

The Dissent and Nonconformity Series

Number 3



The Israel of the Alps

A History of the Waldenses

Volume 1 of 2

Alexis Muston



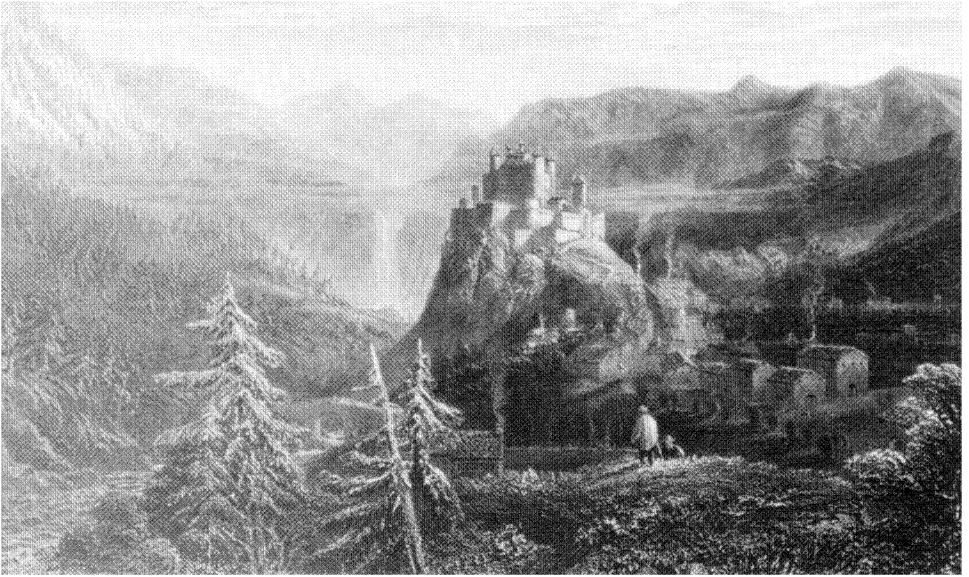
Non dilexerunt animam suam usque ad mortem.

The Latin, *Non dilexerunt animam suam usque ad mortem*, translates, "... they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelation 12:11

On The Cover: *Massacres at Salzburg* took place in 1528 when Prince-Archbishop Cardinal Matthaus Lang of Salzburg issued mandates sending police in search of Anabaptists. Many were captured and killed. This engraving illustrates the sufferings and sacrifices these Dissenters endured when their government, in conjunction with established religion, attempted to coerce and impose uniformity of religious belief. Hence, this picture is a reminder of the cost of religious liberty and the ever-present need to maintain the separation of church and state. We use this art to represent our Dissent and Nonconformity Series.

The

ISRAEL OF THE ALPS



Drawn by S. Bough, from a sketch by Dr. Muston.

Engraved by S. Bradshaw

CHÂTEAU-QUEYRAS.
IN THE VALLEY OF THE GUILLE, DAUPHINY

BLACKIE & SON, GLASGOW. EDINBURGH & LONDON.

The
Israel of the Alps,
A HISTORY OF
The Waldenses.

VOL. I.



PRA DU TOUR.
WHERE THE VAUDOIS BARBAS PREPARED FOR THE MINISTRY.

Blackie and Son;
GLASGOW. EDINBURGH AND LONDON

THE ISRAEL OF THE ALPS.

A COMPLETE

HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES

AND THEIR COLONIES;

PREPARED IN GREAT PART FROM UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS.

BY ALEXIS MUSTON, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH AT BOURDEAUX, DRÔME, FRANCE.

TRANSLATED

BY THE REV. JOHN MONTGOMERY, A.M.

WITH A DOCUMENTARY APPENDIX ON THE ORIGIN OF THE WALDENSES.

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

VOL. I.

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1875



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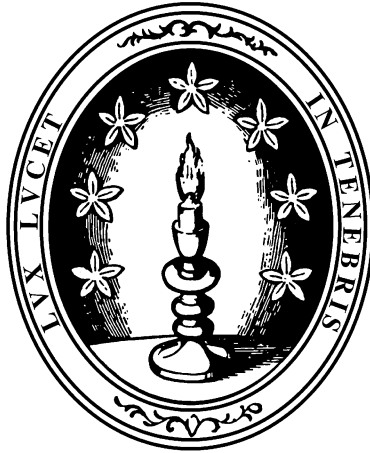
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Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth.
— *Psalm 60:4*

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THE WALDENSIAN EMBLEM

lux lucet in tenebris

“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

“No people of modern times,” says Boyer, “exhibits so much analogy to the ancient Jewish people, as the Vaudois of the Alps of Piedmont; no history has more abounded in marvels than theirs, no church in martyrs.”

