
Baptists in History.

By Rev. W. P. HARVEY, D.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

The following timely sermon was preached by Dr. W. P. Harvey, in the Walnut Street church, on July the 3d, 1892. The endorsement of it by such a church will give it additional influence with those who may doubt the preservation of the church. This doubt may have originated from the current use of the inappropriate term "succession." Christ does not perpetuate his church, as kings and popes are perpetuated, by succession, but in a way that would destroy kings and popes—by *multiplication*. One church does not die that another may succeed it. Those who use the term "church succession," do not mean to convey the common idea so incorrect and hence so offensive to good and wise brethren; and hence Baptists appear to many to be divided on this important feature of the church question. The *fact* of church perpetuity is believed by all, and ecclesiastical historians have aimed to give

the history of the church in all the centuries. Baptists may differ also as to the sufficiency of the *proof*, but the *fact* cannot be doubted without reflecting on the *veracity* of Him who said: "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Does not this doubt also reflect on the *power* of Him who promised, and who is able also to perform, and who purposed that there should be "glory in the church and in Christ Jesus THROUGHOUT all generations for ever and for ever?"—Eph. 3:20,21.

If there has been a generation in which there was no glory in the church, *then*, there was no glory in Christ Jesus, for Christ and his church stand or fall together. The *ipse dixit* of Christ was not to save his *saints* from hades, nor that his *doctrines* should not be prevailed against, but He pledged His power and veracity in behalf of His *church*, which is His body, His betrothed bride, bought with His blood (Acts 20:28) and guarded by His power. When the wrath of "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" was kindled against her, there was a place prepared of God where she should be nour-

ished, and where she should prophesy clothed in sackcloth, and where the remnant of her seed could keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus. And when the storm of persecution was passed, she came up out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her beloved, having the everlasting gospel to preach to all the nations of the earth.

While some may cast reflecting doubts on His veracity and power, there are others who compromise the Scripture ideal church, to favor the imaginary church of modern times, and thus overthrow the faith of some.

If we enquire of the Lord what He meant by "church" in His first use of the term, his other twenty-one utterances should satisfy the most skeptical. In nine out of ten times where He used "church" in the singular number, it is certain, that he used it in the common congregational sense. And, as if to prevent us from ever enlarging on this congregational idea, *twelve times* he spoke of more saints than are in one congregation, and not a single time did he stretch the singular, "church," to take them all in, but in each case He

used the plural, "churches." So His twenty-one succeeding utterances should be infallible proof of His meaning in the first.

Then the true idea is, that He would organize a business-doing body on principles that would make it indestructible from outside forces, and that would admit of its perpetuity, not by succession or enlargement, but by multiplication.

Paul made havoc of the church at Jerusalem, but the scattered members went everywhere preaching the word, and organizing themselves and their converts into churches like the first, and so by persecution the church at Jerusalem was multiplied. This is the true principle of church perpetuity.

I am glad the sermon was preached, and that by one so prominent and faithful as our Brother Harvey. I am glad it was preached in so prominent a church as Walnut Street, the leading church of the South, and that it was published in the *Courier-Journal* the next day, and above all, I am glad that its publication was called for in tract form. I heartily commend it to all the world, and am sure that

a right reading of it will “help them much who believe through grace,” and are baptized according to His commandment, and who are striving to “keep all things whatsoever” He delivered unto them. To such executors of His commission He pledged His “all power,” and continued presence, in all the days, even to the end of the age.

J. B. MOODY.

OWENTON, KY.

P R E F A C E .

On the first Sunday in July Dr. Harvey preached this sermon in the Walnut Street church, in this city. The church, in a regular meeting, on the 13th, appointed Brethren W. Harrison, A. Peter and W. H. Whitsitt a committee to see Dr. Harvey and request a copy of the sermon for publication as a tract.

On the second Sunday in July this sermon was preached to the Harrodsburg church, and that church, by a unanimous vote, requested its publication as a tract.

Three wealthy and generous Baptists in this city pay for the publication of the tract and give the proceeds to the Centennial Fund. The price, by mail, is five cents; one cent pays the postage, and four cents is given to the Centennial Committee.

BAPTISTS IN HISTORY.

Text: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following. For this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death."—Ps. 48:12,13,14.

HISTORY is the medium through which the ancestor transmits his achievements to posterity. It is from this source that the living are benefited by the experience of past generations.

