

TRUTH TRIUMPHANT: CHAPTER 15

Early Waldensian Heroes

Whenever, therefore, in the following sketches, the terms Berengarians, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, Waldenses, Albigenses, Leonists, or the poor men of Lyons, Lollards, Cathari, etc, occur, it must be understood that they intend a people, who agreed in certain leading principles, however they might differ in some smaller matters, and that all of them were by the Catholics comprehended under the general name of Waldenses.¹

TO NORTHWESTERN Italy, southeastern France, and northern Spain one must look for that spiritual fortress which for centuries was invincible to the fierce onslaughts of the medieval hierarchy. There the giant Alps had been piled high as a mighty wall between France and Italy. In the peaceful valleys and dales of the Alps lived the noble and heroic Waldenses. The charm of those verdant fields was rendered more charming by the presence of a people who were ever loyal to the gospel.

The Waldenses, while covering many lands with their Bible teachings, did not spread into all the countries in which are found other branches of the Church in the Wilderness. They may not have counted their members by the millions as did other churches during the Dark Ages. Their first mention is due to the fact that they remained the largest of any Christian group in the struggle to preserve the Bible and primitive Christianity. When the Reformation came, they were still protesting against ecclesiastical tyranny. Among them truth triumphed.

It is not difficult to discern in the lines of influence emanating from the Waldenses a force which aided the spiritual upheavals led by Martin Luther and John Calvin. The ensign of the gospel was passed from their battle-scarred hands to those of the Reformers, and was carried with victorious acclaim to the Teutonic nations of northern Europe and on to the young republic in North America.

To the Waldenses was given the task of passing the light on to the Protestants of modern times and of penetrating the darkness of the world with the glory of true Bible doctrine. Through the Dark Ages the Waldensian heroes kept the faith which they had received from their fathers, even from the days of the apostles.

Of them Sir James Mackintosh writes:

With the dawn of history, we discover some simple Christians in the valleys of the Alps, where they still exist under the ancient name of Vaudois, who by the light of the New Testament saw the extraordinary contrast between the purity of primitive times and the vices of the gorgeous and imperial hierarchy which surrounded them.²

Shut up in mountain valleys, they held fast to the doctrines and practices of the primitive church while the inhabitants of the plains of Italy were daily casting aside the truth.³ When one gazes upon their magnificent mountain bulwarks, he cannot but admit that here God had provided for His people safe and secure retreats as foretold by John in the Apocalypse.

After Emperor Constantine had declared (A.D. 325) which of the Christian churches he recognized, and had decreed that the Roman world must conform to his decision, there came a straggle between the Christians who refused to compromise the teachings of the New Testament and those who were ready to accept the traditions of men. Mosheim declares:

The ancient Britons and Scots could not be moved, for a long time, either by the threats or the promises of the papal legates, to subject themselves to the Roman decrees and laws; as is abundantly testified by Beda. The Gauls and the Spaniards, as no one can deny, attributed only so much authority to the pontiff, as they supposed would be for their own advantage. Nor in Italy itself, could he make the bishop of Ravenna and others bow obsequiously to his will. And of private individuals, there were many who expressed openly their detestation of his vices and his greediness of power. Nor are those destitute of arguments who assert, that the Waldenses, even in this age [seventh century], had fixed their residence in the valleys of Piedmont, and inveighed freely against Roman domination.⁴

Robert Oliveton, a native of the Waldensian valleys, who translated the Vaudois Bible into French in 1535 wrote thus of the Scriptures in the Preface:

It is Thee alone [the French Reformation Church] to whom I present this precious Treasure...in the name of a certain poor People thy Friends and Brethren in Jesus Christ, who ever since they were blessed and enriched therewith by the Apostles and Ambassadors of Christ, have still enjoyed and possessed the same.⁵

Waldenses Date Back to the Apostles

The connection between the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and other believers in the New Testament and the primitive Christians of Western Europe is explained by Voltaire thus:

Auricular confession was not received so late as the eighth and ninth centuries in the countries beyond the Loire, in Languedoc and the Alps - Alcuin complains of this in his letters. The inhabitants of those countries appear to have always had an inclination to abide by the customs of the primitive church, and to reject the tenets and customs which the church in its more flourishing state judged convenient to adopt.

