

compelled to hold their meetings in secret, and to avoid recognition by their neighbors. The straits and miseries of that enforced seclusion cannot be described. The perpetual cry of the stricken was "How long, O Lord, how long?"—How many were murdered, how many were starved, will never be known on earth. But the register is preserved; it is correct and full; and one day "the books will be opened."

The Reformation in the sixteenth century broke up the hiding places, and the prisoners came forth. Speaking of the Mennonites, or German Baptists, Mosheim says—"Prior to the age of Luther, there lay concealed in almost every country of Europe, but especially in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, very many persons, in whose minds was deeply rooted that principle, which the Waldensians, the Wickliffites, and the Hussites maintained, some more covertly, and others more openly; namely that the kingdom which Christ set up on the earth, or the visible church, is an assembly of *holy* persons, and ought therefore to be entirely free, not only from ungodly persons and sinners, but from the institutions of human device against ungodliness. This principle lay at the foundation, and was the source of all that was new and singular in the religion of the Mennonites; and the greatest part of their singular opinions, as is well attested, were approved, some centuries before Luther's time, by those who had such views of the nature of the Church of Christ" (Church History, Cent. xvi. Sect. 3). Those were the views which had been held by the Baptists "some centuries before Luther's time," as has been shown in these pages. The Baptists, therefore, did not originate in the sixteenth century.

The first church of baptized believers was formed at Jerusalem, A. D. 31. Nearly thirty years afterwards the Apostle Paul said, "From Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ:"—"Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (Rom. xv. 19: 2 Cor. ii. 14.) The names of about thirty churches are found in the records of the New Testament; but those records are manifestly incomplete; we read of the churches in Achaia, Galatia, and other countries, but the names of none of them (Corinth