

19
A NEW

HISTORY

OF ALL

RELIGIONS,

IN PARTICULAR,

THE CHURCHES, SECTARIES, AND PARTIES,

OF THE

Holy CHRISTIAN Religion.



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THE
HISTORY
OF ALL

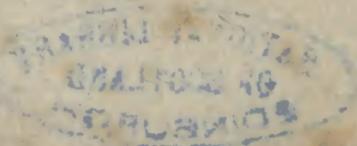
Known Religions.

I.

Of Pagans, or Heathens.

ALTHOUGH the Pagans, or Heathens, in general, believe that there is one God above all; yet they worship and adore many gods, which are but creatures of their own fancy. Almost every nation, country, island, and tribe of people, have their own gods.

In old times the Saxons in England had seven chief gods, viz. 1 The Sun. 2 The Moon. 3 Tusk. 4 Wudsen. 5 Thurst. 6 Fridge. 7 Saturn. Or, in other words, 1 The god of light, who was adored on Sunday. 2 The goddess of night, adored on Monday. 3 The god of strength, adored on Tuesday. 4 The god of war, adored on



Wednesday: 5 The god of power, adored
 Thursday. 6 The god of love adored
 Friday. And, 7 The god of the earth,
 adored on Saturday—From these idols, the
 days of our Week are still named. In Scot-
 land, the fire and the bull were adored,

List of Heathen Gods and Goddesses.

1 Pan, the god of Egypt. 2 Dagon, the
 god of the Philistines. 3 Baal, the god of
 many of the Eastern nations.—Cupid the
 god of love. Venus, the goddess of marriage,
 of love, &c. Bacchus, the god of wine,
 of feasts, the god of storms and winds. Nep-
 tune, the god of the seas, &c.—O the depra-
 vity of fallen human nature!!

II.

Of the Mahometans.

About fifteen hundred years ago, a man
 in Turkey, seeing the high disputes about
 religion in Egypt, and in the neighbouring
 nations, formed a deep laid plan to please
 all parties, by making a new one altogether;
 and so (the better to effect his purpose)
 pretended that he was inspired by God, and
 called himself the *Great Prophet of God*.

This religion is very enticing to corrupt nature, being of a carnal kind; for the heaven it promises, is the full enjoyment of women and wine in the future state, &c. They believe in one supreme God, and have in general, very rational views of a divine Providence.

III.

OF THE JEWS.

I need say little of them, as the doctrine and laws of the Jews are fully recorded in our Old Testament, But their great error is *unbelief*. they do not believe that JESUS whom their fathers crucified, was the true Messiah. and are still looking for another.

I could have given a more full account of the false religions, but my main design is to treat of the true: And therefore I shall now proceed to speak of the Christian Religion and the various denominations of its professors.

(5)
IV.

OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Of the Church of Rome.

THEY hold the great truths of Christianity but have added much to them, such as the following:

1—The infalibility of the the Church, viz. the Pope and high Bishops.

2—The worshipping of angels, the Virgin Mary, Apostles, saints, &c:

3—The doctrine of Purgatory, or a middle state between heaven and hell, to purge the soul from sin

4—Of seven Sacraments. 1 The Eucharist, or Lord's Supper. 2 Baptism. 3 Mass. 4 Extreme Unction, or giving the Lord's Supper to dying people. 5 Holy Order, or making of Priests. 6 Confirmation. And, 7 Marriage.

5—Of Indulgences, or pardon of sins (for money) on confession to the priest.

6—Of Penance, or afflicting the body for sin, by fasting, the black stool, sack gown, black hood &c.

7—Of keeping holidays, and eating no flesh in Lent, in memory of our Lord's fasting forty days in the wilderness

8—Transubstantiation, or that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, are turned into Christ's real body and blood, by the Priest's prayer.

9—Holy Magistrates, or that Churchmen should have power over states.

10—Of Nunneries, Monasteries, &c. of houses where holy Virgins live retired from the world of mankind: no man being permitted there but the Priests.