Those who were called Manichaeans, and those who were afterward named Albigenses, Vaudois, Lollards, and who appeared so often under different names, were remnants of the first Gaulish Christians, who were attached to several ancient customs, which the Church of Rome thought proper to alter afterward.⁶

For nearly two hundred years following the death of the apostles, the process of separation went on between these two classes of church members until the open rupture came. In the year 325 the first world council of the church was held at Nicaea, and at that time Sylvester was given great recognition as bishop of Rome. It is from the time of this Roman bishop that the Waldenses date their exclusion of the papal party from their communion. As the church historian Neander says:

But it was not without some foundation of truth that the Waldenses of this period asserted the high antiquity of their sect, and maintained that from the time of the secularization of the church - that is, as they believed, from the time of Constantine's gift to the Roman bishop Silvester [A.D. 314 - 336] - such an opposition as finally broke forth in them, had been existing all along.⁷

These Christians of the Alps and Pyrenees have been called Waldenses from the Italian word for "valleys," and where they spread over into France, they have been called Vaudois, a French word meaning "inhabitants of the valleys" in a certain province. Many writers constantly call them Vaudois. The enemies of this branch of the Church in the Wilderness have endeavored to confuse their history by tracing to a wrong source the origin of the name, Waldenses. They seek to connect its beginnings with Peter Waldo, an opulent merchant of Lyons, France, who came into notice about 1175. The story

of this remarkable man commands a worthy niche in the temple of events. However, there is nothing in the original or the earliest documents of the Waldenses - their histories, poems, and confessions of faith - which can be traced to him or which make any mention of him.

Waldo, being converted in middle life to truths similar to those held by the Vaudois, distributed his fortune to the poor and labored extensively to spread evangelical teachings. He and his followers soon met with cruel opposition. Finally, in desperation they fled for refuge to those Waldenses who had crossed the Alps and had formed a considerable body in eastern France.

The great antiquity of the Waldensian vernacular preserved through the centuries witnesses to their line of descent independent of Rome, and to the purity of their original Latin. Alexis Muston says:

The patois of the Vaudois valleys has a radical structure far more regular than the Piedmontese idiom. The origin of this patois was anterior to the growth of Italian and French - antecedent even to the Romance language, whose earliest documents exhibit still more analogy with the present language of the Vaudois mountaineers, than with that of the troubadours of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The existence of this patois is of itself a proof of the high antiquity of these mountaineers, and of their constant preservation from foreign intermixture and changes. Their popular idiom is a precious monument.⁸

Turning back the pages of history six hundred years before Peter Waldo, there is even a more famous name connected with the Waldenses. This leader was Vigilantius (or, Vigilantius Leo). He could be looked upon as a Spaniard, since the people of his regions were one in practically all points with those of northern Spain. Vigilantius took his stand against the new relapses into paganism. From these apostatizing tendencies the Christians of northern Italy, northern Spain, and southern France held aloof. The story of Vigilantius and how he came to identify himself with this region is told in another chapter.⁹ From connections with him, this people were for centuries called Leonists, as well as Waldenses and Vaudois.

Reinerius Saccho, an officer of the Inquisition (c. A.D. 1250), wrote a treatise against the Waldenses which explains their early origin. He had formerly been a pastor among them, but had apostatized and afterward had become a papal persecutor. He must have known as much about them as any enemy could. After declaring on his own personal testimony that all the ancient heretical sects, of which there were more than seventy, had been destroyed except four - the Arians, Manichaeans, Runerians, and Leonists - he wrote, "Among all these sects, which still are or have been, there is not any more pernicious to the church than that of the Leonists."

He gave three reasons why they were dangerous to the Papacy:

First, because it is of longer duration; for some say that it hath endured from the time of Pope Sylvester; others from the time of the apostles; second, because it is more general. For there is scarcely any country wherein this sect is not. Third, because when all other sects beget horror in the hearers by the outrageousness of their blasphemies against God, this of the Leonists hath a great appearance of piety: because they live justly before men and believe all things rightly concerning God and all the articles which are contained in the creed; only they blaspheme the Church of Rome and the clergy.¹⁰

Thus Saccho showed that the Leonists, or Waldenses, were older than the Arians; yes, even older than the Manichaeans.

Their Territory Was Not Roman

A distinction has long been recognized between the northern Italian peninsula and the central part, so that for more than one thousand years the bishoprics in northern Italy were called Italic, while those in central Italy were named Roman. Or, as Frederick Nolan says, in speaking of an early Latin Bible in this territory: "The author perceived, without any labor of inquiry, that it [Italic Bible] derived its name from that diocese which has been termed the Italic, as contradistinguished from the Roman."¹¹

The city of Milan in the northern part of the Italian peninsula has always been one of the most famous cities of history. At times it has been a rival to Rome. Several Roman emperors, abandoning the city on the banks of the Tiber, fixed their capital here. It was a famous meeting place for the East and the West. One author states that the religious influence of Milan was regarded with respect, and that its authority was especially felt in Gaul and in Spain.¹² It was the chief center of the Celts who lived on the Italian side of the Alps.¹³ Before it could come under the dominant influence of the Roman bishop, the Gothic armies had completed their conquest of Italy as well as France. These newcomers, who had been converted to Christ more than one hundred years previously, held fast to the usages and customs of the primitive church and did no harm to Milan.¹⁴

Since the Goths granted religious freedom to their subjects, Milan profited by it. When from all parts of Europe newly chosen bishops came to Rome to be consecrated, none appeared from the Italic dioceses of Milan and Turin. They did not join in the procession. In fact, for many years after 553 there was a widespread schism in northern Italy and adjacent lands between Rome and the bishops of nine provinces under the leadership of the bishop of Milan who renounced fellowship with Rome to become autonomous. They had been alienated by the famous decree of the "Three Chapters," passed in 553 by the Council of Constantinople, condemning three great leaders of the Church of the East.¹⁵ The people of this region knew the straight truth. They did not believe in the infallibility of the pope and did not consider that being out of communion with him was to be out of fellowship with the church.¹⁶ They held that their own ordination was as efficacious as the pretended apostolic succession of the bishop of Rome.