The Southern Baptist Convention, at its recent session in Atlanta, Ga., instructed the Foreign Mission Board to send one hundred missionaries into the Foreign field this year, and recommended the raising of \$250,000 for a permanent fund, \$125,000 for the Foreign Mission Board and \$125,000 for the Home Mission Board. This \$250,000 is in addition to our regular contributions. Kentucky's quota of this is \$30,500. We are asked for the regular work, for \$33,000, or in all, \$63,500.

The Convention commemorates 1892 as the Centennial of Modern Missions, and placed your honored pastor as chairman of the Centennial Committee.

Walnut Street Church is looked to as an example by the churches, not only in Kentucky, but throughout the bounds of our Southern Baptist Convention.

May I be permitted to-day to recall what God has done for us as a people; and what we have been enabled to do and suffer for His cause, in order to excite your gratitude, that you may fully come up to the measure of duty this Centennial year.

In doing this, we would not be understood as underestimating or overlooking the great work done by others. Thank God for every agency, wherever and by whomsoever, that is being used for the hastening of His coming.

THE ORIGIN OF BAPTISTS.

History points to the origin of the various denominations of Christians, and, in regard to their respective founders, there is no controversy; but remarkable enough there is no historic account of the origin of Baptists this side of the apostolic age;

and it is the belief of Baptists in every country that they originated with Christ and his apostles. We are aware that some modern historians claim less. This is not strange, since even Protestant writers palliate the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and there are scientific men who repudiate the law of gravitation. The ambition to abandon "beaten tracks" and to appear original, learned and liberal, does make even some specialists reckless, when dealing with what has been considered as fixed. The more sacred, the more inviting, to the self-complacent, and self-styled "higher critic," whose mission is to destroy.

History from the beginning speaks of believers holding similar doctrines, as existing and being persecuted. The Baptists of America deny that they originated with Roger Williams, though as a Baptist we are proud of his achievements.

The English Baptists deny that John Smith was their founder. The Welsh Baptists contend that they received their creed in the first century from those who had obtained it direct from the apostles.

The Dutch Baptists trace their origin to

the same source. The German Baptists maintain that they are older than the Reformation. I quote from Mosheim: "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists." * * * "The origin of the Anabaptists is hid in the depths of antiquity, and it is extremely difficult to ascertain." I speak of Anabaptists as Baptists. There were different sects, differing widely on some points. There may have been those with whom Baptists of the present day could not be identified; but the fact remains that Anabaptists and Baptists are spoken of as the same people by the greatest authorities who have written on the subject; and most of their creeds that have come down to us are Baptistic. When higher critics prove the Bible is not inspired, and when Donnelly proves that Lord Bacon wrote Shakespeare, then some one may prove that Anabaptists were not Baptists.

Zwingle, the Swiss reformer and contemporary of Luther, says: "The institution of Anabaptists is no novelty, but for thirteen

hundred years has caused great trouble to the church." In 1819, the King of Holland appointed Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in the University of Groningen, and Rev. J. J. Dermout, Chaplain to the King, both learned men and members of the Dutch Reformed church, to prepare a history of their church. In the authentic volume which they prepared and published at Breda, they devote one chapter to the Baptists, in which they make the following statement: "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times, Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin.

"On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages.

"The perfectly correct, external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth disputed by the Romish church, that the Reformation, brought about in the sixteenth century,

was in the highest degree necessary; and, at the same time, goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics, that their communion is the most ancient."

"Let it be remembered," says Dr. Wheaton Smith, "that these learned men were not Baptists, that they proclaimed the result of their diligent research in the ear of a king, who listened unwillingly to their conclusions.

"Let it be remembered that, as a result of their investigation, the Government of Holland offered to the Baptist churches in the kingdom the support of the State; and true to their principles they declined it."

Sir Isaac Newton says, as quoted in Appleton's Encyclopedia: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized with the church at Rome."

I now quote from Mr. Alexander Campbell, in his debate with McCalla, page 378: "From the apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists and their practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced."

This testimony is of the highest order,

and refutes the assertion sometimes made by men who, no doubt, are sincere but lacking in information, that Baptists originated at Munster in 1534.

