HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES

Outline by Ron Fleck, MD
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INTRODUCTION:

I've been studying about the history of the Waldenses, and I am specifically interested in helping to rekindle their vision of being a prophetic people with a wonderful heritage that dates way back to early apostolic times. I have several references, proving that the ancient Waldenses kept the Sabbath, and had very pure Apostolic beliefs for their doctrines. Of course most of their writings were systematically destroyed by their enemies. Some of the best quotes are by Roman Catholic Church leaders who were trying to eliminate them

Most of the descendants of the Waldenses today in Northern Italy and elsewhere do not realize all the glorious history of their heritage. Most of them apparently believe that they date back to the days of Peter Waldo (about 1175 AD). They are not aware that their history dates hundreds of years before that, and that it was the Papacy that systematically destroyed many of their records and put forth the thesis that it was the Papacy that dates back to Apostles, and not the Waldenses. After hundreds of years of terrible persecution, the Waldenses finally came to believe this thesis of the Papacy. Most of them do not even realize that their ancestors kept the 7th day Sabbath, instead of Sunday, the first day of the week.

In making this Outline I have researched many references. I collect antiquarian books about church history and the Reformation. I have many books in my private library about Waldensian history, including the following:

Bibliography:

Allix, Peter. *Some Remarks Upon The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, Clarrendon Press, London, 1821.

Comba, Emilio. *History of the Waldenses of Italy,* Truslove & Shirley, London, 1889.

D'Aubigne, J. H.. *History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, William H. Colyer, Boston, 1844.

Morland, Samuel. *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, Vol. 1 and 2, reprinted by The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., No. 1 Iron Oaks Drive, Paris, Arkansas 72855, 501-963-3831.

Mosheim, John L. von. *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, 4 books in 1 volume, M'Corquodale and Co., London, 1848.

Muston, Alexis. *A Complete History of the Waldenses and Their Colonies,* 2 vols, Blackie & Son, London, 1875.

Wilkinson, B. G. *Truth Triumphant, The Church In The Wilderness*, Pacific Press, Mountain View, California, 1944; pages 63-76; 246-267.

Wylie, J. A. *The History of Protestantism*, 3 vols., Cassell Petter & Galpin, London; vol. 1, pp. 23-58; vol. 2, pp. 430-508.

This Outline is not meant to be a scholarly work of research, rather an inspirational sketch of the incredibly interesting story of some of the bravest and most dedicated Christians in world history. I have drawn heavily from two of the above references, which in my opinion give the most accurate and detailed history of the Waldenses. Both of these books are now out of print, but are available as re-prints. The book Truth Triumphant by B.G. Wilkinson, and the 3-volume set The History of Protestantism by J.A. Wylie, are the references I have primarily used. In fact, in many cases, I have directly quoted or paraphrased from these books.

I would hope that after reading and studying this Outline, interested readers would purchase their own references listed above and more deeply understand the Waldensian history. We understand that their experience may be very closely repeated in our own experience in the last days of this earth's history.

Also, I believe that one cannot understand what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian without knowing and understanding the history of the early church, and of the Church in the Wilderness during the dark ages. Due to several factors, the Protestant Reformation did not generally go far enough in getting all the way back to the Bible and primitive Christianity. When the Reformers died, most of their followers stopped searching any further for Bible truth, and simply relied upon what that particular Reformer had found and accepted. Of course, there were some so-called Reformers, who carried things way to far—to an extreme, bringing great damage and embarrassment upon the cause of God. For this reason, and others, mainline Protestants have been reluctant to accept any new truths.

I also hope that the Waldenses in Italy today will be able to see their true history, even of their Sabbath-keeping history, so they can accept that specific truth that their forefathers fought and died for. I pray that they will not be blinded by the deceptions placed upon them by their enemies, who continue to try to prove that the Waldenses came from the time of Peter Waldo. Nothing could be further from the truth, as this Outline shows.

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In northwestern Italy, southeastern France, and northern Spain, was the spiritual fortress. In the peaceful valleys and dales of the Alps lived the noble and heroic Waldenses. They were always loyal to the Gospel. They remained the longest of any Christian group in the struggle to preserve the Bible and primitive Christianity. When the Reformation came, they were still protesting against ecclesiastical tyranny. The ensign of the Gospel was passed from their battle-scarred hands to those of the Reformers. It was carried to the nations of northern Europe and on to the young republic in North America.

VILANTIUS LEO, LEADER OF THE WALDENSES (AD 364-408)

- Vigilantius Leo was born in southern France in Convenae. Convenae also was called Lyons (whose pronunciation is like the English word Leo). Vigilantius was called Vigilantius the Leonist. The Waldenses were often called Leonists.
- He was the earliest prominent leader among the noble Waldenses in northern Italy and southern France.
- Vigilantius worked for a wealthy famous historian, Sulpicius Severus (the renowned idol of the learned class. In his mansion most all the distinguished men of his day visited. He hired Vigilantius, first in ordinary service, but later as collector or rents and manager of his estates.
- Close by to the north lived Martin, bishop of Tours. He had founded the first monastery in France, and subjected himself to extreme austerities of asceticism. He rushed from cave to cave in the excitement of supposed miracles. Sulpicius and Vigilantius visited Martin. Martin drew Sulpicius and his brilliant talents into the monastic life. Sulpicius turned from sound scholarship to fables and visions. The gulf between Vigilantius and Supicius which was formed by their visit to Martin was widened when Sulpicius sent him as the messenger to Paulinus of Nola, Italy. This excellent man had also gone to a retreat where he could give his time to the monastic life. Paulinus of Nola was groveling before the image of a favorite saint. Vigilantius, however, saw in the system a form of religion without the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. He stood at the parting of the ways with his employer, Sulpicius.
- Those who practiced asceticism practiced appalling torments upon themselves. They undermined the doctrine of Christ's full and sufficient atonement for sin. Processions were formed, relics displayed, and incense burned before the tomb of some exalted ascetic.
- The Church Fathers of the Alexandrian school of theology were: Justin Martyr (A.D. 150) was prominent among the early apostates because of his perverted teachings. His pupil Tatian taught Clement (A.D. 190) who was the founder of the ecclesiastical school at Alexandria. Clement said he would hand down the gospel mixed with heathen philosophy. Clement's pupil, Origen, mutilated himself, and promoted celibacy. But monasticism did not originate in Christianity. It was first introduced into Egypt, evidently coming from Buddhism.

- The splendid city of Milan, in northern Italy, was the connecting link between Celtic Christianity in the West, and Syrian Christianity in the East. The missionaries from Judea and Syria started the simple and apostolic Christianity in the region of Milan. The diocese of Milan continued to be independent of Rom until the midst of the 11th century. This was the country of the Vallenses (Waldenses) whose ancestors lived here during the the persecutions of the second, third, and fourth centuries. Here the Waldenses were providentially secluded from the world. The retained the precise doctrines and practices of the primitive church.
- First among those who protested against heathen practices in the church was Helvidius I. It is interesting that 3 of the outstanding opponents of the papal innovations in Latin Christianity were from northern Italy. These were Helvidius I (A.D. 250-420), Jovinian (330-390), and Vigilantius. Helvidius is famous for exposing Jerome for using corrupted Greek manuscripts in bringing out the Vulgate, the Latin Bible of the papacy. He accused Jerome, as Jerome himself admits, of using corrupt Greek manuscripts. Jerome was ascetic and rigid, and most repulsive in personality. He was sour, bitter, envious, intolerant, and dissatisfied with anything that did not measure up to his own standard of sanctity. The very best men of his time did not escape his censure. Helvidius was from northern Italy. He opposed the growing superstitions of the Papal church. He was a student of Auxentius, bishop of Milan, and the precursor of Jovinian.
- The second renowned reformer was Joviniun (A.D. 330-390), also from northern Italy. He was a superior scholar, and the united attempts of such learned papal advocates as Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose failed to overthrow his scriptural and historical arguments. His followers named Jovinianists, along with the Patarines, and Albigenses, were persecuted relentlessly by monks as late as 1215. Jovinian drew the wrath of Jerome because he taught that the lives of married people, all other things being equal, are fully as acceptable in the sight of God as those who are not married. He also taught that eating with thanksgiving is as commendable with God as abstemiousness, and that all who are faithful to their baptismal vows will be equally rewarded at the day of judgment. Because of this, Jerome said that Jovinian had "the hissing of the old serpent," that he was "nauseating trash," and "the devil's poisonous concoction." Likely, the followers of Jovinian took refuge in the Alpine valleys, and there kept alive the evangelical teaching that was to reappear with vigor in the 12 century.
- The event which decided Vigilantius was his visit to Jerome. Jerome had just brought out a new Latin Bible, at the request of the Pope and with money furnished by the pope. Jerome was looked up to by the imperial church as the oracle of his age. Vigilantius decided to visit him in his cell at Bethlehem. When he encountered the fierce polemics of Jerome, his eyes were opened. Jerome was the terror of his contemporaries. In a mistaken attempt to do his duty to God, he failed most signally in his duty toward men. Jerome's face was haggard and pale, he was wasted to a shadow, slowly recovering from a severe illness. His cheeks had deep furrows from crying, his eyes were sunk

deep in their sockets, all the bones of his face were sharp and projecting. There was an air of gloominess about his face. Jerome at first warmly welcomed Vigilantius who brought a letter from another ascetic, Paulinus, to Jerome. Jerome criticized Paulinus, but when Jerome turned fiercely to attack Rufinus, his former friend, the break between Vigilantius and Jerome took place. Vigilantius resolved to quit for good the contentious successors of the Alexandrian school, because of their loose theology, and because they associated with the swarms of Egyptian monks. He determined to raise his voice in defense of the gospel's primitive simplicity.

- There were 2 classes of monks. The first were called anchorites, and they lived along in the gloomiest and wildest spots in the wilderness. The second class, monks, evaded the solitary life, and gathered into communities called monasteries. They refused obedience to any spiritual superior except the supreme head of the church. The inmates of these monasteries had a different program from the Bible training schools, whose pupils were not there for life, but for a period of training. The monks at certain times had pageantries, prostrations, and genuflexions. They helped prepare the way for the union of the papal church with the state.
- Vigilantius first started working in the Cottian Alps (that region lying between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea). He tried publicly to stop the pagan ceremonies that were being introduced and accepted into the true church. Here in the Cottian Alps he found people who adhered to the teachings of the Scriptures. The people had come to those valleys to escape the armies of Rome. The preaching of Vigilantius on both sides of the Alps (Italian and French side) was a thundering denunciation of Jerome, the great champion of the state church. The message of Vigilantius created a cleavage between those who chose to walk in the apostolic way, and those who gave church "development" as their reason for adding pagan ceremonies to the glamour of state gorgeousness.
- The Alpine churches of France and Italy were not caught into the new hysteria. They welcomed Vigilantius with open arms and his preaching was powerful. Vigilantius denounced church celibacy, worship of relics, lighted tapers (candles), all-night vigils, and prayers to the dead. He spent his inherited fortune in collecting manuscripts, circulating the Scriptures, employing secretaries to write from dictation or to copy manuscripts and to write pamphlets, tracts, and books. Jerome demanded that Vigilantius be delivered over to the state for banishment or death. The state church when seeking the life of opponents, turned them over to the secular tribunal for punishment, in order to disguise their crime. Jerome said, "The wretch's tongue should be cut out, or he should be put under treatment for insanity." The imperial church leaders, supported by state police power, were abandoning the persuasion of love for the brutal argument of force.
- In spite of all this, the Christians in the Cottian Alps were determined to follow the Bible only. They were growing in strength, and were coming closer together. Vigilantius helped create a new organization, destined to last through the coming centuries. He had prepared himself for this throughout

the years by giving days and nights to study and research. It is too bad that none of his writings have been preserved.

- Augustine (A.D. 354-430) was a renowned writer of the papal church, probably the most adored of all Catholic Fathers by the papacy. He was forced by the popular pressure into the views of Jerome, and corresponded with him. Augustine, from his Episcopal throne in North Africa, gave to the papacy a deadly weapon. He invented the monstrous doctrine of "Compel them to come in." Thus, Augustine laid the foundation for the Inquisition. He was intoxicated with Greek philosophy, and taught the union of church and state. He exalted the observance of the first day of the week. He found many reasons why the doctrines and practices of the church should be enforced by the sword. His doctrine, "Compel them to come in," sent millions to death for no greater crime than refusing to believe the forms of ecclesiastical worship enforced by the state. This was the atmosphere in which Vigilantius ministered.
- In Vigilantius' day another controversy rocked the Christian world. Milan, center of northern Italy, as well as all the Eastern churches, was sanctifying the seventh-day Sabbath, while Rome was requiring its followers to fast on that day in an effort to discredit it. Ambrose, the celebrated bishop of Milan, said that when he was in Milan he observed Saturday, but when in Rome he fasted on Saturday and observed Sunday. This gave rise to the proverb, "When you are in Rome, do as Rome does."

Vigilantius has been called, "THE FORERUNNER OF THE REFORMATION" and "ONE OF THE EARLIEST OF OUR PROTESTANT FOREFATHERS." The influence of his preaching and leadership among the Waldenses burned its way across the centuries until it united with the heroic reforms of Luther. As the papacy promoted persecutions from time to time against the Waldenses, it proclaimed the "heresy" of these regions as being the same brand as that of Vigilantius. Two hundred years later, papal writers leveled their attacks against Claude, bishop of Milan, and against his followers on the basis that he was infected with the "poison of Vigilantius." Thus, Vigilantius, in southern Europe, like his contemporary, Patrick of Ireland, can be considered "ONE OF THE EARLY BRIGHT STARS OF THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS."

The Waldenses were primitive Christians, living in the valleys of the Alps of northern Italy, where they still exist under the ancient name of "*Vaudois*." Shut up in the mountain valleys, they kept the doctrines and practices of the primitive church, while the people living on the plains of Piedmont in Italy were daily casting aside the truth. In Italy the Pope could not make the bishop of Ravenna and others bow obsequiously to his will. The Waldenses, even in the 7th century had made their home in the valleys of Piedmont, and spoken freely against Roman domination (Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 2, cent. 7, pt. 2, par. 2).

Auricular confession was not received until as late at the 8th and 9th centuries in Languedoc and the Alps. The people here have always had an inclination to abide by the customs of the primitive church. They were first called Manichaeans, and later

Albigenses, Vaudois, Lollards, and were called by different names,. They were actually remnants of the first Gaulish Christians (Celtic of ancient Gaul).

For nearly 200 years after the death of the Apostles, the process of separation went on between the two classes of church members until the open rupture came. In the year 325 the first world council of the church was held at Nicaea, and at that time Sylvester was given great recognition as bishop of Rome. It is from this time that the Waldenses date their exclusion of the papal party from their communion. They asserted the high antiquity of their sect, and maintained that from the time of Constantine's gift to the Roman Bishop Silvester (AD 314-336) such an opposition that had existed all along.

These Christians of the Alps and Pyrenees have been called Waldenses from the Italian word for "valleys." And where they spread over into France, they were then called Vaudois, a French word meaning "inhabitants of the valleys." Many writers constantly call them Vaudois. The enemies of this branch of the Church in the Wilderness have tried to confuse their history by tracing to a wrong source the origin of the name, Waldenses. Their enemies seek to connect its beginnings with Peter Waldo, an opulent merchant of Lyons, France, who came into notice about 1175. However, there is nothing in the original or the earliest documents of the Waldenses—their histories, poems, and confessions of faith—which can be traced to him or which make any mention of him. Waldo was converted in middle life to truths similar to those held by the Vaudois, distributed his fortune to the poor and labored extensively to spread evangelical teachings. He and his followers soon met with cruel opposition. Finally, in desperation they fled for refuge to those Waldenses who had crossed the Alps and formed a considerable body in eastern France.

Alexis Muston, *The Israel of the Alps*, vol. 2, p. 406, says, "The patois (dialect) of the Vaudois valleys has a radical structure far more regular than the Piedmontese idiom. The origin of this patois was anterior to the growth of Italian and French—antecedent even to the Romance language of the Vaudois mountaineers, than with that of the troubadours of the 13th and 14th centuries. The existence of this patois is of itself a proof of the high antiquity of these mountaineers, and of their constant preservation from foreign intermixture and changes. Their popular idiom is a precious monument."

Reinerius Saccho was a former Waldensian pastor who apostasized and afterward became a papal persecutor. He was an officer of the Inquisition (c.a.d. 1250). He wrote a treatise against the Waldenses, which explains their early origin. He said that of over 70 ancient heretical sects, all had been destroyed except four—the Arians, Manichaeans, Runearians, and Leonists (Waldenses). He said that of all these sects, the most pernicious (detrimental or harmful, causing irreparable or deadly injury) to the church was the sect of Leonists. He gave 3 reasons why they were so dangerous: first, because it was the oldest of all the ancient sects—maybe even from the time of Pope Silvester; second, because if was more wide-spread in almost all countries; third, because the Leonists appeared to be very pious and to live justly before men and believe all things rightly concerning God and all the articles which are contained in the creed, except that

they blaspheme the Church of Rome and the clergy. Thus Sacco showed that the Waldenses were the oldest of all the sects, 600 years before Peter Waldo.

The city of Milan in northern Italy has always been one of the most famous cites of history. At times it even rivaled Rome. Several Roman emperors, abandoned the city on the banks of the Tiber River, and made their capital here. It was the chief center of the Celts who lived on the Italian side of the Alps. Before Milan came under the control of Rome, the Gothic armies had conquered Italy and France. The Goths, who had been converted to Christianity over 100 years previously, kept the beliefs and customs of the primitive church and did not harm the Christians in Milan. Milan enjoyed religious freedom under the Goths. When newly chosen bishops came to Rome to be consecrated, none came from Milan or Turin. In fact for many years after 553 there was a widespread schism in northern Italy and adjacent lands between Rome and the bishops of 9 provinces under the leadership of the bishop of Milan who renounced fellowship with Rome and became autonomous. These provinces had been alienated by the famous decree of the "Three Chapters" passed in 553 by the Council of Constantinople condemning 3 great leaders of the Church of the East. The people in these 9 provinces knew the straight truth. They did not believe the infallibility of the pope and did not consider that not believing in the pope was to be out of fellowship with the church. They held that their own ordination was as efficacious as the pretended apostolic succession of the bishop of Rome. While the papacy was bringing much of Europe under her control, the two dioceses of Milan and Turin continued independent. Rome could not stand it that in the very land in which was her throne, there should be a Mordecai in the gate. There were two powerful forces which nullified all the efforts of the papacy to annex the Milan territory. First, the presence of the Lombard kings (a member of the Teutonic or Germanic people that invaded Italy in A.D. 568, and settled in the Po valley and established a kingdom) who were unconquered until about 800 A.D., assured religious freedom and tolerance there. Secondly, the Lombards, like the Goths before them, rejected so many innovations brought in by Rome that they never admitted the papal bishops of Italy to a seat in their legislative councils. Rome called the Lombards Arians, a name given by Rome to her opponents.

The papal writers desperately tried to date the rise of the Waldenses from Peter Waldo (he came into notice about 1175 A.D.). The thesis of the papacy is that the Waldenses did not begin until about 1160. But there were godly exploits of these early Alpine heroes that refute this thesis. There were several "early Waldensian heroes", evangelical leaders that kept continental Europe true to primitive Christianity between the days of the apostles and the Albigensian crusades. These believers did not separate from the papacy, for they had never belonged to it. In fact, many times they called the Roman Catholic Church, "the newcomer."

The most noted papal antagonist of the Waldenses who endeavored to brand them as originating during the days of Peter Waldo in about 1160 is Bishop Jacques Benigne Bossuet. Bishop Bossuet was a brilliant French papist who is considered by some to be one of the seven greatest orators of history. With incredible shrewdness he analyzed every item of history which he thought might prove an early origin of the Waldenses,

then he drew his false conclusions. The historian Mosheim says, "This writer certainly did not go to the sources, and being influenced by party zeal, he was willing to make mistakes." (Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b.3, cent. 9, pt. 2, ch. 5, par. 4, note 5). A casual or partially informed reader could easily be misled by Bossuet. However, full acquaintance with the records exposes this bishop to the charge of a scandalous misuse of information.

There were many men with the name of Waldo. Once papal author, Pilchdorffius, wrote about a Peter Waldo in the seventh century who was an opponent of the papacy. Bossuet and other papal writers have grouped all religious bodies in Europe hostile to Rome since the year 1000 or earlier, under the title of Waldenses. The papacy's reason for doing this is the growth and influence of the churches refusing to go along with Rome's innovations. The teachings and organizing ability of Vigilantius gave leadership to the evangelical descendants of the apostles in northern Italy, southern France, and northern Spain. In those days these evangelical churches were not able to effect visible unity in these areas of Europe. But as these churches who preserved primitive Christianity multiplied on the Continent of Europe and as they contacted the Celts of the British Isles and the Church of the East, they discovered that they were one in their essential beliefs. Then they realized more fully Jesus' prediction that His church would be of all nations. Although great efforts were made to fix various names on these different evangelical groups, even their enemies, at times, were obliged to recognize that they were "men of the valleys," or Waldenses.

The masses of heathen in the world naturally became a mission field for the two rival Christian communions—Rome and the Church in the Wilderness. Although outwardly the papacy seemed dominant because of her apparent victories by law, by the sword, and by political alliances, the evangelical churches increased in power.

In the early eighth century there was strong leadership in both communions. The successors of Columbanus and powerful evangelists of northern Italy and of the Celts, made irresistible appeals to the masses of people. The Council of Frankfort (A.D. 794) attended by bishops from France, Germany, and Lombardy proves that the national clergy was independent to the will of Rome. At this council, in the presence of papal legates, they rejected the second Council of Nicaea (September 24-October 23, 787) which had decreed for the worship of images. Pope Hadrian I, and the Empress Irine, mother of Constantine VI, convoked this Second Council of Nicaea. It was attended by 330 bishops and many monks. It decided that it was right to venerate the saints, the cross, and holy relics. It said, "The more a faithful follower looks at the images the more he shall remember the One who is depicted in them." The Council of Frankfort rejected the 2nd Council of Nicaea.

In the ninth century, there arose a famous apostle of that time—Claude, the light of northern Italy. Claude was a Spaniard by birth, but his eminent talents and learning attracted the attention of the reigning Western emperor. Claude was first called by this prince to his capital in northern Europe, and then promoted by him to be bishop of Turin, Italy. Turin was an influential city nestled in the middle of the Waldensian regions.

When he arrived in Turin, he found the state church in a deplorable condition. Vice, superstition, simony, image worship, and other demoralizing practices were rampant. The papacy was slipping back into paganism. Claude at once began the almost impossible task of stemming the tide. He found that even the evangelical churches were struggling hard against the prevailing influences. Clause boldly defied the papacy and called the people back to New Testament faith and practice. Apparently Claude, while maintaining that Christ was divine by nature, did not accept the extreme speculations concerning the God-head voted by the first Council of Nicaea. This was the position of most of the evangelical bodies which differed from the Church or Rome. After his death, Jonas, bishop of Orleans, accused him of heresy. The writings of Claude, his Biblical commentaries and his other works plainly reveal him to be a New Testament Christian. In one of his epistles (Claude, *Epistle to Abbot Theodimir*, found in *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol.14, p. 197), Claude vehemently denies that he had been raising up some new sect, and points to Jesus who was also denounced as a sectarian and a demoniac. He claims that he found all the churches of Turin stuffed full of vile and accursed images, and he at once began to destroy what was being worshiped. Another opponent of Claude, we learn that Claude's diocese was divided into two parts: those who followed the superstitions of the time and who were bitterly opposed to him; on the other hand were those who agreed with him in doctrine and practice. These evidently were the Vallenses of the Cottian Alps. This opponent, Dungal by name, exalted by modern papal writers as a brilliant churchman, constantly accused Claude of perpetuating the heresies of Vigilantius. The fact that such opponents never stopped hurling the accusation against Claude and his Vallenses that they believed and taught the same doctrine as Vigilantius (the eminent reformer who had lived 400 years earlier), proves the continuous chain of truth among the inhabitants of northern Italy during the lapse of the 400 years (Dungali *Responsa, Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol. 14, pp. 201-216).

Claude spoke out against image worship, "If a man ought not to worship the works of God, much less should he worship and reverence the works of men. Whoever expects salvation which comes only from God, to come from pictures, must be classed with those mentioned in Romans 1, who serve the creature more than the Creator." Against the worshiping of the cross he taught, "God has commanded us to bear the cross, not to pray to it. Those are willing to pray to it, who are unwilling to bear it, either in the spiritual or in the literal sense. To worship God in this manner, is in fact to depart from Him." About the pope he wrote, "He is not to be called the Apostolical…who sits in the apostle's chair; but he who performs the duties of an apostle." (Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 3, cent. 9, pt. 2, ch. 3, par. 17, note 24). Claude wanted to know why they should adore the cross and not also worship many other things—as mangers, fishing boats, trees, thorns, and lances—with which Jesus came in contact. He also denounced pilgrimages.

Thus the gulf was widening between those congregations descended from the apostles and those attached to the papacy. In A.D. 831 a book was written which widened the breach between the evangelical churches and the papacy. It was *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini* (*On the Body and Blood of Christ*), by Paschasius Radbertus. This author boldly

put into print the startling theory of transubstantiation. This revolutionary book was written about 6 years before the noble Claude died in A.D. 839. There is no record that Claude was acquainted enough with this latest lapse into paganism to attack it. Radbertus was supported in his novel doctrine by the papacy. The bishop of Rome had just succeeded with the help of Charlemagne in organizing the Holy Roman Empire, and thus he had gained powerful influence. Radbertus, supported by Rome, boldly put into print this doctrine which had been considered for some time. There had already been advocates of the papal thesis that the priest had power to change the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, but now this startling theory was presented to the public. The simple believers in Scripture concluded that this teaching belittled the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. They believed that salvation was obtained by the one and only death of the Redeemer. They saw that if this new doctrine prevailed, it would logically follow that the Decalogue, which the Redeemer had died on the cross to uphold, would occupy an inferior status. From then on, strong evangelical leaders never ceased to oppose these innovations.

Whenever a new standard-bearer arose from the midst of the Church in the Wilderness, the papacy promptly stigmatized him and his followers as "a new sect." This produced two results. First, it made these people appear as never having existed before, whereas they really belonged among the many Bible followers who from the days of the early church existed in Europe and Asia. Secondly, it apparently detached the evangelical churches from one another, whereas they were one in essential doctrines. The different groups taken together made up the Church in the Wilderness. "And because they dwelt in different cities, and had their particular instructors, the papists, to render them the more odious, have represented them as different sects, and ascribed to them as different opinions, though others affirm they all held the same opinions, and were entirely of the same sect." (Limborch, *The History of the Inquisition*, vol. 1, page 42).

The ninth century also saw certain other new and disastrous claims coming from the ranks of the papacy. The Dark Ages were already beginning to overshadow the people of Europe. Religious thought was poisoned by the work of one person who compiled and issued a series of falsified documents. Usually this has been attributed to Isidore Mercator, a fictitious person formerly erroneously identified with Isidore of Seville, Spain. This collection of falsified documents, usually called the *Pseudo-Iidorian Decretals*, purported to produce early authentic records verifying the claims of the popes to spiritual and temporal world power. These documents were used with powerful effect throughout the next 8 centuries (A.D. 800-1520) to mislead both rulers and ruled. Although about 700 years later their falseness was exposed, the tyranny and dominion obtained by the papacy through them was not surrendered. In a dull and declining age, such fabricated decrees, clothed with an authoritative antiquity, were used against the Church in the Wilderness. Rome itself centuries later was compelled to drop this forgery.

Eleventh century Waldensian Heroes:
A papal author, Ebrard of Bethune (c. A.D. 1200) in attempting to explain the name "vallenses" wrote, "They are some who are called Vallenses, because they dwell in the Valley of Tears." (Bethuensis, *Liber Antihaeresis, Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*,

vol. 24, p. 1572). In about 1250, Pilchdorddius, a writer recognized by Rome, wrote this, "The Waldenses…are those who claim to have thus existed from the time of Pope Sylvester." (Pilchdorffius, *Contra Haeresin Waldensium Tractatus*, ch. 1, *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol. 25, p. 278). Since Silvester was bishop of Rome (Pope from A.D. 314-335), here is another proof that the Waldenses existed as early as A.D. 314. (Pope Silvester I celebrated the first Ecumenical Council at Nicaea. He instituted Sunday as a holiday dedicated to God in memory of the creation, and was the first pope to wear the tiara. He created the "Iron Crown" with a nail from the Holy Cross. He baptized Emperor Constantine the Great.

Cardinal Peter Damian, one of the strongest supporters of the papacy, in his campaign (A.D. 1059) against the Waldenses in northern Italy, called them "Subalpini." (Damian, *opuscula,* Opusculum 18, found in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 145, p. 416). The word in common use to designate these borderers of the Alps was "Vallenses," from which in time the *V* was changed into *W*, and one of the *l*'s into *d*, and they have since the 12th century generally been called Waldenses.

