re-

(Continued on page 7, column 4).

## Pastor Responsible

(Continued from page five)

discipline required by the military, but many a soldier has learned that submission thereto enhanced their safety in the time of battle. Satan hates the N.T. Baptist pastor more than he hates any other Christian, for he holds the highest rank in the army of the living God. In ancient warfare there were men especially purposely trained to kill the captain or leader of the opposing forces. They knew if they could kill the chief officer, it would have a demoralizing effect on the enemy, usually resulting in a rout and sure victory. The devil employs the same tactics in his war against the Lord's churches.

Satan has his spiritual sharpshooters, and they have adjusted their scopes, and focused them on the Lord's undershepherds. Our adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, and he knows if he can devour the shepherd, the sheep will become easy prey. The chief reason Satan singles out the pastor as the primary object of his hatred is not because the pastor is necessarily a better Christian (the church tolerates good members, but nothing less than the best satisfies God), but that he has been charged by God with the care of the church (1 Tim. 3: 5). And the wise pastor knows that the church's security is the Devil's opportunity.

The Devil is too wise to use Arminianism or ecumenism in a frontal attack against the Lord's churches. He knows they would be quickly and emphatically repulsed. So, what he does is: dress up one of his agents in sheep's clothing and infiltrate the flock. Christ warned against this satanic method saying, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7:15). The wolf cannot long-restrain his nature, and there will soon be in motion a plan to tear the church apart. The command to the pastor is: "... rebuke them sharply" (Titus 1:13), and the command to the church is: "... note that man and have no company with him" (II Thess. 3:14). Satan has an army of highly trained church saboteurs, and the pastor is ever to be on the watch for them to expose them before they can light the fuse which leads to the destruction of the church. More ships are lost at sea from internal problems than from the external elements, and we are living in an era when more churches are destroyed by internal strife than by external persecution.

"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15). It is the pastor's responsibility to stand uncompromisingly against every person and thing that would in any measure injure the church. One pastor said he wrote sermons out in manuscript form, read them over, and if there was anything in the sermon which would offend any of his parishioners, he struck it out. A pastor should strike out everything which does not glorify God, and he should leave in everything that will edify the church no matter how offensive it may be to some member. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whose putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). A ministry designed to please men excludes the favor of God (Gal. 1:10).

The story is told of a pastor who had in his congregation a member who was very wealthy, and the pastor compromised some of his convictions in order to court and keep the favor of the wealthy member. The member came down with a terminal illness and he began to reflect upon his past life. He thought of the large sums of money he had spent on his fam-

ily, and the little he had given to the Lord's work. The pastor came to his bedside to comfort him. The pastor said, "You have given as much to the church as any other member, and after all, we everyone are unprofitable servants."

But the member found no peace in his pastor's words, and as his end drew near he took the pastor by the hand, and said, "I am going to the judge, and I am unprepared to meet him—you have been unfaithful to me. For years I have lived and have taught my family to live mostly for the world. We have denied ourselves nothing, but spent great sums on personal comforts, luxuries, and pleasure. When I gave those tens and twenties to the church, they should have at least been fifties and hundreds. My energy, time and money have been devoted to self-pleasing, and now I must give an account of my stewardship to the eternal and infallible Judge. Pastor, I am beyond recovery, do what you can to warn other professors who are in the same current self-indulgence, which is carrying them to utter destruction."

God says to His pastors, "I have set thee a watchman . . . therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them for me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked on his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 33:7-9).

So, if the pastor will live Godly, preach the truth without fear or favor, and defend the church at the peril of his own life, he will hear his Lord say unto him at the end of the journey, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Mt. 25:21).

## Baptists, Great Britain

(Continued from page one)

The Baptists — replied in a work entitled, "THE CHARACTER OF THE BEST." He thus expresses the sentiments of the Baptists of that day, and their reasons for separating from the Pedobaptists: "Be it known, therefore, to all the separation, that we account them in respect of their constitution to be as very a harlot as either her mother England or her grandmother Rome is, out of whose loins she came. The true constitution of a church is of a new creature baptized into the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the false constitution is of infants baptized," etc.

7. The misrepresentations by which the Pedobaptists assailed the sentiments of the Baptists at this period (1610) in reference to infant salvation were well calculated to prejudice their cause. The Mennonite brethren, or family of love, who had for half a century maintained their position in the kingdom, memorialized the king on these misrepresentations, hoping, from his inaugural declaration, to obtain protection; but their prayer was disregarded, and their situation became increasingly critical.