The Munster rioters were composed of Romanists and many non-professors, and a few who repudiated Infant Baptism. Menno, the greatest Baptist of those times, denounced their conduct as "against the spirit and word and example of Christ." Again Menno says: "I warned every man against the Munster abominations in regard to a king, to polygamy, to a worldly kingdom, to a sword, etc., most faithfully."

In the language of Dr. Brown: "It is now too late in the day to confound this primitive people with the Munster sect, because both were called by their enemies, Anabaptists. As well confound the Baptists of the United States with the Mormons of Salt Lake. I thought it proper to note this; although no man of intelligence and candor believes that Baptists so originated. The Baptists had been in existence full fifteen hundred years when Bockold, Mathys and their frantic followers commenced their career of folly

and crime. Munster was a German forest where the Saxon chased the fierce wild boar, when the Master and His disciples laid the foundation of our history. The blood of that Caesar who drove Ariovistus to the Danube was not yet extinct in the veins of Nero, when Baptists were clustering in the vales of Thessaly and Tempe, and among the hills of Rome. The fading light of letters and of art still played in lingering beauty on the marble steps of the Acropolis, when hundreds of Athenian and Corinthian believers were buried with Christ in baptism.”

DISTINCTIVE BAPTIST PRINCIPLES.

1. Jesus Christ—Lord and Master—our only lawgiver.
2. The Bible the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
3. The famous five points of Calvinism, which Mr. Spurgeon called “the five rays of the great star of light.”
4. Converted church membership.
5. Baptism of believers only.
6. Immersion in water in the name of the Trinity, the only valid baptism.
7. Each church a distinct and independent body having supreme authority.

8. Complete separation of church and State.

These cardinal truths have encountered the opposition of "the world, the flesh and the devil."

Baptists of all ages have been animated and dominated by a conquering faith in the sublime destiny and ultimate triumph of their principles. Baptists all over Europe hailed with joy the dawn of the Reformation, hoping that the day of their jubilee was at hand.

They emerged from the "deserts and mountains, and the dens and the caves of the earth," their hiding places, where centuries of proscription and cruelty had driven them, only to be disappointed.

Romanists and Protestants hated each other like Jews and Samaritans; but they were united, and vied with each other, in treating Baptists as Ishmaelites, and in devising means for the extermination of their principles.

PERSECUTIONS IN EUROPE.

In 1526, death by drowning and at the stake was the fate of Baptists in Switzerland. Those who were not apprehended es-

caped to Moravia, where for a season they were tolerated. Finally King Ferdinand was persuaded to banish them, and only a few days were given them to leave his dominions.

“It was summer; harvest was near, and the vintage would follow soon; and humanity would have dictated that even if justice demanded the banishment of these men, they should have opportunity of gathering the produce of their labors, and so be provided with the means of sustenance for their families during the approaching winter. But they were ordered to leave in three weeks and three days on pain of death.”—Cramp, page 267.

“Without leaving one murmur on record, in solemn, silent submission to the Power that governs the universe, and causes all things to work for good, they packed up and departed.

“In several hundred wagons they conveyed their sick, their innocent new-born infants at the breast of their weeping mothers, and their decrepid parents, whose work was done, and whose silvery locks told every one that they wanted only the solace of the grave. At the frontier they

filed off, some to Walachia, and others to Transylvania, Hungary and Poland. Greater, far greater, for their virtues than Ferdinand for all his titles and all his glory.’’

Zwingle was at first favorably inclined towards them; but with their views of the separation of church and State, he could not agree; and he turned against them. Some of the leaders were whipped and banished; some were drowned; others were imprisoned in loathsome dungeons; while others were beheaded, and many fled the country.

From Holland the persecuted Baptists fled to England, soon to learn to their sorrow that Henry VIII. had no toleration for them. He issued a proclamation, giving them twelve days to quit his kingdom, on pain of death if they remained longer. In the next few years as many as twenty-six were burned at the stake.

The Elector of Hesse wrote commending the zeal of Henry VIII.: ‘‘There are no rulers in Germany, whether they are Papists or Protestants, that do suffer these men, if they come into their hands. All men punish them quickly.’’ Hesse, in his

Life of Zwingle, says: "Their morality was rigid, their exterior simple; they disdained riches, or affected to do so; and their austere demeanor inspired the multitude with reverence, at the same time that their doctrines seduced them."