Primitive Christianity became such a threat to papal hierarchy that many synods and councils were summoned to combat it. Evangelical dissent from the growing paganism of the papacy was so strong that even Rome's champions were forced to call this evangelical dissent "inveterate" (firmly established, deep-rooted, entrenched, or irradicable). The papacy decided to challenge this new power with ruthless measures. At one synod or council after another, either the evangelicals were brought to trial or actions were passed on them.

<u>An example of the injustice enacted in such courts took place in the case of the Canons of Orleans, France, in A.D. 1017</u>. The so-called heresy had spread to many provinces. Papal authorities were horrified to learn that Stephen, formerly chaplain of the queen; Heribert, who had been one of the realm's ambassadors; and Lisoye—all famous for learning and holiness—were members of the hated church. As prisoners, indicted for heresy, they were arraigned before the papal prelates. In a farcical trial that lasted 8 hours, these 13 primitive Christians were condemned to be burned at the stake. There are 4 conflicting reports of this farcical trial, but it is obvious that the facts in these reports have been garbled in a ridiculous manner. Three things happened in connection with this Council of Orleans which reveal the spirit of the papal judges:

1. Queen Constantia was stationed at the door, and as the condemned martyrs filed out, she thrust a stick into the eye of Stephen, who formerly had been here private chaplain and had evidently rebuked her for her loose conduct. For this act, her praises have been loudly sung by the "Ultramontanes" (people beyond the Alps favoring absolute supremacy of papal power). Background on Queen Constantia: King Robert II, also known as Augustus the Pious (King of France from 996-1031) first married Rosala, the daughter of Italy's king in 988. He divorced her the next year and was excommunicated by Pope Gregory V. In 996, 8 years later, he married Berthe of Bourgogne, the widow of Eudes, the Count of Chartres, and became King of France, but divorced her in 998, 2 years later. Finally he married

Constance of Provence around 1003, about 5 years later. He was king of France for 35 years, and died in 1031.

2. It is known that one of the Frankish nobility, in order to secure evidence, pretended to join the primitive Christians as a member of their church. By means of this deception, he obtained catch phrases which could be falsely turned at the trial against the accused.
3. After these martyrs were burned at the stake, it was discovered that a certain nobleman had been a member of the hated church for 3 years and had died before the trial. In anger, his body was dug up and publicly dishonored.

At the close of the 8 hours of grilling at this farcical trial, these condemned martyrs addressed their judges, "*You may narrate these doctrines to others, who are wise in worldly wisdom, and who believe the figments of carnal men written upon animal parchment. But to us who have the law written in the inner man by the Holy Ghost, and who know nothing else save what we have learned from God the Creator of all things, you vainly propound matters which are superfluous and altogether alien from sound divinity. Put therefore an end to words; and do with us what you list. We clearly behold our King reigning in heavenly places, who with His own right hand is raising us to an immortal triumph; and He is raising us to the fullness of joy celestial."* (d'Achery, *Spicilegium*, vol. 1, pp. 607, 608).

Eight years later (A.D. 1025) at Arras in northern France another farcical trial was held. The defendants were accused of Manichaeism, the usual false accusation of the papacy against evangelicals. One of the two perverted types of Christianity prevalent in that day was Manichaeism (Gnosticism was the other). Manichaeism was founded by Manichaios Manes in about A.D. 276. It rejected creation, demanded celibacy of its leaders, worshipped the sun as the supreme dwelling place of Deity. It was imbued with the ancient Persian hatred of the Old Testament. It ridiculed the Sabbath and exalted Sunday. This fanatical darkness, with its own fabricated scriptures, had come down upon Syria like a fog in the days of Lucian, who combated it. The farcical trial at Arras, France revealed that these devoted missionaries were guilty of no such demeanors. It made clear that the doctrine unacceptable to that unjust court came from northern Italy. The martyrs were not called Waldenses in the report. Their beliefs, however, were those of the martyrs of Orleans and were similar to the teachings of the Waldenses. From the testimony obtained in these trials of the primitive Christians, we can conclude that their churches were numerous, with some scholars and eminent persons.

Toulouse, a famous city in southern France is an example of how certain communities held fast to the doctrines of the apostles from the early days of Christianity until they aroused the fury of an exterminating crusade. Toulouse is blamed not only as the breeding ground of so-called heresy, but is also said to have successfully housed rejectors of Rome throughout the centuries, first in the days of Gothic Christianity, and later in times of the Albigenses and Waldenses. (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Toulouse."). None of these dissenters can be called "reformed," because they never diverged far enough from the early church either in beliefs or practices to necessitate a movement of reform.

A powerful protestor against the oppressors of primitive Christians was Berengarius of France. His followers were called Berengarians or earlier Waldenses (De Vaux Cerenay, *Historia Albingensium*, ch. 1, found in Migne, *Patrologia Latina,* vol. 213, pp. 545, 546). More church councils were probably held against Berengarius than against anyone else. The papist hated him alive or dead. He was the second prominent witness for truth. The first witness for truth had been Joannes Scotus Erigena, a world figure who had lived 200 years previously. Scotus may have come from one of the schools established by Columba. Both Scotus and Berengarius had truly analyzed the doctrine of transubstantiation. To Berengarius it was the height of seducing delusions.

The main errors of the Roman church were:

1. Transubstantiation
2. Tradition
3. Allegorizing Scripture
4. Abolition of the Decalogue
5. Disregard of the Sabbath
6. Obscuration of the once-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ by the Mass
7. Celibacy of the priesthood
8. Infant baptism, instead of baptism by immersion of older individuals
9. Prayers for the dead
10. Image worship
11. Veneration or worship of relics and crosses
12. Immaculate conception and assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
13. Adoration and intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints
14. Feast and prayers to the Saints
15. Incense and candles burned to the saints
16. Auricular confession to priests
17. Purgatory
18. Penances and imposed fasts
19. Holy water
20. Monkery
21. Pilgrimages
22. Extreme unction
23. Infallibility of the Pope

Apostasy had strengthened since the days of Vigilantius and Claude, and Berengarius had to oppose all that they had denounced and more. He taught many disciples and trained many to spread the light of the gospel everywhere. Thousands of people who loved primitive Christianity received his disciples gladly.

Matthew of Westminster (A.D. 1087) complains that the Berengarians and Waldenses had corrupted all of France, England, and Italy (Matthew of Westminster, *The flowers of History*, vol. 2, p.15). This was a full hundred years before Peter Waldo. Many authorities state that the Berengarians resisted and protested the same errors of the papacy as the resistance shown later by the Waldenses. Other authorities consider Berengarius a leader of the Waldenses.

Berengarius was opposed by Archbishop Lanfranc (counselor and ecclesiastical peer to William of Normandy who conquered England. When William of Normandy added the English kingdom to his French possessions, he offered Lanfranc the primacy of the newly conquered lands. Lanfranc was anxious to overthrow Berengarius, whom he considered an enemy in doctrine. He set out to destroy him by the use of his pen, because Berengarius was too priminent and too greatly beloved to be burned at the stake. Berengarius was repeatedly condemned by many councils, and finally driven into exile. Although he was a nominal Roman Catholic prelate, he had doctrinally gone over to the Waldenses. Lanfranc says that Berengarians called the Church of Rome "The Congregation of the Wicked and the Seat of Satan," which also the Waldenses did. The thousands of people who rejoiced in his bright and shining light were promptly branded by the papacy as Berengarians. Actually, they were only part of the increasing numbers to refused to follow Rome in departing from the teachings of the apostles.

The papacy finally broke with the Greek Church in the middle of its attempt to overthrow the spiritual leadership of Berengarius and its military victory in the conquest of England. At this time the Roman pontiff had 3 ecclesiastical field marshals of outstanding shrewdness:

1. Bishop Lanfranc went against Berengarius
2. Cardinal Humbert was sent to Constantinople (A. D. 1054) to demand that the Greek Church recognize completely the world leadership of the pontiff in the Vatican.
3. Cardinal Damian was sent into northern Italy (A.D. 1059), the region of the Waldenses, to bring into subjection the diocese of Milan which had always remained independent of the Roman see.

Both the Greek and Latin churches had lost much of the spiritual power maintained by the Waldenses. The Latin church had gone much deeper into apostasy than the Greek Church. The civilization of the Greek (Eastern) Church was far higher than that of the Latin (Western) Church. Rome was upset when the king of Bulgaria and his nation were converted to Christianity by Greek missionaries in AD 864. These Greek missionaries had translated the Bible from the original Greek, and not from the Latin Vulgate. The Greek missionaries also had given the Bulgarians a liturgy (order of church services) which was not compatible with the unscriptural Roman liturgy. The papacy was determined to get spiritual control over Bulgaria, Lombardy, and England. The churches of the East had kept Saturday as the Sabbath from the earliest days, and wherever Sunday had crept in, religious services were held on both Saturday and Sunday. Bulgaria had been taught to keep the 7th day Sabbath.

Pope Nicholas I (was pope from 858-867) sent the ruling prince of Bulgaria a long document clarifying political, territorial, and ecclesiastical questions. In this document, he said that one is to cease from work on Sunday, but not on the Sabbath. The head of the Greek Church was offended at this interference of the papacy, and declared the pope excommunicated. He also sent a circulatory letter to some leading bishops of the Church of the East, censuring the Roman Catholic Church for several erroneous doctrines, especially emphasizing its rebellion against past church councils in compelling its

members to fast on the seventh-day Sabbath. This letter rebuked the papacy for trying to impose this yoke on the Bulgarians. A complete break between the Church of the West (Latin) and the Church of the East (Greek) did not occur at this time, however.

Two hundred years later (A.D. 1054) the controversy between the Church of the East and West again arose. The Greek patriarch, Michael Cerulanius (Michele Cerulario), and a learned Greek monk, both attacked the Roman Catholic Church on a number of points, including fasting on the Sabbath. Now the haughty Cardinal Humbert enters the picture. The pope (Leo IX who was pope from 1049-1054) sent 3 legates to Constantinople with countercharges. Among others, the pope made the following charge against the Greek Church: "Because you observe the Sabbath with the Jews and the Lord's Day with us, you seem to imitate with such observances the sect of Nazarenes who in this manner accept Christianity in order that they be not obliged to leave Judaism." (Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 145, p. 506; also, Hergenroether, *Photius*, vol. 3, p. 746. The Nazarenes were a Christian denomination). Humbert failing to bring the Greek Church under subjection became enraged, and declared it excommunicated. He found that the leading bishops of the East sided with the Greek patriarch. The gulf between these two churches was now final. "The observance of Saturday is, as everyone knows, the subject of a bitter dispute between the Greeks and Latins." (Neale, *A History of the Holy Eastern Church*, General Introduction, vol. 1, p. 731). The pope during this time was Leo IX who excommunicated Michele Cerulario who caused the schism of the Greek and Latin Churches.

Now the pope having shaken himself loose from the Greek Church, he had become the titular spiritual head of Europe. He immediately turned his attention to the Waldenses. He resolved to tolerate the independence of the diocese of Milan no longer. The pope realized that a new enemy was the rising tide of evangelical churches whose nerve center was northern Italy in Milan. He resented their claim to be the only true church directly descended from the apostles, and he hated their preaching that the papacy was the mystical Babylon predicted by the Apocalypse. The pope relied for support upon the infiltration of spies who sided with Rome into the diocese of Milan. These spies were determined to eliminate the opponents of the papacy. Pope Nicholas II, who was pope from 1059-1061, sent Cardinal Petrus Damianus and Anselm, Bishop of Lucca, to Milan in 1059 to bring into subjection the diocese of Milan. They demanded them to receive the laws of the Pope's synod. They were sent to condemn the Nicolaitanism (the name which at that time was bestowed on the marriage of priests). Clergy and people alike were greatly upset, and demanded to know by what authority one diocese could invade the rights and prerogatives of another. They were very upset when Damianus assembled a synod of the clergy of Milan and seated himself above their archbishop, Guido. Using deceptive documents, he persuaded with flattery and gentle urging, using deceptive, soothing words and false promises. He threatened, and promised. He followed the Jesuit motto, "Where we cannot convince, we will confuse." He proposed among other things that they adopt several doctrinal articles rejected by the Greek Church, including celibacy of the priesthood. As a result, as soon as his legation left Milan, the loyal clergy and the nobility called a council which asserted the right of the clergy to marry. On the other hand, the papal party had succeeded so far in their efforts that they had induced the chief

magistrate of Milan to use public threats against the Milanese. With the city torn by strife and conflict, those in favor of a married clergy concluded that the only thing for them to do was to retire for their devotions to a separate place called Patara, whereupon they were reproachfully called Patarines. "They have given this nickname of Patarines to the Waldenses, because the Waldenses were those Subalpini in Peter Damian, who at the same time maintain'd in the same doctrines in the Archbishoprick of Turin." (Allix, *The Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, pages 121, 122). Three new names were now given to the men of the valleys: Berengarians, Subalpini, and Patarines.

As the differences were growing between tradition and the Bible, and between apostolic and medieval Christianity, Pope Gregory VII was chosen as supreme pontiff. He ruled from 1073-1085. At this time the papal council issued the "Dictatus Papae" which stated that only the Pope is universal, nobody can judge him; he is the only one who can release from oath. He changed the simpler liturgies, existing since primitive days to suit later corruptions; he rigidly enforced celibacy upon the priesthood, and he brought the princes of Europe under his iron heel. He is the Pope Gregory VII is the pope who made the western emperor, Henry IV, walk barefooted and bareheaded along the walls of the outer court of the castle at Canossa for 3 days in winter imploring the forgiveness and support of the offended pontiff, before he finally forgave him. Pope Gregory VII's harsh and cruel measures to make the married clergy put away their wives finally fastened celibacy upon the Roman Catholic Church. It produced such an opposite effect upon the evangelical groups that it hastened the coming of the Reformation.

Primitive Christianity was growing strong enough to worry the pope, that Pope Urban II (pope from 1088-1099) issued a bull in 1096 (nearly a century before Peter Waldo) against one of the Waldensian valleys on the French side of the Alps for being infested with "heresy." (Muston, *The Israel of the Alps*, vol. 1, pp. 3, 14, note 1).

In the next 100 years, three other names were bestowed upon the Waldenses: Petrobrusians, Henricians, and Arnoldists. But these names were more than mere names. Behind each name stood the record of a powerful leader in evangelism. As each new apostle arose, Rome at first was content to treat him and his followers as a "new sect" for by so doing she aimed to cover up the fact that the renewed evangelical wave sweeping over Europe was another manifestation of the Church of the Wilderness. Later, however, when primitive Christianity made devastating inroads upon the Catholic Church, she began to persecute, and the inquisition, the stake, and the torture chamber followed.

<u>Three important events occurred during the 11th century</u> which formed a background for the reactions which produced famous spiritual leaders among the primitive Christians.

1. The conquest of England
2. The power of Archbishop Lanfranc as spiritual overlord of England, whereby he instituted the policy designed to crush the Celtic Church in Scotland and Ireland.
3. The Crusades made Europe overnight into one vast armed confederacy, with Rome at the head of the armies moving out of Europe into Asia to rescue Palestine from the Mohammedans.

Pope Urban II, who had written a bull denouncing the "heresy" of the men of the valleys, summoned all kings, princes, bishops, and abbots to seize the sword and start for Palestine in 1096, thus proclaiming the first Crusade. He had filled the Continent with tradition instead of Bible teachings. Also, the masses were brooding over a wrong interpretation of Revelation. A thousand years having passed since the writing of the book of Revelation, the hour was at hand, they thought, for the chaining of Satan, for the descent of the Holy City, and for the final judgment. When pilgrims, returning from Jerusalem, told the pitiful stories of Moslem cruelties upon Christians, more fuel was added to the fire. The Vatican sent its agents up and down the land to inflame them to crush the Mohammedans and magnify the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church.

In less than 150 years, there was a crushing defeat of four Crusades. In the midst of these, Rome aroused the mob and rabble under bloodthirsty swashbucklers to destroy the beautiful civilization of the Albigenses of southern France. The eyes of Europe opened, they were tired of seeing lands rent with civil feuds and drenched in fraternal blood. Reform movements grew, nationalism grew, commerce expended. The claims of the Roman pontiff grew weaker and weaker, and the teachings of the Church in the Wilderness grew stronger and stronger.

The Crusades had a different effect upon the masses than the papacy had anticipated. The Cross was not victorious over the Crescent. The downtrodden and defeated armies returning from the East, exposed the folly of papal policies. The demonstrated to the people that the teachings of Christ should be lived in a different way. They realized that Christian victories in this life are not gained by the sword. This drove many to a re-examination of the Holy Scriptures, and they turned to the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Paulicians—different names for the same primitive Christians—who had always circulated translations of the Bible in their native language and who had adopted a simple church service. Men of profound devotion and great learning were stirred by the needs of the masses.

During the 12th century three outstanding evangelical heroes emerged:

1. **Peter de Bruys** was born in the Waldensian valley on the French side of the Alps which Urban II had declared to be infested with "heresy." Even as a youth he had evangelical fervor. The pope's decrees that no church council could be assembled without the consent of the pope had aroused the indignation of southern France. Peter de Bruys began his work about 1104. Much of what can be learned about this evangelical preacher must be gleaned from the writings of an abbot, a contemporary and an enemy, Peter of Cluny (see Peter of Cluny, *Tractatus Contra Petrobrussianos,* found in Migne, *Patrologia Latina,* vol. 189, pp. 720-850). For 20 years Peter de Bruys stirred southern France. He brought about a deep spiritual movement among the masses, brought them back to the Bible and to apostolic Christianity. His message transformed characters. He especially emphasized the 7th day of the fourth commandment as the Bible Sabbath, the day that at that time was still recognized among the Celtic Churches of the British Isles, the Paulicians, and in the great Church of the East. Five

hundred years later, during heated debates on the Sabbath, a learned bishop of the Church of England referred to the Sabbathkeeping of the Petrobrusians (White, Bishop of Eli, *A Treatise on the Sabbath Day*, page 8, found in fisher, *Tracts on the Sabbath*). For centuries evangelical bodies, especially the Waldenses, were called Insabbati or Ensavates, that is, Insabbatati, because of Sabbathkeeping (Gui, *Manuel d' Inquisiteur*, vol. 1, p. 37. Pope Innocent III (pope from 1198-1216) was the inspiring force in legalizing the Inquisition. Dominic became its founder; Francis dragged the unoffending evangelicals to its prisons, but Bernard Gui drew up the process of condemning and of afflicting the victims). Usser says that there were many Sabbathkeepers. The learned Jesuit, Jacob Gretzer, about 1600, recognized that the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Insabbatati were different names for the same people (Gretzer, *Praeloquia in Triadem Scripitorum Contra Valdensium Sectam*, found in *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum,* vol. 24, pp. 1521, 1522). The thesis that they were called Insabbatati because of their footwear is indignantly rejected by the learned Robert Robinson (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, page 304). The term Insabbatati applied to the Waldenses was widespread. The following oath was exacted from prisoners suspected of being heretics by the monks directing the Inquisition:

> *The oath by which a person suspected of heresy was to clear himself was this, to be taken in publick: "I _____ swear, by Almighty God and by these holy gospels of God, which I hold in my hand, before you Lord Garcia archbishop, and before others your assistants, that I am not, nor ever have been, an Inzabbatate Waldense, or poor person of Lyons, or an heretick of any sect of heresy condemned by the church; nor do I believe, nor have I ever believed, their errors, nor will I believe them in any future time of my life: moreover I profess and protest that I do believe, and that I will always hereafter believe, the catholick faith, which the holy apostolical church of Rome publickly holds, teaches and preaches, and you my lord archbishop, and other prelates of the catholick church publickly hold, preach and teach."* (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches,* pages 322, 323).

The worst criticism against the work of Peter de Bruys was branding it as a revival of Manichaeism. This has been repeatedly proved to be false. Nevertheless, many modern historians, whose thinking has been distorted by papal documents, repeat the charge. One hundred years or more before Peter de Bruys, Manichaeism had ceased to be a force in the world. All churches detested its wild teachings and its idolatrous practices. To make this accusation against innocent followers of primitive Christians was to say all manner of evil against the Petrobrusians. Peter de Bruys was hounded and harassed by his enemies, and was finally arrested and burned at the stake about 1124. The name, Petrobrusians, was added by papists to the other names already given the evangelical bodies.

2. **Henry of Lausanne** was another great hero of this age. While the papacy was wasting manpower of Europe in the Crusades, Henry of Lausanne was changing the characters of men. He was generally accepted as a disciple of Peter de Bruys. He wielded the sword of the Spirit, not the sword of steel. As in the case of his mentor, much that is known of his teachings is found in the writings of his enemy, Peter of Cluny. This abbot confesses that his knowledge about Henry of Lausanne came from hearsay. He called him "the heir of wickedness," and said that Henry had written a book and many articles. This book probably influenced both Arnbold of Brescia and Peter Waldo, two reformers who followed after him. As Henry traveled, worked, prayed, and preached to raise the masses to triumphant truth, he was assailed by the most commanding figure in the papal world. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux (1091-1153), was the only man with force enough to whip superstitious Europe into the frenzy of a second Crusade. The first Crusade had flickered out so disastrously that the papacy was compelled to subpoena the services of Bernard. The world of this champion was powerful enough to decide even the choice of popes. Some of Bernard's poetical compositions, having the good fortune to be set to charming music, have been placed by his admirers in Protestant hymnbooks. (In the SDA Hymnbook see #156 "O Sacred Heart Now Wounded," # 242 "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts," and #261 "The Spirit of the Lord Revealed.") He entertained and directed the Irish bishop who did more than any other man to betray the Celtic Church in Ireland. He trained the Irish monks who returned home to overthrow the followers of Patrick. He is called "the oracle of those times." It was this Bernard who poured forth his biting invectives against Henry of Lausanne. Although he could determine the choice of popes, though he could throw crusading armies of Europe into Asia, though he could help to direct the Normanizing and the Romanizing of the Celtic Church in the British Isles, he could not cower the indefatigable Henry of Lausanne. Bernard summoned the count of St. Giles to stop Henry of Lausanne by imprisonment and death. He said,

> *"How great are the evils which I have heard and known that the heretic Henry has done and is daily doing in the churches of God! A ravening wolf in sheep's clothing is busy in your land, but by our Lord's direction I know him by his fruits. The churches are without congregations, congregations without priests, priests without their due reverence, and worst of all, Christians without Christ. Churches are regarded as synagogues, the sanctuary of God is said to have no sanctity, the sacraments are not thought to be sacred, feast days are deprived of their wonted solemnities…This man, who says and does things contrary to God is not from God. Yet, O sad to say, he is listened to by many, and he has a following which believes in him…The voice of one heretic has put to silence all the prophets and apostles."* (Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistle 241 (A.D. 1147) to Hildefonsus, Count of St.

> Eloy, found in Eales, *The Works of St. Bernard,* vol. 2, pp. 707, 708)

Bernard of Clairvaux was a relentless persecutor of Peter de Bruys, Henry of Lausanne, and Arnold of Brescia. When a neighboring clergyman in Germany, Evervinus, bishop of Cologne, asked Bernard to explain why these so-called heretics went to the stake rejoicing in God, Bernard wrote back an answer in which he called these heretics "Apostolicals," giving as his reason for so naming them that no one could trace them back to the name of any particular founder. (Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 66, on the Canticles, found in Eales, *The Works of St. Bernard*, vol. 4, pp. 388, 400-403). The fact that Bernard declared the name of these Christians to be "Apostolicals" and that they called themselves after no human founder, singles them out as descendants of the early primitive church! Eminent authorities have recognized the unity of these believers in essential doctrines and the fact that they were the forerunners of Luther and Calvin. Franacois Mezereay pointed out that there were two sorts of "heretics:" the one ignorant and loose, somewhat of the nature of the Manichees (he probably confounded the followers of Peter de Bruys and Henry of Lausanne with the Manichaeans); the second, more learned and less disorderly, maintaining much the same doctrines as the Calvinists, and called Henricians and Waldenses (Mezereay, *Abrege Chronologique de L'Histoire de France*, vol. 2, pp. 654-657). There is also the remarkable statement by Gilbert Genebrard who states definitely that the spiritual fathers of the Calvinists were the Petrobrusians, the Henricians, and the Albigenses (Genebrard, *Sacred Chronology*. See Allix, *Remarks Upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Church of the Albigenses,* page 172). There were so many disciples of Peter de Bruys and Henry of Lausanne that ecclesiastical councils were called to combat the rising tide of evangelism. In 1119, Pope Callistus II (pope from 1119-1124) assembled a council at Toulouse, France, in which, "the sentence of excommunication was thundered out against a sect of heretics in those parts, condemning the eucharist, the baptism of infants, the priesthood, all ecclesiastical orders, and lawful marriages (Bower, *The History of the Popes,* vol 2, p. 456). By lawful marriages the papists referred to the opposition of the evangelicals to calling marriage a sacrament, and requiring it to be performed only by a priest. When Pope Innocent II (pope from 1130-1143) held a council at Pisa, Italy, in 1134, "the doctrines taught by a hermit named Henry, were declared heresies and condemned with their author and all who taught or held them." (Bower, *The History of the Popes,* vol. 2, page 468). Five years later Innocent II convened a general council in Rome to which all the princes of the West were summoned, and it was a large council. "By the twenty-third canon of the present council the opinions of Arnold of Brescia were declared repugnant to the doctrine received by the Catholic Church, and condemned as such." (Bower, *The History of the Popes,* vol. 2, pp. 470, 471). Naturally, such a council would not be held unless it was to deal

with large propositions. As all of these councils were held many years before Peter Waldo appeared on the scene, one can see that evangelism had grown to be a might force before Waldo's time.

3. **Arnold of Brescia**, was from Brescia, a city with an independent spirit like Milan and Turin. From Brescia comes the beautiful Brixianus manuscript, exemplar of the beloved Itala, the first translation of the New Testament from Greek into Latin, 300 years before Jerome's Vulgate. He was born amid such traditions, and sat at the feet of the renowned Abelard to receive the full flame of freedom which was already glowing within him. He returned to Brescia where he spoke powerfully. His words were heard in Switzerland, southern Italy, Germany, and France. In France, the sensitive ears of Bernard detected an ominous note in his teachings. Arnold had both the spirit of the evangelist and the general. He openly denounced the overgrown empire of ecclesiastical tyranny. He was far ahead of his age. In fact, he did what the reformers failed to do. He attacked the union of church and state. Arnold's idealism and eloquence aroused the people to a high pitch of enthusiasm. Papal bishops and clergy combined against him. A church synod—ever a potential enemy of progress—was called, and in 1139 Arnold was condemned to silence and to expulsion from Brescia. He fled to Zurich, Switzerland, and again took the field against the wealth, luxury, and the temporal power of the clergy. He called for a democratic type of ministry, an he mightily stirred those regions. He was strongly resisted by Bernard of Clairvaux. But in spite of this bitter opposition, Arnold labored on. He scattered the seeds of truth far and wide. It is possible that the future strength of Switzerland in her stand for freedom and religious liberty was due in some measure to the work of Arnold. The papists could not forgive his opposition to certain doctrines. He preached against transubstantiation, infant baptism, and prayers for the dead. (Bower, *The History of the Popes*, vol. 2, p. 471). Because of this, Bernard of Clairvaux continually pressed for the execution of Arnold. Meanwhile in Rome, the city had come out for civil government. The pope fled, but as he went out, Arnold came in. The people welcomed him in a frenzy of enthusiasm. Her is where Arnold compromised his truly evangelical lead by sanctioning, if not directing, the masses in using force. Here is where a flaw affected his vision. Possessing unopposed leadership, however, he divorced religion from the civil government in Rome. He restored the Roman senate. The old glories of Italy returned. His opposition to tradition, to unacceptable ceremonies, and to unscriptural doctrines encouraged the believers in the New Testament. Primitive Christians lifter up their heads, and their followers multiplied everywhere. Papal writers promptly declared that a new sect had been founded, whom they called the "Arnoldists." Then the pope and the emperor leagued against Arnold. He soon learned that they who take the sword shall perish by the sword. The fickle crowd deserted him, and his political friends took to cover. After the pope at the head of an army had driven Arnold out of Rome, he was taken by the armed forces

> of the emperor. His body was burned and his ashes were thrown into the Tiber River. Thus perished a fearless leader who, singlehandedly, dared to denounce the unholy union of church and state. His effect upon future generations was far-reaching. "The Waldenses look up to Arnold as to one of the spiritual founders of their churches; and his religious and political opinions probably fostered the spirit of republican independence which throughout Switzerland and the whole Alpine district was awaiting its time." (Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, vol. 3, p. 281). The provinces of southern France were crowded with the followers of Peter de Bruys and Henry long before Waldo or his followers began to labor there. This is seen in the letter written in about 1150 by the archbishop of Narbonne to King Louis VII: "My Lord the King, we are extremely pressed with many calamities, amongst which there is one that most of all affects us, which is, that the Catholic faith is extremely shaken in this our diocese, and St. Peter's boat is so violently tossed by the waves, that it is in great danger of sinking." (Allix, *Remarks Upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Church of the Albigenses*, page 117).