While the Papacy was bringing much of Europe under her control, the two dioceses of Milan and Turin continued independent. It was unbearable to the Papacy that, in the very land in which was her throne, there should be a Mordecai in the gate. Two powerful forces nullified all her efforts to annex the Milan territory. First, the presence of the Lombard kings, unconquered until about 800, assured religious tolerance there. Moreover, the Lombards, like the Goths before them, rejected so many innovations brought in by Rome that they never admitted the papal bishops of Italy to a seat in their legislative councils.¹⁷ Therefore, they were promptly called Arians, the name given by Rome to her opponents.

Early Waldensian Heroes

Because of the desperate attempt of papal writers to date the rise of the Waldenses from Peter Waldo, all Waldensian heroes before the time of the crusades which largely destroyed the Albigenses, will be called "early." This term refers to those evangelical leaders that kept continental Europe true to primitive Christianity between the days of the apostles and the Albigensian crusades. Such believers did not separate from the Papacy, for they had never belonged to it. In fact, many times they called the Roman Catholic Church "the newcomer."

To relate the godly exploits of the early Alpine heroes from the days of Vigilantius to Waldo is to answer the thesis of the papists that the Waldenses did not begin until about 1160. The most noted

papal antagonist of the Waldenses who has endeavored to brand them as originating at that date is Bishop Jacques Benigne Bossuet. Bossuet, the brilliant French papist, is reckoned by some to be one of the seven greatest orators of history. With almost undetectable shrewdness he analyzed every item of history which he thought might give the Waldenses an early origin, and then drew his false conclusions. Of him Mosheim says: "This writer certainly did not go to the sources, and being influenced by party zeal, he was willing to make mistakes."¹⁸ A casual reader, or one partly informed, could easily be misled by Bossuet. Full acquaintance with the records, however, exposes this bishop to the charge of a scandalous misuse of information.

To those who lay too much stress upon Peter Waldo as being the founder of the Waldenses, it can be said that there were many by the name of Waldo. Particular attention has been called by a papal author to a Peter Waldo, an opponent of the Papacy, who arose in the seventh century.¹⁹

Certain papal writers have grouped all religious bodies in Europe hostile to Rome since the year 1000 or earlier, under the title of Waldenses.²⁰ Their reason for doing this can be seen when one contemplates the record of the growth of the churches refusing to go along with Rome's innovations. Consider to what extent the Waldenses were leaders in this policy. The teachings and organizing ability of Vigilantius gave leadership to the evangelical descendants of the apostles in northern Italy, southern France, and northern Spain.²¹ In those days evangelical churches were unable to effect visible unity in these sections of Europe. As those who preserved primitive Christianity multiplied on the continent and as they contacted the Celts of the British Isles and the Church of the East, they discovered that they were one in their essential beliefs. Then they realized more fully the fulfillment of our Savior's prediction that His church would be of all nations. Though great efforts were made to fix various names on these different evangelical groups, even their enemies, at times, were obliged to recognize that they were "men of the valleys," or Waldenses.

The masses of the heathen naturally became a mission field for the efforts of the two rival communions - Rome and the Church in the Wilderness. Outwardly, the Papacy seemed dominant because of her apparent victories by law, by the sword, and by political alliances. The evangelical churches, however, increased in power.

The eighth century opens with strong leadership appearing in both of these communions. The successors of Columbanus, as well as the powerful evangelists of northern Italy and of the Celts, were making irresistible appeals to the masses. The Council of Frankfort (A.D. 794) attended by bishops from France, Germany, and Lombardy attests the independence shown by national clergy to the will of Rome. In the presence of papal legates they rejected the second Council of Nicaea (A.D. 787) which had decreed for the worship of images.²² In the Orient, in this same century, the independent Church of the East had just erected in the capital of China that famous monument, still standing, which tells of the wide conquests won by consecrated missionaries in central and farther Asia.²³

Claude of Turin

One cannot be rightly acquainted with the ninth century without recognizing a famous apostle of that time - Claude, the light of northern Italy. Although a Spaniard by birth, his eminent talents and learning attracted the attention of the reigning Western emperor. Claude was first called by this prince to his capital in northern Europe, and was afterward promoted by him to be bishop of Turin, Italy, an influential city nestled in the midst of the Waldensian regions. When he arrived at his new post, he found the state church in a deplorable condition. Vice, superstition, simony, image worship, and other

demoralizing practices were rampant. There is an almost unanimous testimony of historians on this point. The Papacy was slipping back into paganism. Claude at once undertook the almost impossible task of stemming the tide. He found that even the evangelical churches had been obliged to struggle hard against the prevailing influences. Claude boldly hurled defiance at the Papacy and called the people back to New Testament faith and practice.