11—Of many orders of Priests 1 The Pope—2 Arch Cardinals—3 Arch Bishops—4 Ordinary Bishops—5 Priests—6 Friars—7 Monks, &c

They hold, that there is no salvation out of their church; and adore particular places Relics of the dead, Wells, Saints, Tombs &c, and go on pilgrimage to them.

They believe that the souls of unbaptized Children, wander or hover about in the air till the last day.

Of the Church of England.

About the year 1530, Henry VIIIth. King of England threw off the Pope's authority, protested against the Church of Rome, and put the church of England on a new footing, having no higher Churchmen than bishops. They deny all the forementioned articles held by the Romish Church; and hold the doctrines of Luther, Calvin, and other Protestant Reformers in Germany.

Of the Church of Scotland.

The people in Scotland being weary of the tyranny, oppression, and licentious lives of the Roman clergy, and having received considerable light from the preaching of Mr George Wishart, an eminent Divine who had been instructed in the principles of Protestant religion, when on his travels in Germany, that they might bring about reformation, entered into a National Covenant in the year 1580. It was renewed by the people of all ranks in the year 1581. It was also renewed by royal and church authority in 1590, and afterwards by nobles, barons,

Burgesses, Ministers, and commons, in the year 1638, and approved by the General Assembly, and by an Act of Parliament 1651. It was also subscribed by King Charles I. at the river Spey, in the north of Scotland, and at the palace of Scoon, near Perth, the year 1651. This Covenant is recorded at large in the Confession of Faith, p. 45. the substance of which is as follows

“ We protest against all false Religion
“ chiefly all kinds of Popery, (see the
“ Articles of the Church of Rome) as also
“ to defend the King's person and government, in defence of the true Religion ”



The Doctrine, Worship, and Government of the Church of Scotland, are inserted in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, which ought to be read by every Christian in Scotland.

Of the Reformed Presbety.

Some Ministers and people conceiving that particular grievances were not redressed, with other misunderstandings attending the settlement in 1628, and wishing Church and State to be put on the very same footing as in 1638*, did separate themselves into a distinct body, under the denomination of the Reformed Presbety. They are vulgarly called Cameronians or M. Millans, from two of their Ministers of that name.

Of Seceders in General.

Between the years 1732, and 1740, Mr Ebenezer Erskine, and his brother Ralph, Mr Fisher, and some others, came out from the Established Church of Scotland. They stated many errors (in their view) that had crept into the Church, such as

* See Confession of Faith and Covenants, National and Solemn League, p. 67.

Arminian and Socinian doctrine, laxness in discipline, and Patronage, that is the chief laird in the parish to have power to put in any Minister he pleaseth; this power in some parishes is lodged in the crown, as Falkirk, Alloa, &c.

Of the Burghers and Antiburghers.

Soon after the Secession took place, they differed among themselves. The ground of this dispute was as follows:

The Burghers maintained that it was lawful to swear the Burgess Oath in all its extent: and that the Covenants cannot be properly sworn by a party; but ought to be done in a national way, being a public deed; other wise it would not be a National, but a Party Covenant.

The Antiburghers, in opposition to this, said, that it was not right to swear the Burgess Oath, having a religious clause in it; and that it is lawful for a party to renew the Covenants at all times.

Of the Presbytery of Relief.

About 50 years ago Mr Thomas Gillespie, then present parish minister of Carnock, being appointed by the General Assembly to place a minister at Inverksithing, against the people's will, refused to do it; for which

(11)
 he was laid aside for a year. Next Assembly
 he spoke boldly against Patronage, and was
 deposed. Soon after, he, with his followers
 formed a party, under the denomination of
 the Presbytery of Relief; being thereby re-
 lieved from Patronage.—They are Calvinis-
 ts*, but they are very free in receiving
 church members.

Of the Old and New Light Burghers.

The Old Light people say, that they stand
 on the Confession of Faith in every point:
 the New Light party do not deny it. Wherein
 lies the difference?