Froude, the historian, says of these people: "The details are gone—their names are gone. Poor Hollanders they were, and that is all. Scarcely the fact seemed worth mention, so shortly is it told in a passing paragraph. For them no Europe was agitated, no courts were ordered into mourning, no royal hearts trembled with indignation. At their death the world looked on complacent, indifferent, or exulting. Yet here, too, out of twenty-five poor men and women were found fourteen who, by no terror of stake or torture, could be tempted to say they believed what they did not believe. History for them has no word of praise; yet they, too, were not giving their blood in vain. Their lives might have been as useless as the lives of most of us. In their death they assisted to pay the purchase-money for England's freedom."

The cruel hatred of this "sect every-

where spoken against," was further shown by excluding them from Acts of General Pardon, published in 1538, '40 and '50. "Thieves and vagabonds shared the royal favor, but Baptists were excepted." Even Barabbas, the thief and murderer, had friends, but Christ had none to ask for his release. Under Bloody Mary, a large portion of blood that flowed was from Baptist veins. Queen Elizabeth followed the example of her wicked father, and began her reign by giving Baptists twenty days to leave her realm. Under her warrant, Baptists were burned at the stake at Smithfield. For two hundred years, according to the records of the courts of England, Baptists were persecuted.

Mosheim, page 493: "In almost all countries of Europe an unspeakable number of these unhappy wretches preferred death in its worst forms to a retraction of their errors. Neither the view of the flames that were kindled to consume them, nor the ignominy of the gibbet, nor the terrors of the sword could shake their invincible, but ill-placed constancy, or make them abandon tenets that appeared dearer to them than life and all its enjoyments."

In 1660, John Bunyan, for preaching Baptist doctrine, was put into Bedford jail, and there he suffered for twelve long years. In the course of time he died and was buried; and men thought it was the last of the "miserable old tinker." But after the lapse of two hundred years, the descendants of the men who put him in jail, built a monument of brass to the memory of John Bunyan; and the great Dean of Westminster delivered a eulogy; and the world pays homage to the man who wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* in Bedford jail.

BAPTIST PERSECUTIONS IN AMERICA.

I quote from Tract, "Indebtedness of the World to Baptists," by Rev. Dr. Lasher, editor *Journal and Messenger*:

"In 1636, just one hundred years after the burning of the Dutch Baptists in London, Roger Williams, who was reared in the church of England, and a graduate of one of the Colleges of the chief University, and a minister of the Established Church in Plymouth Colony, adopts Baptist principles, and is excommunicated, and compelled to flee to avoid imprisonment,

braving the rigor of a New England winter, wading through snow, not knowing what bread or bed did mean for forty days, finding a refuge in the land of the Narragansett Indians, now known as Providence, R. I., where Brown University is located, the first and greatest Baptist University on earth.

“Two Baptist preachers, Clarke and Holmes, dared to go from Rhode Island and aid Wm. Witter in a revival meeting at Lynn, Mass. Both were arrested and imprisoned in Boston jail. They were tried and convicted to pay heavy fines, or be “well whipped.” Both decided to endure the whipping, because, they argued, to pay the fine would be a confession that they did wrong in preaching Baptist doctrines. Some one paid Clarke’s fine, and he was set at liberty; but Holmes remained firm and was severely punished; and for many days he was unable to rest except on his hands and knees.

“When it became known that the first Baptist church of Boston was organized, the General Court arraigned the leading members, among them, Thomas Gould, William Turner, Thomas Osborne, Edward

Drinker and John George. They were convicted, disfranchised and ordered to prison until the General Court. To prison they went and remained about one year.

“In the year 1678, the church had gained numerically, and they built a house of worship. The first service was held in it in 1679. Soon a statute was enacted, forbidding any person to erect, or make use of any house for public worship, without license from the powers that be, upon penalty of forfeiting the building and land, and all private ways leading to it. In the following September a Synod was convened, which gave it as their opinion that ‘the cause of the judgments of God upon the land was because they allowed Baptists to worship by themselves;’ consequently, by order of the Court, the meeting house was nailed up, in March, 1680. To-day there are more Baptists in Boston than there are members of any other Evangelical denomination, and the most prominent and most highly esteemed ministers and churches are of that order.

“One of the finest church edifices in the city, located on the most magnificent avenue, is occupied and owned by the

church whose doors were once nailed up by order of the Court.”