Evidently Claude, while maintaining that Christ was divine by nature, did not accept the extreme speculations concerning the Godhead voted by the first Council of Nicaea. This was true of most of the evangelical bodies which differed from the Church of Rome.²⁴ Nothing in the writings of the famous reformer has ever been brought forth to inculpate him of any heresy, although a well-known antagonist accused him after his death of heresy.²⁵ On the contrary, his Biblical commentaries and his other works plainly reveal him to be a New Testament Christian. In one of his epistles Claude vehemently denies that he had been raising up some new sect, and points to Jesus who was also denounced as a sectarian and a demoniac. He claims that he found all the churches of Turin stuffed full of vile and accursed images, and he at once began to destroy what was being worshiped.²⁶

From another opponent to this reformer can be learned the interesting fact that Claude's diocese was divided into two parts: on the one hand, those who followed the superstitions of the time and who were bitterly opposed to him; on the other hand, those who agreed with him in doctrine and practice. These evidently were the Vallenses of the Cottian Alps. This opponent, Dungal by name, exalted by modern papal writers as a brilliant churchman, constantly accused Claude of perpetuating the heresies of Vigilantins. The fact that such opponents never ceased to hurl the accusation against Claude and his Vallenses that they believed and taught the same doctrine as Vigilantins, the eminent reformer who lived four hundred years earlier, proves the continuous chain of truth among the inhabitants of northern Italy during the lapse of those four centuries.²⁷

Claude cried out thus against image worship: "If a man ought not to worship the works of God, much less should he worship and reverence the works of men. Whoever expects salvation which comes only from God, to come from pictures, must be classed with those mentioned in Romans 1, who serve the creature more than the Creator." Against the worshiping of the cross he taught: "God has commanded us to bear the cross; not to pray to it. Those are willing to pray to it, are unwilling to bear it, either in the spiritual or in the literal sense. To worship God in this manner, is in fact to depart from Him." When accused of not holding to the authority of the pope, he wrote: "He is not to be called the Apostolical,...who sits in the apostle's chair; but he who performs the duties of an apostle. For of those who hold that place, yet do not fulfill its duties, the Lord says, 'They sit in Moses' seat.'"²⁸ Claude wanted to know why they should adore the cross and not also worship many other things - as mangers, fishing boats, trees, thorns, and lances - with which Jesus came in contact. He also defended himself against those who reviled him because he denounced pilgrimages.

The Rise of a New Controversy

Thus the gulf was widening between those congregations descended from the apostles and those attached to the Papacy. About this time (A.D. 831) a book was written which widened the breach.²⁹ It dealt in a revolutionary manner with the subject of the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. Perhaps this bold venture was made because the writer knew himself to be supported in his novel doctrine by the Papacy. The bishop of Rome had just succeeded with the help of Charlemagne in organizing the Holy Roman Empire, and thus he had gained powerful influence. The author, therefore, supported by the theocracy, boldly put into print a doctrine which had been considered for some time. There had

already appeared advocates of the papal thesis that the priest had power to change the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, but now this startling theory was presented to the public.

Simple scriptural believers concluded that this teaching belittled the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Christians who were under apostolic influence took the stand that salvation was obtained by the one and only death of the Redeemer. If this new doctrine prevailed, they saw it would logically follow that the Decalogue, which the Redeemer had died on the cross to uphold, would occupy an inferior status. From that time on, strong evangelical leaders never ceased to oppose these innovations. This revolutionary book on transubstantiation was written about six years before the death of the noble Claude in 839. There is no record that this reformer was acquainted enough with this latest lapse into paganism to assail it.

Whenever from the midst of the Church in the Wilderness a new standard-bearer appeared, the Papacy promptly stigmatized him and his followers as "a new sect." This produced a twofold result. First, it made these people appear as never having existed before, whereas they really belonged among the many Bible followers who from the days of the early church existed in Europe and Asia. Secondly, it apparently detached the evangelical bodies from one another, whereas they were one in essential doctrines. The different groups taken together constituted the Church in the Wilderness. It is as if one wrote of the Washingtonians, the Jeffersonites, the Lincolnites, and the Americans; or, as if one would describe the Matthewites, the Thomasites, the Peterites, the Paulites, and the Christians. The grouping was not of their own originating; instead, it was a device of their antagonist.

As Philippus Limborch writes: "And because they dwelt in different cities, and had their particular instructors, the papists, to render them the more odious, have represented them as different sects, and ascribed to them different opinions, though others affirm they all held the same opinions, and were entirely of the same sect.³⁰

About this time John Scot, a famous Irish scholar, was called to the court of Charles the Bald, grandson of Charlemagne. He is usually called Joannes Scotus Erigena. In those days, the word "Scotus" definitely designated an Irishman. "Erigena" is the Greek equivalent of Scotus. This man, the head of the royal school at Paris, was the author of many celebrated works, and ranks as a leading scholar of his time. He was shocked at the awful import of the treatise advocating that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper is changed into the actual body of Christ by the ritual of the mass. He took up his pen and produced a book which successfully met the new enemy of evangelism and profoundly stirred believers in primitive Christianity. Two centuries later a papal council condemned this work because the participants recognized the powerful influence it long had possessed over the people.