These words sufficiently explain the title of the present Work, *The Israel of the Alps*.¹ Let me state its origin and its object.

For more than fifteen years, I have been occupied with assiduous researches into the history of the Vaudois. My intention was to have taken up again the volume published in 1834, and to have carried out the work on such a scale as would have made it amount to eight or ten volumes octavo.

But a work of such a size could not have served to supply the actual wants of the public. I proposed, therefore, to publish separately the *Sources of the History of the Vaudois*, with the principal historic documents, and a rapid but complete sketch of the history itself. On the one hand, however, circumstances have compelled me to renounce the idea of publishing the *Sources*; on the other, I have found that a complete summary of the history of the Vaudois could not be comprehended in a single volume, because the unpublished part of that history is as considerable as that already known, or perhaps even more so.

The question of the origin of the Vaudois and of the organiza-

¹ The choice of this title has been influenced by another consideration. The author of this work had commenced, in 1834, the publication of a *History of the Vaudois*, of which only the first volume has ever appeared. If he had given to the present work the title of a *History of the Vaudois*, it might have been confounded with the previous work, from which it is in reality quite distinct. The volume published in 1834, by Levrault, at Strasburg (where it is still to be found, as well as at Reinwald's, in Paris), contains a description of the Vaudois valleys, with dissertations, and a great number of quotations relative to the origin and doctrine of the Vaudois. This large amount of matter has not been again embodied in the *Israel of the Alps*. The previous volume also contains a map of the valleys, and fac-similes of the principal authors who have treated of Vaudois history. Far from being a sort of former edition of the present work, the previous volume would rather serve as an introduction to it, rendering it more complete.

tion of their church, prior to the Reformation, required to be re-examined. The primitive character of their doctrines had not been completely determined, for want of documents. The particular histories of the Vaudois of Le Queyras, of Barcelonette, of Valloise, and of Freyssinières, had never been written in a connected manner; the histories of Merindol and of Cabrières had been often written, but never elucidated; it was likewise necessary that the documents connected with the judicial proceedings which preceded and followed the decree pronounced by the court of Aix, on the 18th of November, 1540, should be subjected to a fresh scrutiny, which, to the best of my knowledge, had been attempted by no one.

Details relative to the Vaudois martyrs, will be found in this work collected for the first time. The very interesting history of the churches of Saluces was almost unknown, and here forms half a volume.*

There was a gap betwixt the close of the very full chronicle of Gilles, and the period at which Léger commences his documentary history. A second gap occurred betwixt Léger and Arnaud; and from that writer to our own days, no considerable collection of new documents was to be met with.

Very many histories of the Vaudois had, indeed, been written, general or particular, extensive or brief. Each of them contains interesting facts, or presents interesting historic views; but nowhere is there to be found a collection of documents, arranged with just regard to the proportionate value of historic facts. There have been few events in our history of so great importance as those which led to and those which followed the official re-establishment of the Vaudois in their own country; yet the most complete historians have hitherto scarcely taken the least notice of them. A whole volume of the present work is devoted to these remarkable facts, which occupy only a few pages in the works of my predecessors. The expulsion of the inhabitants of the valleys, in 1686 and 1687, was not narrated in detail, except in contemporary pamphlets, which have now become very rare; the expulsions of 1698 and 1730, have not been so narrated at all. The first part only of the history of the Vaudois colonies in Germany had been written, but not in the French language. The whole of this history will be found in *The Israel of the Alps*. That of the Vaudois of Pragela, who, at one time, were themselves alone more numerous than the inhabitants of all the other Vaudois valleys put together, had never been written in any language; eight chapters are devoted to it in this work. Finally, from 1730 to our own days, new historic

* [The original is in four volumes.]

phases have brought the Vaudois under the indirect influence of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, under that of the French Revolution, that of the Austro-Russian invasions, and that of the empire of Napoleon. Nothing of all this had been related as its historic importance deserved; and it is only since the Restoration, that documents have been printed which begin to throw a sufficient light upon the destinies of the Vaudois church.