Mr. Wightman, a Baptist, was convicted of divers heresies, Dec. 14, 1611, and was burnt soon after. The first and the last martyrs in England were Baptists. Some of them now emigrated to America, and honourable mention is made of them in that land.

Mr. Smyth and his brethren were the first to publish a work against persecution. It was entitled, "PERSECUTION JUDGED AND CONDEMNED." This book was dedicated to all that truly wish Jerusalem's prosperity and Babylon's destruction. It is well written: it mentions the long and harassing sufferings which the Baptists had been exposed to, and the patience with which they had endured them. In further vindica-

tion of their views (1618), a Dutch work was translated, entitled, "A PLAIN AND WELL-GROUNDED TREATISE CONCERNING BAPTISM." The contents of this little book occasioned considerable alarm, and the council was prevailed on to issue a proclamation against the Baptists and their books (1620). They once more appealed to the king; avowed nobly their peculiarities, represented the hardships and grievances they had endured under his government, and entreated some mitigation of his measures. Their appeal proved of no avail.

8. Charles the First succeeded to the throne of his father, 1625. The puritan party now possessed considerable strength and influence among the representatives of the people. This circumstance, however, did not aid the Baptists, and their difficulties led many to seek asylum abroad (1630). Among these was Mr. Roger Williams, who raised a Baptist church in Rhode Island, and by a disinterested example exhibited the first pattern of religious and civil liberty to the surrounding nations.

Society in England became now very unsettled, and to this state of things the religious controversies contributed. Among the works which issued from the press were various treatises on dipping and pouring in baptism. The investigation caused the sentiments of the Baptists to become widely diffused; and many Pedobaptists united with their churches, which were formed on the principle that unity of view is essential to gospel order. These communities were called to experience much opposition (1633); and their sufferings, with those of the nonconformists in general, roused the nation to the abolition of episcopacy and the monarchy.

9. The confused state of the nation permitted the Baptists to propagate their religious sentiments with some freedom (1640). The cessation of the privileges of Episcopals allowed some and led others to examine the Word of God themselves; and a degree of light broke upon the people only then enjoyed. A dissemination of unfettered truth greatly increased the Baptist communities. Some of their ministers are spoken of as men of learning and respectability, even by their enemies.

Their popularity drew forth many severe pamphlets (1641) from those who had no other weapon to wield. They defended themselves in a work entitled, "A TREATISE ON DIPPING." Other publications followed, and the scriptural doctrine of believers' immersion took deep hold of the minds of the English people. The ordinance was openly proclaimed and openly administered. This success called for the Pedobaptists; public discussions between Christian ministers on the mode and subjects of baptism continued for years, which very much increased the Baptist brethren.

To confirm converts in their scriptural views, and convince the public of the reasonableness of their doctrines and practice, the London churches put forth a con-

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of faith, in fifty-two articles. Mr. Cornwall also published his "VINDICATION OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF KING JESUS." This work (1643) was dedicated to the House of Commons, and was distributed at the doors of its members. These efforts were attended with success. Neal says that "the Baptists increased wonderfully." There were many of them in the army; indeed, "the Anabaptists were Oliver's favorites in conflict;" and Baxter, who was chaplain to the Protector, says, "they are a godly set of men."

10. One cause of their success (1644) was supposed to be the general prejudice against dipping new-born infants, on account of the unpleasant casualties it sometimes occasioned. Pouring was a novel rite, and many were opposed to any alteration. The controversies had also convinced vast numbers that infant baptism had not a shadow of support from the Word of God. The quality of water to be used was now very solemnly discussed; and sprinkling was at last deemed sufficient for all the purposes of Christian baptism. This declaration (1645) occasioned many mock ceremonies, which irritated the body of Pedobaptists exceedingly.

A gathering storm from the union of opponents prompted Mr. Roger Williams, of Rhode Island, who was on a visit to England, to publish "THE BLOODY TENET OF PERSECUTION FOR THE CAUSE OF CONSCIENCE." Spanghain sent forth his "ENGLAND WARNED BY GERMAN'S WOES." Considerable union of effort was now apparent to suppress the Baptists. Their enemies sought parliamentary aid "to suppress the prevailing errors and heresies which overspread the land" (1646). The government prohibited the Baptists in the army from preaching and baptizing.