Glaring Papal Forgeries

This century also witnessed certain other new and disastrous claims issuing from the ranks of the Papacy. The Dark Ages were already beginning to overshadow the masses of Europe. Religious thought was poisoned by the work of one who compiled and issued a series of falsified documents.³¹ The collection, usually called the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, purported to produce early authentic records verifying the claims of the popes to spiritual and temporal world power. These documents were employed with powerful effect throughout the subsequent eight centuries (A.D. 800-1520) to mislead both rulers and the ruled. Although about seven hundred years later their perfidy was exposed, the tyranny and dominion obtained by the Papacy through them was not surrendered. In a dull and

declining age, such fabricated decrees, clothed with an authoritative antiquity, were used against the Church in the Wilderness. If it had not been for its innate virility, born of the Spirit of God, the apostolic religion would surely have gone down before the baneful influence of such falsifications. Rome itself centuries later was compelled to drop this forgery.

Eleventh-Century Waldensian Heroes

In discussing the churches of south central Europe which preserved primitive Christianity, the greatest credit is usually given to those peoples who lived along both sides of the Alps and in the Pyrenees. In these deep, beautiful, secluded valleys they were often called by names which indicated their location. Thus Ebrard of Bethune, a papal author (c. A.D. 1200) in attempting to explain the name "Vallenses," wrote, "They are some who are called Vallenses, because they dwell in the Valley of Tears."³² Pilchdorffius, a writer recognized by Rome, wrote this about 1250: "The Waldenses...are those who claim to have thus existed from the time of Pope Sylvester."³³ Since Sylvester was bishop of Rome in the early part of the fourth century, here is another witness to the claim that the men of the valleys existed as early as 325.

Cardinal Peter Damian, one of the able builders of the papal edifice, in his campaign (A.D. 1059) against these primitive Christians in northern Italy, called them Subalpini.³⁴ The word in common parlance to designate these borderers of the Alps was "Vallenses," from which in time the V was changed into W, one of the l's into d, and they have since the twelfth century generally been called Waldenses.

Primitive Christianity, enlarging its influences, became such a threat to the papal hierarchy that many synods and councils were summoned to combat it. Evangelical dissent from the growing paganism of the Papacy was so strong that even Rome's champions were forced to call it "inveterate."³⁵ The Papacy decided to challenge this new power with ruthless measures. At one synod or council after another, either the evangelicals were brought to trial or actions were passed against them. An example of the injustice enacted in such courts took place in the case of the Canons of Orleans, France, in 1017. The so-called heresy must have affected numerous provinces, because the judges claimed that it was brought into Gaul from Italy through a missionary "by whom many in many parts were corrupted." Papal authorities were horrified to learn that Stephen, formerly chaplain of the queen; Heribert, who had been one of the realm's ambassadors; and Lisoye - all famous for learning and holiness - were members of the hated church. As prisoners, indicted for heresy, they were arraigned before the prelates.

Four conflicting accounts come down to us of the Council of Orleans.³⁶ Papal writers, such as Bossuet, take out of these accounts the material that they wish, thinking thus to justify their unfounded charge of Manichaeism against the evangelicals. Writers studying these reports cannot refrain from noticing that the charge was not proved, and that the facts were garbled in a ridiculous manner.³⁷

Three things happened in connection with the Council of Orleans which revealed the spirit of the papal judges who condemned thirteen primitive Christians to be burned at the stake. First, Queen Constantia was stationed at the door, and as the condemned martyrs filed out, she thrust a stick into the eye of Stephen, who formerly had been her private chaplain, and had evidently rebuked her for her loose conduct. For this act, her praises have been voluminously sung by the ultramontanes. Secondly, it is known that one of the Frankish nobility, in order to secure evidence, pretended to join the primitive Christians as a member of their church. By means of this double dealing, he obtained catch phrases which could be falsely turned at the trial against the accused. Thirdly, after these martyrs were burned

at the stake, it was discovered that a certain nobleman had been a member of the hated church for three years and had died before the trial. In anger, his body was dug up and publicly dishonored.

The faith of those condemned at this court of injustice may be understood from the words that they addressed to the judges at the close of eight hours of grilling. They said:

You may narrate these doctrines to others, who are wise in worldly wisdom, and who believe the figments of carnal men written upon animal parchment. But to us who have the law written in the inner man by the Holy Ghost, and who know nothing else save what we have learned from God the Creator of all things, you vainly propound matters which are superfluous and altogether alien from sound divinity. Put therefore an end to words: and do with us what you list. We clearly behold our King reigning in heavenly places, who with His own right hand, is raising us to an immortal triumph; and He is raising us to the fullness of joy celestial.³⁸

Can this be the testimony of profligates or erratic religionists?