You are familiar with the story of the persecutions of Baptists in Virginia, by fines and imprisonment, during the reign of the Episcopal as the Established Church, which held sway for about two hundred years.

North Carolina had a law which prohibited Baptists from building houses of worship. The Georgia Legislature once refused to charter a Baptist institution of learning. In Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia, Baptists now outnumber all other denominations.

We have followed the Baptists through the pages of history, written not by themselves, but by critics and enemies, or those who recorded the events with cold indifference. We have learned of their afflictions and struggles in their helplessness. We have seen them without secular allies or worldly advantages, contending valiantly “against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places;” and in all their weary march they have borne a constant and unwavering testimony at whatever sacrifice to their heaven-

born, yet peculiar and unpopular tenets.

The sculptor with his chisel hews the marble block and makes it the beautiful statue. The furnace separates the gold from the dross. Veterans who win great battles are made by constant drilling, long marches and rigid military discipline. So in the providence of God, he has chosen Baptists to be pioneers in almost all great religious movements.

Baptists have been forerunners in all great religious movements.

1. THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS, as organized by Robert Raikes on the plan of hired teachers, were doomed to die with the founder; when a Baptist, the Rev. Wm. Bordie Gourney, inaugurated the present voluntary plan in 1805.

2. BIBLE SOCIETY.—There was a little Welsh servant girl who was in the habit of repairing on Sunday morning to the Baptist church, walking several miles; and as soon as the door was open, she would enter and commence reading the Bible which was chained to the pulpit. Bibles were scarce and expensive, and only churches and some favored few were able to afford such a treasure. The incident was related

in London by the little girl's pastor, and resulted in the inauguration of the British and Foreign Bible Society by William Hughes, a Baptist layman.

3. MODERN FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Prior to Carey the Roman Catholics had missionaries in heathen lands, and so had the Moravians. But it remained for the Baptist, Wm. Carey, of England, to become the champion and hero of modern missions. After many difficulties he embarked for India, June 13, 1793. In thirty years he was instrumental in translating the Bible into forty different languages, the tongues of one-third of the earth's inhabitants. His versions are used by all denominations to-day throughout India. Carey and his co-laborers made and gave in India nearly \$400,000 to spread the gospel. The colossal figure in the missionary movement in America is Adoniram Judson, the son of a Congregational minister. As a missionary of the Congregationalists, he sailed from Salem, Mass., on February 19th, 1812. On the voyage he concluded, in view of the fact that he would meet Baptist missionaries in India, that he had better prepare on points of difference, which resulted

in his conversion to Baptist principles. When he landed he was baptized, and the news came to America and aroused the Baptists, who recognized the providential call of God, and they adopted Judson as their missionary. "The missionary spirit of the Baptist denomination is its greatest strength, and its missionary record its greatest glory." Facts do not justify the claim that we inaugurated modern missions. At the same time the prominence of Baptists in the application and execution of the great commission entitles us to the honor of leadership among our Christian brethren of every name.

4. To BAPTISTS, more than to any other people, the world is indebted for civil and religious liberty. "Equal rights to all, exclusive privileges to none," is a divine principle, and founded on the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." As promulgated in the Declaration of Independence, "all men are born free and equal," and all have the inalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. These are cardinal Baptist tenets, for the maintenance of which Baptists have sealed

their testimony with their blood. We do not mean to say that Baptists are the only denomination who cherish and would defend these principles to-day, or that there have not been in all the struggles people who sympathized with us; but in the light of history, and without fear of successful contradiction, your speaker *affirms* that to the Baptist principles and sacrifices, more than to any other source, *this country is indebted for religious liberty.*

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIM CONSIDERED.

In 1852, Archbishop Hughes declared that "the palm of having been the first to preach and practice it (religious liberty) is due beyond all controversy to the Catholic Colony of Maryland."

The Maryland Charter was granted by a Protestant king, Charles I., and its very continuance implied non-interference with Protestants. The Maryland Act of Toleration was enacted in 1649 (16 and 17 Cecillius T. Bacon). 1. It provided that "blasphemy against God, denying our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be the Son of God, denying the Holy Trinity of the God-head of the three persons, should be pun-

ished with death and confiscation of goods and lands to the Lord Proprietary." 2. "Persons using any reproachful word or speech concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of our Saviour, or the Holy Apostles or Evangelists, or any of them, for the first offence to forfeit five pounds sterling to the Lord Proprietary, or in default of payment to be publicly whipped or imprisoned, at the pleasure of his Lordship, or Lieutenant-General. For the second offence to forfeit ten pounds, or in default of payment to be publicly and severely whipped and imprisoned, as before directed, and for the third offence to forfeit lands and goods, and be forever banished out of the Province."