1 The Old Light party say, that the civil
 Magistrate hath a right to call Church Courts,
 and sit in them; and also to punish all here-
 ses and errors, even to bodily punishment.
 Moreover, they say, that the Covenants,
 National and solemn Leagues sworn above
 50 years ago, are as binding upon us to
 this day, as they were upon them by whom

* They hold Justification by free grace, only
 thro' the sacrifice of Christ, received by faith.
 The dissenters & Independants hold the same.

See Confession of Faith, chap. 28, sect 8.

they are sworn; and if we do not take or acknowledge them, we are perjured persons, although many cannot in conscience approve of the proceedings of that time. They also think, that public national covenanting, as such, is as warrantable now under the New Testament, as it was under the Old when the true worship of God was confined to the carnal seed of Abraham. In short, all alterations whatever, either essential or circumstantial (in the r-view) are deviations from the truths and received canons of the Church of Scotland, as received in 1638.

The New Light party say, that the Civil Magistrate, as such, hath no warrant from the New Testament, to call Church Councils, nor preside in them. And though it is the duty of the Civil Magistrate to maintain justice and peace in civil society, and to punish offenders, yet they have no right to exercise power over mens' consciences, in things purely spiritual.

They also say, that the Civil Magistrate hath no right to call Church Councils, nor to preside in them, because the power of calling and presiding in Church Councils is a spiritual power, and therefore belongs to the Church alone.

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Of Independants and Missionaries.

The Independants and those called Missionaries, are no new party, but an old one revived. Every Congregation formeth a particular Church hath no higher Court than its own members, and every member has a right to speak. They say that faith, human or divine, implies nothing more but simply believing — but the difference between divine and human faith, doth not consist in its nature, but in the object of it. That the Lord's supper ought to be taken every first day of the week* — They view it as a thanksgiving, and so bless not the bread, but bless God of Christ; as represented in that ordinance to true believers only.

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* Acts xx. 7.
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Of the Predebaptists.

They baptize none till the person actually profess faith in Christ, according to Matth. xxviii 19. Mark xvi 16. In baptism they dip, or immerse the whole body in water, in imitation of John's baptism, Matth iii 16. Their teachers and church office bearers, are chosen from among themselves in every particular meeting, which forms a church, in which all controversies are solved. The manner of their church discipline and censures are recorded in Matth. xvii. and xxviii. 2 Cor. xi—1 Cor v. &c.

They say, though none can be saved but those who repent, believe, and obey the gospel; yet faith, repentance, and good works, are no ground or condition of a sinner's justification before God, but resteth alone upon the eternal decree of free grace. They receive the Lord's supper weekly — But are improperly called Anabaptists; for the Anabaptists are another Sect. who baptize all their members every year. The Latin word *anno* from which Anabaptist is derived, signifieth year; and therefore that denomination may more plainly be rendered Yearly Baptist.

Of Quakers.

They are so called, because they sometimes groan and tremble in their prayers. And preach none, unless moved (as they view it) by the Holy Ghost. Many people are so bold as to say, that this is a delusion of Satan; but it is very dangerous to speak in that manner, so many good fruits appear in them, such as plain honest dealing in the world; mercy to the poor: abstaining from swearing, lying, and the like. They give titles of honor to no man*, nor uncover their heads, though in the presence of the highest personage, nor in their own places of worship, but when they are disposed to speak. They do not name the days of the week, as we do, but number them 1, 2, &c for, in their view (in the main it is so) the names at present in use, were handed down to us from the heathens. They allow women to exhort in their meetings, but not to rule. Acts xxi 9—1, Cor xi: 5.

They appeared first in England in the time of Cromwell. Their founder was one David George, a respectable shoemaker in Oxford; after him, another remarkable character arose among them, called, William Pen, whose uncle had been a very active

* Matth. xxiii 9. § See page 2.