The **Nobla Lecon** (Noble Lesson) was an important document written in the Romaunt tongue (the common language of the south of Europe from the 8th to the 14th century. Its opening words claim that it was written in 1100. The people to whom the treatise belongs is definitely called Vaudois, and this is nearly 100 years before Peter Waldo. This document begins, "Hear, oh brothers, a Noble Lesson." Then there appears a sublime presentation of the origin and the story of the plan of redemption. The Noble Lecon stands for the eternal moral obligation of the Ten Commandments, and in that light it presents the great expiation on the cross. One is led along step by step in considering what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon man in such divine provisions for his ransom from the fall. Its soft and glowing terms stir the soul. No one can read the chapter by Peter Allix in which he analyzes and presents the message of the Noble Lecon without feeling that a great contribution has been made to the world's literature.

Peter Waldo of Lyons, France, began his work somewhere between 1160 and 1170. He was a wealthy merchant who gave away all his goods and began to preach the genuine doctrines of the New Testament. He claimed the papacy to be the "man of sin," and the beast of the Apocalypse. He devoted much time to translating and distributing the Bible. Some authorities claim that the name Waldo was derived from the Waldenses because of his prominent work among them. We do know that from his time on the name Waldenses was more generally used to indicate those large reforming bodies which had previously been called "men of the valleys," or Vallenses, Albigenses, Insabbatati, Berengarians, Subalpini, Patarines, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, and other names.

Peter Waldo gave a new impetus to the Waldenses in that he provided popular editions of the Bible in the vernacular, so he can be credited with contributing to the increase in numbers and influence of Waldenses around the world. Soon he felt the wrath of the papacy, and withdrew to northern France. When pursued, he fled to Bohemia. When the

anger of the papacy turned from him to his converts, great numbers of his converts fled to the Waldensian valleys in Italy. It was in God's providence that Waldo went to east central Europe, and that many of his followers migrated to the surrounding mountainous terrain. The seeds of truth of previous centuries were beginning to grow into a large harvest. In the 12th century there was a longing throughout Europe to return to the type of religion which Jesus pointed out when he said, "All ye are brethren." Churches with pomp and ceremonies, with a great gulf between priest and people, with clergy graded in ascending ranks with titles of honor were growing in disfavor. Enforcement of doctrines by law had brought rebellion. Now the Bible was more widely circulated. Bible principles were contrasted with hierarchical canons. Multitudes becoming aware of a more excellent Christianity drew together to form large bodies. They had been called by all kind of names, but gradually they took the general name of Waldenses.

On the other hand, the priests who had allied themselves with kings, generals, and world officials were determined to hold what temporal power they had acquired and to possess the seat of absolute authority. However, the attempt to dub people as criminals for freedom of belief, brought growing resentment. Therefore, the name Waldenses was found more on the people's lips, a title that was to be synonymous in Europe with the Christianity set forth by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament.

The Waldenses suffered dreadfully under persecution. But their steadfastness and victory was miraculous. Much of the liberty, enlightenment, and advance of civilization today can be attributed to the faithfulness of the Church in the Wilderness, and especially to the courageous Waldenses because of their valiant and triumphant efforts to maintain the principles of democracy.

The records of the Waldenses were destroyed. In the empires of antiquity a new emperor often purged the preceding dynasty by destroying all writings telling of its past, even to the extent of chiseling annals from stone monuments. The rage of the papacy almost completely obliterated the noble and voluminous literature of the Waldenses. Only fragments remain. For the rest one must trace the tirades against them, the accounts of papal inquisitors, sentences pronounced by emperors, papal councils, and the Inquisition against them to reconstruct their history.

The Waldensian pastors were well trained and educated, well-versed in the languages of the Bible. The only books and ancient documents written by the Waldenses preserved were those sent to the libraries of Cambridge and Geneva by Pastor Leger. The papists carefully destroyed as much of the Waldensian literature as possible after every persecution. The Waldenses had an intimate knowledge of God's Word—their only light. Their school was in the almost inaccessible solitude of a deep mountain gorge called Pra del Tor, and their studies were severe and long-continued, involving the Latin, Romaunt, and Italian languages. The Romance language came from the Vaudois, and it was from this language that the French and Italian were formed.

The idea fostered by Rome that the Waldenses were few in number, without much organization or learning, and dependent upon Rome for their Bible and culture is

dispelled by lots of trustworthy and scholarly testimony. In some places the nobility were members of the Waldensian churches. Among them were the greatest scholars and theologians of the age, and among them were leaders in language, literature, music, and oratory. They sent missionaries all over the world proclaiming the simple truths of Christianity (Hungary, Behemia, France, England, Scotland, and Italy). Lollard, who paved the way for Wycliffe in England , was a missionary from these valleys. In Germany and Bohemia the Vaudois teachings heralded, if they did not hasten, the Reformation, and Huss and Jerome, Luther, and Calvin did little more than carry on the work begun by the Vaudois missionaries. (McCabe, *Cross and Crown*, page 32; also Perrin, *History of the Ancient Christians*, pages, 47, 48).

After early schooling it was not uncommon for the Waldensian youth to go to the seminaries in the great cities of Lombardy or to the University of Paris. They were a Bible people. No subsequent Protestant church reverenced the Holy Scriptures more than did they. Through the long night of the Dark Ages they were a sanctuary for the Holy Scriptures. They were the ark in Europe which safely carried the Bible across the stormy waters of medieval persecution.

Since the Waldenses existed from the early Christian centuries, it would naturally be expected that their first Bible in their own tongue would be in Latin. Diligent research has proved this to be true. They early possessed that beautiful Latin version of the Bible called the Itala, which was translated from Greek manuscripts (Nolan, *The Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, pages 88, 89). The bible formed the basis of their congregational worship, and the children were taught large portions of it by memory. Their pastors, called, "barbes" were a learned class, well-versed in Greek and Hebrew, and taught the youth to be missionaries in the languages which then were being used by other European peoples. Thus, through these people has been handed down to the present generation the Bible of the primitive church, which found a permanent influence in the translation of the Authorized Version.

The Waldenses were persecuted before the 13th century. For hundreds of years, wars of extermination were waged in order to wipe out every vestige of the writings of these different groups of people. The most terrible atrocities were committed against them, thousands and thousands were killed in every possible way. Many books have been written relating these circumstances, and picturing these heart-rending scenes. By 1550, there were 800,000 in the Alpine provinces who continued to resist the papacy.

The Albigenses did not differ from the Waldenses in belief. They are called Albigenses only because of Albi, the French city which was their headquarters. The decrees of the popes condemned them as Waldenses. Legates made war against them as professing the beliefs of the Waldenses. Many historians have called them Waldenses.

In 1517, the dawn of the Protestant Reformation came to Europe. Protestantism was not so much a separation from the Church of Rome as it was a revival of apostolic doctrines so long held by the Waldenses. Protestantism was a spiritual expansion of the Church in

the Wilderness. The Waldenses were the purest and the most prominent of the remaining evangelical churches which had come down from the days of the apostles.

On September 12, 1532, a Synodal Assembly was held at Angrogna, attended by a number of deputies from the Reformed Churches in France and Switzerland—among them was William Farel of France. Farrell showed the greatest interest in the manuscript copies of the Bible which the Vaudois had preserved from the earliest times, and at his insistence the entire Bible was translated into French, and sent as a free gift from the Vaudois to the French Church. The Reformers admitted the antiquity of the Vaudois rites and the purity of their faith, and treated the mountain church with the greatest respect.

The simplicity and purity of their lives was the result of the simplicity and purity of their doctrines. Even their enemies admitted that their beliefs were like those of the early Christians. An explanation of their beliefs sounds like the preachings of Vigilantius in the 4th century, and of Claude in the 8th century.

> 'The ancient Vaudois constantly rejected doctrines that were based on authority and human tradition; they repelled, with holy indignation and honor, images, crosses, and relics, as objects of veneration or worship; the adoration and intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary and the saints; they consequently rejected the feasts consecrated to these same saints, the prayers addressed to them, the incense and tapers that were burned in their honor; they likewise rejected the mass, auricular confession, purgatory, extreme unction, and prayers for the dead, holy water, Lent, abstinence from meat at certain times and on certain days, imposed fasts and penances, pilgrimages, the celibacy of the clergy, monkery, etc…Their declaration on these points is as explicit as it is strong." (Monastier, *A History of the Vaudois Church*, pages 83, 84).

Their enemy, Reinerius, had to admit they were a commandment-keeping people:

> "They were modest, simple, meddling little with bargains or contracts…That the first rules and instructions which for rudiments they gave unto their children was the Decalogue of the law, the Ten Commandments." (Mornay, *The Mysterie of Iniquitie*, page 449).

As expected, many of the people were torn away from some of their beliefs by persecutions, isolation, and desperate circumstances. At times there was a certain amount of conformity to papal practices. Also, when the Reformation, manifesting extreme liberalism in many things, swept over Europe, it greatly influenced the ancient churches which had long suffered for many of the doctrines to which the Reformers turned. These ancient churches shared in many points identical beliefs with those of the Reformers.

Unfortunately, in their joy over the Reformation they conformed to certain shortcomings of the Reformers. The Reformation was a mighty influence for good as far as it went; but it is widely recognized that it did not go far enough. (Muir, *The Arrested Reformation*, page 3). Later, others than the pioneer Reformers were obliged to labor for the further restoration of primitive Christian beliefs and practices in the churches that were sincerely following Jesus' precepts.

THE SABBATH AND THE WALDENSES:

It is important to study the status of Sunday observance at the end of the first period of church history, terminating in the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. Constantine, the first Christian ruler of the Roman Empire at the time when the church and the state were coming together in perfect union, issued his now-famous Sunday law in A. D. 321. A leading Roman Catholic journal states this very clearly,

> "The emperor Constantine after his conversion to Christianity, made the observance of Sunday a civil duty, and the law which commanded it is found in the Roman code. "Let all judges and people of the town rest, and the trades of various kinds be suspended on the venerable day of the sun. Those who live in the country may, however, freely and without fault apply to agriculture, because it often happens that this day is the most favorable for sowing wheat and planting the vine, lest an opportunity offered by divine liberality be lost with the favorable moment." Now we con scarcely conceive that Constantine would have excepted agricultural labor, if the church had from time immemorial strictly forbidden among Christians that king of work which it prohibited at a later period…Hence it has been the unanimous doctrine of divines, from time immemorial, that cessation from servile work is not only a point of discipline liable to change but it can be dispensed with by the ecclesiastical authority whenever a reasonable cause presents itself…To place the subject in a clearer light, we may state that, according to many learned writers it was not strictly commanded to abstain from work on Sunday during the first ages of the church. This day was undoubtedly viewed by Christians as a day of joy, of triumph, and of gratitude to God; and they convened in the church to offer their homage to the Almighty; but there is no evidence to show that cessation from work was considered obligatory; probably because there might have been some danger of Judaism in this cessation from work, and perhaps also because practice, in the time of persecution, would have greatly exposed the professors of Christianity. It was deemed sufficient to substitute public prayer for the Jewish Sabbath, particularly as the latter was observed by many of the faithful." (*The United States Catholic Magazine*, Index to vol. 4, 1845, pp. 233, 234).

Thus it can be seen that Sunday in the early Christian centuries was not a holy day of divine appointment; but was, rather, appointed by man, and physical labor was carried on. In the churches of the East as well as in all the churches of the West, except Rome, the Sabbath was publicly observed by those who were courageous enough to withstand the rising tide of those endeavoring to appease a sun-worshiping heathen world which gave special prominence to Sunday.

Socrates, a church historian of the 4th century wrote,

> "For although almost all the churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this." (Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, b. 5, ch. 22, found in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* 2nd Series, vol. 2).

Another church historian, Sozomen, who was a contemporary of Socrates, says,

> "The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria." (Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, b. 7, ch. 19, found in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd Series, vol. 2).

Thus we see that Christianity of the Greek Church was a Sabbath-keeping Christianity; and that the Christianity of the West, with the exception of the city of Rome and possibly Alexandria, was also a Sabbath-keeping Christianity.

The history of the church in Spain is very interesting. Spain had the good fortune to escape for centuries any marked influence of the church at Rome. The history of Spain is divided into two periods: First, that which covered the time up to A.D. 325; and secondly, the period between 325 and 1200. For the study of the first 4 centuries it is more than fortunate that the 81 church resolutions or canons passed by the council held at Elvira, Spain in about A.D. 305, still exist.

These records of the Council of Elvira reveal several interesting things:

1. Up until the time of that council, the Church of Spain had adopted no creed, and certainly not the creed later adopted at Nicaea
2. Punishment of faulty members by the Church of Spain did not go farther that dismissal, for there was no appeal to civil law
3. Up to the time of that council, movements toward a union of the church and the state had made no progress, but it was evident that attempts were being made along that line
4. Canon 26 of the Council of Elvira, reveals that the Church of Spain at that time kept Saturday, the seventh day. "As to fasting every Sabbath: Resolved, that the error be corrected of fasting every Sabbath." (Errorem placuit corrigi, ut omni Sabbati die Superpositiones celebremus." Mansi, *Sacroum Counciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio,* vol, 2, p. 10). This resolution of the council is in direct opposition to the policy the church at Rome had inaugurated, that of commanding Sabbath as a fast day in order to humiliate it and make it repugnant to the people.

For centuries Christianity in Spain was one, yet when Rome began encroaching on these primitive Christians in Spain, the people of the Pyrenees (mountains along the border between Spain and France from the Bay of Biscay to the Gulf of Lions) separated themselves from the errors that crept in upon them. The historian, Robert Robinson, writes that the people living in the valleys in different countries became known as the "valley dwellers" or "Vallenses." In fact, Robinson states that he believed that the inhabitants of the Pyrenees in Spain and France were the true original Waldenses. (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, page 299). The original word is the Latin, *vallis*. From it came "valleys" in English, Valdesi in Italian, Vaudois in French, and Valdenses in Spanish. (*Ibid*, page 302). Thus, since Resolution 26 of the Council of Elvira shows that the early church of Spain kept the 7th-day Sabbath, and history proves that the

Waldenses of north Spain existed at that time, these connections prove the keeping of the 7th-day Sabbath by the early Waldenses in Spain.

Another interesting fact is that in northeastern Spain near the city of Barcelona is a city called Sabadell, in a district originally inhabited, in all probability, by a people called both "Valdenses" and "Sabbatati." (*Ibid*, page 310). Could not this name, Sabadell, have originated from the expression, "dell of the Sabbath-keepers?" It is also shown that the name Sabbatati comes from the fact of their keeping the Sabbath. There are still in the vicinity of Sabadell archaeological remains of these ancient peoples. Many centuries later, when the papacy rose to dominion in Spain, and persecution fell upon these people of the valleys, they often would go over to northern Italy where they were welcomed and given a home among the Waldenses of the Alps. (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, pages 319-321).

While the church at Rome grew stronger, the greater was the emphasis placed on Sunday. On the other hand, the churches which continued in apostolic Christianity clung as long as possible to the Sabbath which had been sanctified by Jesus and the apostles.

The Waldenses were so thoroughly a Bible people that they kept the Bible Sabbath as the sacred rest day for centuries. Pope Gregory I, was Pope from 590-604. During the plague, an angel appeared to him on the castle that has since been called Castel Saint Angelo in Rome. He created a young choir for the purpose of embellishing the church ceremonies with chants, since called, "Gregorian Chants." Pope Gregory I issued a bull in A.D. 602 against the community of Sabbath-keepers in the city of Rome. In about A.D. 791, almost 200 years later, a church council was held at Friaul, in northern Italy. Friaul was one of the 3 large duchies into which the Lomabard kingdom had been originally divided. The Council of Friaul commanded all Christians to observe the Lord's Day, and testified to the wide observance of Saturday: "Further when speaking of that Sabbath which the Jews observe, the last day of the week, which also all peasants observe." (Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Vol. 13, p. 852).

"About 100 years later (A.D. 865-867), when the sharp contest between the Church of Rome and the Greek Church over the newly converted Bulgarians and their observance of the Sabbath came to the front, the question again entered into the controversy, as can be seen in the reply of Pope Nicolas I to the one hundred and six questions propounded to him by the Bulgarian king. (*response Nicolai Papae I ad Consulta Bulgarorum,* Responsum 10, found in Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Vol. 15, p. 406).

"Peter Allix, speaking of an author who was discussing the doctrines of the Waldenses, writes: 'He lays it down also as one of their opinions; that the Law of Moses is to be kept according to the letter, and that the keeping of the Sabbath, circumcision, and other legal observances, ought to take place.' (Aallix, *The Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, page 154). However, the accusation that they practiced circumcision has been repeatedly proved to be false.

Writing of the Passagians, who are taken to be a branch of the Waldenses, David Benedict says: 'The account of their practicing circumcision is undoubtedly a slanderous story forged by their enemies, and probably arose in this way. Because they observed the seventh day, they were called, by way of derision, Jews, as the Sabbatarians are frequently at this day; and if they were Jews, it followed of course, that they either did or ought to circumcise their followers. This was probably the reasoning of their enemies; but that they actually practiced this bloody rite, is altogether improbable.'" (Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*, vol. 2, p. 414).

"Adam Blair says: 'Among the documents we have by the same peoples, an explanation of the Ten Commandments, dated by Boyer 1120. It contains a compend of Christian morality. Supreme love to God is enforced, and recourse to the influence of the planets and to sorcerers, is condemned. The evil of worshiping god by images and idols is pointed out. A solemn oath to confirm anything doubtful is admitted, but profane swearing is forbidden. Observation of the Sabbath, by ceasing from worldly labors and from sin, by good works, and by promoting the edification of the soul through prayer and hearing the word, is enjoined.'" (Blair, *History of the Waldenses*, vol. 1, p. 220).

Although persecuted, God protected the commandment-keeping Christians, and they grew in numbers. The pope became terrified concerning the number of the Waldenses. The 'heretics' in southern France were really the western portion of the Waldenses. They were usually called Albigenses because there were so many in the large city of Albi—a province allied with the king of France, although not incorporated legally into France. The 'heretics' held a synod in 1167 in the district of Toulouse attended by Christian sects from Lombardy and Italy, and France. Nicetas, the Paulician leader from Constantinople, was requested to preside. (Warner, *The Albigensian Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 15). But the Paulicians disregarded Sunday, and kept Saturday. (Adeney, *The Greek and Eastern Churches*, page 218).

Two orders of monks were formed at this time. "It has been affirmed that the orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans were instituted to silence the Waldenses." (Gilly, *Waldensian Researches*, page 98, note 2). The Waldenses were persecuted for Sabbath-keeping. In about 1194, the decree of Alphonso was published: "Alphonse, king of Aragon [region in NE Spain bordering on France, once an independent kingdom] etc., to all archbishops, bishops, and to all others:.. 'We command you in imitation of our ancestors and in obedience to the ordinances of the church, that heretics, to wit, Waldenses, Insabbathi and those who call themselves the poor of Lyons and all other heretics should be expelled away from the face of God and from all Catholics and ordered to depart from our kingdom.'" (Marianae, *praefatio in Lucam Tudensem*, found in *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol. 25, p. 190).

Here we see that the heretics who should be expelled from Aragon were called "Insabbathi." These Sabbath-keepers in Spain were actually Waldenses. This is proved by a statement of Bernard Gui, the famous program builder of the Inquisition: "Ensavates [Insabbatati] was the name given to the Vaudois." (Gui, *Manuel d' Inquisiteur*, vol. 2, p. 158). There is much evidence that these Sabbath-keepers were

interchangeably called Waldenses and Insabbatati (Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latintatis*, art. "Sabatati.")

In Spain there was a Gothic Spanish liturgy (Geddes, *Miscellaneous Tracts*, vol. 2. p. 26). It was very different from that of Rome, and was not done away with until 1088 (Whishaw, *Arabic Spain*, pages 19, 20; also Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 3, cent. 11, pt. 2, ch. 4, par. 1).

"The papal supremacy was a thing not known in the ancient Gothick Catholic Church: so that the popish doctrines of transubstantiation, and of purgatory, and of praying to angels and saints, and of adoring images, and of auricular confessions, etc. were as little known in her; may, I conceive, easily be proved from her records, which are extant." (Geddes, *Miscellaneous Tracts*, vol. 2, p. 71). Geddes says in the same paragraph that the ancient Spanish Church had the same faith and belief as the ancient British or Celtic Church, which kept the seventh day as the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. This is another link in the chain of evidence proving that the term Insabbatati refers to the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath.

The fact that clear unto the year 1194, the Waldenses were keeping the Sabbath in Spain, is very important. This late in the Middle Ages the Sabbath was still being observed. The fact that papal authorities in Germany, Italy, and France at about the same time as the decree of King Alphonse of Aragon issued his decree in 1194 were putting forth their writings against the Sabbatati, or Insabbatati, shows how many and wide-spread were these Waldenses. In the records of the Inquisition, there are lots of references to "heretics" called by the name of Sabbatati or Insabbatati. However, explanations of the beliefs of these heretics are scarce because, "It was a maxim with the catholicks to avoid the mention of heresy in their synods, lest it should create a desire in any to inquire what it was. They forbad preachers to quote even their good arguments lest the people should entertain a favorable opinion of the authors." (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, pages 271, 272).

The sects which kept the 7th day as Sabbath were called Sabbati, Sabbata, and Insabbatati. "The were called Insabbatti, not because they were circumcised, but because they kept Sabbath according to the Jewish law." (Quoted by Dr. Jacob Gretzer, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 12. pt. 2, p. 11).

A Waldensian prisoner probably in Freiburg, Germany, was obviously a Sabbath-keeper: "Barbara Von Thies testified…That on the last Saint Michael's day concerning confession as it is administered by the priests she has nothing to do with it. As to that which has to do with the Virgin Mary, on that she has nothing to answer. Concerning Sunday and feast days she says: 'The Lord God commanded us to rest on the seventh day and with that I let it be; with God's help and His grace, we all would stand by and die in the faith, for it is the right faith and the right way in Christ.'" (*Der Blutige Schau-Platz, Oder Martyrer Spiegel der Taufs Gesinnten*, b. 2, pp. 30, 31).

In almost every country of Europe, prior to Luther's time, especially in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, there were many Christians who were deeply rooted in the principles of the Waldenses, the Wycliffites, and the Hussites. (See Mosheim, *Instituttes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 4, cent. 16, sec. 3, pt. 2, ch. 3, par. 2).

Many of these Sabbath-keepers were lords and princes of high standing: "All the counselors and great lords of the court, who were already fallen in with the doctrines of Wittenburg, of Ausburg, Geneva, and Zurich, as Petrowitz, Jasper Cornis, Christopher Famigali, John Gerendi, head of the Sabbatarians, a people who did not keep Sunday, but Saturday, and whose disciples took the names of Genoldists. All these, and others, declared for the opinions of Glandrat. (Lamy, *The History of Socinianism*, page 60).

"There is an abundance of testimony to show the harmonious chain of doctrine extending from the days of the apostles down to the Reformation and later, including the beliefs held by the believers of northern Italy, the Albigenses, the Wycliffites, and the Hussites. Andre Favyn, a well-known Roman Catholic historian, who wrote in French, traces the teachings of Luther back through Vigilantius to Jovinianus, claiming that Vigilantius gave his doctrines to 'the Albigenses, who otherwise were called the Waldenses,' and that they in turn passed them on the Wycliffites and the followers of Huss and Jerome in Bohemia.'" (Favyn, *Histoire de Navarre*, pages 713-715.

The Waldenses who traveled all over Europe through mountain passes, were sometimes called Passaginians. "Passagii and Passagini, or the inhabitants of the passes, from the Latin word *passagium*, is one of the names given by ancient authors to the Waldenses." (Gilly, *Waldensian Researches*, page 61, note 2).

Many of the Waldenses, whether called by that name or some other names, observed the Sabbath of the 4th commandment. Because of this they were called by the significant name Insabbati, or Insabbatati. "Farmers or townsmen going on Saturday about their work were so impressed by the sight of groups of Christians assembling for worship on that day that they called them Insabbatati. The term 'Sabbath" was almost never applied to Sunday. Speaking of Constantine's Sunday law of 321, Robert Cox writes, 'No evidence has been adduced, that before the enactment of this law there was Sabbatical observance of the Lord's Day in any part of Christendom.'" (Wilkinson, *Truth triumphant*, p. 264—quoting Cox, *The Literature of the Sabbath Question*, vol. 1, p. 257).

"They hold that none of the ordinances of the church that have been introduced since Christ's ascension ought to be observed, being of no worth; the feasts, fasts, orders, blessings, offices of the church, and the like, they utterly reject." (Lewis, *A Critical History of Sabbath and Sunday*, pages 211, 212). In Bohemia, as late as about 1500 A.D., the Bohemians kept the seventh-day Sabbath scrupulously and were called Sabbatarians (Cox, *The Literature of the Sabbath Question*, vol. 2, pp. 201, 202).

"Thus from direct historical statements, from unquestioned historical evidence that under various names and designations the Waldenses kept the Sabbath, as well as from their being called Sabbatati, Insabbatati, and other forms of this name, it is plain that one of the

fundamental teachings and practices of the larger part of the Waldenses was that of observing the seventh day as the sacred day of the fourth commandment." (Wilkinson, *Truth triumphant*, p. 264).

Although the reformed churches changed Europe, they did not give up all Latin practices, which later rose up to haunt them. It was impossible for the followers of the Reformers, which had just come out of the dark ages to have received all the light.

The churches of the Piedmont, in joy and boundless feelings of brotherhood toward the Protestants in other parts of Europe, were unable to continue to hold to their ancient purity of doctrines.

After hundreds of years of hardship and persecution, the Waldenses met with important Protestant Reformers at the Synod at Chamforans from October 12-18, 1532. This synod was held at Chamforans, in the heart of the Angogna Valley, in the northern Italian Alps. They signed an agreement or charter of 17 articles, in which they basically joined their European brethren—the Protestant Reformers of the rest of Europe. It was a hard decision, but by then they were greatly weakened by terrible persecution, and most of their leaders had been brutally tortured and killed already.

In 1630, the descendants of the Waldenses who lived in the Piedmont Valleys, because of their close proximity to the French and Swiss Reformers, embraced their doctrines and methods of worship. Although they kept many of their ancient rules of discipline and beliefs up until 1630. In this year most of the Waldenses were swept off by pestilence. Their new teachers, Reformed pastors from Switzerland and France, regulated all their affairs according to the French Reformed Church's method of doing church. (See Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 4, cent. 16, sec. 3, pt. 2, ch. 2, par. 25).

HISTORY OF WALDENSES FROM "HISTORY OF PROTESTANTISM" By J.A. Wylie, LL.D.

(This is a careful and thorough Outline by Ron Fleck, MD)
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The Churches in the Alps were descendents of the Apostolic Christians with pure doctrines. They remained distinct and separate communities. They stayed in the mountains spurning the tyrannical yoke and corrupt beliefs of the Church of the Seven Hills (Rome). They preserved the faith in purity and simplicity that their fathers handed down to them. Rome had abandoned what was once the common faith of Christendom. Behind the rampart of the mountains the remnant of the early apostolic faith of Italy kept truth alive for several hundred years.

The "Nobla Leycon," though a poem, is really a confession of faith, and could only have been composed after considerable study of the system of Christianity. As opposed to the errors of Rome. The Nobla Leycon dates from the year 1100 and goes to

prove that the Waldenses of Piedmont did not come from Peter Waldo of Lyons, who did not appear until about 1160 AD. Their greatest enemies, Claude Seyssel of Turin (1517) and Reynerius the Inquisitor (1250) have admitted the antiquity of the Waldenses and stigmatized them as "the most dangerous of all heretics, because the most ancient." They have been carefully dated to the 9th century at least and probably a lot further than that.

The Italian Alps are imposing. Some rise like castles. Others shoot up like needles, and others run in serrated lines. Drawing near the hills, on a line about 30 miles west of Turin, there opens before one what looks to be a great mountain doorway or gateway (portal).

A low hill in front serves as a defense, while at the gate stands a stupendous monolith—Castelluzzo, which shoots up into the clouds. As you approach La Torre, a little town in Northern Italy, the Castelluzzo rises higher and higher and is like a massive pillar. Many Waldensian martyrs were killed here.

There are seven Waldensian Valleys between Pinerolo on the east, and Monte Viso on the west side. Monte Viso is like a pyramid towering above the surrounding mountains. The first three valleys run out like the spokes of a wheel. The first valley, Lucerna (which means "Valley of Light"), runs about 12 miles long and 2 miles wide, is carpeted with meadows, and the Pelice River runs through it. The second valley, Rora (which means"Valley of Dews"), is a vast cup fifty miles in circumference and its rim is formed of craggy and peaked mountains. The third valley is Angrogna (which means "Valley of Groans"). The remaining four valleys form the rim of the wheel. These last four valleys are all enclosed by a line of lofty mountains. One of these valleys is the Pra Valley.

Each valley is a fortress having its own gate in and gate out, caves, rocks, and mighty chestnut trees, all forming places of retreat and shelter, so that the highest engineering skill could not have better adapted each valley to this very purpose.

Taking all these valleys together, each is so related to each other, the one opening into the other, so that they might be said to form one fortress of amazing and massive strength. All the fortresses of Europe, though combined, would not form a citadel so enormously strong.

The valley where one battle began opened up into another valley, where it could be continued and carried around the entire territory, until at last the invading foe would be overpowered by the rocks rolled down upon them from the mountains.