Eight years later (A.D. 1025) at Arras in northern France another farcical trial was held. The defendants were accused of Manichaeism, the usual false accusation of the Papacy against evangelicals. If the trial resulted in anything, it revealed that these devoted missionaries were guilty of no such demeanors.³⁹ It made clear that the doctrine unacceptable to that unjust court came from northern Italy. The martyrs were not called Waldenses in the report. Their beliefs, however, were those of the martyrs of Orleans and were similar to the teachings of the Waldenses. From the testimony obtained in these trials of the primitive Christians, we are enabled to conclude that their churches were numerous, with some scholars and eminent persons.

The renowned city of Toulouse in southern France is an example of how certain communities held fast to the doctrines of the apostles from the early days of Christianity until they aroused the fury of an exterminating crusade. Toulouse is blamed not only as the breeding place of so-called heresy, but is also said to have successfully housed rejecters of Rome throughout the centuries, first in the days of Gothic Christianity, and later in times of the Albigenses and Waldenses.⁴⁰ None of these dissenters can be called "reformed," because they never diverged far enough from the early church either in beliefs or practices to necessitate a movement of reform.

As to the remote antiquity of the hated evangelicals in the city and kingdom of Toulouse, there is a remarkable statement from the chaplain who accompanied the bloody crusade of 1208-1218, which destroyed the beautiful Albigensian civilization. "This Toulouse," he said, "the completely wretched, has, it is asserted, from its very foundation, rarely or never been free from the miasma or detestable pestilence of condemned heresy, handing down, and successively diffusing throughout generations from father to son, its poison of superstitious infidelity."⁴¹

Berengarius

The cruel use of fraud and force against the inoffensive and persecuted followers of Jesus Christ only confirmed them in the conviction that their cause was of God. The common people sympathized with the oppressed Bible believers and prayed for deliverers. Noble and scholarly leaders arose to oppose the oppressors. However, they were cut down before they were permitted to go far enough in their sacrificing efforts to turn the tide of persecution and intolerance. Among those whose protest went home with force was Berengarius of France, who comes in to claim special attention. His followers were called the Berengarians or earlier Waldenses.⁴²

More church councils were probably held against Berengarius than against anyone else. The papists hated him alive and dead. He was the second prominent witness in whose mouth the truth was established. Joannes Scotus Erigena, a world figure two hundred years previous, had been the first. There is a tradition to the effect that Scotus came from one of the schools established by Columba. Both had truly analyzed the doctrine of transubstantiation. To Berengarius it was not simply an error of the church; it was the height of seducing delusions. Other errors were tradition, allegorizing, abolition of the Decalogue, disregard of the sabbath, and obscuration of the one and sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Apostasy had strengthened since the days of Vigilantius and Claude, and Berengarius was obliged to oppose all that they had denounced and more. He was therefore branded as the "purveyor of many heresies." He gathered disciples around him and committed to many groups of trained young men the task of spreading the light everywhere. Thousands in whose hearts lingered the love of primitive Christianity received his disciples gladly.

Matthew of Westminster (A.D. 1087) complains that the Berengarians and Waldenses had corrupted all of France, England, and Italy.⁴³ This was a full century before Peter Waldo. Many authorities acknowledge that the resistance of the Berengarians to the Papacy was the same as the resistance shown by the Waldenses. Others, as Ussher and Benedict, see in Berengarius a leader of the Waldenses.

Archbishop Lanfranc was counselor and ecclesiastical peer to William of Normandy when he set out to conquer England. After William had added the English kingdom to his French possessions, he offered Lanfranc the primacy of the newly conquered lands. Lanfranc was anxious to overthrow Berengarius, whom he considered an enemy in doctrine. He set out to destroy him by the use of his pen, because Berengarius was too prominent and too greatly beloved to be burned at the stake, although in the fifty years previous many believers in the doctrines issuing from northern Italy had expired in flames. Repeatedly condemned by many councils, Berengarius was driven into exile. Though nominally a Roman Catholic prelate, he had doctrinally gone over to the Waldenses. From Lanfranc it is learned that the Berengarians called the Church of Rome "The Congregation of the Wicked and the Seat of Satan," which also the Waldenses did. The Papacy promptly branded the thousands who rejoiced in his bright and shining light as Berengarians. Actually they were a part of the increasing numbers who had refused to follow Rome in departing from the teachings of the apostles.

Separation Between Greek and Latin Churches

In the midst of its attempt to overthrow the spiritual leadership of Berengarius and its military victory in the conquest of England, the Papacy reached its final break with the Greek Church. During these eventful years the Roman pontiff possessed three ecclesiastical field marshals of outstanding shrewdness. They were Lanfranc, Damian, and Humbert. The Papacy had used Lanfranc against Berengarius. Cardinal Humbert was sent to Constantinople (A.D. 1054) to demand that the Greek Church recognize completely the world leadership of the pontiff in the Vatican. Cardinal Damian was sent into northern Italy (A.D. 1059), the region of the Waldenses, to bring into subjection the diocese of Milan which had ever remained independent of the Roman see. Since the scholarly rejection which this haughty priest met at Constantinople took place before the mission to Milan, it greatly strengthened the Waldenses in their resistance.