Admiral in the reign of Charles I. and for which he had been promised a consideration by the Government. Upon the death of the Admiral, his nephew William, waited on Charles II. and (with his head covered) demanded what had been promised his uncle in the former reign. The Admiral having, besides his meritorious services, advanced a considerable sum for the use of Government; the Parliament gave William a grant of the Province of Pennsylvania in North America; to which a great number of the Quakers emigrated, and founded one of the most beautiful cities in the world, the capital of that Province, and called it Philadelphia, which signifies *Brotherly love*. The name of the province itself has its derivation from the founder's name PEN.

I shall conclude the account of this Sect, with an anecdote of another distinguished character among them, called Robert Bartley, who addressed King Charles II. upon his restoration, in the following manner:

“ (thou hast tasted of prosperity and ad-
“ versity; thou knowest what it is to be
“ banished thy native country, to be over-
“ ruled, as well as to rule and to sit upon the
“ throne; and being oppressed, thou hast
“ reason to know how hateful the oppressor
“ is, both to God and man; If, after all
“ these warnings and advertisements, thou

" dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy
 " heart, but forget him who remembered
 " thee in thy distress, and give up thyself
 " to fellow lust and vanity, surely great
 " will be thy condemnation — Against which
 " snare, as well as the temptations of those
 " who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee
 " to evil, the most excellent and prevalent
 " remedy, will be to apply thyself to that
 " light of Christ which shineth in thy con-
 " science, and which neither can nor will
 " flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease
 " in thy sins "

Of the Bereans.

They take this name to themselves from
 Acts xvii. 11, " The Bereans were more
 " noble than those of Thessalonica, in that
 " they received the word with all readiness
 " of mind; and searched the scriptures daily,
 " whether these things were so." Whom
 they pretend to have imitated, that they
 might find out truth, and lay the foundation
 of their Church, in distinction from all other
 denominations of Christians. Their founder
 was one Mr John Barclay preacher of the
 Gospel in the parish of Kesteven, Angus-
 shire, and assistant to the late Key Mr Dow,
 an aged Minister of that parish. Upon the
 death of Mr Dow, having little interest to

succeed in the parish, Mr. Barclay set out for Edinburgh, and in a short time after it was announced in the News Papers, that he had formed and joined himself to the Berean Society in that city, about the year 1770.

So far as is known, Mr Barclay was a man of good character, of a religious turn of mind, and only rendered singular by his peculiar sentiments concerning the doctrine of the Assurance of Faith, viz

They say, As faith and doubting are opposite principles, so no true Christian can have any doubt of the truth of the gospel; that is, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the only Redeemer of God's elect; nor of their own salvation; for both resteth on the same testimony; "He that believeth, shall be saved." &c Mark xvi 16.

They are Independents, and allow infant-baptism, although some of them are very scrupulous on that head.

They say, that people ought to remain in no doubt of their believing, and consequently of their being saved; for such as do, are in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity.

Mr Barclay asserts, in a letter to a friend, on the doctrine of assurance. That he has no more doubt of his shining as a star in the kingdom of heaven, after death, than he has of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah being already in that happy state; because it is positively said, "He that believeth shall

“be saved.” And therefore, as he was persuaded that he did believe the Gospel, he saw no reason to doubt of his salvation.”

He had a peculiar talent for religious poetry, and published a new version of the Psalms of David in metre, adapted to the Christian dispensation: in which he applies all the psalms to Christ and his church.

He also published a volume of Spiritual Songs, to the tunes of the most common songs, sung by the young women of Fetter-cain at their wheels, to prevent them from prostituting their musical talents on profane or senseless subjects. He died but a few weeks ago, on a Sabbath morning, going from his own house to their place of worship, in Edinburgh.

Of the Arians.