In the present work, all these gaps have been filled up; and if it be thought that these volumes surpass the limits of an abridgment, I would say, Gather together the works which have been written on the Vaudois—run over their tables of contents—compare it with that of the present work, and see if these volumes do not comprehend more variety of matters than all the other books which have been written on this subject, which, however, would of themselves, form a large library, as any one may satisfy himself, by casting a glance over the *Bibliography* with which *The Israel of the Alps* concludes. PERRIN (an 8vo volume of 248 pages) has only furnished me with matter for two half chapters; GILLES (a 4to volume of more than 600 pages), has furnished me with three complete chapters and seven half chapters; I have derived a whole chapter and four half chapters from LÉGER (a folio volume of 212 and 385 pages); from ARNAUD (an octavo of 407 pages), I have derived two chapters and a half; and the whole of the German authors who have written on the Vaudois colonies, have supplied me only with what amounts to about three half chapters. All the rest has been drawn from works exclusively relating to particular parts of the subject, or from unpublished documents.

Whatever judgment may therefore be formed of the present work, I venture to think, that it must be admitted to have really given a new aspect to the history of the Vaudois; and that *The Israel of the Alps* not merely contains the most complete history of the Vaudois which has hitherto been published, but that, were all which has hitherto been published collected together, it would be equivalent only to a very limited portion of what is here presented. As far as the nature of the work permitted me, I have always allowed the authors from whom I had occasion to quote, to speak in their own words—not merely in order to afford the reader a gratification which otherwise he could have found only by searching into rare books or manuscripts, but more especially in order to give greater variety to the narrative, and to restore as far as possible the impress of contemporary emotions.

It has often happened that I have discovered errors in the works which I have consulted, even in those of greatest reputation and

learning; I have corrected them, according to the best of my information, but without taking any particular notice of them; for this would have produced no change in the page which contained the error, and I would have thought it somewhat at variance with that gratitude which we owe to writers who have devoted their labours to subjects in which we are most warmly interested.

The number of these inaccuracies forbids me to presume that my own work can be exempt from them. I would be very thankful if any one would put it in my power to remove them. If it had not been printed as fast as it could be prepared, I would already have corrected some slips,¹ and would likewise, I doubt not, have changed some strong expressions here and there, which the horrible character of the facts narrated has drawn involuntarily from my indignant pen. These reflections of a writer's own feelings may render his style more animated, but are scarcely compatible with the calm dignity of history. Besides such errors of style, and errors of the press, there must unquestionably be many other imperfections discoverable in this work. But as it is the first which presents the history of the Vaudois in a complete form, and is certainly the most accurate of all yet in existence upon that subject, I hope for some indulgence as due to the long and laborious researches which it has cost me.

These researches have been prosecuted most of all in the *State Paper Office of the Court of Turin*. The papers there preserved having been put into my hands only in bundles unarranged, I have taken notes from them and quoted them with few exceptions according to a running number which marks the order in which I received them. The *Diplomatic Archives* of France supplied me with many precious documents, for which I am indebted to the kindness of M. Guizot, then minister of foreign affairs. The *Records of the Council of State* of Geneva, have been made available for *The Israel of the Alps*, by the obliging attentions of the minister, M. le Fort. I obtained access to the *State Paper Office* of the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, through M. Du Thill, then minister of the interior. The archives of Baden, of Stuttgart, of Frankfort, of Berlin, and of the principal cantons of Switzerland, have also been consulted, either by myself in person or by correspondents. The records of the old *Court of Accounts* at Grenoble, those of the *Senate* and of the *Court of Accounts* at Turin, have likewise augmented my store of materials. I have been indebted for numerous documents to the municipal archives of Pignerol, of

¹ The present translation enjoys the character of a new edition, in virtue of corrections and additions by the Author.

Lucerne, of Fenestrelles, of Briançon, of Gap, and of some other towns both of Piedmont and of France. And here I ought to express my deep-felt gratitude to my relative and friend, M. Aillaud, professor at Pignerol, who searched for me the archives of the *Intendance* of that city. Access to those of the bishopric was obtained for me by the author of *Historical Researches concerning the Origin of the Vaudois* (see the *Bibliography*, section II., § iv., No. 9). Without referring in this place to anything else than the researches which he facilitated, I value too highly the privilege of having been enabled to complete them in such a manner, not to testify a just sense of gratitude to him on that account.

I have derived much assistance from the admirable collection of rare pamphlets, comprising also a number of valuable manuscripts, contained in the *Royal Library* at Turin. I owe an expression of my thanks to MM. De Promis, Des Ambroix, De Coccillo, De Saluces, Duboin (son of the celebrated civilian, whose great collection he still continues to increase), Bonnino, deputy-keeper of the records of the Court of Accounts, and Sclopis, author of *The History of the Laws of Piedmont*, who have facilitated my researches by their communications, their kind offices, or their advice. The learned M. Cibrario, member of the historical commission for the *Monumenta Patriae*, and of the Academy of Sciences at Turin, has with similar kindness taken an interest in my labours. He has, moreover, been at the trouble of making some researches himself, and sending me several documents of very great interest, which otherwise I could not have procured.

