

REVIEWS.

RELIGION IN FRANCE.

1. *Gallia Christiana*. Paris, 1656.
2. *History of the Crusades against the Albigenses in the thirteenth Century*. From the French of J. C. L. SIMONDE DE SISMONDI. 8vo. London, 1826.
3. *History of the Reformed Religion in France*. By the Rev. EDWARD SMEDLEY, A. M. 18mo. 3 vols. London, 1832.
4. *Musée des Protestans Celebres*. Paris, 1821, &c.
5. *Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes*. 5 vols. 4to. Delft, 1693.
6. *History of the Hugonots*. By T. S. BROWNING, Esquire. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1829.
7. *History of the Persecution endured by the Protestants in the South of France*. By MARK WILKES. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1821.
8. *Reports of the Foreign Evangelical Society*. New York. Various years.

It is probable that France received the gospel both from Italy and from Asia Minor. The constant intercourse with the former country, where was the seat of the Imperial Government, and the settlement of Romans in France, for official purposes, as well as for trade, necessarily introduced, from time to time, the institutions, the manners, and the forms of religion peculiar to the Italian peninsula: among these, Christianity doubtless had a place, and it may be believed that the servants of Christ who went from Italy to Gaul, published the truths of salvation and founded churches in their new places of abode. The South of France was Christianized from Asia Minor. An extensive commerce was carried on between the Southern ports and Smyrna, thus affording facilities for the transmission of books and the conveyance of missionaries. The Asiatic origin of the earliest churches in that part of the country seems to be satisfactorily established.

Eusebius has preserved the greater part of a letter, containing an account

of a horrible persecution endured by the Christians of Lyons and Vienne, in the year 177. It is a most affecting narrative. The rage of the Pagans was unbounded. They vied with each other in the infliction of torments, ambitious to excel in cruelty. Scourgings—lacerations—the wild beasts—the hot iron chair—with other modes of torture, were unsparingly employed—yet for the most part without effect: very few denied the faith or shrunk from pain. Even the weaker sex nobly braved the efforts of the foe, and “witnessed a good confession.” Blandina, a Christian woman, whose constancy wearied out her tormentors, and who expired at last in the amphitheatre, where she was exposed in a net, to be tossed and torn by a wild bull, refused to confess the crimes of which the saints were in those days falsely accused, and would only say, in reply to the questions put to her, “I am a Christian, and no evil is committed among us.” One of the brethren, Sanctus by name, “to every interrogatory answered in Latin, ‘I am a Christian.’ This, he repeatedly owned, was to him both name, and state, and race, and every thing; and nothing else could the heathen draw from him. Hence the indignation of the Governor and of the torturers was fiercely levelled against this holy person, so that having exhausted all the usual methods of torture, they at last fixed brazen plates to the most tender parts of his body. These were made red hot for the purpose of scorching him, and yet he remained upright and inflexible, and firm in his confession; being, no doubt, bedewed and refreshed by the heavenly fountain of the water of life which flows from Christ.”

The fury of the enemies was not satisfied with death. “Our sorrow was greatly increased,” the writer of the letter observes, “because we were deprived of the melancholy satisfaction of interring our friends. Neither the dark-