Both the Greek and the Latin churches had lost much of the spiritual power maintained by the Waldenses. Dean Stanley reveals how much deeper the Latin apostasy was than the Greek as late as the twelfth century: "At certain periods of their course, there can be no doubt that the civilization of

the Eastern Church was far higher than that of the Western."44 Rome's discontent at the lagging Eastern Church was first manifest when the king of Bulgaria and his nation were converted to Christianity by Greek missionaries in 864. The pope noted that these missionaries had followed the example of Eastern evangelism by translating the Bible not from the Latin Vulgate, but from the original Greek. They also had given the Bulgarians a liturgy, or order of church services, which was not pliable to the unscriptural Roman liturgy. The Papacy was as determined to achieve spiritual supremacy over Bulgaria as over Lombardy and England.

Again the Sabbath question became prominent. The churches of the East from the earliest days had sanctified Saturday as the Sabbath, and wherever Sunday had crept in, religious services were observed on both days.⁴⁵ Bulgaria in the early season of its evangelization had been taught that no work should be performed on the Sabbath.⁴⁶ Long before this time, migrations from the Paulician church had reached Bulgaria. These Paulicians observed the Seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Consequently, they were a strong reinforcement to the Greek attitude on this question.

Pope Nicholas I, in the ninth century, sent the ruling prince of Bulgaria a long document elucidating political, territorial, and ecclesiastical questions, and saying in it that one is to cease from work on Sunday, but not on the Sabbath. The head of the Greek Church, offended at the interference of the Papacy, declared the pope excommunicated. The Greek patriarch also sent a circulatory letter to some leading bishops of the East, censuring the Roman Catholic Church for several erroneous doctrines, especially emphasizing its rebellion against past church councils in compelling its members to fast on the seventh-day Sabbath. This fast was commanded in order that they might unfavorably compare the austerity of the seventh day with the pleasures of the first day. The letter rebuked the Papacy for seeking to impose this yoke on the Bulgarians. A complete break between the churches, however, did not occur at this time. The heat of the controversy continued, only to break out anew later.

Events conspired to drive the Greek and Latin branches of the church more and more apart. Two hundred years later (A.D. 1054) the controversy again arose. The Greek patriarch, Michael Cerulanius, and a learned Greek monk, both attacked the Roman Catholic Church on a number of points, including fasting on the Sabbath. Now the haughty Cardinal Humbert comes into the picture. While Lanfranc was assailing Berengarius, and Cardinal Damian was preparing to gather Waldensian territory into the fold, the pope sent three legates to Constantinople with countercharges. Amongst others, the following charge was made by the pope against the Greek Church: "Because you observe the sabbath with the Jews and the Lord's Day with us, you seem to imitate with such observances the sect of Nazarenes who in this manner accept Christianity in order that they be not obliged to leave Judaism."⁴⁷ Enraged at his failure to bring the Greek Church under subjection, Humbert declared it excommunicated. He found that the leading bishops of the East sided with the Greek patriarch. The gulf between these two communions was final.

The following quotation from John Mason Neale will reveal the difference in attitude toward the Sabbath between the Greek and the Latin Church: "The observance of Saturday is, as everyone knows, the subject of a bitter dispute between the Greeks and the Latins."⁴⁸

The Revolution in Northern Italy

The pope immediately turned his attention to the Waldenses. Having shaken himself loose from the Greek Church, he had now become the titular spiritual head of Europe. He resolved to tolerate the

independence of the diocese of Milan no longer. He saw, as a new enemy, the rising tide throughout the Continent of evangelical churches whose nerve center was northern Italy. He resented their claim to be the only true church directly descended from the apostles, and he detested their preaching that the Papacy was the mystical Babylon predicted by the Apocalypse.

It never occurred to the pope that, instead of crushing the northern Italian diocese, he might create a small but well-organized minority with dangerous possibilities. He relied for support upon the infiltration into that diocese of those who sided with Rome. These latter were determined to eliminate the opponents of Vatican policies. Therefore, the shrewd Cardinal Damian was sent to Milan in 1059 to work with the malcontents and to bring into subjection that diocese.