At Paris, I have found no less disposition to assist me. M. De Salvandy, then minister of public instruction, caused a very important manuscript to be placed at my service, which, without his authority, I could not have consulted. M. Michelet was kind enough to point out to me in the national archives of France, some documents hitherto unknown.¹

¹ A voluminous record of an investigation concerning the hardships inflicted by *John de Roma* upon the Vaudois of Provence. The following is the title marked upon a detached slip—" [Cayer de procédures, &c.] :—Record of proceedings in 1533, in virtue of a commission from Francis I., King of France, of date 12th February, 1532, against John de Rome, of the order of the Jacobins, who, after having been expelled from Avignon by the Cardinal de Clermont, withdrew into Provence, where, without being legally recognized or authorized, he performed the functions of an inquisitor, and conducted himself towards the lieges of that province in an outrageous and vexatious manner, contrary to all public order."

This manuscript, which, according to another note, used to be contained in a bag, and was not included in the *Inventary* under the head of the *Government of Provence*, consists of eight quires of paper, of small folio size. On the back is affixed the rescript of Francis I., which authorizes the prosecutions. The deposi-

M. Sordet, keeper of the records of the *Hôtel de Ville* at Geneva, and Professor Diodati, curator of the library there, as well as the pastors Lavit, Claparède, Vaucher-Mouchon, &c., have, in the most obliging manner, facilitated my researches. I have been permitted to consult the *Archives of the Venerable Company*, known under the name of the *Archives of St. Peter*. The distinguished historian, Professor Merle D'Aubigné, has assisted me, both by giving me the benefit of his information and by communicating documents in his possession. And, finally, I am indebted to M. Lombard-Odier, banker, for a copy of an interesting manuscript, the work of a proscribed Vaudois in 1729. I am not less bound, however, to express my thanks to my young fellow-countrymen, MM. Tron, Geymonet, Parise, Bert, Rivoire, and Janavel, then students at Geneva, who were kind enough to employ themselves in transcribing for me everything that I required. M. Monastier, an author, who, like them, is a native of the valleys of Piedmont, and has produced a recent and much-valued history of the Vaudois, communicated to me notes and extracts which he collected when engaged in his own labours. Another native of the valleys, M. Appia, in whom the French church at Frankfort recently lost an eminent and venerated pastor, most freely made me welcome to the whole resources of his rich collection of documents connected with the history of the country of his birth, and gave me the benefit of all his information, his advice, and his reminiscences. I regret that this just tribute of my gratitude can only be paid to his memory. A venerable Vaudois pastor, the late M. Mondon, the successor of Scipio Arnaud in one of the Vaudois colonies in Germany, but whose removal from this world preceded by a long time that of M. Appia, expressed the same interest in my undertaking. To him I owe the use of the first sheets of the original manuscript of the *Return*, now deposited at Berlin.

In the Vaudois valleys, the gentlemen holding offices connected with the Table have, in more instances than one, placed at my disposal official documents and notes most valuable for their accuracy; and the pastor M. Joshua Meille, and his son-in-law, M. Volle,

tions of the witnesses commence on the first page of fol. 84.—*National Archives of France*, compartment J, No. 851.

An unpublished letter of Margaret of France, Duchess of Savoy, dated from Turin, 1 June, 1566 [*"Thurin ce premier jour de juing 1566"*], and relative to the Vaudois, has also been communicated to me by Professor Ch. Bonnet; but too late to be of much service. It will be published, along with other valuable documents, the fruits of the researches of that learned professor, in a *Life of Renée of France, Duchess of Ferrara*, which will shortly gratify the impatient expectations of all who are acquainted with his patient and admirable labours.

have in other ways contributed to the increase of my collection of unpublished papers. I am bound to make the same acknowledgment in regard to M. Gay, of Le Villar, and M. Antoine Blanc, of La Tour, as well as to my friend M. Amédée Bert, whose *Historic Scenes*, recently published, have excited in Italy so great an interest in favour of the Vaudois.

Amongst foreigners, the reverend Dr. Todd, of Dublin, and above all others, the reverend Dr. Gilly, of Durham, have laid me under particular obligations by transmitting to me information which they alone were able to furnish.