Subsequently it was enacted that a refusal to have one's child baptized was made a heinous offence and heavily fined; and in latter days the expression of certain religious opinions subjected the guilty party not only to heavy fine, but to have his tongue bored through. According to Bishop Hughes, this was the "first preaching and practicing of religious liberty."

Pope Pius IX., in his Encyclical letter of 1864, says: "Liberty of conscience and

of worship in the sense that it is the right of every man, is an erroneous opinion, most pernicious to the Catholic church and to the salvation of souls." His predecessor, Gregory XVI., Encyclical letter, 1832, denounced the liberty of the press as "never to be sufficiently execrated," and religious liberty as "that pest of all others most to be dreaded in a State." "Religious liberty," says the Roman Catholic *Boston Pilot*, "in the sense of liberty possessed by every man to choose his own religion, is one of the most wicked delusions ever foisted upon this age by the father of all deceits."

Alexander H. Stephens' History, p. 51, speaking of Roger Williams and his relation to religious liberty, says: "His heresy, according to Bancroft, consisted in maintaining 'that the Civil Magistrate ought to restrain crime, but never control opinion; should punish guilt, but never violate the freedom of the soul.'" Page 50: "The Colony of Rhode Island was founded, in 1636, by Roger Williams, the celebrated divine and apostle of civil as well as religious liberty." Pages 53 and 54: "It was a refuge and asylum for those in all coun-

tries who were persecuted and suffered for conscience sake." The design of Williams was "that his Colony should be open to all persons who might choose to reside there without regard to their religious opinions."

Rhode Island was founded in 1636, or thirteen years before the Act of Toleration was adopted. The Maryland Act was proscriptive and most intolerant, so far as Jews, Unitarians, infidels and Baptists were concerned. But to the credit of Lord Baltimore be it said, it was in advance of the toleration of Plymouth, or the Colony of Virginia.

Gervinus, the great German philosopher, says, referring to soul liberty, [as quoted by Fish, pages 141 and 142,] in his *History of the Nineteenth Century*: "In accordance with these principles Roger Williams insisted, in Massachusetts, upon allowing entire freedom of conscience, and upon entire separation of church and State. But he was obliged to flee; and in 1636, he founded in Rhode Island a small and new society, in which perfect freedom in matters of faith was allowed, and in which the majority ruled in civil affairs.

Here in a little State, the fundamental principles of political and ecclesiastical liberty practically flourished before they were even taught in any of the schools of philosophy in Europe. At that time people predicted only a short existence for these democratic experiments, universal suffrage, universal eligibility to office, the annual change of rulers, perfect religious freedom, the Miltonian doctrine of schisms. But not only have these ideas and these forms of government maintained themselves here, but precisely from this little State have they extended themselves throughout the United States. They have conquered the aristocratic tendencies in Carolina, New York, the High Church in Virginia, the theocracy in Massachusetts, and the monarchy in all America. They have given laws to a continent, and formidable through their moral influence, they lie at the bottom of all the democratic movements which are now shaking the nations of Europe."

Let it be remembered that toleration is not liberty in the sense that we enjoy it. Toleration implies the right to prohibit. Where Romanism has sway there is no

toleration and never has been. Is there toleration in Italy, Spain or Austria with the consent of the Romanists? We have toleration in England, Scotland and Germany. This is as far as Protestantism has advanced where there is a union of church and State. In free America, where the leaven of Baptist principles has permeated, we have religious liberty.

When the Lord Chancellor of England sought to award to John Locke the honor of being the author of religious liberty, Locke proclaimed in the face of the world the following words: "The Baptists were the first propounders of absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty."

When the first Continental Congress met in 1774, the first petition was for religious liberty, presented by a committee from Warren Baptist Association of Rhode Island. Rev. Isaac Backus was the chairman. As a result, we have in our Constitution: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

The Baptists of Virginia, who had suffered so long, in 1775 organized a crusade

against the Established Church. After their triumph was complete, Hanks, the historian, says: "The Baptists seem to have known no relenting, and their hostility never ceased for twenty-seven years." Again the same author says: "The Establishment was finally put down. The Baptists were the principal promoters of this work, and in truth did more than any other denomination in its accomplishment."