To meet these orders, and counteract their baneful effects, the Baptists sent forth a confession of their faith and practice, addressed to parliament, with sixteen ministers' signatures. This was supported by Blackwood's "STORM OF ANTI-CHRIST." The Baptists exceeded at this period all the sects of the land. "Persons of this persuasion filled the army with preaching, praying, and valiant men" (Russell). Their services and sentiments were considered by parliament (1647), and a declaration was made in their favour. It is acknowledged that a feature of sanctity at this time appeared among all classes in the nation.

The Baptists, who had engaged in the conflict to secure liberty, now felt their importance in the nation, and evidenced anxiety to secure the boon on a permanent and equitable basis; but Cromwell's ambition was checked by these exertions, and he resolved on removing the Baptists from those posts of honour which were likely to offer any opposition to his projects. He consequently remodeled his army, removing the Baptists from all military places of trust and dignity (1649).

This proceeding did not prevent their increase; they spread in the country, and most of the horse and foot regiments were declared to hold their views. The Presbyterians, in order to check their progress, declared against Toleration, and procured a law, that whosoever should say that the baptism of infants is unlawful or void, and that such persons are to be immersed, be ordered to renounce his error, or be committed to prison till he find sureties.

On account of the spiritual destitution of Wales, a commission was entrusted to Mr. V. Powell, a Baptist minister, and through his efforts and those of others, the Baptists in a few years amounted to twenty thousand in the principality" (Neal). In the year measures were taken by government to improve Ireland. Here it was discovered that some Baptist churches existed,

and a correspondence was opened between the brethren at home and in the sister isle. The increase of the Baptist churches in the middle of this century (1650) is apparent, and their interests were strengthened by the union of some clergymen.

In 1653 the first association of Baptist churches in England and Wales was formed. The question was now mooted how far political and military affairs should engage (Continued on page 8, column 3)

# "WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY?"

The decline in baptisms by Southern Baptists will reach the lowest ebb in 18 years, according to Convention sources. The projections by the Baptist Sunday School Board indicate that baptisms will dip to 342,201.

It represents the second year in a row in which baptisms will decline and is an 11 per cent drop from the baptism rate of the 1976 church year, in which 384,496 were baptized. These figures are the results of growing modernism in the Southern Baptist Convention.

President Carter in 1977 appointed David M. Walters as his personal representative to the Vatican to succeed Henry Cabot Lodge. Government officials estimate the U.S. Department of State will spend \$39,500 during the fiscal year 1978 for the new representative to the seat of Roman Catholicism.

Stokely Carmichael, a self-proclaimed total revolutionary, recently spoke at Shippensburg State College in Pennsylvania. According to him, world peace will not come until the American

Christian missionary forces fear the law will be used to bar a person from encouraging a Jew to become a Christian. This law will lead to religious persecution and fan the flames of anti-Semitism abroad.

This law would have made Jesus Christ a lawbreaker for passing out the loaves and fishes, if it had existed in His time.

Mrs. Otis A. Johnson was elected unanimously as chairman of deacons at the First Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia. She is named chairman of deacons in a Georgia Baptist church.

Decatur First Baptist Church has 12 female deacons. Mrs. Johnson was one of the first four elected and ordained in 1952. This church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

LONDON, (EP) — A rare manuscript of the "Wyclif Bible," sold by Bristol Baptist College in western England, brought \$16,900 when auctioned at Sotheby's here.

Dated about 1400, the manuscript contained St. Matthew's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, written in brown ink on 168 vellum pages, in the first version of the English translation of the Bible by John Wycliffe.

PASADENA, Calif. (EP) — A national survey of 1.6 million "conservative Christians" in 30 denominations has found that 93.5 per cent support Anita Bryant's stand against "gay rights" bills.

In answer to that question the respondents, who included about 250,000 "conservative Catholics," showed overwhelming support for Miss Bryant's stand. Only 4 per cent opposed her opposition, and 2.5 per cent said they were undecided.

The survey was taken by Christian Cause, an agency concerned with educating the conservative segment of American society on normal issues.

WESTFIELD, N.J. (EP) — A court has ordered the pastor of Bethel Baptist Church here to stop preaching after church members complained that the pastor had criticized members from the pulpit and neglected parish duties.

The suit against Miles J. Austin charged that he "started preaching the gospel in such a manner as to become offensive to various members of the congregation and began throwing out slurs from the pulpit, slandering the parishioners by name and criticizing the deacons."