These valleys are lovely, fertile and strong. They are watered by numerous streams which descend from snowy summits.

The Angrogna Valley, located in the heart of these mountains, is the most interesting of all the Waldensian Valleys. In this valley is a retreat walled by high mountains. Here the pastors or barbes ("uncles") of the Waldenses met at an annual synod from all their other valleys. Here was their college, and here their missionaries were trained, and after being trained and ordained were sent out to other lands. We ascend up to this retreat by going up the long, narrow, and winding Angrogna Valley. This valley gets more narrow as it goes up—rough with projecting rocks and shady with great trees. There it opens up into a circular basin. Just before the basin it seems shut in by a mountainous wall right across the valley. Beyond the valley are some snow-clad Alps. Among these Alps is the valley we are looking for where the Waldenses used to be. A crack in the mountains from top to bottom opens a path through it to the valley

beyond. Going through this narrow mountain pass we go on a narrow mountain ledge on the mountain side with the thundering stream way down below. After going about two miles you come to the gate of the Pra Valley, which was formerly a crack in the mountains from top to bottom, which opened up through it to the valley beyond. Later some people used dynamite to blow open the portal so a road could go through, and it is a little more open now.

The Pra Valley is a noble circular valley with an encircling ring of white peaks. This was the inner sanctuary of the Waldensians.

The rest of Italy had turned aside to idols. The Waldensian territory alone had been reserved for the worship of the true God.

The theology of the Waldenses was drawn from the Bible. Their cardinal truth was the atoning death and justifying righteousness of Christ. They believed in the Trinity, the fall of man, the incarnation of the Son of God, the perpetual authority of the Ten Commandments as given by God, the need of Divine grace in order to do good works, the necessity of holiness, the institution of the ministry, and the resurrection of the body.

They held substantially what the apostles taught before their day and the Reformers after it taught. They held that there had been no true Pope since Sylvester (314-335); that the temporal offices and dignities are not appropriate for preachers of the Gospel; that the Pope's pardon were a cheat; that purgatory was a fable; that relics were simply rotten bones which had belonged to one knew not whom; that to go on a pilgrimage served no end save to empty one's purse; that flesh might be eaten any day if one had an appetite; that holy water was not more efficacious than rain water; and that prayer in a barn was just as effective as if offered in a Church.

The Waldenses had the New Testament in the vernacular. It was in the Lingua Romana or the Romaunt tongue—the common language of southern Europe from the 8th through the 14th centuries. All the New Testament books were translated into the Romaunt language in the 12th century. This Romaunt Version was the first literal version since the fall of the Empire. It was the first complete and literal translation of the New Testament. It had probably been translated under the superintendence and at the expense of Peter Waldo of Lyons, not later than 1180. And so, it is older than any complete version in German, French, Italian, Spanish, or English. Six copies of the Romaunt Version have been preserved. Lyons has one copy, Grenoble has one copy, Zurich has one copy, Dublin has one copy, and Paris has two copies. These are small portable volumes, contrasting with those splendid and ponderous folios of the Latin Vulgate—written in gold and silver, richly illuminated, their bindings upgraded with gems inviting admiration rather than study, unfitted by their huge size and splendor for use by the common people.

The Waldenses reflected the primitive Christian Church. Their territory was divided into parishes, each parish had a Pastor. The Pastor, or barbe, preached, dispensed the sacraments, visited the sick, and catechized the young. A consistory of laymen helped him govern his church. The synod met once a year. It was composed of all the Pastors, and equal number of laymen. Its most frequent meeting place was in the mountain-protected Pra Valley at the head of the Angrogna Valley. Sometimes as many as 150 barbes and 150 lay members would assemble. They were humble, learned, and earnest men and presided over by a simple moderator. Higher office or authority was

unknown amongst them. The youth sat at the feet of their barbes and used the Scriptures for their textbook. They not only studied the Bible, but they were required to memorize it and recite accurately, whole Gospels and Epistles. Printing was unknown and copies of the Scriptures were rare. Part of their time was spent in transcribing the Bible, which they were to distribute when they went out as missionaries. Thus God's Word was scattered all over Europe. There was a general impression that the world was about to end.

Many laymen were concerned about the pride, luxury, and profligacy of the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. The world was in unrest. The serf was contending with his seigneur for personal freedom, and the city was waging war with the baronial castle for civic and corporate independence. It was commonly a practice for the youth to later go to seminaries at the greater cities of Lombardy or to the Sorbonne at Paris. There they saw other customs, other studies, and they had a wider horizon around them than in the seclusion of their native valleys. They often made converts of the rich merchants with whom they traded and of the landlords in whose houses they lodged. The priests avoided arguing with the Waldensian missionaries.

The Waldenses wanted to maintain the truth in their own mountains, but they also felt their responsibility to the rest of Christendom. They sought to drive back the darkness and to re-conquer the kingdom which Rome had overwhelmed. They were an evangelical and evangelistic church. Before becoming a Pastor in the local church, they had to serve three years in a mission field.

Youth, on whose heads the barbes laid their hands in ordination, did not envision becoming wealthy, but a possible martyrdom. Their mission field lay outspread at the foot of their own mountains. They went forth two by two, concealing their real character under the guise of a secular profession, most commonly merchants or peddlers of silks, jewelry, and other articles at that time not easily purchased locally. They were welcomed as merchants where they would have been spurned as missionaries. Both peasant's cottages and the baron's castles were equally open to them. They always carried with them concealed among their wares or about their persons, the Word of God usually their own transcriptions and to these Scriptures they would draw people's attention. If the person was interested but couldn't afford to buy it, they would give to them the Scriptures for free.

They went all over southern and central Europe. They did not leave traces of their visits with their new disciples. They went to Spain on the west. In Southern France they formed congenial fellow-laborers in the Albigenses. On the east they covered Germany, Bohemia, and Poland with their doctrines. Their tracks were marked by worship buildings, around those whose steps were the stakes of martyrdom. They were not even afraid to enter the seven-hilled city of Rome. They often went barefoot and they wore coarse garments, which often made them stand out on city streets. If their real purpose was discovered the Roman Catholic leaders often killed them.

From her lofty seat, Rome looked down with contempt upon the Bible and its humble bearers. At first Rome was not too worried about the humble Waldenses. Later, however, the penetrating eye of Pope Innocent III, detected the danger to the Roman Catholic Church that the Waldenses posed. So he commenced the terrible crusades against them.

FIRST PERSECUTION OF THE WALDENSES

The Waldensian faith and worship existed many centuries before Protestantism arose. There is undeniable proof and monument to this fact in lots of histories and lands of medieval Europe.

The Reformation was in the loins of the Waldensians church before the birth of Luther. The Waldenses sowed the seeds of that great spiritual revival, which, beginning in the days of John Wycliff, and advancing in the times of Luther and Calvin, awaited its full consummation in the future.

It was natural that Rome should want to silence the Waldenses, since they were promoting the Bible, and they were conclusive proof of her apostasy.

The persecutions of these heroic people form one of the most heroic pages of Church history. These persecutions lasted hundreds of years, but were endured with patience, constancy, and bravery. The Waldenses were heroes and martyrs.

The Cottian Alps (the part of the Alpine mountain chain which extends between Turin on the east in Grenoble on the west) is the dwelling place of the Waldenses—the land of ancient Protestantism. On the west the mountains slope down towards the plains of France, and on the east they run down to the plains of the Piedmont.

The glittering line of peaks includes the snow-clad lofty peak of Monte Viso on the west, and the craggy peaks of Geneure on the east.

On the western slopes lived the Albigenses, named because they came from the city of Albi in southern France, and on the eastern slope lived the Waldenses—both early Christian witnesses. But the Waldenses had also gone up into the western valleys, and there was hardly a valley in which their villages and sanctuaries were not found.

But in the lower valleys, especially the vast fertile plains of France, spread out at the foot of the Alps were the Albigenses—mostly of Cis-Alpine or Gallic extraction.

First, Pope Innocent III launched a Bull (or degree), sent forth his Inquisitors, and soon almost completely wiped out the Albigenses. After a short pause he commenced the work of destruction on the east against the Waldenses. He resolved to pursue and attack them in those grand valleys which open into Italy.

At the feet of the eastern slope of the Alps, about thirty miles west of Turin, there is a crescent of mountains. On the west it is made up of Monte Friolante, Monte Viso, and then the Castelluzzo; and on the east the Pinerolo. Down below is the little town of Bricherasio and there are famous valleys right down in this area. Some thirty persecutions have been enacted at this spot down in the Bricherasio area.

One of the earliest dates of Waldensian martyr history is 1332, approximately. The reigning Pope was John XII. He wanted to resume the work of Innocent III, so he ordered the Inquisitors to go to the Valleys of Lucerna and Perosa, and kill the heretics there. The Papal Bull references “chapters” (or synods) that assembled in the valley of Angrogna attended by five hundred delegates. This was before John Wycliff had begun his career in England. After this date of 1332, rarely was there a Pope who did not bare unintentional witness to their great numbers and diffusion.

In 1352 we find Pope Clement VI charging the Bishop of Embrun to purify those parts of his diocese infected with heresy. This pope urged the Dauphin, Charles of France, and Louis, King of Naples, to seek out and punish those of their subjects who strayed from the faith. However, the zeal of the Pope was not shared by that of the

secular Lords. The Waldenses and Albigenses were the most industrious and peaceable of their subjects, and although they wanted to please the Pope, they naturally were against destroying the flower of their populations. Besides, the princes of that age were often at war amongst themselves, and they didn't have time or desire to make war on the Pope's behalf. Therefore the Papal thunder sometimes rolled harmlessly over the Valleys, and the mountain-home of these true believers was wonderfully shielded till very nearly the era of the Reformation.

Sometimes the Waldenses were provoked by acts of violence to reprisals. In 1375 they attacked the city of Susa (a Popish city) and killed the Inquisitor.

Evil days came to the Popes themselves. First, they were chased to Avignon for 72 years. This is called the "Babylonian Captivity of the Papacy." Next, the yet greater calamity of the Schism befell them. During these clouded seventy-two years of Captivity and the tempestuous days of the Schism, they still pursued with inflexible rigor their policy of extermination of the Waldenses. An Inquisitor named Borelli had 150 men, besides a great number of women, girls, and even young children, brought to Grenoble and burned alive.

In the closing days of the year 1400 there was a terrible tragedy. It happened in the valley of Pragelas, one of the higher reaches of the Perosa Valley which opens near Pinerolo, and is watered by the Clusone stream. It was Christmas Day and the inhabitants dreaded no attack, believing themselves sufficiently protected by the snows which lay deep on their mountains. Borelli, at the head of an armed troop, broke suddenly into the Pragelas valley, planning to completely wipe out its population. The poor inhabitants fled rapidly to the mountains, carrying on their shoulders their old men and their sick, and their infants. In their flight a great many were overtaken and slain. Nightfall brought their deliverance from pursuit, but not from equally dreadful horrors. Most of the fugitives wandered toward Macel in the storm-swept, ice-clad Valley of San Martino, where they camped on a summit ever since called "Alberge or Refuge Summit."

Without shelter or food, the frozen snow around them, they suffered terrible. When morning broke some lost their hands and feet from frostbite, others were stretched out corpses on the snow. Fifty to eighty children were frozen to death, some laying on the bare ice, others locked in frozen arms of their mothers who had also died of freezing that night. In the valley of Pragelas the story of that Christmas tragedy is still told from father to son.

Executions of Waldenses continued in the 1400s. They were kidnapped whenever they ventured down to the Piedmont plains, and carried to Turin and other towns where they were burned alive. But the Roman Catholic church made no headway against them.

In 1487 a great blow against them was planned by Pope Innocent VIII. He remembered how his renounced namesake, Innocent III, had swept all the Albigensian heretics from southern France. Imitating the reign of Pope Innocent III, he decided to purge the Waldensian valleys as effectively and as speedily as Pope Innocent III had done in France. His first step was to issue a Bull denouncing the Waldenses as heretics, and delivering them over to slaughter. He ordered "that malicious and abominable sect of malignants, if they refuse to abjure, to be crushed like venomous snakes." This bull is given in full by Par Jean Legar in his book, "General History of the Evangelical Churches of the Piedmont and Waldenses." A faithful copy of the Bull is lodged with other documents in the Cambridge University Library. The Bull of 1487 by Pope Innocent

VIII invited all Catholics to take up the cross against the heretics. To stimulate them in this pious work, it absolved from all ecclesiastical pains and penalties, general and particular. It released all who joined the crusade from any oaths they might have taken; it legitimized their title to any property they might have illegally acquired; and promised remission of all their sins to such as should kill any heretic. It annulled all contracts made in favor of the Vaudois ("the dwellers of the Valleys"0 as the Waldenses were called), it ordered their domestics to abandon them, it forbade all persons to give them any aid whatsoever, and empowered all persons to take possession of their property. These were powerful incentives—plenary pardon and unrestrained license. The Pope sent papal missives to all princes, dukes, and powers, within whose dominions any Vaudois were to be found—especially to Charles VIII of France and Charles II of Savoy, commanding them to support the effort of extermination of the Waldenses.

To carry out his Bull, Innocent VIII appointed as his legate, Albert Cataneo, the Archdeacon of Cremona, to be in charge of this whole plan of killing the Waldenses.

The King of France, Charles VIII, and the Duke of Savoy, Charles II, accepted the summons from the Vatican. They enlisted soldiers and "this holy cause" and soon a large army marched toward the mountains where these confessors of the Gospel with pure and undefiled faith had lived many years.

Behind the army came a motley crowd of volunteers, vagabond adventurers, ambitious fanatics, reckless pillagers, and merciless assassins, assembled from all parts of Italy. By now it was the next year, June 1488. The Pope's Bull was talked of in all countries. All kings were invited to pick up the sword and come to the help of the Church in the execution of her purpose to wipe out the heretic Waldenses.

Almost the only people ignorant of the Papal Bull about to be enacted out were the Waldenses themselves. The joint army numbered about 18,000 regular soldiers and thousands more of ruffians. The Piedmontese division of the army started toward the valleys proper on the Italian side of the Alps. The French Division, marching from the north advanced to attack the Albigenses—who had begun to take root and recover from the terrible slaughter of Innocent III. The two storms were approaching the Alps from opposite sides.

ALBERT CATANEO'S EXPEDITION IN 1488 AGAINST THE ALBIGENSES AND THE WALDENSES

The French division was led by a daring and cruel man, the Lord of La Palu. He ascended the mountains with his fanatics and entered the valley of Loyse (a deep gorge overhung by towering mountains). The people, seeing an armed force twenty times their own size prepared for flight. They placed their old people and children in rustic carts, together with their utensils and a little food and driving herds before them, they began to climb the ragged slopes of Mount Pelvoux, which rises about six thousand feet above the valley floor. They sang as they climbed the steeps. Many were overtaken and slaughtered, and perhaps theirs was the happier lot. About half way up there is an immense cave called the Aigve-Froid Cave (which means "cold-water cave" from the cold springs that gush out of its rocky walls). In front of the cave is a rock platform, beneath which are fearful precipices and which must be clamored over to reach the entrance of the cave. The Vaudois entered this cave. Their women, infants, and old men

were placed in the inner hall, their cattle and sheep were placed along the lateral cavities of the grotto. The able-bodied men posted themselves at the entrance. They barricaded the path and opening to the cave with huge stones.

Cataneo says in his "Memoirs" that they had enough provisions to last two years. La Paulu ascended the mountain on the other side, and approached the cave from above. He let down his soldiers by ropes from the precipice overhanging the entrance to the grotto. The boldness of this maneuver paralyzed the Vaudois. They retreated into the cavern to find in it their grave. La Palu piled up all the wood he could find, after securing the rock platform in front of the cave entrance, and set fire to it. A huge volume of black smoke rolled into the cave. They could either die inside of smoke inhalation or be cut to pieces if they ran out. Some rushed out and were massacred, but most remained inside and died of suffocation. Over 3,000 Vaudois perished in the cave, including 400 infants. Cataneo distributed their property among the vagabonds who had accompanied him. This terrible stroke killed the entire population of the valley of the Loyse.

However this taught neighboring Vaudois that their only chance of safety lay in resistance. So in the neighboring valleys of Argentiere and Fraissiniere, the inhabitants barricaded the passes of their valleys and showed so much resistance to the troops of La Palu, that he deemed it prudent to turn away and leave them in peace.

A part of the French army struck across the Alps in a southeastern direction to unite with the main body of Crusaders under Cataneo. They slaughtered, pillaged, and burned as they went, and at last arrived with dripping swords in the Valley of Pragelas.

The Valley of Pragelas sweeps from near the summit of the Alps, to the south (watered by the rivers Clusone and Dora), and opens on the great plains of Piedmont. Here the Waldenses had 11 parishes, 18 churches and 64 meeting places where worship was celebrated morning and evening. It was in Laus in the Pragelas Valley that was held the famous synod of 140 pastors assembled each with two or three lay-deputies, 200 years before the Protestant Reformation. It was from here that the Gospel made its way into France before the 15th century. Here is where the terrible Christmas tragedy of 1400 had occurred.

Again terror, mourning, and death, came into the Valley of Pragelas. The people were reaping their harvest when the hoard of assassins burst upon them. At first panic seized them and they fled from their houses. Many were overtaken and slain, hamlets and whole villages were burned. The horrible barbarity of the Valley of Loyse was repeated here in the valley of Pragelas. Many were killed by smoke suffocation. After the surprise, the people took heart, and turning upon their murderers they drove them from their valleys exacting a heavy penalty in the pursuit for the ravages they had committed in it.

We can now turn to the Italian party, led by the Papal legate, Cataneo, in person. He started at Mount Pinerolo. From here he sent a band of preaching monks to convert the men of the Valleys. They returned without having made a single convert. Cataneo put his soldiers in motion, advanced up the road that leads towards La Torre, the capital of the Valleys. He sat down in front of the town. Seeing this mighty host before their Valley, the Waldenses sent two of their patriarchs to request an interview with Cataneo, and if possible turn his heart toward peace. The two men they sent were John Campo and John Desiderio.

Cataneo divided up his army into a number of attacking parties, which were to begin the battle at various points at the same time. His strategy was rewarded with a few successes at first.

One troop was stationed at the entrance to the Lucerna Valley. Their first step was to occupy the town of La Torre (situated on the angle formed by the junction of the Lucerna Valley on the west side and on the east side the Angrogna Valley. The shadow of Mount Castelluzzo covered La Torre town. The Pelize River was at its feet. The inhabitants had already fled to the mountains, and the valley beyond La Torre was very open and the soldiers advanced up the valley unopposed. The soldiers next came to Villaro, situated midway up the Lucerna valley, on a mountain ledge about 200 feet above the Pelice River (which flows past this little village about a quarter of a mile away.) Most of the inhabitants had fled after being warned of the danger, so the soldiers had little difficulty of taking Villaro. They killed anyone who had been unable to make their escape. Now Cataneo's soldiers occupied half of Lucerna Valley, in the towns of La Torre and Villaro. So far the victories had not been glorious as they had only killed unarmed peasants and bedridden women. Resuming their march they came next to Bobbio (a little town nestled at the base of the gigantic cliffs of the Mount Col La Croix that overhangs the pass that the Waldenses had walked on). The Pelice River wound its way through the dark gorges of the high mountains in a thundering torrent. This is where the grandeurs of Lucerna Valley attain its height.

Right behind Bobbio shoots up Mount Barion, symmetrical as an Egyptian obelisk, its summit rising 3,000 feet above the roofs of the little town. A glorious amphitheater of mountain crags overtop Mount Barion, some peaks, like domes, others like needles. In the background are the lofty peaks of Mount Alp des Rousses and the Col de Malaure.

After the easy capture of Babbio, Cataneo's troop now controlled La Torre, Villaro, and Bobbio, thus controlling the whole Lucerna Valley. Bobbio's inhabitants had been chased to the Alps or else killed, their blood mingling with the waters of their own Pelice River.

Cataneo now planned to cross Mount Col Julien, sweep down on the Valley of Prali (which lies on the north side of this mountain), where he would punish the inhabitants of Prali, pass on to the San Martino Valley, and Perosa Valley, thus following the circuit of the Valleys. They would kill all the heretics in this way and join the main body of Crusaders. They expected that these other troops by this time would have finished their work in the Angrogna Valley, and all together they would celebrate their victory. They would then be able to say that they had gone all around the Waldensian country and had at last utterly extirpated its heresy. But this war was destined to have a very different ending.

So, Cataneo immediately set off to cross Mount Col Julien with a group of 700 men taken from the army at Lucerna Valley. The ascent of the mountain started right out of the north side of Bobbio. The soldiers were walking up a mere footpath formed by the herdsmen. The inhabitants had already left or fled. They finally reached a very high spot on the mountain. Beneath was Bobbio. These soldiers of the Papal legate were carrying their weapons. Finally they reached the top and looked down on the Valley of Prali, a peaceful scene at that moment.

Suddenly this troop of 700 soldiers, like vultures, rushed down on the inhabitants of Prali Valley, thinking that, no warning of their approach having reached this secluded valley, they would easily kill or crush these unarmed peasants. But it was not to be so.

Instead of fleeing panic-struck, as the invading army expected, the men quickly assembled and stood to defend themselves. They fought at the little hamlet of Pommiers. The weapons of the Vaudois (Waldenses) were primitive, but their trust in God and their indignation at the cowardly and bloody assault, gave them strength and courage. The soldiers were tired from climbing up and down the rugged and slippery trail and they fell beneath the blows of the Vaudois. Every single soldier except one man was killed (699 soldiers killed).

During the carnage, one soldier escaped and climbed up the bank of a mountain stream. He crept into a cave in the snow, where he remained hid for several days. But finally cold and hunger drove him out. He cast himself upon the mercy of the men of Prali. They were generous enough to pardon the one lone survivor of the 700 men who had come to massacre them. They sent him back across the Col Julien Mountains to tell the other soldiers that the Vaudois had courage to fight for their homes and churches, and that of the army of 700 which they had sent up to slay them only he had escaped to tell the story of what had happened.

Cataneo's camp was pitched right at the gates of La Torre, beneath the shadow of Mount Castelluzzo. He was about to try to force his way into the Angrogna Valley which opens where the legate had established his camp and runs on for 12 miles into the Alps, through narrow gorges and open dells terminating in a noble circular basin called Pra del Tor. This basin is surrounded by snowy peaks and forms the most venerated spot in all Waldensian territory since it was the seat of their college, and the meeting place of their barbes.

Here is the Pra del Tor (or "Meadow of the Tower"). Cataneo expected to surprise all the Waldensian people now gathered into this circular basin since it was the strongest refuge which their hills gave them. Cataneo also expected to be joined by the troops he had sent around Lucerna Valley to make the circuit of the Valley, and after devastating Prali and San Martino to cross the mountain barrier and join their companions at Pra del Tor. Little did he realize that the troop he had dispatched on that errand of massacre were now decorating the valleys with their corpses.

The Waldenses chose to fight for their lives, rather than go to mass or to be butchered as sheep. But first they had to move to a place of safety all who were unable to bear arms. They packed up their utensils, laying their aged on their shoulders, and their sick in couches. Leading their children by the hand they began to climb the hills in the direction of Pra del Tor at the head of the Angrogna Valley. They sang hymns as they climbed. Some remained manufacturing pikes and other weapons of defense and attack, repairing the barricades, arranging themselves into fighting groups, and assigning to the various groups the posts they were to defend.

Cataneo now moved his soldiers. Just before arriving at the town of La Torre they turned sharply to the right and entered Angrogna Valley. This valley eventually opened up to the heights of Mount Rocomaneot, where the Vaudois had resolved to make a stand. They posted fighting men along the ridge. Their only weapons were bows and arrows. They wore protective shields of skins of animals (thick hides) covered with the bark of the chestnut tree, to better resist the thrusts of pike or sword cuts. Behind the

brothers, fathers, and husbands they put the women and children in a hallow area for protection.

The army kept coming up the mountain, discharging a shower of arrows as they advanced. The Waldensian line, hit by these arrows seemed to waver and to be on the point of giving away. The women and children were praying on their knees for God's protection. One of the army captains, Le Noir of Mondovi ("the Black Mondovi") heard the prayers and cries to God for help. He instantly shouted that his soldiers would give the answer, and he threatened them with horrible blasphemies. He then raised his face shield as he spoke. At that instant an arrow from the bow of Pierre Revel of Angrogna Valley struck the Black Mondovi in the forehead between his eyes, and stuck into his skull, as he fell to the ground. The fall of this daring papal leader discouraged the papal army, and the soldiers began to fall back. The Vaudois chased the soldiers down the slopes, falling upon them like one of the rushing streams. They drove the soldiers all the way to the plains, cutting off many in their flight. That evening they returned up the mountain, and celebrated with songs the victory which their God had given them.

Cataneo burned with rage and shame at being defeated by the herdsmen. A few days later, he reassembled his army and made a second attempt to enter the Angrogna Valley. He was successful, and passed the height of Rocomaneot where he had been defeated at first, without meeting any resistance. The soldiers went up the narrow mountain pathways. He saw that none of the inhabitants of the hamlets on the other side of the stream were present. He knew they had joined the men of Lucerna Valley in the Pra del Tor.

Between Cataneo's army and the Waldenses rose the "Barricade," a steep unclimbable mountain, which runs like a wall across the valley and formed a protective wall to the famous Pra del Tor ("Meadow of Tor"). He finally found an entrance. Cataneo was now in a vast cul-de-sac. The only path leading to Pra del Tor was through a long, dark, and narrow chasm. Cataneo boldly ordered his men to enter and go through this frightful gorge, not realizing how few of them he should ever lead back. The pathway through this chasm is a rocky ledge on the side of the mountain, so narrow that only two people could walk side-by-side. There was no retreat if they were attacked from the front or rear. Nor was there any room for the soldiers attacked to fight. Here the naked cliff runs sheer up for over 1000 feet, and leans over the path in hug masses which look as if about to fall.

Here the naked cliffs run sheer up for over a thousand feet, and lean over the path in huge masses which look as if about to fall. Occasionally there was a little level space in ground about a half acre or so maybe a chalet.

The soldiers of the Papal legate now worked into this terrible trap along the narrow ledge. They were now nearing the Pra del Tor. The Papal soldiers were confident that they were going to break the neck of the Waldenses. But God was watching over the Vaudois.

Suddenly, God used one of the frailest and lightest instruments of nature to protect the Waldenses. He brought the march of the army to an instant halt. A white cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, unseen by the soldiers but keenly watched by the Vaudois, was gathering at the mountain summit, about the time that the army was entering the narrow mountain path. That cloud grew bigger and blacker. It began to descend, rolling down the mountainside wave upon wave, like an ocean tumbling out of

heaven, a sea of murky vapor. It fell right into the chasm and filled it from top to bottom completely surrounding the Papal army. Suddenly they were all in the dark. They were bewildered, stupefied, and could not see anything. They could neither advance nor retreat. They were terrorized and stopped.

The Waldenses interpreted this fog as an interposition of Providence on their behalf. Climbing the slopes of the Pra meadow, they came out from all their hiding places and spread out all over the mountains, the paths of which were familiar to them. The army stood riveted beneath them.

They tore up huge stones and rocks and sent them thundering down the ravine. The Papal soldiers were crushed where they stood. Some of the Waldenses entered the chasm sword in hand and attacked the soldiers from the front. The army was in a state of panic. They tried to flee back down the mountain, but their effort to escape was even more fatal. They jostled one another; they threw each other down in the struggle. Some were trampled to death, others were rolled off the precipice and crushed on the rocks below, or drowned in the torrent.

One of the invaders was Captain Saquet, a giant from Polonghera in Piedmont. He began to vent curses on the Waldensian dogs, like Goliath—his Philistine counterpart. The words were yet in his mouth when his foot slipped. Rolling over the precipice, and tumbling down into the torrent of Angrogna Valley, he was carried away by the stream. His body was finally deposited in a deep eddy or whirlpool. This spot to this day is called the "Tompie de Saquet" or "Gulf of Saquet."

This war lasted for a whole year. The Waldenses suffered much loss, their houses were burned, their fields devastated. Of the 18,000 regular troops joined by another 18,000 desperados which started the campaign, few ever returned to their homes. They left their bones along the mountains they had come to subdue. Fleeing parties of Waldenses would suddenly issue from the mist, or from some cave known only to themselves, attack and defeat the soldiers, and then so suddenly retreat into the friendly mist or sheltering rocks.

The Prince, Charles II, only twenty years old was humane and wise. God turned his heart toward the Waldenses. He sent a prelate to their valleys to assure them of his goodwill and to invite them to send deputies to meet with him. They sent twelve of their more venerable men to Turin to meet with Duke Charles II. They gave him such an account of their faith, that he candidly confessed that he had been misled in what he had done against them. He told them he would not again allow such wrongs to be inflicted upon them. Several times he said that he "had not so virtuous, so faithful, and so obedient subjects as the Vaudois." He surprised the twelve deputies by requesting to see some of the Vaudois children. He had been told that the Vaudois children were monsters with only one eye placed in the middle of their forehead with four rows of black teeth and other similar deformities. Twelve infants with their mothers were immediately sent for from Angrogna, and presented before the Prince. He examined them carefully and found them all well formed, with healthy faces, and not deformed.