Finally, I owe the warmest expressions of gratitude to Professor Schmidt, author of the *History of the Cathari*, who has been kind enough to look over the proof-sheets of the *Bibliography of The Israel of the Alps*; as also to MM. Mailhet, Arnaud, and Olivier, who have gone over the manuscript and the proof-sheets of the whole work.

I cannot mention all the public libraries to which I have been more or less indebted in the preparation of this work. Those of Lyons and Grenoble contain ancient Vaudois manuscripts in the Romance language; as do also those of Geneva, Zürich, and Dublin. Those of Avignon and of Carpentras possess other manuscripts, which, although more modern, are not less interesting.

M. Frossard, author of a *History of the Vaudois of Provence*, and M. Barjavel, author of the *Historical Dictionary of Vaucluse*, have augmented, by the fruits of their studies, the notes which I had already collected on the subject treated of by the first of these writers.

I have attempted, in various ways, to have researches made at Prague, in order to discover, if possible, some documentary traces of the relations anciently subsisting betwixt the Vaudois and the evangelical churches of that country; but these attempts have been fruitless.

The charter-chests of a number of families have been opened to my investigations—amongst others, those of the Counts of Lucerna—but at a time when I could not go in person to examine them. I have not the less pleasure in recording here the respectful expression of my gratitude.

It would have been equally desirable to have seen, if possible, the episcopal records of Suza and of Saluces—those of the Archbishopric of Turin, and of the Inquisition formerly existing there—those of Aceil, of Carail, of Dronier, and of other towns, in which the Vaudois had numerous adherents in days of yore—as well as those even of the Holy Office at Rome. And I have no doubt that there are still many sources of information altogether un-

known to me. However, I have succeeded in forming, I believe, the most numerous collection of historical documents, relative to the Vaudois, which any historian has as yet possessed. I am especially happy in having been enabled to fill up the lamentable blanks which have hitherto existed in that memorable history.

But the operation of accumulating a great mass of historical materials is no more the distinguishing function of the historian, than the operation of bringing together the materials of a building is the distinguishing function of the architect. With the same materials may be erected either a monument of striking beauty, or one of the most commonplace description. What gives its proper character to a work of art, is its leaving in the mind a precise idea corresponding with the purpose for which it was intended. France possesses two such works, the smallest and the greatest of their kind, I believe, in Europe—the *Maison carrée* of Nismes, and the Cathedral of Strasburg, of which both the one and the other leave a distinct idea, an abiding impression, in the mind—an impression which will remain in the memory of the traveller more vivid and perfect than that of the street in which, perhaps, he has long had his abode. Unity, harmony, and proportion distinguish those things of which our minds thus readily take hold. Without these qualities in the completed work, a great collection of materials is nothing else, in history or in architecture, than a mere heap: these alone give the work a higher character, whether it be great or small. I do not deny that I have been ambitious that my little work should exhibit these characteristics.

Hitherto, the chronological method has been almost exclusively followed in all the histories of the Vaudois. This method consists in relating, year by year, all which occurs in the different countries, or different series of facts with which we have to do. It appears, at first sight, the most natural, and would be in reality the best, if each fact had neither cause nor effects. On the contrary, it is only the linking together of these causes and effects that renders our view of any fact complete; but as the origin of events is often to be traced far back, and the consequences stretch far into the future, the chronological method breaks up the connection, cutting asunder the exhibition of a fact and its consequences, by the account of a contemporaneous fact which has no relation to it. It follows that blanks are concealed from observation amidst these incomplete exhibitions of historic facts; and these blanks are often involuntarily produced by the very pen of the writer, who is compelled, by the chronological succession, to pass from one fact to another, instead of proceeding in a continuous manner with the

development of the same fact. This development, then, becomes like a broken picture, whose fragments are scattered at great distances. It is what might be expected, that the reading of histories written after this method ordinarily leaves in the mind none but very confused historic ideas, or rather leaves it without precise and dominant ideas.