Mr. Austin reportedly told parishioners frequently that they should not own such things as Cadillacs or split-level homes, according to the suit lodged by members.

NEW YORK (EP) — America's "supermarket psychics" had another bad year of it.

The sensational predictions that screamed from the headlines of the mass-marketed National Enquirer and National Star last January may look embarrassingly silly one year later.

But, just for the record, here were some of them:

Pope Paul will negotiate a peace settlement in Northern Ireland.

Cures will be discovered for diabetes, leukemia and multiple sclerosis.

Archaeologists in Egypt will find a spaceship that crashed in ancient times. Also, the U.S. Air Force will capture some aliens from outer space.

Barbara Walters will quit her TV career; Grace Kelly will quit her marriage, return to movie and win an Oscar; Ethel Kennedy will marry Andy Williams.

A U.S. politician will be miraculously cured of cancer at Lourdes.

A rush-hour commuter train will collide with a chemical-laden freight train and hundreds will be killed in America's worst rail disaster.

Geologists will discover the world's greatest oil reserves under the Great Lakes.

That the fortune-tellers made predictions more fanciful than accurate hasn't dissuaded them, however. They're back in business with predictions for 1978.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — The U.S. population on Jan. 1 was 218,218,066 — about 1.8 million higher than the population a year ago, according to estimates issued by the Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census.

The 1.8 million net population gain during 1977 compares with 1.6 million increase in 1976. The record annual gain of 3.1 million was registered during the "baby boom" year of 1956.

The rate of increase during 1977 was 0.8 per cent. The annual rate of increase had ranged from 1.6 to 1.8 per cent during 1947-1961.

NEW YORK (EP) — Three Christian leaders who signed a statement defending the "financial integrity and accountability" of the Billy Graham evangelistic association claim the contents of the statement were misrepresented to them before they endorsed it.

David Poling, United Presbyterian minister and syndicated columnist, who released the statement, said he had contacted six others by phone and they had agreed on a statement defending the evangelist's fiscal integrity.

Now, Union Theological Seminary professor Robert McAfee Brown, says the statement read to him by Poling did not refer to Graham's alleged financial integrity.

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (EP) — Only two per cent of adult Swedes under age 39 read the Bible with any regularity, according to sources at the Church of Sweden here.

This is quite a turnabout, according to John Fredrik Ivarsson, head of the Church's Verbum Publishing House, because 100 years ago you could tell a person's education by his knowledge of the Bible.

He reports that the Bible is virtually ignored in the public schools in Sweden, though there is no law against religious instruction in the country.

PASADENA, Calif. (EP) — Two studies conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth here

showed that 53 per cent of the decisions registered were by Christians "re-dedicating" their lives to Christ. Of the non-churchgoers who made "decisions for Christ," nearly 85 per cent did not join churches.

Of the hundreds of thousands of "decisions" registered by the Campus Crusade effort, 97 of every 100 were never incorporated into a church.

Dr. Win Arn, president of the Institute for American Church Growth, noted that the study of the Graham crusade's effects also found that more than 8 of 10 of the persons who had joined churches after attending the crusade already had friends or relatives attending the churches they joined.

## Baptists, Great Britain

(Continued from page five) requiring all children, within thirty days of birth, to be baptized, under a penalty of 30 s (A.D. 700); if the child died before baptism, the personal estate was to be forfeited (Collier).

But why make the penalty of disobedience so heavy? The answer is easy. The severity of the fine proves the difficulty the hierarchy had to reduce the ancient Baptists to its new customs. The reason for such a law did not consist in any aversion of the native Britons to immersion; for the Druids, and all the Celtic nations, did, at this time, dip their newborn infants (Davis Mythol. Henry's Eng.); and Britain, for so doing, was called barbarous. A conjunction of the hierarchy and

New Guinea. Do not say that it is for missions as this will only be confusing since we have other mission works.

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atics, says Lingard, "who infested the north of Italy, Gaul, and Germany, and who were called puritans," is said to have come into England. Usher calls them Waldenses from Aquitaine; Spelman calls them Publicans (Paulicians), but says they were the same as the Waldenses (A.D. 1150). They gained ground, and spread themselves and their doctrine.

They rejected an infant baptism, and refused to baptize infants, and preached against the pope. Thirty of these were put to death near Oxford. The remainder of them worshipped in private, until Henry II came to the throne in 1158, when, from the mildness of his measures, they appeared again publicly.