Prince Charles II confirmed the privileges and immunities of the Vaudois. He dismissed them with his promise that they would be unmolested in the future. Leger and Gilles, who were Waldensian historians, said that it was Phillip the VII who put an end to this war. Monastier says that Phillip the VII was then in France and did not begin to

reign until 1496. Peace was granted in this year of 1489 and they had a short respite from persecution here.

The Valley of Angrogna best illustrates the sad, yet glorious scenes of martyrdom over all the other Waldensian Valleys. Every rock in it has its story. Here is the spot where young children were dashed against the stones. Here is where men and women, stripped and naked, were rolled up as balls and sent crashing down the mountains; where sometimes caught by stumps of a tree, or a projecting angle of rocks they were hung transfixed, enduring for days the agony of a living death. There is not enough time to tell even ten percent of what has been done and happened in this famous pass or valley.

Charles II, the Duke of Savoy, was sincere in his promise for peace in 1489 but he was not fully able to make good his promise for peace. He could not guard the Waldenses from the secret planning of the Roman Catholic priests. Although for the time being there was no armed crusade, the Roman Catholic missionaries and Inquisitors attacked them. Some were seduced, others kidnapped and carried off to the Roman powers.

A desire for rest made many conform outwardly to the Church. This caused a decay of piety in the Waldensian church. In order to be safe on their trips or business some Waldenses obtained "certificates" or "testimonials" of their being papists from the priests. To obtain these credentials it was necessary to attend a Roman Catholic chapel, confess, go to mass, and have their children baptized by the priests. These Waldensians rationalized that this was OK since they muttered to themselves when they entered the temple, "Cave of robbers, may God confound thee!" This was actually a shameful and criminal dissimulation. At the same time they continued to attend the preaching of the Vaudois pastors. But these men and the Church that tolerated these deceits had greatly declined. That old vine seemed to be dying.

About this time the Reformation had begun and had already stirred most of Europe before news of the mighty change reached these secluded mountains. The Vaudois could hardly believe this news. They were eager to have these rumors confirmed and to know to what extent the nations of Europe had cast off the yoke of Rome. They sent forth pastor Martin of Lucerna Valley on a mission of inquiry. In 1526 he returned with the amazing news that the light of the old Gospel had broken out in Germany, France, and Switzerland, and that every day was adding to the number of those who openly professed the same doctrines to which the Vaudois had born witness from ancient times. To prove what he said, he produced the books he had received in Germany containing the views of the Reformers.

Also the other Vaudois on the north of the Alps sent out men to collect information about the Reformation. In 1530 the Churches of Provence and Dauphine sent George Morel of Merindol and Pierre Masson of Bergundy to visit the Reformers of Switzerland and Germany, and bring them word about their doctrine and manner of life. These deputies met in conference with members of the Protestant churches of Neuchatel, Morat, and Bern. They also had interviews with Berthold Haller and William Farel. Going on to Basel, they met with Ecolampadius in October, 1530. They presented to him a document in Latin containing a complete account of their ecclesiastical disciplines, doctrine, and manners. They requested in return that Ecolampadius would tell them whether they approved of the order and doctrine of their church, and if he held it to be

defective, to specify in what points, and to what extent. The elder church submitted itself to the younger.

The visit of these 2 Pastors of this ancient Waldensian church brought great joy to the Reformer of Basel. He heard in them the voice of the primitive and apostolic church speaking to Christians of the 16th century and welcoming them within the gates of the city of God. For ages the ancient church had been in the fires, yet she had not been consumed. This was encouraging to those just entering persecutions not less terrific.

Ecolampadius wrote in a letter to the church of Provence, the Waldensian churches in France, dated October 13, 1530, "To our most gracious Father that He has called you into such marvelous light, during ages of which such darkness has covered almost the whole world under the Empire of the anti-Christ. We love you as brethren." But his love for them did not blind him to their declensions. He gave them admonitions which he saw they needed. He wrote that they should not because of fear of persecution dissemble and conceal their faith. He wrote that there is no concourse between Christ and Belial. He advised them not to commune or worship with unbelievers, nor to take part in their abominable masses—in which the death and passion of Christ are blasphemed. He said, "I know your weakness, but it becomes those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ to be more courageous. It is better for us to die than to be overcome by temptation."

This is how Ecolampadius, speaking in the name of the Church of the Reformation, repaid the Church of the Alps for the services she had rendered to the world in former ages. By sharp, faithful, brotherly rebuke, he tried to restore to her the purity and glory which she had lost.

After seeing Ecolampadius, the deputies went out on to Strasburg. There they had interviews with Bucer and Capito. A similar statement of their faith to the Reformers of Strasburg drew forth similar congratulations and counsels. In the clearer light of her morning the Reformation Church saw many things which had grown dim in the evening of the Waldensian Church. The Reformers willingly permitted their elder sister the benefit of their own wider views. The Reformers of the 16th century recognized the voice of primitive Christianity speaking in the Vaudois, and they heard the voice of the Bible, or rather of God Himself, speaking in the Reformers. The Waldensians submitted themselves with modesty and docility to the reproofs of the Reformers. The Waldensians, after so many years of terrible persecution and isolation had begun to give in to the papal church such as going to mass, confessing to priests, having their babies baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, so they would not be so persecuted and all the while some of them were still trying to be Waldenses.

Each of these two churches, the Reformation Church and the Waldensian Church was a miracle to each other. When they compared their prospective beliefs, they found they had one creed in common. They were the elder and younger members of the same glorious family, the children of the same God.

On the way back to the French Alps, Pierre Masson was thrown into prison, and ultimately condemned and burned at Dijon. George Morel happily arrived safely at Provence, bearing the letters of the Reformers.

The news he bore was both encouraging and saddening. The fact that there were many Christians in many lands so full of knowledge, faith, and courage was literally astounding. The Waldensians thought they were alone in the world—every successive

century saw their numbers thinning and their spirit growing less resolute. Their ancient enemy, the Roman Catholic Church was steadfastly widening her dominion. A little longer, they imagined, and all public faithful profession of the Gospel would cease. It was at this moment that they were told that a new army of champions had arisen to maintain the old battle. Now they beheld the fruits of their father's blood. Those who had fought the battle were not to have the honor of victory. That was reserved for combatants who had newly come into the battle. The Waldensians painfully felt sadness and regret, that they had by their defection, decline in piety, and compromise with the Roman Catholic Church's errors, forfeited the honor of victory. Hence, the regret that mingled with their joy.

The Waldensians proceeded to discuss what should be their response to the Churches of Protestant Faith, especially whether they should adopt the reforms urged upon them in the letter which the deputies brought back from the Swiss and German Reformers. The great majority of the Waldensian barbes were of the opinion that they should. A small minority, however, were opposed to this because they thought that it was not right for the new disciples to dictate to the old disciples; or because the Reformers themselves were secretly inclined to the Roman superstitions.

Again the Waldenses went back again to the Reformers for advice; and after repeated interchange of views, it was finally decided to convene a synod or conference in the Waldensian valleys, at which all the questions between the two churches might be debated, and the relations to which they were to sustain toward each other in the future, determined. If the church of the Alps was to continue apart, as before the Reformation, she felt that she must justify her position by proving the existence of great and substantial differences in doctrines between herself and the newly-arisen Church of the Reformation. But if no such differences existed, she would not, and dared not, remain separate and alone. She must unite with the Church of the Reformation.

It was resolved that the coming Synod should be a truly ecumenical one—a general assembly of all the churches of the Protestant faith. A hearty invitation was sent out, and it was generally responded to. All the Waldensian Churches in the bosom of the Alps were requested at this synod. The Albigensian communities on the north of the Alps and Vaudois churches in Calabria, sent deputies to it. The churches of France and Switzerland chose William Farel and Anthony Saunier to attend it. Delegates even came from more distant lands such as Bohemia, to deliberate and vote in this famous convention.

The representatives met on <u>October 12, 1532</u>. Two years before, the Augsburg Confession had been given to the world, marking the culmination of the German Reformation. One year before Zwingli had died on the battlefield at Cappel. Calvin was a Protestant, although he had not yet taken his permanent place in Geneva. The representatives met at the town of Chamforans, in the heart of the Angrogna Valley. It is about the strongest position in all that Valley. The town of Chamforans does not now exist—only a solitary farm house remains.

The synod met for six consecutive days. Their findings were written in "*A Brief Confession of Faith Made by the Pastors and Heads of Families of the Valleys of Piedmont."* It can be considered a supplement to the ancient "Confession of Faith", from 1120 AD.

It consists of 17 articles—the most important being, "The Moral Inability of Man," "Election to Eternal Life," "The Will of God as Made Known in the Bible, The Only Rule of Duty," and "The Doctrine of the Two Sacraments Only—Baptism and the Lord's Supper."

The ancient spirit of the Waldensians revived. They no longer practiced those dissimulations (hiding under a false appearance), in cowardly concealments which they had done previously to avoid persecution. They no longer feared to confess their faith. No more were they ever seen at mass, or in the Roman Catholic Churches. They refused to recognize the Priests of Rome as ministers of Christ, and under no circumstances would they receive any services from the Priests.

They set about rebuilding their churches. For about 50 years public worship had all but ceased in their Valleys. Their churches had been razed by the persecutors, and the Vaudois had feared to rebuild them lest they should draw upon themselves a new storm of violence and blood. Sometimes they had met for worship in caves. In more peaceful years the house of their barbe or some of their chief men had been converted into a church. When the weather was nice, they had met on the mountainside under huge trees. But now, strengthened by the fellowship and counsels of their Protestant brethren, Churches were raised, and the worship of God was reinstituted. At Lorenzo, right next to where the synod met, was the first of these churches set up. Other churches rapidly followed, pastors were multiplied, and crowds flocked to their preaching.

The Waldenses translated the Scriptures into the French tongue. At the synod they resolved to translate and print both the Old and New Testaments, at the sole charge of the Vaudois, and it was considered as their gift to the Churches of the Reformation. The Bible which the Waldenses had received from the primitive church—which their fathers had preserved with their blood—which their barbes had laboriously transcribed and circulated—they now put in the hands of the Reformers, making them along with themselves the custodians of the Bible—the Ark of the world's hope. Robert Olivetan, a close relative of Calvin, was asked to make the translation and he did it with the help of Calvin, it is believed.

The French Bible was printed in Folio (sheet paper folded once and numbered) in black letters, at Neuchatel, in the year 1535, by Pierre De Wingle, commonly called Picard. The whole expense was paid by the Waldenses, who collected the huge sum of 1500 crowns of gold—a large sum for so poor a people. Thus did the Waldensian Church emphatically proclaim at this new era in their existence, that the Word of God was her one Sole Foundation.

The Church of the Alps had peace for 28 years now. It was a time of great spiritual prosperity. The churches were raised all over the valleys. It was estimated that at this time there were over 800,000 Waldensians (in the valleys, on the plain of Piedmont, in Naples and Calabria, Southern France, and in Germany). The Waldenses enjoyed a comparative exemption from persecution during the time of prosperity. There WERE individual Vaudois, however, who were seized and put to death—at the stake on the rack, or by the chord.

In 1534, two years after the synod, the Vaudois churches and Provence in south-eastern France were destroyed. Three years later, persecution broke out again and raged for a short time.

Charles III of Savoy (the region in southeastern France in Savoy Alps, southwest of Switzerland and boarding Italy), a Prince of mild manners, but under the control of the priests, when requested by the Archbishop of Turin and the Inquisitor of Turin, gave his consent to "hunting down" the heretics of the Valleys. This job was given to a nobleman of Pinerolo, near the entrance to the valley of Perosa. His name was Bersour, a man of savage disposition. He collected a troop of 500 men on horseback and attacked the Valley of Angrogna. He was repulsed, but he then turned to attack the Vaudois who lived around his home. He seized a lot of people, whom he threw into the prisons and convents of Pinerolo and at the Inquisition of Turin. Many of them were burned to death. One of these martyrs, Catalan Girard, taught the spectators of his burning a lesson. From the flames he asked for two stones, which were instantly brought to him. Rubbing them together he said, "You think to extinguish our poor Churches by your persecutions. You can no more do so, than I with my feeble hands can crush these stones."

Suddenly the sky cleared above the Waldenses and the arm of persecution was stayed for a while. It was a change in the politics of Europe in this instance. The French King, Francis I (who lived from 1494-1547), planned to recover the Duchy of Milan, a long-contested prize between himself and Charles V. Francis I demanded of Charles, Duke of Savoy, permission to march an army through his dominions. Charles, Duke of Savoy, refused this request of his brother Monarch. Then realizing that the passes of the Alps were controlled by the Waldenses whom he was persecuting, he thought that should he continue their suppression, the Vaudois might open the gates of his kingdom to the enemy (Francis I); so he sent orders to Bersour to stop the persecution in the Valleys.

In 1536 one of the more distinguished Waldensian Pastors, Martin Gonin of Angrogna, was returning from Geneva where he had gone on ecclesiastical business. As he was returning through Dauphine he was arrested on suspicion of being a spy. He cleared himself of that charge, but when the jailor searched him he found certain papers upon him, and he was convicted by the Parliament of Grenoble of a much greater crime—heresy. Condemned to die, he was led out at night, and drowned in the river Isere. They would have burned him at the stake, but they feared the effect of his dying words upon the spectators.

Three French Protestants and 2 Waldensian pastors returning from Geneva were seized at Col De Tamiers, in Savoy, and taken to Chambery. They were tried, condemned, and burned.

Nicholas Sartoire was a student of theology at Geneva. He had a scholarship which the Lords of Bern had allocated for the training of young men as Pastors in the Churches of the Valleys. He set out to spend his holiday with his family in Piedmont. He had just passed the Italian frontier at the Pass of St. Bernard, in the valley of Aosta, when he was arrested on suspicion of heresy. This was in May. They tried to make him waver with promises and threats, and finally on May 4, 1557, he was brought out of his dungeon at Aosta and burned alive.

Geofroi Varaile was 50 years old, and from the town of Busco, in Piedmont. His father had been a captain in that army of murderers, who, in 1488, ravaged the Valleys of Lucerna and Agrogna. Geofroi became a monk in 1520, and possessing the gift of a rare eloquence, he was sent out on a preaching tour with a hooded monk, more famous, Bernardo Ochino, of Sienna, the founder of the Order of the Capuchins. The arguments of the man he was sent to convert staggered Varaile. He fled to Geneva, where he was

taught more fully the Gospel. Ordained as a pastor, he returned to the Valleys like another Paul, to preach the faith he once tried to destroy. After a ministry of a few months, he set out to visit his native town of Busco. Monks laying in wait for him apprehended him. He was condemned to death by the Inquisition of Turin. His execution took place in a Castle-Piazza of Turin on March 29, 1558. He was singing with a loud voice until he sank amid the flames.

In 1556, two years before this, the same Piazza (means a castle yard) at Turin, had witnessed a similar spectacle. Bartholemy Hector was a book seller at Poictiers. He traveled as far as the Valleys to Mount La Vechera that looks down on the Pra del Tor. He would sit on this mountain slope and read to the people there, also of the Scriptures. The Inquisitor tracked him down and dragged him off to Turin, to answer for the crime of sowing Genevese books. His judge said, "You have been caught in the act of selling books that contain heresy—what say you?" He replied, "If the Bible is heresy to you, it is truth to me." "But you use the Bible to deter men from going to Mass," said the judge. "If the Bible deters men from going to Mass," he replied, "it is proof that God disapproves of it, and that the Mass is idolatry." The judge said, "Retract." Hector answered, "I have spoken only truth. Can I change truth as I would a garment?"

The judges kept him in prison some months. They were concerned that these repeated executions were hurting the Roman Catholic cause. They said, "The smoke of these martyr piles was infecting those on whom it blew," referring to the death of Patrick Hamilton, in Scotland. Finally, they brought out Bartholemy Hector and burned him at the stake. His behavior during his death, "drew rivers of tears from the eyes of many in the Popish crowd around his stake, while others repeated reproaches and invectives (insults and abuse) against the cruelty of the monks and the Inquisitors."

Some of these martyrs died by cruel, barbarous, and most horrible methods. There was no town in Piedmont where some Waldenses were not put to death. At Turin, Hugo Chiamps of Finestrelle had his abdominal organs torn from his living body. At Lucerna, Peter Geymarali of Bobbio, in like manner, had his internal organs taken out, and a fierce cat thrust into their place to torture him further. At Rocco-Patia, Maria Romano was buried alive. At San Giovanni, Magdalen Fonlano was also buried alive. At Saracena, Susan Michelini, was bound hand and foot and left to perish of cold and hunger. At Fenile, Bartholomew Fache was gashed with sabers, and then they filled his wounds up with quicklime, and thus he died in agony.

At Bobbio, Daniel Michelini had his tongue torn out for having praised God. James Baridari died covered with sulphurous matches, which had been forced into his flesh under the nails, between the fingers, in the nostrils, in the lips, and all over his body, and lighted. Daniel Revelli had his mouth filled with gunpowder, which when lighted blew his head to pieces. At Lionsa, Maria Monneu had the flesh cut from her cheek and chin bones so her jaw was left bare, and she was thus left to die. At Rora, Paul Garnier was slowly sliced to pieces. At Miraboco, Thomas Margueti was mutilated in an indescribable manner. At La Torre, Susan Jaquin was cut in bits. On the road between Eyral and Lucerna, Sara Rostagnol was slit open from the legs to the bosom and so left to perish. Ann Charbounier was impaled on a pike and thus carried, as a standard from San Giovanni to La Torre. At Paesano, Daniel Ramband had his nails torn off, then his fingers chopped off, then his feet and hands, then his arms and legs, with each successive

refusal on his part to abjure the Gospel. Thus, the role of martyrs ran on with more excruciating and even more horrible modes of torture and death.

Charles III, Duke of Savoy, refused to let Francis I, King of France, march an army through his territories. So Francis seized Piedmont in the Waldensian Valleys and held possession for 23 years. He was more tolerant of the Waldenses. So although he was burning heretics in Paris, he spared them in the Valleys.

The general peace of Chateau Cambresis, April 13, 1559, restored Piedmont (with the exception of Turin), to its former rulers of the House of Savoy. There, Charles III had been succeeded by Emmanuel Philibert in 1553. Philibert had married a sister of Henry II, King of France. She had been carefully brought up in the Protestant faith by her famous relatives, Margaret, Queen of Navarre, and Renee of France, daughter of Louis XII.

Unfortunately, the treaty of peace that restored Emmanuel Philibert to the throne of his ancestors, contained a clause binding the contracting parties to extinguish heresies. Philibert wanted to treat the Vaudois humanely but his intentions were overborne by cruel men. He was unable to resist powerful political requests by the Inquisitors of his kingdom, the nuncio of the Pope, and the ambassadors of France and Spain.

On February 15, 1560, Philibert issued an edict forbidding his subjects to hear the Protestant preachers in the Lucerna Valley or anywhere else. The fine was 100 dollars of gold for the first offense, and the galleys for the second offense.

Soon a yet severer edit commanded an attendance at Mass under pain of death. To carry out this cruel degree, three men on a commission were to enforce it.

1. **Philip of Savoy, Count De Raconis** was chief commissioner
2. **George Costa, or Count de la Trinita**
3. **Thomas Jacomel, the Inquisitor General** was cruel in disposition and licentious in manners
4. **Counsilor Corbis** was initially on this commission, but resigned after witnessing a few initial scenes of barbarity and horror

The first burst of this persecution fell on Carignano, about 20 miles southwest of Turin. There were many Protestants here. The wealthiest were selected and dragged to the burning pile, in order to strike terror to the rest. Many Protestants fled to Turin (then under the domination of France), and many gave up their Protestant faith to save their lives. After Carignano, the persecuting tempest cloud went across Piedmont, toward the Waldensian Valleys, going through villages with terror, pillage, and blood.

Rumors of the confiscations, arrests, cruel tortures, and horrible deaths which had happened to the Churches at the foot of the mountains preceded the appearance of the Crusaders at the entrance of the Valleys. At this time the Pastors and leading laymen assembled to deliberate on what to do. They fasted and prayed and humbled themselves before God, and sought by earnest prayer the direction of the Holy Spirit. They resolved to humbly draw up a petition. The first was to the Prince, and two other petitions were also sent—one to the Queen and another to the Council.

The first petition was "to the serene and most Mighty Prince, Philibert Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont, our most gracious Lord."

1. They claimed the right to be heard before being condemned,

2. They disclaimed the main offense against them, that of departing from the true faith, and of adopting unscriptural doctrines,
3. They claimed their faith was what Jesus Christ Himself had taught, then the apostles, also the fathers, the first four counsels had ratified. They were willing any moment to appeal their cause to a general council provided that the council were willing to use the only infallible standard they knew, the Word of God. If on this evidence they should be convicted of holding even one heresy, they would most willingly surrender it.
4. They stated their loyalty to the Prince, and claimed to be the most faithful and devoted of his subjects.
5. They asked why they should be killed, since they had never caused any problems in his Kingdom.
6. They concluded by saying, "Once thing is certain, most severe Prince, that the Word of God will not perish, but will abide forever. If then, our religion is the pure Word of God, as we are persuaded it is, and not of human invention, no human power will be able to abolish it."

The Waldenses of the Alps dispatched these three petitions, and having done so, they waited in answer with eyes lifted up to heaven. They hoped for peace, but they were prepared to die.

The Vaudois selected to put his life in his hand and carry the remonstrance, "an earnest presentation in opposition, to the two severe edicts issued by Prince Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy," was M. Gilles, Pastor of Bricherasio, a devoted and courageous man.

The Duke of Savoy, Prince Emmanuel Philibert, then lived in Nice, a long ways off. Gilles finally reached Nice in safety, and after many difficulties and delays, he had an interview with Queen Margaret, who took the petition to her husband, the Duke.

Pastor Gilles also had an interview with the Duke's brother, Philip of Savoy, Count de Raconis, as the Chief Commissioner, for the Act of the Purgation of the Valleys. On the whole, he received the Waldensians Pastor well. Philip soon became disgusted with the cruel and bigoted George Costa, Count de la Trinita, and left the bloody business wholly in the hands of his fellow commissioners.

Queen Margaret loved the Waldensian people, but she stood alone as their intercessor with the Duke. Her voice was drowned by the requests and threats of the prelates, the King of Spain, and the Pope.

Three months went by with no letter or edict from the Court at Nice. The enemies of the Waldenses, athirst for plunder and blood, were unable to restrain their passions any longer and began persecution on their own.

The tocsin (bell) was rung out from the Monastery of Pinerolo, which was on the frontier of the Valleys. From here the monks kept their eyes fixed upon the heretics of the mountains. The monks hired a troop of marauders (men who roamed around plundering and looting,) whom they sent forth to pillage (loot). They returned, driving before them a wretched company of captives, whom they had dragged from their homes and vineyards in the mountains. The monks burned alive or sent to the galleys the poorer ones. The richer ones were imprisoned until they paid a ransom.

Certain Popish land-lords in the Valley of San Martino followed the example of the monks. The two Seigneurs (men of rank and authority, feudal lords of a manor) of

Perrier attacked, before daybreak on April 2, 1560, the villages of Rioclareto with an armed band. They killed some, the rest they drove out, without clothes or food, to perish on the snow-clad hills. For 3 days, the ruffians took possession of the Waldensian homes. Finally, the Protestants of the Valley of Clusone (400 in number), hearing of the outrage, crossed the mountains, drove out the invaders, and reinstated their brethren.

Next appeared in the valleys, Philip of Savoy, Count de Raconis, and Chief Commissioner. He was an earnest Roman Catholic, but a humane and upright man. He attended a Waldensian sermon one day in the Protestant Church of Angrogna, and was so much pleased with it, that he obtained from the Pastor an outline of the Vaudois faith, to send it to Rome, in the hope that the Pope would stop persecuting a creed that seemed so little heretical. Pope Pius IV, however, saw a great deal of heresy in the outline of Vaudois Faith, and would not permit a discussion with the Waldensian Pastors as Philip had proposed.

Finally in October 1560, finding the Waldenses obdurate (unyielding and inflexible), the Duke of Savoy declared war against them. The Pastors and chief persons assembled to deliberate on how to meet this terrible crisis. The Duke's ruffians were getting closer every day. On October 31, 1560, a proclamation was posted throughout the Angrogna Valley threatening fire and sword if the inhabitants did not return within the Roman pale (territory or jurisdiction). On November 1, 1560, the Papal army appeared at Bubiana, on the right bank of the Pelice River, at the entrance to the Waldensian Valleys. There were 4,000 infantry and 200 horsemen beside the desperados that made up its main body.

The Vaudois could now see their enemies, and humbled themselves in a public fast before God, next they partook of the Lord's supper. Then the old men and women climbed the mountains on their way to the Pra del Tor where they sought asylum. At that time the Vaudois population of the valleys was not over 18,000. Their armed men did not exceed 1200—these were distributed at various passes and barricades to oppose the enemy who was so near.

The next day, November 2, 1560, the Piedmontese army started moving, crossed the Pelice and advanced along the narrow gorge or passage that leads up to the valleys. Mt. Bricherasio was on the right, Monte Friolante was on the left, with the towering Vaudalin and Castelluzzo in front. The army camped in the meadows of San Giovanni, very close to the point where the Val di Lucerna and the Val di Angrogna divide.

The Val di Lucerna expands into a wide meadow and vineyard, running on between magnificent mountains, till it ends in the savage pass of Mirabouc. The Val di Angrogna winds and climbs in a grand succession of precipice and gorge, and grassy secluded hollow or small valley, until it emerges in the funnel-shaped valley around which the ice-cornered mountains stand as sentinels.

George Costa, Count de la Trinita, marched into the Val di Angrogna with 1200 men, the wings of his army deploying over the border of the Valley—La Cotiere. Only a few Vaudois, some of whom were armed only with slings and a cross-bow, opposed the soldiers. Skirmishing with the soldiers, the Vaudois retired, fighting, to the higher grounds. By evening, neither side could claim a decided advantage. Both sides were tired and camped for the night. The Vaudois on Mt. Roccomaneot, and the Piedmontese, their campfires lighted, on the lower hills of La Cotiere.

Suddenly the silence of the evening was broken by a shout of scorn or ridicule from the Piedmontese army. They had caught sigh of, between them and the sky, on the heights above them, the Waldensian warriors on their knees pleading the God of battles. Hardly had their scoffs died away, when they heard a drum beating in a side valley. A child had got hold of the drum, and was amusing himself with it. But La Trinita's soldiers saw in imagination a fresh body of Waldensians advancing from this side in the narrow gorge to rush upon them. They seized their arms in great disorder. The Vaudois, seeing the movement of their enemy, seized their arms also, and rushed down-hill to anticipate the attack. The Piedmontese threw away their arms and fled, chased by the Waldenses. They lost in ½ hour the ground it had cost them a day's fighting to gain. Their abandoned weapons provided a much needed and most opportune supply to the Vaudois. That day La Trinita's army had 67 men killed, but only 3 of the Vaudois had fallen.

La Trinita now entered the Valley of Lucerna on his left, with its towns, La Torre, Villaro, Bobbio, and others, forming the noblest of the Waldensian Valleys. He now occupied this valley with his soldiers. Almost all the inhabitants of this Valley had fled to Pra del Tor. In the following days, La Trinita fought some small battles with the Vaudois, and in all of them he was repulsed with considerable number of his soldiers killed.

La Trinita realized that these mountain people were courageous, and determined to die rather than submit their conscience to the Pope, and their families to the passions of his soldiers. He also discovered that they were a simple and confiding people, utterly unversed in the ways of intrigue (secret schemes and plots). He was delighted to find this out. La Trinita had with him 2 men as cunning and vile (morally despicable, repulsive, foul, disgustingly bad, obnoxious) as himself:

1. **Thomas Jacomel—the Inquisitor General**—cruel in disposition and licentious in manners—lacking in moral restrains, disregarding sexual restrains.
2. **Gastaud, La Trinita's secretary**. He faked a love for the Gospel.

La Trinita then assembled the leading men of the Waldenses, and said some flattering words to them. He said this was no pleasant business in which he was engaged, and that he would be glad to have it over. Peace could be easily arranged if only they would make a few small concessions to show they were reasonable men. He proposed that they should deposit their arms in the house of one of their leaders, and permit him, for form's sake, to go with a small procession and celebrate Mass in the Protestant church of St. Laurenzo in Angrogna, and afterwards pay a visit to Pra del Tor.

La Trinita had correctly figured out the Waldenses. They spent a whole night deliberating over La Trinita's proposition, and agreed to accept it, contrary to the opinion of their Pastors and some of their laymen.

The Papal general said his Mass in the Protestant church, and then walked up the gloomy narrow gorges that led up to the famous Pra del Tor. He returned to wear the mask a little longer. He pretended to be earnestly trying to bring peace. The Duke was now living closer, at Vercelli—on the plain of Piedmont. La Trinita thought the Vaudois ought to send deputies to him. He said it would strengthen their supplication and probably secure their success if they would raise a sum of 20,000 crowns. On payment of this sum, he would withdraw his army and leave them in peace to practice their religion.