They have their name from one Arius, a Lybion by birth, and a Presbyter of Alexandria by profession. His heresy brake out under the emperor Constantine, 290 years after Christ, and over ran a great part of the world; being opposed by none, for some time, but the famous Athanasius, an eminent father of the church at that time; who composed an admirable Creed in opposition to the Arian doctrine: their errors were condemned in the council of Nice,

gathered by Constantine's appointment, in the year 325. after a most cruel and bloody persecution, wherein many of those who opposed it, and were therefore called the Orthodox, suffered martyrdom.

Arians say that God is one absolute being, that Jesus Christ is the first and best of all the creation of God — and the Holy Ghost only an attribute of Deity.

Of Arminians

They are so called from James Arminius, divinity reader in Leyden who in the year 1605, published and maintained five articles, which have occasioned great trouble to the church of God: being eagerly maintained by his followers, called remonstrants. The five articles are concerning predestination, redemption, God's grace, free-will, and the perseverance of the saints

Of Socinians.

So called from one Faustus Socinus, an Italian of Siena. They place all their religion in the old condemned heresies; following their master, a most vile heretic

Amongst other things, they hold the doctrine of man's free-will; and say, that original sin is nothing more than the power of

bad example:—that Jesus Christ was the best man that ever appeared in our world; and was sent by God to correct the errors which had crept into the mortal world; that his death was a natural incident; and that God raised him from the dead, to shew us that our death is not eternal.

Of Antinomians:

So called from two Greek words, which signifies AGAINST, and THE LAW; they sprung up from one John Agricola, who affirmed, that the moral law was altogether needless, and that Christians were not tied to the observation thereof. This sect began about the year 1535

Of Erastians.

So called from Thomas Erastus, a physician in Heidelberg in Germany, who held that the civil magistrate had the supreme power in church and state.

Of Jesuits.

In the year 1540, this sect arose in the Church of Rome, and was confirmed by Pope Paul III they were employed as missionaries, to advance the Popish religion; for which purpose they are all well educated in philosophy school divinity, and many other arts and sciences — their founder was one Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish soldier.

Of the Douglasites.

They hold the heresy of the Originists, and some German Anabaptists viz Not only the wicked, but the devils themselves, after suffering the torments of hell for an appointed period, shall be received into the favor of God, and be made for ever blessed and happy.

As this heresy has been long since condemned, I shall say no more about it.



*An Account of the Origen of**BURNING HERETICS in ENGLAND.*

In the year 1401, and reign of Henry IV. King of England, it was found that the number of the Lollards, which was the name generally given to the Wickliffites, was continually increasing, it was, by the influence of the ecclesiastics enacted, that no should preach without a licence from the Bishop of the diocese. However, this and the other laws in being, were thought sufficient for the protection of the church, and to prevent the growth of heresy; The Clergy were desirous of having a shorter and easier method of defending the doctrines of the Church than by the tedious and difficult one of reason, and argument. They therefore gave the King to understand, that this thing would more attach the Clergy to his interests than his exerting himself for the protection of the Church, by which it was meant, to make a law for the burning of heretics. The King does not appear to have discovered any great reluctance; but the Commons, many of whom thought favourably of Wickliff, were very averse to such arbitrary proceedings. An act, however, was at length passed, empowering the Clergy to the extent of their wishes; but this passed

not but with the utmost stretch of the King's authority. And Mr Fox says, that he cannot find that it ever did pass the Commons; but supposes, that as parliamentary affairs were then managed with little regularity, it was huddled in among other acts, and signed by the King without farther notice. It is indeed by no means improbable, that this act might be passed without the consent of the Commons; for in the next reign we find the lower House of Parliament petitioning that no act or statute might pass without their assent. However, it was never enacted that upon a certificate of the diocesan Bishop, or his commissaries, delivering those who either refused to abjure their heresy or relapsed after abjuration, over to the secular arm, the civil magistrate should receive their bodies and cause them to be burnt public. William Wautre, a Lollard, rector of St Otho's in London, was the first man who was put to death of this stature, Sentence was pronounced against him in the ecclesiastical court immediately after the act was passed: so eager were they to proceed to the extirpation of heresy.

FINIS.