It was now discovered (1176) that these people had several houses of the Albigensian order in England. Collier observes, wherever this heresy prevailed, the churches were either scandalous, neglected or pulled down. Infants were not baptized by them (Hoveden). The conflicts between the sovereigns of this kingdom and the archbishops (1230), during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, permitted the Baptists to propagate their sentiments very extensively unmolested. The sword not being in the hand of the clergy, they employed the Friars to preach down heresy (1237), but their conduct disgusted the people.

4. The English Baptists were much revived, strengthened, and increased (1315), by the visit of Walter Lollard, a Dutchman. "He was remarkable," says Mosheim, "for his eloquence and writings." He was an eminent bar or pastor among the Begherds, in Germany, who baptized anew all who came over to their party (Wall). He was in sentiment the same as Peter de Bruis.

About this period, 1338, colonies of Weavers, Waldenses, came into the county of Norfolk. These people made little noise, though they existed in almost all the countries of Europe. Although the same in religious views as the Paterines, (Continued on page 8, column 1)

in this rite was effected in 997 (Collier). The church of England became open to all nations, and, as a result, no vestige of Christianity was seen in its hierarchy. The return to the church of which was now confined to the Saxons. Christianity in the Saxon hierarchy no better than paganism, and, therefore, held no communion with them (Milton). In order to reduce these nonconformists, a bishop and seven bishops were invested with power to effect conformity (A.D. 702). The controversy on baptism ended in favour of the sword. After a awful darkness for three centuries, the Baptists again emerged from obscurity.

The confused state of the nation allowed some foreign brethren to visit and settle in it. They were called Albigenses and Waldenses (A.D. 1020), and were charged with propagating Berenger's views (Collier). They were very successful in instructing the people, both rich and poor, throughout the island. William the Conqueror became alarmed at their success among his subjects, and consequently enacted (A.D. 1100), "that those who denied the pope should not trade with his subjects" (Newton). To prevent the errors of these gossellers, Archbishop Lanfranc wrote, says Fox, *Opus Scitillarum* against Berenger, in which he opposes him on the sacraments — this was about 1141.

Another colony of people, belonging to a numerous sect of fa-

## Baptists, Great Britain

(Continued from page seven)

Picards, Waldenses, they were now called Lollards (Hallam). There had appeared in England, up to this time (1340), about twenty good men, preachers of the gospel, so that the soil was prepared for after reformers (Mackintosh).

The Baptists now adopted a plan of dropping their written sentiments against popery in the way of members of the houses of parliament. At this period (1350), a treatise was published, evidently

They now abounded; more than half the nation became Lollards; yea, they covered all England. In 1389, they formed separate and distinct societies, agreeably to the Scriptures (Rapin). In these

churches, all the brethren were equal; each could preach, baptize, and break bread. They were united in opinion as one man (Fox), and were called Bible-men, since they allowed no office not enjoined in the Word of God (Bp. Pecock). They held Berenger's opinion on infant baptism, and would not take their children to church to be baptized. They called the rite the key to Hell.

from the pen of a Lollard, entitled "The Prayer and Complaint of the Plowman." It is the production of a Baptist, as it enjoins yea, and nay, nay, in conversation; and baptism after teaching, as in Acts 2:38; Matthew 28:20. Its tone is querulous and severe against priests. Vices are condemned, and retaliation forbidden. In 1368, thirty errors in matters of religion were charged on the people in the neighborhood of Canterbury; one was, that children could be saved without water baptism (Du Pin); but none gave baptism to children at this time but for salvation (Wall).

5. In 1372, Wycliffe, who received his religious views from the

... his religious views from the ... council of Blackfriars (Du Pin); but he is described as "qualifying his assertions in such a so... that he did mitigate and assuage the rigour of his enemies" (Fox). The itinerant Lollards formed an honourable exception to Wycliffe (Lingard); they were truly evangelical. The interruption of the intercourse between England and Rome gave the Baptists a favourable opportunity to make known their sentiments; and in their efforts, they had the sanction of many of the nobility.

6. The printing of the Scriptures called forth Colet, Latimer, and others, to preach publicly (1505), which aided the Bible-men, and led the way to the changes made by Henry VIII. Tyndale's New Testament threw a flood of light upon the English nation (1527). The king's misunderstanding with the pope led him to relieve and encourage the Lollards everywhere (1534); and their brethren, with foreigners of every sentiment, flocked into England to enjoy liberty, and strengthen true religion.

