

excepted) are preserved. We know, however, that the members of those churches had been "baptized into Christ," and "called upon his name:" and we rejoice in the belief that even in the darkest times of the subsequent history—those times in which, as Archbishop Leighton remarks, the Church could only be traced by her blood—could only be seen by the light of the fires in which her martyrs were burnt—the godly succession was kept up. There were gaps which cannot now be filled, and now and then the chain seemed to be broken. But it never was.

There was a "falling away." "Perilous times" came. Corruptions and abuses crept in. Idols were set up. Will worship prevailed. The word of God was neglected and trampled on. Priestcraft was rampant. Nevertheless, He "left not himself without witness." Every age brought to view champions for the true and right: and we Baptists are the Novatians, the Donatists, the Paulicians, the Petrobrusians of the nineteenth century.

Some one starts up in dismay;—"Sir! all those people were heretics and schismatics!" Hard words, these! But we have been used to them. They called our Lord himself a "Samaritan," and said that "he had a devil." The fact is, that the dominant party always assumed to be the orthodox, and bade the people believe that those who differed from them were heretics. Trinitarians were orthodox in the days of Constantine, and the Arians were banished. The Arians were the orthodox in the next reign, that of Constantius, and then the Trinitarians were banished. These alternations were continually taking place. And so it comes to this, that if you want to trace the true church of God, you must follow her down the line of those who have been stigmatized, and their names cast out as evil. Patriotism has been oftener found at the headsman's block than in kings' palaces.

"THE CHURCH"! What "great swelling words of vanity" have been employed on this subject! We hear every day of the teaching of "the Church," the laws of "the Church," and all people are commanded to do the bidding of "the Church." But what was that mysterious body called "the Church," in the times of her greatest glory, that is, during the ages of dulness and despotism—the times of Becket and Wolsey? Was she not "a cage of