

THE CHRISTIAN BANNER.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,"
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

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BAPTIST HISTORY.

This large and influential body of Christians claim that theirs have been the true doctrines of the church in all ages; and that amid all the corruptions of Popery, the few dissenters therefrom have been for the most part Baptists. In modern times they trace their pedigree to the Waldneses, of whom Greece was the parent; Spain the nurse; France the foster-mother; Savoy the jailor; and the Reformation the release. It is generally conceded that they sprung from the *Paulicians*, who, being persecuted by the Greek emperors, passed over into Spain. Hence, on the invasion of the Saracens, they crossed the Pyrenees and settled in France, chiefly in and near the city of Lyons, once so famous for evangelical dissenters. Finally they sought refuge in Piedmont, a state very unwilling to persecute, but, like other jailors, obliged to do as it was told. Amongst the various sects that trace their origin to the illustrious body of Christians, we may very fairly admit the claim of the Baptists. We do not mean to say that all the Waldneses practised baptism by immersion. There is much conflicting testimony on this subject in works which both parties quote as authorities. This, however, is easily explained. We are apt to look upon the Waldneses, somehow or other, as if they were a sect, whereas they were of all manner of sects and opinions, and are best distinguished as "Anti-Lutheran Protestants," who, while they all agreed in opposing the Roman Church, differed as much from each other in standards, creeds, and forms, as do the anti-Catholics of the present day. They spread all over Europe, and passed by different names, as Albigenses in France, Waldneses in Savoy, Picards and Hussites in Bohemia, Lollards and Wickliffites in England, &c. All were substantially the same people, and many of them practised baptism by immersion.

Of the early settlers in New England, some were Baptists; and though they made no distinct profession, but worshipped with the other colonists, they brought with them the grain of mustard seed which, when once rooted in American soil, sprang up and became a great and spreading tree, overshadowing a large portion of these Uni-