The Vaudois, unable to conceive of dissimulation (cunning or deceit) like La Trinita's, made concession after concession. They had previously laid down their arms. They now sent deputies to the Duke; next they taxed themselves to buy off his soldiers; and last, and worst of all, at the demand of La Trinita, they sent away their Pastors. It was dreadful to think of traveling across Mount Col Julien in the winter. They had to send their Pastors across the Valleys of Prali and San Martino, and over the snow and ice-covered mountains beyond to find refuge among the Protestants in the French Valley of Pragelas.

La Trinita now believed that the poor people were entirely in his power. His soldiers did their pleasure in the Valley of Lucerna. They pillaged the houses abandoned by the Vaudois. The few Vaudois who had remained tried to make their escape by making refuge a second time in the woods and caves in the higher reaches of the Valleys. The outrages committed by these ruffians were so terrible that they cannot be described.

One helpless man, 103 years old, was placed in a cave, and his granddaughter, age 17, was left to take care of him. When the soldiers found their hiding place they murdered the old man and offered to rape the girl. She fled from the brutal pursuit of the soldiers, leapt over a precipice, and died. Another old man was pursued to the brink of a precipice by one of La Trinita's soldiers. He stopped, turned around, and dropped to his knees as if to plead to his life. The trooper was raising his sword to strike him dead, when the Vaudois old man, grabbed him tightly around the legs, and lunging backwards with all his might, rolled over the precipice, dragging the soldier with him into the ravine below.

Part of the money agreed upon between La Trinita and the Waldenses had already been paid to him. The poor people had been forced to sell their herds of sheep and cattle to raise the money. La Trinita now destroyed the corn, oil, and wine he had not been able to carry away. He broke their mills in pieces. He withdrew his army to winter quarters at Cavour, a place near enough to the Valleys that he could re-enter them at any moment.

To afflict the Waldenses even more, he placed garrisons here and there in the Valleys, and required the Waldenses to provide what little food they had to these soldiers. The soldiers were continually prowling about in search of victims on whom to gratify their cruelty and lust. Those who had the misfortune of being dragged into their den were raped if they were women, or excruciatingly tortured if they were men.

THE GREAT CAMPAIGN OF 1561

The Waldenses waited impatiently for the deputies who went to see the Duke to return. The deputies came back with an order commanding them to submit unconditionally to the Church of Rome, or be exterminated. Their alternative was: the Mass or universal slaughter.

The Waldenses' spirit woke up. They would not disgrace their ancestors, imperil their souls, or bring a heritage of slavery on their children. Their depression left them, they were as men awakened out of a heavy sleep. They found their arms, recalled their Pastors, raised up their fallen churches and resumed public worship services in them.

Letters of sympathy and promises of help came to them from fellow Protestants in Geneva, Dauphine (Southern France) and all other parts of France.

The Waldenses of Lucerna sent deputies across the snow-covered mountains to the Valleys of Pragelas to propose an alliance with the Protestants there. The deputies swore to stand by each other and render mutual support in the upcoming struggle. It was agreed that this oath of alliance would be sworn solemnly in the Waldensian Valleys as well.

Deputies from Pragelas, crossed Mount Julien and arrived in Bobbio on January 1, 1561. The night before, a ducal proclamation had been published in the Valleys commanding them to attend Mass or abide the consequences: "Fire, Sword, Cord." The deputies from Pragelas and from Lucerna ascended a low hill behind Bobbio. They promised with hands on their Bibles, to sustain each other, to maintain the Bible, though it cost them their lives, and promised to aid and help their persecuted brothers, not relying upon man, but upon God. It was in this setting that the Waldenses opened one of the most brilliant campaigns waged by their arms. The next morning they must choose between the Mass and possible death. A neighboring church stood ready, with an altar decked and candles lighted for the Vaudois to hear their first Mass. At the crack of dawn, the Vaudois were at the church door. They stood for a moment surveying the strange transformation their church had undergone and they set to work.

They extinguished the candles, pulled down the images, and swept into the street the rosary, crucifix, and all the other paraphernalia of Popish worship in a few minutes. The minister, Humbert Artus, then ascended the pulpit and read Isaiah 45:20, "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot see."

He then preached a sermon which struck the key-note of the campaign then opening. The Waldenses then rushed down into Lucerna, and set out to purge the temple at Villaro. On their way they encountered and attacked the Piedmontese garrison and drove them back. The monks, and religious leaders and magistrates, who had come to receive the abjuration of the heretics, accompanied the troops in their disgraceful, humiliating flight. The whole band of fugitives (soldiers, priests, and judges) shut themselves up in the town of Villaro, now besieged by the Vaudois. Three times the garrison from La Torre tried to rescue their people and lift the siege, but three times they were repulsed. Finally, on the tenth day, the garrison surrendered. Their lives were spared, 2 Waldensian Pastors accompanied them to La Torre.

In the beginning of February, 1561, the Count La Trinita moved his army into the Valleys from Cavour. He tried to sow dissension among the Vaudois by entangling them in negotiations for peace, but by this time they had learned too well to trust him or to delay for an hour their preparations for defense.

The Waldenses erected barricades, planted ambushes, appointed signals to telegraph the movements of the enemy from post to post. Every house became a manufacturing place for pikes, bullets, and other weapons. They selected their best marksmen and formed them into the "Flying Company," whose duty it was to hasten to the point where danger pressed the most. To each body of fighting men they attached two Pastors, to maintain the morale of their army. These pastors, morning and evening, that led the public devotions, prayed with the soldiers before going into battle and when the fighting was over. When the Vaudois were chasing the enemy down their great

mountains and through their dark gorges, they tried to restrain the unnecessary flow of blood.

La Trinita knew that if he would conquer the Valleys, and bring the campaign to a successful end, he must take control of the Pra del Tor. Into that vast natural fortress was gathered the main body of the Waldensian people. Their few remaining herds and provisions had been brought here. They had constructed mills and baking ovens. Their councils sat here, and from here directed the whole operations of defense.

La Trinita directed all his efforts against Angrogna. His first attempt to enter the Valley of Angrogna was made on February 4, 1561. The fighting lasted all day, but he was repulsed. On February 7, he made a second attempt. He got a considerable distance into Angrogna burning and ravaging, but he eventually had to abandon the ground won. On February 14th, was the most severe struggle. He divided his army into three corps and advanced toward the Pra del Tor from three points.

No scout had seen what was happening. While the three armies were marching against them, the Waldenses in their grand Valley were having their morning devotions. Suddenly they heard cries of people trying to escape, and shouts of assailants from the narrow chasm on the south. They also saw the smoke of burning hamlets. Of the three points of attack, this was the easiest to defend. Six brave Waldensian youths went down to try to stop La Trinita's soldiers. They were six against an army.

The road the soldiers were coming up was long and gloomy, overhung by great rocks, and very narrow—only two men could march abreast. On one side was the mountain, on the other side far down thundered the torrent—a ledge in the steep face of a cliff. The road led to what was called, "The Gate of The Pra." The only entrance into Pra del Tor in the South side was by this gate of nature's own erecting. It was here that the six Waldensian warriors took their stand. They not only stopped the advance of the army, but drove it back in a panic-stricken mass, which made the precipices of the narrow gulley even more fateful.

Suddenly danger came from another direction—the East. On the heights of La Vechera, crossing the snow, an armed troop was viewed from afar. Before they had time to descend, they were met by the Waldenses, who dispersed them and made them flee. Thus two of the attacking parties of La Trinita had failed.

As the Waldenses were pursuing the routed enemy on La Vechera Mountain, they saw yet another armed troop, which had crossed the mountains that separate the Val San Martino from the Pra del Tor on the North, descending upon them. Instantly the alarm was raised. They could only spare a few men to meet them. These few Waldenses lay in ambush at the mouth of the narrow gulley through which the attacking party was making its way down into the Pra. As they came through the narrow gorge, the Vaudois rushed upon them sword in hand. The Piedmontese soldiers fought desperately but in a few minutes other Waldenses hurried, from the points where they had just been victorious, to help their brethren.

The invaders, seeing themselves attacked from all sides, turned and fled up the slopes they had just descended. Many were slain, nor would a single man have escaped but for the Pastor of the "Flying Company," who screamed at the top of his voice, pleading for the Waldenses to spare the lives of those who were no longer able to resist. Among those killed was Charles Truchet, who so cruelly ravaged the commune of Rioclaret a few months before. A stone from a sling laid him prostrate on the ground,

and his head was cut off with his own sword. Another noted persecutor of the Vaudois, Louis de Monteuil, died in the same way.

Furious at his repulse, the Count La Trinita turned his arms against the almost defenseless Valley of Rora. He ravage it, burning the little town, chasing away its population of eighty families (who escaped over the snows of the mountains to Villaro, in the Valley of Lucerna. La Trinita then entered the Valley of Lucerna, but although it was at that moment almost depopulated, the Waldenses that remained repulsed his soldiers again and again. Finally, he called off his soldiers and retreated back to his old quarters at Cavour.

He spent a month reinforcing his army, greatly weakened by the losses he had sustained. The King of France sent him ten companies of foot soldiers, and some other choice soldiers. He got a regiment from Spain, and numerous volunteers from Piedmont, including many of the nobility. From four thousand, the original number of his army, it was now raised to seven thousand. He thought he was strong enough to begin a third campaign. He was confident he could this time wipe out the disgrace which he had suffered, and sweep from the earth at once and forever the great scandal of the Waldenses. He again directed all his efforts against Angrogna, the heart and bulwark of the valleys.

It was Sunday, March 17, 1561. All the Vaudois were assembled in the Pra del Tor soon after dawn to unite in public devotion. Suddenly an alarm was raised. The enemy was approaching by three different routes:

1. On the eastern ridges appeared one body of armed men.
2. Another body of soldiers was moving in a single column up the gorge and in a few minutes would poor through the gateway to the Pra del Tor.
3. A third body of soldiers was forcing itself over rocks by a path between the two other groups of soldiers.

Instantly, the enemy was met on all points of approach. A handful of Waldensians were enough to thrust back along the narrow gorge the line of glittering metal-armoured men who were marching in single column through it. At the other two points, where bulwarks of rock and earth had been erected, the fighting was severe, and the dead lay thick, but the day at both places went against the invaders.

Some of the ablest captains were among the slain. The number of soldiers killed was so great that Count La Trinita is said to have sat down and wept when he saw the heaps of the dead. It was a matter of astonishment at the time that any of the soldiers escaped. The Waldensian Pastors restrained the victorious Vaudois, having laid it down as a maxim at the beginning of the campaign that they would use with moderation and clemency whatever victories God would be pleased to give them, and that they would spill no blood unless when absolutely necessary to prevent their own from being shed. The number of Piedmontese soldiers was again out of all proportion to those who had fallen on the other side.

More deeply humiliated and disgraced than ever, La Trinita led back the remains of his army to its old quarters. The popish general was slow to learn the lessons of his losses.

Negotiations had opened between the Waldensians and the Duke of Savoy, and the Vaudois were not suspecting evil. This was the moment La Trinita chose to attack

them again. He hastily assembled his troops. On the night of April 16, 1561, he marched against them at Pra del Tor, hoping to enter it unopposed and to kill them all as sheep.

Early in the morning, when their worship had just ended, they heard unusual sounds coming from the gorge that led into the valley. Instantly, six brave mountaineers rushed to the gateway that opens from the gorge. The long file of La Trinita's soldiers was seen advancing, two abreast, their helmets and armor glittering in the early morning sunlight off the snow. The six Vaudois made their arrangements, and calmly waited until the enemy was near. The first two Vaudois, holding loaded muskets, knelt down. The second two stood erect, ready to fire over the heads of the first two. The third pair undertook the loading of the weapons as they were discharged. As the first two of the soldiers turned the rock, they were shot down by the two foremost Vaudois. The next two were shot down by the Vaudois in the rear, and so on. In a few minutes, a little heap of dead bodies blocked the pass, making it impossible for the advancing column of soldiers to pass.

Meanwhile, other Vaudois climbed the mountains that overhung the gorge in which the Piedmontese army was imprisoned. Tearing up the great stones strewn over the hillside, they sent them rolling down upon the soldiers. Unable to advance because of the pile of dead soldiers in front, and unable to flee from the ever-accumulating masses behind, the soldiers were crushed by the dozens by the falling rocks. Panic set in. The soldiers were wedged together on the narrow ledge, with murderous rain of rocks falling on them. Their struggle to escape was frightful. They jostled one another, and trod each other under foot, while vast numbers fell over the precipice, and were dashed on the rocks or drowned in the torrent. The Angrogna Torrent, instead of a clear stream, rolling along on a white gravelly bed, was now dyed deep red from the slaughter. The Count of La Trinita withdrew on that same night with his army to return no more to the valleys.

Negotiations were again resumed, through Philip of Savoy, Count of Raconis. The Duke of Savoy made peace with the men whom he found he could not conquer. An agreement was reached and put into a document called, "The Articles of Capitulation," which was signed on June 5, 1561.

1. It granted an indemnity for all offenses (the indemnity was given to those who had suffered, not to those who had gone against the Waldenses).
2. It permitted the Vaudois to erect churches in their valleys, except in two or three of their towns, and to hold public worship, in short to celebrate all the offices of their religion.

This peace agreement closed this war of fifteen months. The Vaudois ascribed it in great part to the good Duchess Margaret. The Pope called it a "pernicious example" (detrimental, harmful, noxious, causing irreparable injury), which he feared would be imitated in other places, in those times when the love many to the Roman Church was waxing cold. It stank in the nostrils of the prelates and monks of Piedmont, to whom the heretics had been a free booty. Nevertheless, Duke Emmanuel Philibert faithfully maintained its stipulations, the Duchess Margaret being by his side to counteract any pressure in the opposite direction.

This peace, the warm summer weather, together with the sympathy and aid universally given them by Protestants abroad—especially by Calvin and the Elector Palatine, all helped to console and re-animate this brave but afflicted people.

The spirit of devotion of the Vaudois was admirable. They firmly believed that God had helped them. After each battle, as the enemy was in flight, and the victors had returned from chasing the invaders from their valleys, the old Pastors, the old women, and young people as well as little children would assemble in the Pra del Tor, and while the sun was setting in glory over the mountaintops of their once-more ransomed land, they would raise their voices together, and sing and praise God.

WALDENSIAN COLONIES IN CALABRIA AND APULIA IN SOUTHERN ITALY.

In about 1340, a gentleman from Southern Italy was visiting in Turin, and invited the Waldenses to emigrate down South to more fertile land and warmer weather and less harsh conditions of farming. Quite a few Waldenses emigrated to Calabria, at the Southern extremity of the Italian peninsula. Calabria was like the land of promise for them. They had relative freedom for free and undisturbed exercise of their worship.

Ferdinand of Arragon, King of Naples, permitted them to govern their own affairs, civil and spiritual, by their own magistrates and their own pastors. Their first settlement was near the town of Montalto.

Fifty years later, about 1390, rose the city of San Sexto, which later became the capital of the colony. Other towns and villages soon sprang up in that region. Soon the whole area was beautiful with fruit trees, and luxuriant crops. One of the towns had a wall around it, La Guardia, it was on a hill near the sea.

In about 1395-1400, some more Vaudois emigrated from Provence, France, and arrived in Southern Italy, settling in Apulia, not far from their Calabrian brethren. Soon that area was full of orange groves, myrtle trees, olive trees, vineyards, corn fields, and pasture lands.

In 1500, there arrived in Calabria another emigration from the valley of Pragelas and Fraissinieres, and they settled by the Volturata River which flows from the Apennines into the Bay of Tarento. These Waldensian colonies in Southern Italy flourished for about two hundred years. Before the Renaissance, the Vaudois of Calabria anticipated that great literary revival, and there was a revival of letters and science among them. They had brought with them the Scriptures in the Romance Version.

The colonists kept up their connection with the mother country of the Valleys in Northern Italy, although they were situated at the opposite extremity of Italy. To keep their faith, which was their connecting link, pastors were sent in relays of two to minister in the churches of Calabria and Apulia for two years. After two years, those pastors were replaced by another two. On their way back to the valleys, the barbes visited their brethren who were living in another town in Italy. The famous Vaudois historian Gilles' grandfather in one of these pastoral visits to Venice was assured by Waldenses there that there were at least six thousand Waldenses in Venice alone. Fear had not yet awakened the suspicions and kindled the hatred of the Romanists, for the Reformation had not yet come. Nor did the Waldenses try to thrust their opinions upon their neighbors. But the priests could not help but notice that their manners were, in many ways, peculiar and strange. They id not attend feasts and revelry, and their children were taught by foreign schoolmasters. Their churches did not have images or lighted candles. They never went on pilgrimages. They buried their dead without the aid of the priests. They never brought a candle to the Virgin's shrine, or purchased a mass for the help of their dead relatives.

But one thing went far to atone for them—they paid with utmost punctuality and fidelity their stipulated tithes. Since the value of the land was yearly increasing, there was a corresponding yearly increase in tithe to the priests and the rent payable to the landlord, and neither was anxious to disturb a state of things so beneficial to himself.

In the middle of the 16th century Protestantism from the North began to move into these colonies. The pastors who visited them told them of the Synod in Angrogna in 1532. They heard that in Germany, France, Switzerland, and in Denmark, the old Gospel had blazed forth in a splendor unknown for years. The Lamp of the Alps was no longer one solitary light in the world. All around the world was a circle of mighty torches, blending with those of the older luminary, combining to dispel the night from Christendom. When they heard these stupendous things, their spirit revived, their past conformity appeared like cowardice to them. They, too, wanted to take part in the great work of emancipation of the nations, by making open confession of the truth. No longer content with mere visits of a pastor, they petitioned the mother church to send them a pastor—who could live permanently among them.

At that time there was a young minister in Geneva, a native from Italy, and he was selected by the Church Of The Valleys to the dangerous but honorable post to go to Calabria in Southern Italy. His name was Jean Louis Paschale. He had been a knight of the Sword and a Romanist, but he became a knight of the Cross (in a truer sense than Ignatius Loyola).

Paschale had just finished his theological studies at Lausanne, and was betrothed to a young Piedmontese Protestant girl named, Camilla Guerina. They parted, never more to meet on this earth.

Paschale carried with him to Calabria the energetic spirit of Geneva. He preached with power. He revived the zeal and courage of the Waldenses in Calabria. Their light formerly hid under a bushel, was now openly displayed. Its splendor attracted the ignorance and awoke the fanaticism of the region. The priests who had tolerated the heresy (modest up to that point), could no longer be blind to it.

The Protector of the colonists up to then, was the Marquis of Spinello. He was forced to move against them. He was told, "That dreadful thing, Lutheranism, has broken in, and will soon destroy all things." The Marquis called the Pastor and his flock before him. After Paschale talked with the Marquis, the Marquis dismissed the members of the congregation, and threw Paschale into the dungeons of Foscalda. The bishop of the diocese next took matters into his own hands and took Paschale to the Prison of Cosenza, where he was confined for eight months.

The Pope at that time was Pius IV (Giovan Angelo de Medici). He was elected Pope on January 17, 1560 and died December 9, 1565. He re-convoked and concluded the Council of Trent. Pope Pius IV heard of the case and delegated Cardinal Alexandrini, Inquisitor-General, to extinguish the heresy in the Kingdom of Naples. Alexandrini ordered Paschale to be removed from the Castle of Cosenza, and taken to Naples. He was chained to gang of prisoners—the handcuffs were so tight that they entered the flesh. He spent nine days on the road, sleeping on the bare earth. At Naples he was placed in a filthy deep, damp dungeon.

On May 16, 1560, Paschale was taken in chains to Rome, and imprisoned in the Torre di Nona—in another filthy cell. He wrote to his betrothed bride, telling her that his affliction for her "grows with that I feel for God."

While Paschale calmly waited for his martyr's death in his dungeon at Rome, things deteriorated in Calabria. The Inquisitor-General, Alexandrini, and two Dominican monks, Valerio Malvicino and Alfonso Urbino, were dispatched by the Sacred College to reduce the Calabrian churches to the obedience of Rome, or stamp them out. They first

went to San Sexto, where they assembled the inhabitants and told them they would not do them any harm if they would but dismiss their Lutheran teachers and come to mass. They rang the bell for the celebration of the mass, but the citizens all left the town in a body, and retired into the woods.

The Inquisitors left San Sexto and set out for La Guardia, and locked the gates behind them when they had entered. Assembling the inhabitants, they lied to the people—telling them that their co-religionists of San Sexto had renounced their errors, and dutifully attended mass, and exhorted them to do the same by following their good example, and return to the fold of the roman Shepherd. They warned the people that as heretics they might lose goods and life. The poor people were taken unawares and consented to hear mass. As soon as the mass was ended, and the gates of the town re-opened, they learned the deceit which had been done to them. Indignant, and ashamed of their own weakness, they resolved to all leave and join their brethren in the woods, but were persuaded to stay by the promises of their feudal superior, the Marquis of Spinello.

The Inquisitor-General, Alexandrini, sent for and received two companies of soldiers, and the soldiers were sent in pursuit of the people of San Sexto. They slaughtered many of them; others were pursued with bloodhounds. Some of he fugitives reached the craggy tops of the Apennines, and hurled down stones on the soldiers, compelling them to stop from the pursuit.

Alexandrini sent to Naples for more troops to "quell the rebellion of the Vaudois." The Viceroy of Naples came in person with an army. He tried to storm the fugitives, who were then strongly entrenched in the great mountains. The Viceroy demanded their return within the pale of the Church of Rome. He tried to take them by force, but the shower of rocks injured and killed many of his soldiers. The Viceroy issued an edict promising a free pardon to all bandits, outlaws, and other criminals who would climb the mountains and attack the Waldenses. These assassins, familiar with all the secret trails of the mountains found and butchered the poor Vaudois of San Sexto, exterminating them.

Meanwhile, Alexandrinis, the Inquisitor-General, and his monks pursued their work of blood at La Guardia. He enticed the citizens outside the gates, and placing his soldiers in ambush, they captured about 1600 persons. Of these, 70 were sent in chains to Montalto, where they were tortured. Stefano Carlino was tortured till his bowels gushed out. Another prisoner, Verminel, was kept for 8 hours on a horrid instrument called the *hell*. Some were thrown from the tops of towers or off cliffs. Others were torn with iron whips, and finally beaten to death with fiery brands. Others, smeared with pitch, were set on fire and burned alive.

The worst bloody tragedy happened at Montalto, enacted by the Marquis di Buccianici (who was promised a Cardinal's hat to his brother if he would clear Calabria of heresy). It was witnessed by a servant to Ascanio Caraccioli, a Roman Catholic.

On June 11, 1560, the Vaudois were all shut up on one house as in a sheep-fold. The executioner went to the house, put a bandana over the face of one, led him out to a field near the house, and had him kneel down, and cut his throat with a knife. Then, taking off the bloody napkin, he went a brought out another, whom he killed in the same manner. In this way, he butchered all 88 men. The executioner, with the bloody knife in his teeth, the dripping bandana in his hand, and his arms smeared with gore, went to the house, and took out each victim one after another. Their bodies were quartered and stuck

up on pikes along the high road leading from Montalto to Chateau-Vilar, a distance of 36 miles.

Some men and women were burned alive. Many were sent off as slaves in the Spanish galleys. Some submitted to Rome. A few escaped from the scene of horrors and finally reached their native valleys to tell that the once-flourishing Waldensian colony and church in Calabria no longer existed, and that they were the only survivors.

Meanwhile in Rome, preparations were being made for the trial and execution of Jean Louis Paschale. On September 8, 1560, he was brought out of his prison at Torre di Nona in Rome, and conducted to the della Minerva Convent, and cited before the papal tribunal. He confessed his Savior, and with a serenity to which his judges were not used to seeing, listened to his death sentence for the following day. The Torre di Nona was one of the principal prisons in Rome, used especially for criminals condemned to death.

On September 9, 1560, it was like a holiday in Rome. From every street and open square (piazza) eager crowds rushed out uniting in one overwhelmingly and surging stream across the Bridge of St. Angelo and pressing in at the gates of the old fortress which were thrown wide open to let them all in.

In the courtyard of the old Castle of St. Angelo all the dignitaries were gathered. In the center of the courtyard was the Pope's chair with Pope Pius IV already seated in it. He was determined to be present at today's tragedy.

Behind the Pope were his Cardinals in scarlet robes and counselors, with many dignitaries in their royal regalia, arranged in circles around the Pope, according to their pecking order of rank. Behind the ecclesiastics were seated the most noble and beautiful people of Rome, row after row. The vast courtyard of St. Angelo was densely occupied, the floor was packed with people who had come to see the spectacle.

In the middle of the throng was a scaffold, rising a little way over the sea of human heads, with its iron stake, and beside it a bundle of faggots (sticks).

Suddenly by the gate, Jean Louis Paschale was seen slowly entering, amid hissing and jeers from the mob. He was the obvious object of universal dislike. The heavy chains and foot shackles clanked on the cobblestone floor. Although young, his face was pale with suffering. He looked haggard. He lifted up his eyes and with undismayed countenance surveyed the vast multitude and the dismal apparatus in the midst of the crowd, awaiting its victim. Calm courage was upon his brow, with the serene light of the deep, untroubled peace beaming in his eyes. He climbed up the scaffold and stood beside the stake.

Every eye was turned upon him, not on the Pope wearing the tiara (the 3-tiered crown worn by the Pope), but on the man wearing the "San Benito." This was a sackcloth coat, named after St. Benedict of Nursia (1560), worn by impenitents condemned to an *Auto-da-Fe* ("Act of Faith'). This garment resembled a scapular, which was a long, wide band of cloth with an opening for the head, worn front and back over the shoulders like a monastic habit. It was usually either yellow with red crosses or black with painted devils and flames. The *Auto-da-Fe* ("Act of Faith") was the ceremony accompanying the pronouncement of judgment by the Inquisition, and followed by the burning of the heretic by the secular authorities.

Paschale, the martyr, addressed the crowd. "Good people," and the whole crowd became silent, "I am come here to die for confessing the doctrine of my Divine Master and Savior, Jesus Christ." Turning then to Pope Pius IV, he charged him and accused

him as the enemy of Christ, the persecutor of His people, and the anti-Christ of Scriptures, and concluded by summoning him and all his Cardinals to answer for their cruelties and murders before the throne of the Lamb. The historian Crespin says, "At his words the people were deeply moved, and the Pope and the Cardinals gnashed their teeth."

The inquisitors quickly gave the signal. The executioners gathered around Paschale and strangled him. Then they lit the faggots (sticks), and the flames blazing up speedily, reduced his body to ashes.

For once the Pope had performed his function. With his "Key of Fire", which he may truly claim to carry, he had opened the celestial doors for Paschale.

So died, Jean Louis Paschale, the Waldensian missionary and Pastor to Calabria. His ashes were collected and thrown in the Tiber River, and from there they were born to the Mediterranean Sea. He was noble and courageous before the Pope himself. The Mediterranean Sea was a nobler mansion than ever Rome raised to any of her pontiffs.

The war that La Trinita had waged against the Waldenses ended, as we have seen in a treaty of peace between Philip of Savoy and the deputies of the Valleys, singed at Cavour on June 5, 1561. But the Waldenses wept as they saw the desolation and ruin—fruit trees cut down, vineyards and cornfields ruined, hamlets burned, villages—in some cases, a heap of ruins. They remembered all their friends and families who had been killed.

Now there was a near famine. Seven months of fighting without stopping, had left them no time to cultivate their fields. The stock of last year's provisions were exhausted, and starvation stared them in the face. Also, about this time fugitives from the area of Calabria began to arrive in the Valleys. They had escaped with nothing but their lives, and they were hungry with no clothes. Their brethren of the Valleys opened up their arms and shared what little they had.

The Protestant brethren in other countries sympathized with them. Calvin led the movement for their relief. He asked for the Waldenses to send deputies to represent their case to the Churches of Protestantism in other countries. Collections were made for them in Geneva, France, and Germany.

By and by, seed-time and harvest was restored in the Valleys. They were just beginning to recover when Castocaro, a Tuscan by birth, was appointed Deputy-Governor of their Valleys. Castrocaro had served as a colonel of the militia under La Trinita. He had been taken prisoner in an encounter with the Waldenses, but honorable treated, and at length, generously released. But he returned the Waldenses evil for good.

Castrocaro owed his appointment as Governor of the Valleys mainly to his acquaintance with the Duchess Margaret, the protectoress of the Vaudois. He had gained her confidence by professing a warm affection for the people of the Valleys. Another reason he was appointed Governor was because of his friendship with the Archbishop of Turin—to whom he had pledged himself to do his utmost to convert the Vaudois to Romanism.

When Castrocaro finally arrived in the Valleys as Governor, he forgot his professions to the Duchess Margaret, but faithfully set about fulfilling the promise he had made to the Archbishop of Turin. He began by restricting liberties of the churches in the treaty of peace.

1. He ordered the dismissal of certain of their Pastors.
2. He fined and imprisoned those congregations who did not comply.
3. He sent false and calumnious (false charges or misrepresentations calculated to maliciously damage another's reputation) reports to the court of the Duke of Savoy.
4. He introduced a troop of soldiers into the Valleys—under the false pretext that the Waldenses were breaking out into rebellion.
5. He built the fortress of Mirabonc, at the foot of the Col de la Croix, in the narrow gorge that leads from Bobbio to France, to close this gate of exit from their territories, and to intimidate the Valley of Lucerna.
6. He threatened to renew the war unless they should comply with his wishes.