The analytic method, on the contrary, after having classified the events, exhibits them in all their amplitude. Their aspect is presented entire and distinct, and consequently the mind of the reader more readily lays hold of the unity of the whole group. But this method is necessarily very tedious and difficult. After the documents have been collected, a selection and critical examination must be made: those which may serve as sources of historic information must be placed by themselves, and valid authorities must be distinguished from doubtful testimonies. It is then expedient to arrange them all in chronological order, with the view of having a general representation of the whole subject which is to be investigated. After this, the whole must be divided into distinct epochs, in order to detach from the historical picture the different outlines which are afterwards to be filled up with details. It is then necessary to fix upon the series of documents in each epoch, relating to facts of the same nature, and to withdraw from the group those which relate to things of a different kind. Finally, it remains to arrange these different series of documents, with a view to the historic exhibition of the facts which they tend to establish, so that these facts shall elucidate each other. All these things have been done for the *History of the Vaudois* which I now give to the public, of which, perhaps, I may say that the plan has cost me more time and trouble than anything else in the work. I venture to hope that its simplicity would prevent this from being perceived. Whatever may be the scale upon which it may yet happen that the *History of the Vaudois* shall be again taken up—whether it shall be extended to ten volumes or reduced to one—this plan, I believe, will always be found suitable.

The two chapters which treat of the Vaudois martyrs, are the only ones in this work which I have borrowed, without modification, from my original publication. Numerous notes have been appended to those which I have had to compose entirely from unpublished documents—such, in particular, as the two first chapters of the fourth volume—[Part II., Chapters xviii. and xix.]—the matter for which, although presenting little variety, was very considerable in amount; and, in general, all those which treat of the history of the Vaudois from 1690 to 1814.

If circumstances should permit me, hereafter, to publish entire the documents which I have used as authorities, the suppression of which has, more than all other things, contributed to restrict this book to moderate dimensions, I will have accomplished almost all that I would desire or think it in my power to do with regard to the history of the Vaudois.

An examination of the various arguments by which it has recently been attempted to disprove the existence of the Vaudois previous to Valdo, will be found in the Bibliography at the end of this Work.¹ In some instances, I did not possess the means of verifying, for this Bibliography, the titles of certain works with which I was unacquainted. I have not, however, on that account, thought it necessary to refrain from noticing them, according to the indications of them which I had obtained.

Something would, no doubt, have been gained, with regard to a number of important questions concerning the original sources of the history of the Vaudois, had they been here subjected again to the fiery trial of a better sustained and more profound analysis. Many things may yet remain to be said concerning the origin of the Vaudois, and their relations with the other sects of the middle ages. But the present work was meant to contain statements of fact rather than dissertations, and to have dwelt in this way upon particular points would not have consisted with its plan. A desire to present as condensed a historic narrative as possible, and an ambition to fill up the immense blanks which still subsisted in the modern history of the Vaudois, have been paramount in directing the preparation of these volumes. I have been obliged to carry on my labours in a little village, destitute of any learned library, and at a great distance from the printing-office. This will account for *errata*, a mere allusion to which will certainly be enough to obtain for them the indulgence of intelligent readers, who will easily rectify slight imperfections.

I have thought it my duty to indicate, at the head of each chapter, the authorities and sources of information particularly connected with each, and I conclude *The Israel of the Alps* with a list of the works which form general sources of information, relating throughout to the whole history of the Vaudois. Notwithstanding the large number of authors contained in this list, there are but few of them who can be regarded as authorities, the greater part having

¹ Concerning the opinion which would make the Vaudois derive their origin from Valdo, see *Bibliogr.*, part I. sect. II. § iii. article 24. Concerning the antiquity of the Vaudois MSS. in the Romance language, see part II. sect. I. § i. Concerning the *Nobla Leyczon*, see the same section, § iii., MS. 207, art. 5, &c.

done nothing but copy from one another. Besides, with the exception of the earlier ones, who have derived their information from original documents, and of a few subsequent writers, who have brought the aids of an exact criticism to the elucidation of obscure points, the rest are only of inferior interest. Yet there is none of them to be despised, for they may be found to present valuable details of fact, and new views of passages of history.

If I had written, as was my original intention, a critical and documentary history of the Vaudois, I would have quoted almost all these works, and made parts of them the subject of discussion. Having attempted nothing here but to narrate events as completely and as briefly as possible, I have confined myself to the authorities upon which I depend for them—all discussion has been avoided, and all means of abridgment have been studiously employed.

