

immediate successors of the Apostles were vessels of honour, prepared and meet for the Master's use, whether they are contemplated as Ministers or as apologists. Such also were the witnesses clothed in sackcloth, when the gold had become dim, that the most fine gold was changed. To the same end, and by the same Providence, the wrath, purposes, and inventions of men were made to praise God;—the Crusades, for example, and the fall of Constantinople; these events led to the dispersion of valuable knowledge in Western Europe;—the rise, also, of the Florentine school in the house of Medici, and the great change in letters to which this led;—the invention, at this moment, of printing, and the rapid multiplication of books;—the building of St. Peter's;—the work of Tetzels;—all, led the way to Luther, Melancthon, and the Reformation; by which, as from death, the church arose in her might.

The honoured names of the most conspicuous actors in this important event have been deservedly handed down to posterity; and long may they be remembered by men! But there were others equally worthy, who laboured, suffered, and prepared the way for their more distinguished successors, of whom but little is recorded and known. How scanty, for example, are the memorials which have been transmitted to us, of that Deacon who, A. D. 600, on his return from Mahometan captivity, was hospitably received at Mananalis, in the north of Syria, by Constantine, another Christian in suffering. In the morning, when about to depart, the only way in which the Deacon could repay his kind host was, by a gift of the holy Scriptures, and they became the power of God to his salvation. The blessing he had found, he began to make known to his neighbours, and with great effect. As the Epistles of Paul were highly valued by this good man, and affectionately commended to his hearers, Constantine and his followers were speedily known by the term Paulicians. Their enemies reported them to be Manichees; but Gibbon, though not their friend, declares, "The Paulicians sincerely condemned the memory and opinion of the Manichæan sect." Mosheim states the same fact. They were severely persecuted, yet they grew and rapidly extended. From Asia Minor and the east of Europe, they were driven towards the west, and were known as Cathari, a word akin to our Puritans. Still driven by intolerance, their representatives fled to the glens near the Alps, and were proscribed on one side of those mountains as Vallenses or Waldenses, and on the other as Albigenses. From thence they were hunted to the caverns of the Alps, &c., where, as if wolves and not men, they were the jest of their enemies as Turlupins. Still regarded and pursued as reptiles that should be trodden under foot, they fled wherever they could find a refuge. In France their designation was Tisserands, from their employ, and "the poor men of Lyons." Among these persecuted fugitives, and remnants of early churches, under different names, whom Bossuet acknowledges as "the theological if not the natural descendants of the Paulicians of Armenia," the Protestants of those ages, the

flock and church of Christ was permanently found. It would be no difficult task, to attempt to connect the gift of one solitary copy of God's word by a suffering Deacon to Constantine, with the light that dawned on Wickliffe, Huss, and Luther, and which led to the Reformation. Yet the Deacon and the Paulicians are but little known; and, where known, generally it has been but to be dishonoured.

Luther, and his noble associates, stand before us in growing repute. Yet how few have heard of John de Wesalia, and John Wesselus (if the latter is not the former name Latinized) of Groningen; who was once known and honoured as the "forerunner of Luther!" Wesselus was born A. D. 1419, travelled in the east, became Doctor in Divinity, suffered for the "truth," and died 1489. In his day, Wesselus was so celebrated, as to be known as the "light of the world;" but that which the most distinguished kind, was his preparation, by his works and sufferings, of the way for Luther. By this great man some of the works of Wesselus were edited, and he greatly commended him for his learning and worth. By this kindness of Luther, principally if not only, the name of Wesselus has been preserved from perishing; yet assuredly the church owes that man very much, and should cherish his memory, who could be truly spoken of as the Forerunner of the great Saxon Reformer. One other fact in reference to Wesselus may be noticed: At the elevation of Sixtus the IVth. to the Papal throne, he bade Wesselus ask at his hands some gift. He modestly expressed his wish and prayer, that the pontificate might be to its possessor a great personal and public good. "That," said Sixtus, "is my care: ask something for yourself." "Then, holy father," replied Wesselus, "my request is that from your library you would grant me a copy of the Scriptures." "That," said the Pope, "you shall have; but foolish man, why do not you ask for a bishopric, or something of that sort?" The answer was, "Because I do not want such things." Like the late John Wesley, he was *homo unius libri*, "a man of one book."

The Reformation, though attended with mighty changes, did not accomplish all that might have been expected, nor long maintain its vigour. With all their faults, we are greatly indebted to the Puritans, and the noble band of Nonconformists, for the preservation of the leading doctrines of the Reformation in Britain. But the children of these men renounced the faith, and departed from the spirit of their fathers. What is known as Methodism (a term by which the religion of Nonconformist Ministers was also known; Mr. Sandercock of Tavistock, in his notice of Richard Saunders, M. A., who was ejected from Keston, Devon, and who died at Tiverton, reports that he was one of those who were at that time called *New Methodists*) has during the last century effected a great change in Britain, the direct and indirect operations of which are mighty in our churches; and from us and America, to the most distant parts of the earth, This "second Reformation" has placed the name o