Rhode Island and Virginia were slow in adopting the Federal Constitution; and to satisfy them, the following amendment was made: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or the free exercise thereof."

Chief Justice Story, speaking of the Baptist settlement in Rhode Island, says: "In the code of laws established by them in Rhode Island, we read for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Caesars, the declaration that conscience should be free, and men should not be punished for worshipping God in the way they were persuaded He requires."

Bancroft, volume 1, page 375, speaking of Roger Williams and his relation to soul liberty, says: "In its defence he was the

harbinger of Milton, and the precursor of Jeremy Taylor; for Taylor limited his toleration to a few Christian sects, the philanthropy of Williams compassed the earth."

The same great historian, page 376, volume 1, says: "He was the first in modern Christendom to assert in its plentitude, the doctrine of soul liberty."

Again he says, volume 2, page 66: "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was from the first the trophy of the Baptists."

Southey says of Roger Williams: "He began the first civil government on earth, which gave equal liberty of conscience."

Schaff says of the English Baptists: "For this change of public sentiment, the chief merit is due to the English Non-conformists, who in the school of persecution became advocates of toleration, especially to the Baptists and Quakers, who made religious liberty (within the limits of the golden rule) an article of their creed, so that they could not consistently persecute even if they should ever have the chance to do so." *Creeds of Christendom*, volume 1, page 803.

Herbert S. Skeats—A History of the Free Churches of England, London, 1869, page 24—says: “It is the singular and the distinguished honor of the Baptists to have repudiated, from their earliest history, all coercive power over the consciences and actions of men with reference to religion. No sentence is to be found in all of their writings inconsistent with these principles of Christian liberty and willinghood which are now equally dear to all the free Congregational churches of England. They were the proto-evangelists of the voluntary principle.”

And in a foot note the author says: “The author is not connected with the Baptist denomination; and has therefore, perhaps, greater pleasure in bearing this testimony to undoubted historic fact.”

5. MARVELOUS GROWTH AND PROSPERITY. From one to every sixty of the population one hundred years ago, we have increased to one to every twenty for the whole country; and while in the Northern States we have just held our own, we have become in the South one to every nine of the population. In the whole country we have increased in church membership three

times as fast as the population; while in the South we have increased six times faster, in proportion, than the population.

6. WE ARE NO LONGER POOR, and looked down upon socially; this may be a disadvantage to us. Those influenced by outward show will remain, and others not of us will be attracted.

7. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES.—According to the last United States census, the Baptists have more institutions of learning, and more students, and more money invested than any other denomination. When I think about our marvelous past and our present opportunities and responsibilities, I tremble. The Children of Israel have left a history no more marvelous than our own.

God released them after hundreds of years of Egyptian bondage; He divided the waters and enabled them to escape from their enemies; they murmured, and they forgot the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night; they forgot the water from the rock and the manna from heaven, and wandered for forty years in the wilderness, making a journey that could have been made in twenty-four hours. At

Cadesh Barnea they listened to the report of the spies, and lacking faith, they turned back and perished in the wilderness.

Epicætetus had these words for his motto: "Know an opportunity." O, that we knew our opportunity in this free country, whose laws and institutions are our allies, in opposition to the bans of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny!

Christians of other denominations rejoice in our prosperity and glory in our fidelity to a common Master. I quote from Dr. J. L. Withrow, Presbyterian of Boston: "I suppose there is not a denomination—I speak in no fulsome praise, but literally—I think there is not a denomination of Evangelical Christians that is throughout as sound theologically as the Baptist denomination. I believe it. After carefully considering it, I believe I speak the truth. Sound as my own denomination is, sound as some others are, and I do not cast unfriendly reflections upon any particular denomination, I do say, in my humble judgment, there is not an Evangelical denomination in America to-day that is as true to the simple, plain Gospel of God, as it is recorded in the Word, as the

Baptist denomination.” Far be a spirit of vain boasting from us. In recognition of the strong arm that has led us and the Holy Spirit that guides, let us bow in the dust of humility, and dedicate our lives and our all to greater piety and zeal in His service; because “where much is given much shall be required.”

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

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