The mere substance of official documents has almost always been given—speeches have not been given at full length—narratives of judicial examinations have been transformed into simple dialogues, by which means the diluting phrases, “Being then asked,” “He replied,” &c., have been avoided. Occasionally in place of mentioning in succession the written communications of a negotiation, I have suppressed them altogether, saying merely, “It was then proposed,” “It was replied,” &c. And when the documents which I had before me proved respecting any historic personage, and upon the authority of sure witnesses, that such a personage had spoken to such or such an effect, had made such or such an answer, or had brought forward such or such considerations, I have thought it right to substitute for the narrative form that of direct address, making the person himself speak instead of relating what he said. This method was common with the historians of antiquity; and whilst I have been very reserved as to the use of it, I have always attended with the greatest care to the exact accuracy of the words, as expressing the thought which they were meant to convey. I shall perhaps be told that it is the duty of the historian neither to abstract nor to add. But in what sense? What sort of text is it of which not a single word may be changed? When he has before his eyes a number of different accounts of the same event or series of events, a number of documents, of which each by itself is insufficient, but which taken together present the subject in a clear enough light—when he has to pursue his search for the truth through a heap of judicial records, police reports, diplomatic notes and private correspondence, contemporary publications bearing the stamp of party spirit, narratives intentionally falsified or involuntarily left incomplete,

journals varying in the accuracy of their information, &c.—is it not from the comparison, the combination, and the persevering and critical examination of all these confused elements, that history must be framed? It is as important, in such a case, that the materials should be rightly estimated and classified, as that they should be of large amount.

I shall not say more on this subject. There are, of course, in this book, imperfections which I am aware of, and others of which I am ignorant. I can only offer, by anticipation, the expression of my gratitude to those who may be pleased to point out to me any improvements of which it may be susceptible. But if I am accused of being inaccurate, upon the sole ground of my having departed from the ideas hitherto prevalent, I must reply—Look to the sources from which my information is derived, and inform yourselves, before you pronounce an opinion.

I am far from concealing that my sympathies are with the oppressed and against their oppressors; but I have never been consciously inaccurate; and in every instance in which the facts of history have called me to say anything to the credit of the adversaries of the Vaudois, I believe that I have done it as fully and as frankly as possible.

There exist already a large number of histories of the Vaudois. They are all incomplete. Another recapitulation would have served no purpose. I assigned myself the task of writing their history, so as to make it complete. That undertaking presented difficulties which it may well be believed were not small, as no one had yet surmounted them. In default of other good qualities, the long and fatiguing labours which I have been obliged to undergo, in order to attain my object of presenting the truth without blanks, may perhaps obtain for me the approbation of my readers and of the Vaudois who love their native land.

I have prayed God to support me in my labours; and I pray him now to render them serviceable to my native country and to the truth.

ALEXIS MUSTON.

BOURDEAUX (DRÔME), 18 *September*, 1850.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE translation of this work was undertaken in the belief, which remains unshaken in the translator's mind, of its being the most complete and interesting history of the Vaudois yet given to the world. The lively and graphic style, of which the English reader may perhaps find here but an imperfect representation, although it adds much to the value of the work, is far from being its chief merit. The author has evidently devoted no small amount of labour to its preparation, both in the acquisition and in the arrangement of his materials. He has added to the stores of historic information previously accumulated, and has elucidated points that were formerly obscure, by his researches amongst documents inaccessible to previous historians. He has also, more fully than any previous author, brought the whole history of the Vaudois into one view—not only that of the Church in the Piedmontese valleys from the earliest period to the present day, but also that of the Vaudois inhabiting the French territory, of the Vaudois settlement in Calabria, and of the colonies which Vaudois exiles founded, who sought a refuge from persecution in different parts of Germany.

Few subjects have greater claims to the regard of all Christians than that of which this work treats. Even if the opinion were admitted, against which Dr. Muston contends, that the Vaudois derived their name and their origin as a distinct Christian community from Peter Waldo, the merchant of Lyons, who became a preacher of righteousness, and a witness against the corruptions of the Church of Rome, in the end of the twelfth century, it would be impossible to regard without deep interest that light shining in the midst of darkness throughout so many centuries, and the testimony so long maintained, amidst so many conflicts, by these Reformers before the Reformation. But the interest with which we contemplate the Vaudois (or *Waldenses*), is greatly increased when we acknowledge them as possessing a still higher antiquity—

as giving his name and, in part at least, his knowledge of the truth to Waldo, instead of deriving theirs from him—as forming a connecting link between the primitive church and the churches of the Reformation.