When the Waldenses complained in Turin, the Duke and Duchess's ears had been poisoned by the malice and craft of the Governor. In their extremity they asked for help from the Protestant Princes of Germany. They responded, especially Frederick, Elector Palatine. He wrote a great letter to the Duke of Savoy:

> "Let your Highness know that there is a God in heaven, who not only contemplates the actions, but also tries the hearts and reins of men, and from Whom nothing is hid. Let your Highness take care not voluntarily to make war upon God, and not to persecute Christ in His members…Persecution, moreover, will never advance the cause it pretends to defend. The ashes of the martyrs are the seed of the Christian Church. For the Church resembles the palm-tree, whose stem only shoots up the taller the greater the weights that are hung upon it. Let your Highness consider that the Christian religion was established by persuasion, and not by violence; and as it is certain that religion is nothing else than a firm and enlightened persuasion of God, and of His will, as revealed in His Word, and engraven in the hearts of believers by his Holy Spirit, it cannot, when once rooted, be torn away by tortures." So did the Elector-Palatine, Frederick, warn the Duke.

From about this time Castrocaro moderated his violence, although he intermittently continued to terrify and threaten the poor Waldenses. When Emmanuel Philibert died in 1580, his real character came to light. The young Duke Charles Emanuel, ordered his arrest, but Castrocaro had entrenched himself in the Castle of La Torre, and surrounded himself with a band of desperados. He also had a pack of ferocious bloodhounds. However, a captain of his guard betrayed him, and so by treachery (like his own) did his doom at last overtake him. He was taken to Turin, where he died in prison.

Europe was in combustion. Protestants in France, Spain, and in Italy were being massacred, and dying at the stake. The Waldenses had been afflicted by famine, war, and persecution—sometimes in succession, sometimes together, but now a new calamity brought gloom and morning into their Valleys.

On August 23, 1629, a huge black cloud gathered on the summit of Col Julien. A huge flood of water poured down. On each side of the Mountain, in Bobbio on the South

of the Mountain and Prali in the northern Valley, there was a sudden flood. Many houses were swept away.

In September, 1629, an icy wind ruined their valley chestnut crops. Then another flood wiped out the grape harvest. These calamities were especially bad since they came after a year of partial famine.

The Vaudois Pastors assembled in solemn Synod (ecclesiastical council) to humble themselves and to lift up their voices in prayer to God. Little did they imagine that this was the last time they were to meet one another on this earth.

In 1630, a French army, under Marshal Schomberg, suddenly occupied the Valleys. In this army were many volunteers who had escaped from a virulent contagious disease then raging in France. In the hot weather, the plague rapidly developed and spread. In May, 1630, the first week, it hit the Valley of Perosa. Next it hit the more northern valley of San Martino, and soon it spread all throughout the Valleys. The Pastors met together to plead to God for help. They bought medicines and collected provisions for the poor, visited the sick, consoled the dying, and preached in the open air to crowds, solemn and eager to listen.

In July and August, 1630, the heat was excessive and the plague raged even more furiously. In July, four of the Pastors died by the plague, in August seven more died, and in September a twelfth Pastor died. There remained only three Pastors for the Lucerna, San Martino, and Perosa Valleys.

These 3 Pastors met on the heights of Agrogna, to consult with the various parish deputies regarding how to provide for the celebration of worship services. They wrote to Geneva and Dauphine for Pastors to replace those who had died in the plague, so that the venerable Church of the Valleys, which had survived so many calamities, might not become extinct. They also recalled Antoine Leger from Constantinople. Antoine was the uncle of the Leger who was the famous historian. He had been tutor for many years in the family of the Ambassador of Holland in Constantinople.

The plague subsided during the winter, but in the Spring of 1631 it rose up again with renewed force. One of the three surviving Pastors died, leaving only two—Pierre Gilles of Lucerna and Valerius Gross of Martino. In La Torre alone, 50 families became extinct. About 10,000 people died from the plague—from one-half to one-third of the entire population of the Valleys. Crops were unharvested. Strangers, who came to find health in the pure mountain air found instead their grave. Towns and villages were silent. Parents were without children; children were without parents. Even Pastor Gilles lost his 4 elder sons. Although he was in the homes of the stricken, at the bedsides of the dying, he himself was spared to write down the history of his ancient Church.

Since there were only 2 Pastors remaining, ministers hastened from Geneva and other places to the Valleys, lest the old lamp should go out. The worship services in the Waldensian Churches had previously been conducted in the Italian tongue, but the new Pastors could only speak French. Worship was then conducted in the French language, but the Vaudois soon came to understand it, since their own ancient tongue was a dialect between French and Italian. They also adopted the ritual of the Protestant Churches in Geneva. Also, the primitive and affectionate name of Barba was dropped and Pastors were called “Monsieur le Ministre,” (“Mister Minister” or “Lord Minister”).

After the plague epidemic of 1630-1631, the Waldenses tried to re-organize their society. They restored ruined churches and villages and tried to create family and home again.

The army left the Valleys, peace having been signed between the French Monarch and the Duke, and the Valleys returned once more under the dominion of the House of Savoy. Comparative tranquility allowed the population to root itself anew.

In 1650, the Vaudois entered the shadow of their greatest problem. The throne of Savoy was at this time filled by 15 year-old Charles Emmanuel, II, a prince of mild and humane disposition. But he was counseled and ruled by his mother, the Duchess Christina, who had been appointed Regent of the Kingdom until he became an adult. Christina came from a race which has always been noted for its dissimulation (deceit and cunning), its cruelty, and its bigoted devotion to Rome.

Christina was the daughter of Henry IV and Marie de Medici (Henry IV's second wife), and granddaughter of that Catherine de Medici, whose name stands so conspicuously connected with the detestable tragedy—the St. Bartholomew Massacre (August 24, 1572 under Charles IX).

Christina inherited the gloom superstition and ferocious temper of her grandmother, Catherine de Medici. Christina was a cold, cruel, and blood-thirsty Regent who governed the kingdom of her son, Charles Emmanuel II. It was her shrewd spirit, prompted by the Vatican, that enacted those scenes of carnage we are now going to review. The blow did not descend all at once; a series of lesser attacks heralded the great and final stroke.

The plague, as we have seen, visited the Valleys in 1630-1631. But a second plague came to the Valleys in about 1650, when a swarm of Capuchin monks were sent to convert the heretics. They began by eagerly challenging the Pastors to a controversy, in which they felt sure of winning. But they soon realized that it was much harder than they had hoped.

The Capuchin monks complained, "The heretics made a Pope of their Bible." Since this was a book which the church fathers had not studied, they did not know where to find the passages which they were sure would confute (refute conclusively or overwhelm in argument) the Vaudois Pastors. They could silence them only by banishing them, so they drove the Pastors into exile, even the accomplished Antoine Leger, the uncle of the famous historian. Thus the people were deprived of their natural leaders.

The Vaudois were forbidden to purchase or farm lands outside their own territories, on pain of confiscation or death. Certain of their churches were closed. There was an order forbidding them to cross the frontier or border of their territories—even for a few hours—except on fair-days.

The wholly Protestant towns of Bobbio, Villaro, Angrogna, and Rora were ordered to maintain each a mission of the Capuchin monks. Foreign Protestants were interdicted from settling in the Valleys under pain of death, and a fine of 1,000 gold crowns upon the towns that should receive them. This law leveled against their Pastors, who since the plague, were mostly French or Swiss. The Capuchins hoped that within 5 years they would be without ministers.

Pawnshops (*Monts-de-piete*) were established to induce the Vaudois to pawn their goods, and when all had been put in pledge they were offered restitution in full if they

would renounce their faith. Dowries were promised young maidens on the same terms. All these devices had very limited success. About a dozen Waldensian perverts were added to the Roman Church. It was plain that the good work of proselytizing was proceeding too slowly. More efficient measures must be done.

Previously, in 1622, Pope Gregory XV had established "*De Propaganda fide"*—("The Society For The Propagation of the Faith"), which had already spread over Italy and France. Since then, another concise clause was added to the name of the society, "*De Propagana fide, et Extirpandis Haereticus"* ("and The Extirpation of Heretics"). Many people joined the society (laymen, priests, nobles, prelates, peasants, and paupers)—the inducement being a plenary indulgence to all who should take part in the good work of getting rid of the heretics. The societies in smaller towns reported to the metropolitan cities; the metropolitan cities to the Capital; the capitals to Rome, where, in the words of Leger, "sat the great spider that held the threads of this mighty web."

In 1650, "The Council of the Propagation of the Faith and the Extirpation of Heretics", was established at Turin. The chief councilors of the state, the great lords of the country, and the dignitaries of the Church enrolled themselves as a presiding board.

Women's societies were formed, at the head of which was Marchioness de Pianeza, the First Lady of the Court. Since she had lived a wicked life, she was anxious to make expiation for her errors of the past. She was zealous to train other women who were organized to visit their assigned territories twice a week, suborning (secretly inducing them to do unlawful things) simple girls, servant maids, and young children by their flattering allurements and fair promises, and doing evil turns to those who would not listen to them. They had spies everywhere, who would ascertain in which Protestant families disagreement existed. To these families, the propagandists would go, stirring up the flame of dissension in order to break up the family—promising them, and indeed giving them, great advantages, if they would consent to attend the mass.

The ladies asked everyone for money to support their cause. The Marchioness of Pianeza herself, great lady as she was, used every second or third day to go out and raise money—even going into the taverns.

While she was scheming in this way, she was stricken with a fatal illness. On her deathbed, she summoned her lord, from whom she had been parted for many years, to her bedside, and charged him to continue her good work. To stimulate his zeal, she bequeathed him a sum of money, which he couldn't touch till he had converted the Vaudois. The Marquis undertook the task wholeheartedly. As a bigot and soldier, he could think of only one way of converting the Vaudois—it was now that the storm burst.

On January 25, 1655, was issued the famous Edict of Gastaldo. This decree commanded all the Vaudois families living in the towns of Lucerna, Fenile, Bubiana, Bricherasio, San Giovanni, and La Torre to leave their dwellings within 3 days and retire into the Valleys of Bobbio, Angrogna, and Rora. This they were to do or be killed. They were further required to sell their lands to Romanists within 20 days. Those who were willing to abjure the Protestant faith were exempted from the decree.

This was a most inhuman and barbarous edict. It was in the coldest part of winter. How could young children, old people, sick and bedridden people, the blind and the lame undertake a journey across rivers, through valleys buried in snow and over ice-covered mountains? This edict was another form of condemning them to die of cold and hunger.

The Romish Propagandists at Turin chose this season for the enforced flight of the Vaudois.

The alternative was to go to Mass. Leger says that not one of his congregation of almost 2,000 people accepted the alternative. Their enemies were amazed that the whole community rose up as one man and left their towns. The Vaudois of the other valleys welcomed these poor exiles, and joyfully shared with them their own humble and scanty fare.

On April 17, 1655, the Marquis de Pianeza secretly left at midnight from Turin, and appeared before the valleys leading an army of 15,000 men. That evening he appeared under the walls of La Torre at 8 PM that Saturday evening with about 300 of his men. The main body of the army he had left encamped in the plain. This secret army was made up of Piedmontese bandits, some companies of Bavarians, 6 regiments of French (who had killed many Huguenots), several companies of Irish Romanists (who had killed many Protestants in Ireland).

The Waldenses had hastily constructed a barricade at the entrance to La Torre. The Marquis ordered his soldiers to storm it, but after 3 hours of fierce fighting had not made any progress.

At 1 AM, that Sunday morning, Count Amadeus of Lucerna, who knew the locality, made a flank movement along the banks of the Pelice River, stole silently through the meadows and orchards, and attacked the Vaudois from the rear. The Vaudois turned around and went through the ranks of the soldiers, and retreated to the hills, leaving La Torre in the hands of the soldiers. The Vaudois lost only 3 men in all that fighting. It was now about 2-3 AM Sunday morning (Palm-Sunday). The Catholic soldiers went to the local church and chanted a "Te Deum" ("Thee God we praise"—a liturgical Christian hymn of praise to God). This is how they celebrated that great festival of love and goodwill in the Waldensian Valleys.

The Vaudois were once more in their mountains. Their sentinels kept watch night and day along the frontier heights. They could see the movements of Pianeza's army on the plains beneath. They could see their orchards being chopped down and their homes being torched by the soldiers.

On Monday, April 19, and Tuesday, April 20, 1655, a series of skirmishes took place along the line of their mountain passes and forts. Although the Vaudois were outnumbered about 100 to 1, they were victorious on all points. The popish soldiers fell back in shameful rout, telling of the Vaudois valor and heroism to their comrades on the plains and causing panic in their camp.

Pianeza now began to have misgivings, as he remembered the mighty armies htat in the past had perished in these mountains. He decided on a different weapon which the Waldenses had always been less able to cope with than the sword.

On Wednesday, April 221, before daybreak, he announced by sound of the trumpet at various locations along the fighting front, his willingness to receive the Vaudois deputies and have peace talks. Delegates set out for his camp, and on their arrival at headquarters were received with utmost politeness and splendidly entertained. Pianeza expressed utmost regret for the excesses his soldiers had committed, and which had bee done, he said, contrary to orders. He said he had come into their valleys only to track a few fugitives who had disobeyed Gastaldo's order, that the higher villages had

nothing to fear, and that if they would admit a single regiment each for a few days, in token of their loyalty, all would be peacefully ended.

The deceit and craft of Pianeza conquered the deputies. Despite the warnings of the more wise, especially Pastor Leger, the Waldenses opened the passes of their valleys and the doors of their homes to Pianeza's soldiers.

Very sadly, these poor people were finished. They had received under their roof the murderers of their families. The first two days, the 22nd and 23rd of April were passed in comparative peace, the soldiers eating at the same table, sleeping under the same roof, and talking freely with their destined victims. By now, the enemy occupied their towns, villages, cottages, and the roads throughout the valleys. Both of the great passes that led to France which could be used for escape, had been blocked by the army. The Vaudois were enclosed in a net.

Finally, the blow fell with the sudden crash of a thunderbolt. At 4 AM on Saturday, April 24, 1655, the signal was given from the castle-hill of La Torre. At that instant a thousand assassins began their work of death. Dismay, horror, and agony suddenly overspread the Valleys of Lucerna and Agrogna. Though the Vaudois climbed the hills as fast as they could, the murderers were on their tracks. The torrents as they rolled down from the mountains soon began to be tinged with red. As morning broke, dark smoke was rolling through the valleys as the priests and monks, accompanying each party of soldiers, set fire to the houses as soon as the people inside had been killed. The cries and groans of the dying were echoing and re-echoing from the rocks around.

The soldiers were not content with quickly killing people with the sword, so they invented new and up-to-then unheard-of methods of torture and death. Their disgusting and horrible, wicked deeds never can be all told. Little children were torn from the arms of their mothers, clasped by their tiny feet, and their heads dashed against the rocks. Or, they were held between 2 soldiers and their quivering limbs torn off by force. Their mangled bodies were then thrown on the highways, or fields to be devoured by beasts. Some had their hands, arms, and legs lopped off, and fire applied to the severed parts to stop the bleeding and prolong their suffering. Some were skinned alive; some were roasted alive, some disemboweled. Some were tied to trees in their own orchards and their hearts cut out. Some were horribly mutilated. Others had their brains cut out, boiled and eaten by these cannibals. Some were fastened down into the furrows of their own fields, and ploughed into the soil as men plow manure into it. Others were buried alive. Fathers were marched to their death with their sons' heads suspended around their necks. Parents were forced to watch their children being raped then massacred, before being themselves permitted to die.

But here we must stop. The tortures were so vile, abominable, monstrous, utterly and overwhelmingly disgusting, horrible and fiendish, as described by the historian Leger, that it makes one nauseated and dizzy to even think of them. Some of the individual cases of martyrdom were especially terrible as described by Leger. Paul Garnier of Rora—whose eyes were first plucked out, then was terrible tortured, and finally he was skinned alive and his skin was divided into 4 parts and extended on the window gratings of the 4 main houses in Lucerna.

These cruelties were unparalleled and unique in history. These atrocities and murders are more fiendish than any before or since. The authors of these atrocities denied and tried to cover up their deeds, but Pastor Leger made sure that he provided

clear, and indisputable proof of these awful crimes for posterity. He traveled from village to village, immediately after the massacre, attended by notaries, who took down the depositions and attestations of the survivors and eyewitnesses of these deeds in the presence of the Council of the place. From the evidence of these witnesses he compiled and gave to the world a book, which Dr. Gilly characterized as one of the most dreadful in existence. The originals of these depositions Leger gave to Sir Samuel Morland, who deposited them, together with other valuable documents pertaining to the Waldenses, in the library of the University of Cambridge.

When the storm had abated, Leger assembled the scattered survivors, in order to decide what should be done. Some wanted to abandon the valleys for good. Leger strongly argued against this. He advised them not to forsake their ancient independence, but to rebuild in faith that God would not permit the Church of the Valleys to finally overthrown.

To encourage them, he undertook to write about their sufferings and broken condition for their brethren of other countries, who he was sure would hasten to their help in their great crisis. His counsels prevailed. Protestant Europe was horror-stricken when it learned of the massacre.

In England, especially, did the response to Leger's letters swell. Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) was an English General and Statesman, and Lord Protector of England (1653-1658). Background of Oliver Cromwell:

> Charles I became kind of England at age 25, but clashed with parliament over who should rule England. For 11 years he tried to rule without a parliament at all. After civil war he was offered honorable peace, but tried to start the war again. The Parliamentarians tried him, found him guilty by one vote and publicly executed him on January 30, 1649. In 1653, Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector of England, with the authority of a king. He ruled England as a republic for the next 5 years. When he died in 1658, his son Richard Cromwell succeeded him, but lacked his authority. Charles II was invited to reassume the crown in 1660.

Cromwell proclaimed a fast and ordered a collection or the Waldenses. Oliver Cromwell's Latin Secretary was John Milton (1608-1674) A FAMOUS English poet was given the noble and sacred task of writing the letters dictated from Cromwell. These letters were written to all the Protestant princes, and to the King of France with the intent of enlisting their sympathy and aid in behalf of the Vaudois. Milton wrote, "Paradise Lost."

Mount Castelluzzo is important in the history of the Waldenses and their many martyrdoms. It is closely connected with the Massacre of 1655. It stands at the entrance of the Valleys. The bottom is covered with feathery woods, above which is a mass of broken rocks and fallen rocks—which countless storms have gathered like a girdle around its middle. From among these broken rocks the huge column shoots up like a pillar into the clouds. One can see a dark spot on the face of the cliff just below the crowning rocks of the summit. That is the mouth of a huge cave that can contain up to hundreds of people. To this cave many of the Vaudois fled during this great massacre of 1655. The persecutors tracked them here and threw them off the high precipice. Castelluzzo is a unique martyr's monument in the world. While it stands, the memory of this great crime cannot die.

VALLEY OF RORA MASSACRE OF 1655

The next tragic episode happened in the Valley of Rora. It lies to the left as one enters La Torre. It is separated from the Lucerna Valley by a barrier of mountains. There are two entrances to this valley. The first is by a side ravine which branches off about 2 miles before reaching La Torre. The second entrance is by crossing the mountains from Lucerna Valley. The Valley of Rora is about 60 miles in circumference.

Among the Waldenses God raised up a mighty man of valor, Captain Joshua Gianavello, a native of the Valley of Rora. He ad all the qualities of a great military leader: daring courage, resolute purpose, venturous enterprise, resourcefulness, self-possessed in emergencies, quick to resolve, prompt to execute, devoted to God and energetic, and heroic.

On that Saturday morning at 4 AM, April 24, 1655, the day when the great butchery began, the Marquis de Pianeza dispatched 500 soldiers to the Valley of Rora to massacre its unoffending and unsuspecting inhabitants. They had reached the summit of the pass, and were already descending on the town of Rora. Fortunately, Gianavello had known for weeks that a storm was gathering, and was on the lookout. He was their troops and guessed their errand. There was not a moment to be lost. How could he single-handedly attack an army of 500 men? He stole uphill, under the cover of rocks and trees, and on his way convinced 6 peasant men, brave like himself, to join him in repelling the invaders. This heroic little band of 7 men hid among the bushes near the troops, laying in ambush by the side of the path.

The soldiers came on, not suspecting the trap into which they were marching. Gianavello and his men fired with such good aim that 7 of the troop fell dead. Their attack was unexpected. Since they were hidden, Pianeza's soldiers imagined there were ten times more Waldenses than there really were. They began to retreat. But Gianavello and his men, leaping from cover to cover, like mountain-goats, hung upon their rear firing with deadly accuracy with their bullets. The invaders were chased from the Valley of Rora by these 7 peasants, leaving 54 dead soldiers behind.

Gianavello well remembered the maxim enacted at the Council of Constance (December 9, 1413-April 22, 1418), "No faith is to be kept with heretics," which had been put into practice so many times in the Valleys. Gianavello knew that Pianeza was the agent of the "Council of Extirpation."

The next morning Gianavello was out, scanning with eagle-eyes the mountain paths leading into his valley. Soon he saw 600 men-at-arms, especially chosen for this difficult enterprise, ascending Mount Cassuleto. Gianavello had now mustered a little group of 18 men—12 of whom had muskets and swords, and 6 only had the sling. He divided these 18 men into 3 parties, each with 4 musketeers and 2 slingers. He posted them in a gulley (or narrow gorge) through which he saw the invaders must pass.

As soon as the wing of the enemy entered the gorge, a shower of bullets and stones from invisible hands saluted them. Every bullet and stone did its work. The first discharge brought down an officer and 12 men of the soldiers. Other volleys of bullets and stones were equally fatal. The soldiers cried, "all is lost, save yourselves!" Their flight was abrupt and sudden, since every bush and rock seemed to vomit forth deadly missiles. Thus a second humiliating and disgraceful retreat rid the Valley of Rora of these murderers.

Pianeza next organized a battalion of 800-900 men. The next morning this group made a rapid march on Rora, seized all the avenues leading into the valley, and chased the inhabitants to the caves in Monte Friolante. They also set fire to the homes of the Vaudois after plundering them.

Captain Joshua Gianavello, at the head of his little troop, saw that he was greatly outnumbered, so he waited for a more favorable moment to attack them. He waited until the soldiers were heavily loaded down with their booty of stolen goods, and driving before them the cattle of the Vaudois. He knelt down before his little band of 18 men, and prayed that God would give him a third deliverance. He then attacked the band of 800-900 soldiers. The spoilers turned and then fled uphill, in the hope of escaping into the Valley of the Pelice, throwing away their booty in their flight. When the soldiers had reached the pass and begun their descent, great stones were torn up and rolled after them, mingled with bullets and killed many of them, most of the rest fell off precipices as they tried to escape. The few who survived fled to Villaro.

The Marquis of Pianeza, instead of seeing in these events the finger of God, was only more inflamed with rage, and the more resolutely bent on the extirpation of every heretic from the Valley of Rora. He assembled all the available royal troops under his command, in order to surround the little territory. He had about 8,000 armed men ready to march against Rora.

But a certain captain Mario, who had distinguished himself in the Massacre at Bobbio was impatient and wished to take the entire glory of this massacre to himself. He would not wait the movement of the main body of 8,000 men, so he marched 2 hours ahead with 3 companies of regular troops, few of whom ever returned. They were routed by the 18 men of Gianavello, and in their retreat their ferocious leader—Captain Mario was precipitated over a rock cliff into a stream, and badly bruised. He was pulled out and carried to Lucerna, where he died 2 days later in great torment of body and mind. Of the 3 companies which he led on this fateful expedition, the Irish company (banned by Oliver Cromwell in England), all died.

The fury of Pianeza knew no bounds. His was with herdsmen had brought him nothing but disgrace, and the loss of his bravest soldiers. It was said, "The skin of every Vaudois cost him 15 of his best Piedmontese soldiers." He had lost hundreds of his best soldiers, and yet he had not been able to get even one of the little troop of Gianavello, dead or alive. Nevertheless, he resolved to continue the struggle, but with a much greater army. He assembled 10,000 men, and attacked Rora on 3 sides all at once.

Blood, burning, and plunder overwhelmed the little community. No distinction was made for age or sex. Happy were those who were killed instantly, thus escaping horrible indignities and tortures. The few spared from the sword were carried away as captives, and among these was the wife and 3 daughters of Gianavello.

There was now nothing more in the Valley of Rora for Gianavello to fight for. His village was a heap of ruins, his relatives had been killed with the sword, but he marched his little troop over the mountains to fight wherever God led them. Pianeza wrote him a letter exhorting him to renounce his heresy and save himself and his wife and 3 daughters. Otherwise, Pianeza would burn his wife and daughters, and torture him if he was ever caught.

Gianavello had saved from his family only his infant son. With the infant son on his shoulders, he went over the frozen Alps to Queyras, in the Valleys of the French

Protestants. He told people there of the awful massacre of his people. Indignation was raised, and he recruited quite a few brave men to join him. With this little band, he re-crossed the Alps a few weeks later to begin his second and more successful campaign.

When he arrived back in his Valleys, he was joined by Giaheri, who had been assembling a troop to avenge the massacre of their brethren. Giaheri, although very courageous, was humble, always giving to God the glory of his victories. He was well-versed in Scripture and very talented. The Massacre of 1655 had reduced the Vaudois race almost to extinction, and Gianavello and Giaheri could only collect 500 men to fight with them.

The army opposed to them in their Valleys at this time had from 15,000 to 20,000, consisting of trained and hand-picked soldiers. But the courage of these 2 men was based on faith. Nothing could withstand the fury of their attack. Post after post, and village after village was taken back from the Piedmontese army. Soon they drove the enemy from the upper valleys. Then they moved their way down to the Piedmontese plain with the same success and heroism. In nearly every battle they were victorious. Often at the end of a day's battle, there would be 1400 Piedmontese soldiers dead and only 6 or 7 Waldenses killed.

During all this time, tidings of the wrongs and cruelty of the government of Savoy against the Waldenses reached the Protestant States of Europe. They felt it was their clear duty to help them. Especially, Oliver Cromwell in England felt this way. He had already written the letter, composed by John Milton, to the Duke of Savoy. Now he wrote to Louis XIV, King of France, asking for his mediation with the Duke of Savoy, in behalf of the Vaudois.

The French King undertook mediation, but hurried it to a conclusion before the Protestant States ambassadors had arrived. King Louis XIV took the whole affair upon himself and concluded a lousy peace treaty on August 18, 1655. It was a very unfair treaty:

1. The Waldenses were stripped o their ancient possessions on the right bank of the Pelice, lying toward the plain of Piedmont
2. They were guaranteed liberty of worship within the new boundary
3. An amnesty was granted for all offences committed during the war
4. Captives were to be restored when claimed
5. They were to exempt from all taxes for 5 years

When this Treaty was published, it was found to contain two clauses that astonished the Protestant world:

1. In the preamble the Vaudois were called "rebels", whom it had pleased their prince to graciously receive back into favor
2. In the body of the Deed was an article empowering the French to construct a <u>fort above La Torre</u>. (This looked like a preparation for renewing the war.)

By this Treaty, the Protestant States were outwitted, their ambassadors duped, and the poor Vaudois were left as always in the power of the Duke of Savoy and the "Council For the Propagation of the Faith and The Extirpation of Heretics."

After the Great Massacre of 1655, the Church of the Valleys had rest from persecution for 30 years—at least relative rest. Often the Vaudois had to work in their

fields with their guns slung across their shoulders. Many of their chief men were sent into exile. Captain Gianavello and Pastor Leger had death sentences passed upon them. Gianavello had retired to Geneva—from where he continued to watch intensely what was happening to his people. Leger became Pastor of a congregation at Leyden (city in w. Netherlands in S. Holland on a branch of the lower Rhine River), where he crowned his life of work and suffering for the Gospel by writing a book, "History of the Churches of the Vaudois", a noble monument to his Church's martyr-heroism and his own Christian patriotism.

Now a new storm was approaching the Waldenses. On April 13, 1598, Henry IV (1533-1610), King of France (1589-1610), had signed the Edict of Nantes, registered in Parliament in Paris on February 25, 1599. It had been the great Charter of Protestant Liberties. But now, Henry IV's grandson, Louis XIV, The Great, was King of France. It was the year 1685, 87 years after the Edict of Nantes was signed. Louis XIV, the Grand Monarch (as he was called), was nearing the grave. He inquired of his priest-confessor, Pere de la Chaise, by what good deed as a king he might atone for his many sins as a man. He was told that he must extirpate Protestantism in France. There were some other factors as well, which prompted Louis XIV to do what he did. (See "The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes" by Henry M. Baird, Vol. I and II, 1895).

King Louis XIV bowed subserviently or compliantly before the shaven head of the priest, while Europe was trembling before his armies. He did as he was commanded. On October 17, 1685, he revoked the Edict of Nantes, a terrible blow to Protestantism. This gigantic crime inflicted terrible misery on the Protestants, and brought countless calamities and griefs on the the throne and nation of France.