Their numbers and decided hostility to the hierarchy aroused their adversaries to adopt severe measures; and in 1400, a law was passed, sentencing Lollards to be burnt to death. In Norfolk they abounded, and there they suffered severely. Bonner asked where the church was before Luther? Fox says, the answer might have been, "Among the Lollards in the diocese of Norwich." The first martyr under this law was Sir William Sawtre, who was of Baptist sentiments. Still the Bible-men increased, and became dangerous to the church. It is said they amounted to one hundred thousand (1413).

7. Under Edward, the penal laws were repealed; the prisons were thrown open; and many who had expatriated themselves returned. The island was now divided into three religious sections, the Baptists, the Episcopalians of Rome, and the rigid reformers from Geneva; these all had liberty to speak and print. The Baptists were soon charged with proselyting; and they became very numerous in England (Burnet). The clergy, not having the control of the sword, published their views on baptism; but the Baptists replied, "Children are of Christ's kingdom without water" (Luke 18:16). So numerous were the Baptists, that in one town five hundred were said to live; and, as books did not answer the intended purpose, a commission was entrusted to Cranmer for their suppression, which entailed sufferings on many. The general pardon of 1550 again exempted the Baptists; the churches in Kent were disturbed, and some eminent men suffered.

8. On Queen Mary's accession to the throne, all statutes in favour of the Protestant religion were repealed. Many non-conformists left the kingdom, but some exposed, to use Calvin's language, the fopperies of the hierarchy of England, which awakened the vengeance of Mary's council. Measures were devised to stay anabaptism (1554); these brethren, notwithstanding, boldly declared, 1st — That infant baptism was anti-scriptural. 2d — That it originated with popery; and 3d — That Christ commanded teaching to go before baptism. Mary's anger spent itself more particularly on the reformers (1557).

9. Elizabeth's reign promised liberty (1558), but the conflicting opinions of the nation on the subject of religion reflected, she thought, on her prerogative. Not having succeeded in silencing the Baptists by proclamation, she commanded all Anabaptists to depart out of her kingdom within twenty-one days. The greater portion of them obscured their sentiments (1560). Foreigners being tolerated in England, The Family of Love, (Mennonite Baptists) flocked hither and spread themselves wonderfully (Fuller). Their numbers were great in Norfolk (1572), and they formed societies in many places.

After having been extinguished seventeen years, the fires of Smithfield were again lighted, and two Mennonite brethren suffered. Emigrants from Holland strengthened the churches (1595), and houses of charity (i.e., dissenting meeting-houses) were opened in several places. In 1600, increased severity towards the Baptists, and a proclamation for all Anabaptists to depart the kingdom, had all destroyed dissent in England. "Though driven from England," Brandt says, "the Anabaptists consisted in his day of such a number of sects, that scarce any body can reckon the number of them" (Hist. Ref., v. i, p. 336).

Many testimonies might be quoted in evidence of the holy and exemplary lives of the early Baptists. Erasmus says (1529), "The Anabaptists, although very numerous, have no churches in their possession. These people are worthy of greater commendation than others, on account of the harmfulness of their lives. But they are oppressed by all other sects." And Bullinger says (1538), (Hist. of Anab.), "Let others say what they will of the Anabaptists, I see nothing in them but gravity; I hear nothing from them, but that we must not swear; must not do any injury; that all ought to be pious, and live holy lives; therefore I see nothing of evil in them. They use yea and nay in the conversation." Similar testimonies are given by Comenius, Scultetus, Beza, Cloppenbergh, Sander, Heyden, Hornbeck, Burnet, Dr. Wall, Haws, Dr. Lingard, and James Mackintosh.

(Taken from a tract published by the Baptist Tract Society, 1841.)

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centuries by threats, he carried out his measures by removing them from all confidential situations. Soon afterwards he died (1657), and in a short time Charles II ascended the throne. This king caused a retrograde movement of fifty years (1662); after the loss of so much wealth and blood, the advantages obtained were by a few acts of parliament almost wholly neutralized.

The Baptists had to endure trials of the severest kind: they were fined, imprisoned, branded, and dismembered. These cruelties were borne by many with heroic patience. The Act of Nonconformity added a few clergymen to our persuasion, but the societies raised up under their ministry were of a mixed character. The measures proposed by the government, whether of leniency to seduce, or of severity to compel, did not effect their object. The nonconformists nobly withstood all proposals of compromise.