The reader of Vaudois history cannot read with unmingled pleasure. History records no deeds of cruelty more atrocious, no persecutions more terrible. But scenes which the benevolent mind would fain shut out from its contemplation, are yet invested with the highest and most enduring interest by the triumphs of faith, or possess a very great historic value as manifestations of the spirit of Popery, and as proofs of the identity of the Church of Rome with that Babylon of the Apocalypse, in which, when the Lord makes inquisition for blood and proceeds to the judgment long deferred, shall be found “the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

The high testimonies of approbation which Dr. Muston's work has received from the historians Thierry and Michelet, the late lamented Dr. Gilly, and others most competent to judge, have already in part been made known by the publishers in their prospectus of this translation. The translator may be permitted to add, that the manner in which Dr. Muston's work has been treated, even by those continental writers who, in magazines and in works recently published, have argued in support of opinions contrary to his, on the important question of the origin of the Vaudois, has been such as to exhibit their high sense of its importance. Dr. Herzog, in his recent work on this subject (*Die romanischen Waldenser, ihre vorreformatorischen Zustände und Lehren, u. s. w.*), describes Dr. Muston's history as containing a rich store of precious materials. Constant reference has been made to it in the whole of the recent discussions concerning the Vaudois.

To the question of the origin of the Vaudois, the translator has ventured to devote an Appendix. He would have been glad to have entered more largely into this subject than he has been able to do—the necessary limits of the work preventing him. His desire, however, was not so much to adduce any argument of his own, which he could scarcely pretend to do, as to exhibit the state of the controversy on the Continent concerning the historic apostolicity of the Vaudois—a question of great interest and importance, although certainly not of so great importance as some have ascribed to it. This he has in some measure endeavoured to do; and imperfect as it is, he is not without hope that the appendix devoted to this subject, may be of use in directing attention to facts and arguments with which, if he may judge from all he has

seen in print, very few persons in this country seem to have much acquaintance.

It may be proper, and yet, perhaps, it is not quite necessary, for the translator here to say that he does not hold himself responsible for every sentiment contained in the work which he has translated, nor wish to be understood as assenting to it. He differs from the author in some instances in which he has not thought it requisite to append any note; but in no case did he think it warrantable to change what the author had written. Dr. Muston has been allowed to speak for himself, and to say to the British public what he originally thought fit to say to that of France and Switzerland. On various points, religious, political, and historical, the translator would have expressed himself otherwise; but he remembered that the work was Dr. Muston's and not his, and he is confident that it will find general approbation among the religious public of Britain, for the evangelical, liberal, and generous sentiments with which it is pervaded.

The work, as now issued, is not, however, a mere translation of the *Israel of the Alps*, as published six years since in France, but possesses, at the same time, the character of a second edition. Some corrections and additions have been made by the author, and maps and plates now accompany the work for the first time. The plates are chiefly, as will be seen, from sketches by Dr. Muston himself.

The translator has only to add, that concerning the form and spelling of proper names, he felt considerable difficulty. The French form, generally used in the original, is sometimes the least familiar to British readers. It has been thought best to prefer the most familiar form—French or Italian, as it might be. And if a perfect uniformity has not in all cases been preserved, it is hoped that no difficulty will thence arise to the reader.

J. M.

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- PRA DU TOUR, IN THE MOUNTAINS OF ANGROGNA, *Engraved Title.*
- Here the ancient Vaudois had the school of their Barbas or Pastors, the secret source of those vivifying missions which they sent to both extremities of Italy. Not a vestige, however, can now be traced of the buildings of the ancient college which formerly existed in this mountain retreat. The Vaudois regard the Pra du Tour almost as a sacred spot. A Roman Catholic chapel was erected here, with the view of drawing over the Waldenses to the Church of Rome, but the project, as might have been expected, signally failed.
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- This view is taken from the Mountain of Lucernette, and affords a very comprehensive and interesting prospect of the Vaudois country.
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The coalition of church and state (corpus Christianum) has continually had outspoken opponents since its inception in the 4th century under Constantine. All through the long medieval night of papal terror and up to the present day of accommodation and compromise, there has never been a time when the voice of dissent and nonconformity was not heard, protesting against established religion and coerced uniformity. The most prominent target of that protest has been the arrogant usurpation of Christ's Kingly Authority and Headship over His churches and the souls of men, whether that usurpation was Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, or any other. As it has been, so shall it ever be. This enduring testimony of dissent, this genuine Christian nonconformity arises as the inevitable response of the Christian soul to the internal witness of the Spirit toward the truth and supreme authority of God's Word. Consequently, the origin, nature and history of Christ's churches can never be adequately discerned or explained apart from some grasp of the Biblical Truths advocated and defended throughout the history of genuine Christian Dissent and Nonconformity. As Dr. J. S. Whale, former Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Mansfield College, Oxford University and President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge University, said, *"Dissent, not only from the centralized absolutism of Rome, but also from the State establishments of Protestantism in the Old World is an historic fact of enduring influence. To account for the tradition of liberty in the 'free world' of today without reference to dissent would be to read modern history with one eye shut."*

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