Wishing for companionship in the bloody work of purging France from Protestantism, Louis XIV sent an ambassador to Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, with a request for him to exterminate the Waldenses, as he was doing to the Huguenots in France. Young Victor Amadeus, who was naturally humane was at that time very friendly with the Vaudois. They had just helped him win his late war with the Genoese at Genoa in NW Italy. He had even written them a recent letter of thanks. The Duke did not reply to the French ambassador, but the request was repeated—to which he gave an evasive answer. Finally, it was urged a third time, with a hint from the powerful Louis XIV that if it was not convenient for the Duke to purge his dominions of the Protestants, the King of France, Louis XIV, would do it for him with an army of 14,000 men, and he would keep the valleys for his pains.

This was too much for Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy. He immediately made a treaty with Louis XIV, the French King, in which Louis XIV promised an army to reduce the Vaudois to Roman obedience or to exterminate them.

On January 31, 1686, the following terrible edict was promulgated in the Valleys:

1. The Vaudois had to cease forever to exercise their religion.
2. They were forbidden to have religious meetings, under pain of death and losing all property.
3. All their ancient privileges were abolished.
4. All their churches and prayer-houses were to be razed to the ground.

5. All the Pastors and schoolmasters were required to either embrace Romanism or leave the country within 15 days, under pain of death and confiscation of goods.
6. All the children born, or to be born, were to be compulsorily trained up as Roman Catholics. Every newborn child was to be, within a week after its birth, brought to the parish priest, and admitted to the Roman Catholic Church—on pain of mother being whipped publicly with rods, and the father being a galley slave for 5 years.
7. All Vaudois Pastors were to abjure their doctrine, and would then receive a salary one-third greater.
8. All Protestant foreigners settled in Piedmont were ordered to either become Roman Catholics, or to leave the country within 15 days.
9. "By a special act of his great and paternal clemency, the sovereign will permit persons to sell, in this interval, the property the may have acquired in Piedmont, provided the sale be made to Roman Catholic purchasers."

This monstrous edict seemed like the death blow to the Vaudois as a Protestant people. Pleadings by Vaudois delegates to Turin, along with interceedings from Protestants in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, were of no avail. Shortly, the armies of France and Savoy arrived before the Valleys.

Gianavello was in exile in Geneva. Oliver Cromwell was dead, and an avowed papist filled the throne of Great Britain—Charles II (born May 29, 1630 and died February 6, 1685; King of England from 1660-1685).

Protestants were being attacked everywhere. France, Piedmont, and Italy were closing in around the Valleys, every path guarded and blocked, and an overwhelming force waited for the signal to massacre them. The Swiss envoys counseled the Vaudois to leave the Valleys. But they ultimately rejected the proposal to leave the Valleys.

On April 17, 1686, being Good Friday, they renewed their covenant, and on April 19, 1686, Easter Sunday, their Pastors dispensed to them the communion. This was the last time they partook of the Lord's Supper before their Great Dispersion.

On April 18, 1686, Monday, the Vaudois were attacked by a cmbined force of 15,000-20,000 men. In San Martino, they were attacked by the French army under General Catinat. The fighting lasted 10 hours, and ended in a complete defeat of the French who lost over 500 men, and wounded, while the Vaudois had lost only 2.

The Vaudois were tricked by telling them at different posts that their neighbors had all submitted, that this submission was universal, and that no one could stay alive if they fought. They were assured if they followed the example of the rest of the nation, all their ancient liberties would be left intact.

At last all the Valleys had submitted and layed down their arms. Then there was a terrible massacre in all their Valleys, similar in its horrors to the great butchery of 1655. About 3,000 or more perished. The rest of the nation, 12,000-15,000 souls were sent to various prisons and fortresses of Piedmont. Now the Valleys were, for the first time in their history, empty. The ancient lamp of truth burned no longer. The crops were unharvested, nothing was seen but dismantled forts and the blackened ruins of churches

and hamlets. All the Waldensian race that remained from the massacre was in prison in the dungeons of Piedmont.

They were treated terribly in prison. They had insufficient clothing and food, were fed fetid bread, putrid water to drink, exposed to the sun by day, to the cold at night. They had to sleep on straw so full of bugs that the stone floor was preferable. Disease and mortality was fearful.

When they were imprisoned they were about 14,000 healthy mountaineers. At last due to the intervention of the Swiss deputies, they were sent out a exiles to Switzerland—only about 3,000 skeletons crawled out.

After being in prison about 8 months, in December, 1686, they were thrust out of the prison in the middle of the winter to try to make it over the mountains to Switzerland. The snow and ice were piled high as they were commanded to rise up and cross the Alps, as in 1655. They were emaciated and sick, weakened by hunger, shivering from not enough clothing. They began their journey on that very day, for their enemies would permit them no delay. On the first day's march, 150 of them died. They struggled through blinding snow drifts and fearful whirlwinds on the mountains. That next night 86 died in the snowstorm.

The first company of these miserable exiles arrived at Geneva on December 25, 11686, after about 3 weeks on their journey. They were followed by small groups, one after the other, being let out of prison at different times. It was not until the end of February, 1687 (5 weeks later) that the last band of these emigrants reached the hospitable gates of Geneva. Some had their tongues so swollen they could not speak. Some died on the outskirts of town, some had frost-bitten limbs. Gianavello, still alive in Geneva, sent out to meet them on the border and took them to their homes.

RETURN TO THE VALLEYS

Now we open the bright page of the History of the Waldenses. About 3,000 Waldenses made it to Geneva, the feeble remnant of a population of 14,000-16,000. Geneva could not hold all the refugees. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV on October 17, 1685, had thrown thousands of French Protestants upon the hospitality of the Swiss. Now the arrival of the Italian Waldenses brought even heavier demands on the public and private charity of the Cantons (Swiss States). But Protestant Helvetia (Switzerland) welcomed the Waldenses just as warmly as they had the Huguenots from France.

Several German Princes opened their states to these exiles. But the influence of Louis XIV was then too powerful in Germany to permit their residence being altogether an agreeable one. There was talk of sending them in Holland ships and planting them at the Cape. This prospect of forever being separated from their Native land, dearer in exile than when they dwelt in it, caused them intolerable anguish.

After one and a half years in exile, they started asking themselves, was it not possible to reassemble their scattered colonies, go back to their Valleys and rekindle their ancient lamp again?

The Vaudois had sent spies to examine the condition of their Valleys, and they found the fields untilled, vines unpruned, and the ruins had not been raised up. It was almost as desolate as when they left 3 years before.

At last they could no longer wait to go back. The march back to their Valleys is one of the most wonderful exploits ever performed by any people. It is famous in history as "*La Rentree Gloriense."*

The day was fixed for beginning their expedition on June 10, 1688. They traveled from various areas of Switzerland along back roads by night, and assembled at Bex, a small town in the territory of Bern. Their secret march was soon known to the Senates of Zurich, Bern, and Geneva. Foreseeing that the departure of the exiles would compromise them with the Papacy, the authorities tried to prevent it. A boat loaded with arms for their use was seized in Lake Geneva. The Vaudois were stopped at the Bridge of St. Maurice, and their expedition was for the time stopped. To extinguish all hopes for their return to the Valleys, they were anew distributed all over Germany. But soon war broke out.

French troops over-ran the Palatinate (region in SW Germany once ruled by Courts Palatine of the Holy Roman Empire). The Vaudois living there, left ahead of them, dreading, not without reason, the soldiers of Louis XIV, and retook the road to Switzerland. The Protestant States pitying these poor exiles, tossed from country to country by political storms, settled them once more in their former allotments. Other political changes were taking place.

William III (William of Orange) (born November 4, 1650 and died March 8, 1702) was a Dutch Protestant. A grandson of Charles I (King of England from 1625-1649), he married his cousin Mary (born in 1662), the eldest daughter and heir of James II (King of England 1685-1688). James II, never made any secret of his being Roman Catholic. So when Charles II died in 1685, James II found himself a Catholic King in a fiercely Protestant country (England) in which Catholics were forbidden to hold any public office. Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, immediately led a

rebellion against James II, but was executed and the rebels severely punished at the bloody Assizes. People gave James II their loyal support until he went too far—first by allowing Catholic officers in the army, then by putting 7 Protestant bishops on trial for sedition. The throne of England was offered to William III of Orange and his wife Mary, daughter of James II. When James II's Catholicism was too much for the English in 1688, Parliament invited William and Mary to rule as a pair in place of her father. They accepted by constitutional agreement, rather than by divine right. James II, invaded Ireland to try and win his throne back, but was decisively beaten by his son-in-law, William III of Orange at the Boyne in 1690. James II was exiled to France, where he died in 1701 at age 68.

Mary was large, William III was small, they had no children, and he preferred male company but loved her and they were a good match. Mary supported her husband's insistence that he should be King rather than merely consort. She showed little sympathy for her father, whose throne she had usurped, mostly because her father was Catholic and she preferred the Calvinism of Holland, and a stricter moral code of the court. Mary died of smallpox at age 32. William III was with her when she died, and was so devastated he feared he would die too or lose his mind. He never remarried.

William III of Orange, was a lifelong enemy of the mighty Louis XIV of France, making him the Protestant champion of Europe. He died at age 52, a few days after his horse stumbled over a mole-hill, on March 8, 1702.

The Vaudois in Switzerland saw Louis XIV attacked by the Emperor, and humiliated by the Dutch. They say their own prince, Victor Amadeus, withdraw his soldiers from Savoy, so he could defend Piedmont. Encouraged by these events, the Vaudois began again to arrange a second time for their departure to return to the Valleys of Northern Italy.

The Vaudois began to arrange for a second attempt at departing to go back to Italy to the Waldensian Valleys. The final meeting was scheduled for August 16, 1689. The Waldenses decided to meet in the woods on the Northern shore of Lake Geneva (also called Lake Leman—a lake 45 miles long on the border between SW Switzerland and E. France, traversed by the Rhone River. The Rhone River is 500 miles long, rising in the Alps and flowing through Lake Geneva into the Gulf of Lions inlet of the Mediterranean Sea, thus flowing through Switzerland and France). For days before they had converged in scattered bands and by secret marches to avoid attracting attention..

On August 16, 1689, they gathered together in the woods. After a solemn prayer asking for God to go with them, they crossed in boats across the lake by starlight. Curiosity had drawn lots of people to that part of the lake, and these sightseeing boats actually helped their escape across the lake.

At this crisis, God led a distinguished man to lead these 800 fighting men who were setting out for their native Northern Italian Alps. This man was Henri Arnaud. He at first had been a Pastor, but had been forced to leave the Waldensian Valleys, and had served in the armies of the Prince of Orange. He was pious, decisive, and courageous. The soldiers respected and listened to him preach from the pulpit, but also as he gave them orders on the battlefield.

When these 800 Vaudois arrived on the Southern shore of Lake Geneva, they knelt in prayer, then began their march through a country full of enemies. They had to

fight their way over huge snow-clad mountains. Arnaud arranged his little army into 3 companies—an advance guard, a center, and a rear-guard.

They seized some chief men as hostages from the areas of Savoy they went through (Alps in SE France and SW Switzerland and N. Italy), but always treated them kindly. They fought a few skirmishes but mostly were unopposed, for the terror of God had fallen on the people of Savoy. They climbed the Alps next to Mount Blanc, sometimes waist-deep in snow. It was very dangerous due to steep precipices and treacherous glaciers. They were soaked with rain. Their scanty provisions were replenished by shepherds of the mountains—who brought them bread and cheese, and let them stay in their huts at night. At every stage of their trip they got new hostages (sometimes a Capuchian monk, or an influential landlord).

When they got down into the Dora Valley, they met a fairly large army of over 2500 French soldiers with some other groups of armed followers. They got caught between French soldiers in front and at their rear. They charged straight ahead surprising and confounding the French soldiers, and after 2 hours of fighting they completely routed the French army led by the Marquis de Larrey, who unsuccessfully tried to rally his men. He was wounded in the fighting. When the moon rose up that night, here were seen 600 French soldiers laying dead on the ground, besides officers. Strewn all over the battlefield were arms, military stores and ammunition and provisions. They badly needed the weapons and food. What they could not take with them they piled up and burned. In this great victory, the Waldenses lost only 15 men killed, and 12 wounded.

Although exhausted, they were afraid to stay there, so they began climbing the mountains again. The next morning at sunrise, Henri Arnaud pointed out to the assembled Waldensian fighters the mountain-tops of their own land. In the early morning sunrise, on Mount Sci they worshipped God. They humbled themselves before God, confessing their sins and praising God for their many deliverances. It had been three and a half years since they crossed the Alps, a crowd of skeleton exiles, worn by sickness and confinement. Now they were returning a marshaled army, victorious over the French army, and ready to encounter the Piedmont army.

When they reached the San Martino Valley about 12 days after leaving the shores of Lake Geneva (Lake Leman), they gathered at Balsiglia, the first Vaudois village they entered. They found that fatigue, desertion and battle had reduced their number from 800 to 700 men.

The first Sunday after their return was spent in the Village of Prali. The only church left standing was in Prali, all the others were in ruins. They resolved to re-start that very day their ancient and Scriptural worship. After they purged their church of its popish ornaments, one half o the little army laid down their arms at the door, entered the church o worship and listen to Henri Arnaud, the soldier-pastor, preach to them, while the other half of their army stood outside the church—too small to contain them all. Henri Arnaud stood on a table placed in the porch of the church while he was preaching. They began worship by chanting Psalm 74. Henri Arnaud preached from the texts in Psalm 129. When he had finished preaching, all 700 soldiers chanted the whole Psalm 129. they remembered that it was at Prali where a horrible outrage had been done at the time of their exile. The Pastor of Prali, M. Leidet, a very pious man, had been discovered by soldiers as he was praying under a rock. They had dragged him forth, tortured and

mutilated him, and then hanged him. His last words were, "Lord Jesus, Receive my spirit."

built similar entrenchments on each of the 3 peaks that It was surely appropriate that after the silence of 3 ½ years, during which the persecutor's rage had forbidden the preaching of the glorious Gospel, that its re-opening should take place in the pulpit of the martyred M. Leidet.

Although they had entered their land again, they still had to face a large, strong army of Piedmont, aided by the French, but Henri Arnaud had courage and faith.

The 700 Vaudois fighters now climbed the Col Julien, which separates Prali from the Lucerna Valley. Near the summit of the pass of Col Julien, Piedmontese soldiers stationed there challenged them, "Come on ye Barebets; we guard the pass, and there are 3,000 of us!" The Vaudois fighters did come on, and in a moment put the Piedmontese garrison to flight. In the evacuated camp, the Vaudois found lots of ammunition and provisions which they badly needed. They went down the slopes, surprised and took the town of Bobbio. They drove out the popish inhabitants to whom it had been turned over, and took possession of their ancient dwellings. They rested here about a week, then moved on to Villaro, halfway between Bobbio and La Torre. They stormed Villaro, driving away its new inhabitants. But the next day, a large reinforcement of regular troops came up and they had to abandon Villaro and go back to Bobbio. Now the Vaudois became 2 bands and or many weeks waged a sort of guerilla war in the mountains. France on one side, and Piedmont on the other side, poured in soldiers, in the hope of exterminating this handful of warriors. They won daily marvelous victories against the enemy, while suffering great privations and hardships.

But although they always won, their ranks were rapidly thinning. Even though they killed 100 men of the enemy for every one they lost, the Piedmontese could recruit more soldiers, but the Vaudois could not. Now low on ammunition and food, except what they took from their enemies, and with winter coming near, a war council was held, and the decided to repair to the Valley of San Martino, and entrench themselves on La Balsiglia Valley.

This brings us to the last heroic stand of the exiles. The Balsiglia Valley is on the western slope of Mt. San Martino; it is about 2 miles wide and 5 miles long, with a very rich meadow floor. Its walls are mountains, wonderfully hung with terraces with flowers and fruits, and protected above by splintered cliffs and peaks. On the western end, this Valley is closed by the naked face of a perpendicular mountain, down which the Germagnasca Torrent dashes in a flood of silver.

La Balsiglia Mountain has 4 colossal towering rock peaks covered with firs that rise up into the clouds. It was on the terraces of this mountain that Henri Arnaud, with his patriot warriors, pitched his camp in the storms of winter, and yet darker tempests of a furious and armed bigotry. Now Henri Arnaud's army was reduced to 400 (50% of the original 800 fighters). They dug in high up on the mountain within earth walls and ditches; they erected covered ways, dug out about 80 cellars in the rock to hold provisions, and build huts as temporary barracks. Three springs gushing out of the rock supplied them with water. Theyrose about them, so that if one were taken, they could climb to the next (there were 4 altogether).

Only 3 days passed until 4 battalions of the French army arrived, and enclosed the Balsiglia on every side.

On October 29, an assault was made by the French, but it was repulsed with great slaughter of the French and not one man of the Vaudois was killed. Since the first winter snow was falling, the French General thought it was best to postpone the task of capturing Balsiglia until spring. On his way out of that area, he began his retreat by destroying all the corn which the Vaudois had collected and stored in the Villages.

All throughout that winter of 1689-1690, the Vaudois remained in their mountain fortress, resting and preparing for the promised return of the French. Henri Arnaud raised an altar from which he conducted worship morning and night. Beside daily devotions, he preached 2 sermons a week (one on Sunday, and one on Thursday). He also administered the Lord's Supper at stated times.

Foraging parties brought in wine, chestnuts, apples and other fruits. A strong detachment made an incursion into the French Valleys of Pragelas and Queyras and returned with salt, butter, about a 100 head of sheep, and a few oxen. They didn't realize it yet, but the snow had fallen earlier that year and covered the grain and corn before it could be harvested. This had protected much of it from being destroyed by their enemies.

At the foot of Mt. Balsiglia on the Germagnasca Torrent was a little mill. Three years before, M. Tron-Poulat (the owner) when going into exile with his brethren, threw the mill-stone into the river, thinking it might be needed in the future. Now they looked for the mill-stone and discovered it, drew it out of the stream and got the mill working again. There was another mill further away at the entrance o the Valley—which the Vaudois had access to wen the enemy was in the immediate area of the first mill by Balsiglia.

The armies of France and Piedmont appeared with the return of spring—the combined force was 22,000 (10,000 French and 12,000 Piedmontese). The troops were commanded by a celebrated lieutenant-general of the armies of France, De Catinat.

The 400 Waldenses looked down from their "camp of rock" on the Valley beneath them, and saw it glittering with steel by day, and shining with campfires at night.

De Catinat thought that it would take him a single day to capture the Waldenses. Since he considered the victory already won, he ordered 400 ropes to be sent along with the soldiers, in order to hang at once the 400 Waldenses. He had ordered the inhabitants of Pinerolo to prepare a celebration with fireworks to grace his return from the campaign.

The French army headquarters was at Great Passat (which had about 30 huts, on a great ledge of rock that juts out from Mount Guinevert, about 800 feet above the stream across from Balsglia. On the flanks of this rocky ledge are still seen today the ruts worn by the cannon and baggage wagons of the French army.

De Catinat ordered the assault on May 1, 1690. He had to make the attack up the side of Galsiglia up a gradual slope with a stream trickling down. Every other side was a wall of rock. Five hundred hand-picked men, backed by 7,000 musketeers advanced to storm the fortress. They threw themselves at the palisades (a fence of stakes pointed at the top and set very close together as a defense). This palisades or barricade was made of great trunks, fastened with mighty boulders. Massed behind this defense were the Vaudois (the younger men loading the muskets for the veteran sharpshooters). Henri Arnaud had taken great care to fortify the strong palisades. These veteran Vaudois took steady aim, while the enemy were falling in dozens at every volley. The assailants, started to waiver, and the Waldensians made a fierce sally (action of suddenly bursting forth or rushing out), swords in hand, and cut down those who had not been shot. Out of

the 500 hand-picked soldiers, only a few lived to get back to the main body of soldiers, which had seen them get routed from their position, down in the Valley. Incredible as it may seem, not a single Vaudois was killed or wounded. The fireworks which De Catinat had ordered the inhabitants of Pinerolo to have ready for his celebration were not needed that night.

The French finally brought up cannon 2 weeks later on May 14, and the last and grand assault was made. All day Cannon fired Cannon-balls at the Waldenses, and by night-fall the ramparts (protective barriers) of the Waldenses were in ruins. The saw that they could not maintain their defense any longer. The seemed to face certain destruction.

Behind them rose unscalable precipices, and below them lay the Valley swarming with enemies. But the hour of their extremity was the time of God's opportunity. A mountain mist began to gather on the summit of the mountains around them. They recognized this old mantle of protection that had been wrapped around their fathers in the hour of their peril. The mist crept lower and lower on the great mountains. It touched the very top of Mt. Balsiglia. Then it rolloed downward in its white fleecy billows, and hung in sheltering folds around the war-battered fortress and its handful of heroic defenders. The mist kept its downward course, and then all was dark. A hellish gloom filled the gorge of San Martino.

The Waldensian Captain Poulat was a native these parts, and told them to be of good courage, for he knew the paths, and would conduct them past the French and Piedmontese lines, by a path known only to himself.

Crawling on their hands and knees, and passing close to the French sentinels, yet hidden from them by the mist, they descended frightful precipices, and made their escape.

When day broke, every eye on the plain below turned to look at the Balsiglia. They were amazed to see the Mountain abandoned. The Vaudois had escaped and gone.

For several days they wandered from hill to hill, or hid in the woods suffering great privations. Finally they were able to reach Pra del Tor. To their amazement and joy, on arriving at this celebrated and hallowed spot they found deputies from their prince, Victor Amedeus, Duke of Savoy, waiting for them with an overture of peace.

A league or coalition, including Germany, Great Britain, Holland, and Spain, had been formed to check the ambitions of France by Louis XIV. Three days had been given to Victor Amedeus to decide to which side he would join himself—the Leaguers (in Coalition) or Louis XIV. He resolved to break with Louis XIV and take part in the Coalition. So, Victor Amedeus wanted to put the Vaudois in charge of the Alps.

The Vaudois accepted the offer of peace. Their towns were restored, the lands were given back to them. Their churches were re-opened for Protestant worship. Their brethren still in prison in Turin were freed, and the Vaudois living in Germany were given passports to return to their homes in the Alps.

Thus, after a dreary interval of 3 ½ years, the Valleys were once again peopled with the ancient race of Vaudois, and the land resounded with their songs. This famous period of the history of the Vaudois was similar to the sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness and their arrival in the Promised Land.

With this second planting of the Vaudois in their Valleys, the period of their great persecutions may be said to have come to an end. They were not completely free, and were still subject to petty oppressions. From time to time, little parties of Jesuits would appear in their Valleys. The Vaudois lived in continual apprehension of having the few

privileges which had been conceded them swept away. On one occasion they were actually threatened with a second expatriation.

Rome, the real author of all their calamities and troubles, still meditated their extermination. Rome had entered a formal protest against their rehabilitation. Rome let the Duke of Savoy know that to be a friend of the Vaudois was to be an enemy of the Pope.

Pope Innocent XII declared on August 19, 1694, that the edict of the Duke of Savoy re-establishing the Vaudois was null and void, and he enjoined his Inquisitors to pay no attention to it in their pursuit of heretics. Pope Innocent XII (Antonio Pignatelli) was elected Pope on July 15, 1691 and died September 27, 1700.

Nevertheless, their condition was tolerable compared to what they had gone through. Although few in number and very poor, they still had recuperative power. Their brethren in England and Germany hastened to help them re-organize their Church. William III of England incorporated a Vaudois regiment at his own expense. Due to this regiment the Duke of Savoy was not utterly overwhelmed in his wars with his former ally, Louis XIV, King of France.

In 1692, there were 12 churches in the Valleys, but they couldn't each afford a Pastor. Mary of England, the Consort of William III, granted the Vaudois a "Royal Subsidy" to provide Pastors and schoolmasters, and this grant was increased as their numbers of parishes increased, until it reached the annual sum of 550 pounds.

In 1770, they took up a collection in England, which permitted them to increase the Pastors' salaries—this was called the "National Subsidy." The States-General of Holland also made collections for salaries to schoolmasters and Pastors, and for founding of Latin school. The Protestant Cantons (States) of Switzerland gave bursaries to students from the Valleys at their academies—one at Basle, five at Lausanne, and two at Geneva.

The policy of the Court at Turin towards the Waldenses changed with the shiftings in the great current of European politics. Once, when the influence of the Vatican was increasing, Henri Arnaud (who so gloriously had led the Waldenses back to their ancient inheritance) was banished from the Valleys along with other Waldensian patriotic leaders. William III of England tried to get him to go to England, but Arnaud retired to Schoenberg, where he spent his last years in the humble and affectionate discharge of Pastoral duties among his expatriated countrymen. Arnaud died in 1721 at the age of 80.

The spiritual condition of the Vaudois languished. In 1789 the French Revolution introduced a new political age. Nations were convulsed, thrones and altars were laid prostrate. The Vaudois were once again under the dominion of France. This brought more civil rights, and better social conditions, but unfortunately with the friendship of France came the poison of its literature. Voltairianism was a greater threat to the Church of the Alps than all the persecutions of the previous centuries.

At the Restoration they were given back to their former Sovereign, the Duke of Saxony, and they returned to their ancient restrictions, although there were no more bloody persecutions.

Their final emancipation or great deliverance rose on the Waldenses as a day rises on the earth—by slow stages:

1. They were visited by the apostolic Felix Neff in 1805.

2. They were visited by Dr. William Stephen Gilly in 1828. The result of his visit was the erection of a College at La Torre, or the instruction of youth and the training of ministers, and a hospital for the sick. His visit also awakened general interest on behalf of the Waldenses in England.
3. Another friend stood up to befriend the Waldenss, General Beckwith. He was a young soldier, brave and chivalrous and ambitious of glory. He fought at the battle of Waterloo (a town in c. Belgium, s. of Brussels) until the enemy was in full retreat and the sun was going down. A fleeing soldier shot a long shot at him and his leg was hopelessly shattered by the bullet. Beckwith passed months upon a bed of pain, during which he pulled out a neglected Bible, and began to read and study it. He had laid down, a soldier of the sword, but rose up a true knight of the cross. One day in 1827, he paid a visit to Apsley House, and while he waited for the Duke, he took up a book which was lying on the table. It was Dr. Gilly's narrative of his visit to the Valleys of the Waldenses. Beckwith felt himself drawn irresistibly to these people with whose wonderful history this book made him acquainted for the first time. He lived among them as a father—as a king. He devoted his fortune to them, he built schools, churches, and parsonages. He provided improved schoolbooks, and suggested better modes of teaching. Above all, he tried to quicken their spiritual life. He taught them how to respond to the requirements of modern times. He widened their vision of service to all of Italy. He was their advocate at the Court of Turin. All through the Valleys he was revered as a father. He was commonly called, "The Benefactor of the Vaudois."

But despite the efforts of Gilly and Beckwith, and the growing spirit of toleration, the Waldenses continued to groan under a load of political and social problems.

They were still a proscribed race. Their territory was almost yearly shrinking. They could not own or even farm or work a foot of land beyond their own boundary. They could only bury their dead in their Valleys. They were not permitted to erect a tombstone above their graves, or even to enclose their graveyards with a wall. They were shut out from all the learned professions. They could not be bankers, physicians or lawyers—only working their herds or tending their vines. If they emigrated to Piedmont, they were permitted only to be domestic servants.

There were forbidden to have printing presses in their towns. The few Bibles, catechisms, or hymn books they had were printed abroad, chiefly in Great Britain. When these books arrived at La Torre, the Moderator had to sign before the Reviser-in-Chief that not one of these books could be sold, or even lent, to a Roman Catholic. They were forbidden to evangelize or make converts. But the priests had full liberty to enter their Valleys and proselytize. If a boy of 12 or a girl of 10 professed willingness to enter a Roman Church, they were to be taken from their parents, so that they with more freedom could carry out their intentions.

They could only marry among their own people. They could not erect a sanctuary except on the soil of their own territory. They could not take any degree in any of the colleges of Piedmont.

In short, they were denied the duties, rights, and privileges that constitute life. They were reduced as nearly as possible to simple existence. One great exception—granted to them as a favor, not as a right, was the liberty of Protestant worship within their territorial limits.

The Revolution of 1848 overthrew all these restrictions—they fell in one day. The Waldensian Church became the door by which freedom of conscience entered Italy.

NAMES OF IMPORTANT CHARACTERS IN THIS STORY:

Pierre Robert, (known as Olivetano

- **From Noyon in Picardy, in n. France**
- **A cousin of Jean Calvin**
- **Gave a new translation of the Bible, printed in 1535**

Emanuele Filiberto (Emmannuel Philibert)

- **Duke of Savoy**

Vittorio Amedeo, II

- **Duke of Savoy in 1686-96**

Enrico Arnaud

- **Waldensian Pastor and military leader who led out in the "Glorious Return to the Valleys"**

Charles Beckwith

- **"English General with the wooden leg" who helped the Waldenses**

Carlo Alberto

- **Issued special law February 17, 1848 making the Waldenses free citizens**

Giosue Gianavello (Joshua Gianavello)

- **Organized the popular defense against the troops of Savoy in 1655**

Val di San Martino—today if known as Val di Germanasca