The Baptists, says Sir James Mackintosh, "suffered more than any other under Charles II (because) they had publicly professed the principles of religious liberty" (Hist. Revol.). "The Anabaptists," says Burnet, "were men of virtue and universal charity: they were from being on treating terms with the church of England; so that nothing but a universal toleration could make them capable of favour and employment."

12. Dr. Wall says that during the reign of Charles II the Baptists did not increase. Mr. Hutchinson states, that in 1676 they had spread like a cloud over the English horizon. They are stated from calculation to have been about ten thousand in and about London. In 1684 all their meetinghouses were closed, and such measures were enacted as to place them in a situation experienced just one hundred years before: but amidst these plans of extirpation, the king died (1685).

James II, who succeeded, was equally hostile to Protestants. An ill-concerted plan to relieve the country from these measures involved many dissenters in Somersetshire and Dorsetshire but oppression opened the way for a deliverer in the person of the Prince of Orange (1688). It has been computed that between the Restoration and the Revolution 70,000 persons suffered on account of religion, 8,000 persons were destroyed, and 12,000,000 pounds of money paid in fines.

13. William III obtained for the nonconformists the Toleration Act. This act gave liberty to dissent. The Baptist churches now increased considerably. "They are the most numerous," says Dr. Wall, "of any sort of men that separate from the establishment. In Essex, Kent, Suffolk, Surrey, etc., there are very few that make a separation from the church but they. There are also great numbers of

them in London and its suburbs." In 1689 the representatives of upwards of 100 churches assembled in London.

14. The number of their churches led the Baptists soon after the revolution (1691) to form themselves into twelve associations. One of the epistles of the Western Association expresses great satisfaction in the union, communion, and peace which prevailed in all the churches. This prosperity soon subsided, particularly in the London Association. Agricola's views were revived by Dr. Cripps (1696) and proved a spiritual laudanum to the body.

Though the brethren became considerably divided on speculative points (1700), yet they set forth, in the name of one hundred churches, a confession expressive of Trinitarian and Calvinistic views. This was done probably to check the Socinian and Antinomian doctrines which about this time (1704) threatened the communities, and which in after years agitated, divided, and subdivided the churches. Weakened thus within, and exposed to the power of high church principles from without, their situation became very critical. Some of their places of worship were destroyed (1710), and some of the brethren were harassed by petty actions for teaching others.

The threatening storm aroused the London ministers; and they invited the country churches to join with them in united prayer. This appeal to Heaven was remarkably answered, and deliverance was given in the time of danger (1712); but after this seasonable relief the churches settled into a profound slumber. Infidelity, Socinianism, and papacy now spread far and wide. Collins attacked Christianity on the ground of the unreasonableness of infant baptism (1724). His work made a great stir, and thirty-five answers were written.

In the middle of this century (1750) it was discovered that the Baptist churches had much diminished in number since the revolution.

The modern question led to the discussion of the nature and extent of the invitations of the gospel, the state of the heathen, and the duty of Christians to evangelize them. The slavery question was agitated (1780), and the Baptists sent the first petition to parliament against this nefarious traffic. Missionary societies were proposed (1792), and Cary with Thomas left for India. Steadman, of Broughton, and Saffery, of Salisbury, led the way in itinerating through the villages. From their report, the Home Mission was proposed. Since that period they have greatly increased. At the end of this century the Baptist churches in England amounted to 326, and in Wales to 56.

In 1840 their number in England was about 1250, and in Wales 244.

## Baptists, Great Britain

(Continued from page six)  
the attention of Christians. Many Baptists had openly and severely censured the Protector's line of policy; and some of them were suffering for their political philippics. Cromwell's resolve to remove all Baptists from his government and army awakened in the veterans a kind of defiance; and the officers sent him and his council a memorial of remonstrance (1654). It asks if the Baptists have not filled his towns, cities, provinces, islands, castles, navies, tents, armies, and court. "Your council is not free; only we have left you your temples for yourself to worship in, so that I believe it will be a hard thing to root them out" (Neal, v. 153).

Their influence was so considerable, that the Protector proposed to admit the Baptist ministers with the Episcopalian bishops into the church; but this they refused. Finding he could not win them by court favour, nor silence their