Clergy and people alike were greatly stirred. They demanded to know by what authority one diocese could invade the rights and prerogatives of another.⁴⁹ They were deeply incensed when Damian assembled a synod of the clergy of Milan and seated himself above their archbishop, Guido. Using deceptive documents, he cajoled, threatened, and promised. He followed the Jesuit motto, "Where we cannot convince, we will confuse." He proposed among other things that they adopt several doctrinal articles rejected by the Greeks, including celibacy of the priesthood. The result was that as soon as his legation left the city, the loyal clergy and the nobility called a council which asserted the right of the clergy to marry. On the other hand, the papal party had succeeded so far in their efforts that they had induced the prefect of the city to use public threats against the Milanese. With the city torn by strife and contest, those in favor of a married clergy concluded that the only thing for them to do was to retire for their devotions to a separate place called Patara, whereupon they were reproachfully called Patarines.⁵⁰ "They have given this nickname of Patarines to the Waldenses, because the Waldenses were those Subalpini in Peter Damian, who at the same time maintained the same doctrines in the Archbishopric of Turin."⁵¹

The maneuvering of the cardinal not only destroyed the age-long independence of the Milan diocese, but it also transformed the Patarines into a permanent organization of opposition. Thus, he produced a revolution. By Lanfranc's opposition, the Papacy had publicized the preachings of Berengarius; through Humbert's hostility, it had left on the pages of history a mighty opponent in the Greek Church; through the work of Damian, it had transformed Milanese dissent into the organized Patarines. Thus the imperious work of these three papal legates not only alienated the public, but also caused large additions to Christian congregations clinging to primitive Christianity. Three new names were now given to the men of the valleys; namely, Berengarians, Subalpini, and Patarines.

Gregory VII, the Imperious Innovator

While the incompatibilities between tradition and the Bible, and between apostolic and medieval Christianity, were growing in intensity, Pope Gregory VII (A.D. 1073-1085) assumed the tiara. When chosen as supreme pontiff, he began immediately to subject the Roman Catholic clergy more completely to the bishop of Rome. He changed the simpler liturgies, or services of worship, existing since primitive days to suit later corruptions; he rigidly enforced celibacy upon the priesthood; and he brought the princes of Europe under his iron heel.⁵² He is the pope who made the western emperor, Henry IV, stand barefooted and bareheaded in the outer court of the castle at Canossa for three days in winter imploring the forgiveness and support of the offended pontiff. Gregory's harsh and cruel measures to make the married clergy put away their wives finally fastened celibacy upon the Roman Catholic Church. It produced such an opposite effect upon the evangelical groups that it hastened the coming of the Reformation.

That primitive Christianity was growing strong enough to worry the pontiff of Rome may be seen in the decree of Urban II, the pope who attempted to carry on the reforms of Gregory VII. This Vatican ruler issued a bull in 1096 (nearly a century before Peter Waldo) against one of the Waldensian valleys on the French side of the Alps for being infested with "heresy."⁵³

In the following one hundred years, three other names were bestowed upon the people known as the Waldenses; namely, Petrobrusians, Henricians, and Amoldists. But these were more than mere names. Behind each appellation stood the record of a powerful leader in evangelism. As each new apostle arose, Rome at first was content to treat him and his followers as a "new sect," for by so doing she aimed to cover up the fact that the renewed evangelical wave sweeping over Europe was another manifestation of the Church in the Wilderness. Later, however, when primitive Christianity made devastating inroads upon her flock, she began to persecute, and the Inquisition, the stake, and the torture chamber followed.

Three important events occurred in the eleventh century which formed a background for the reactions which produced famous spiritual leaders among the primitive Christians. The first event was the conquest of England. The second consisted in the power of Archbishop Lanfranc as spiritual overlord of England whereby he instituted the policy designed to crash the Celtic Church in Scotland and Ireland. The third, the Crusades which followed the conquest of England, made Europe overnight into one vast armed confederacy, with Rome at the head of the armies moving out of Europe into Asia to rescue Palestine from the Mohammedans.

Pope Urban II, author of the bull denouncing the "heresy" of the men of the valleys, summoned all kings, princes, bishops, and abbots to seize the sword and start for Palestine in 1096. The hour was propitious, for he had filled the Continent with tradition instead of Bible teachings. Then too, the masses were brooding over a wrong interpretation of the Apocalypse. A millennium having passed since the writing of the book, the hour was at hand, they thought, for the chaining of Satan, for the descent of the Holy City, and for the final judgment. When pilgrims, returning from Jerusalem and the scenes of our Savior's journeyings, told the pitiful stories of Moslem cruelties upon Christians, more fuel was added to the fire. The Vatican sent its agents up and down the land to inflame them and to crash the Mohammedans and magnify the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church.

In less than a century and a half there was the crashing defeat of four Crusades. In the midst of these, Rome aroused the mob and rabble under bloodthirsty swashbucklers to destroy the beautiful civilization of the Albigenses in southern France. The eyes of Europe opened. They became satiated in seeing lands rent with civil feuds and drenched in fraternal blood. Reform movements grew. Justice depended less upon the caprice of one man. Nationalism grew. Commerce expanded. The claims of the Roman pontiff grew weaker and weaker, and the teachings of the Church in the Wilderness grew stronger and stronger.

Peter de Bruys

The Crusades had a different effect upon the masses than the Papacy had anticipated. The Cross was not victorious over the Crescent. The downtrodden and defeated armies, returning from the East, exposed the folly of papal policies. They demonstrated to the people that the teachings of Christ should be lived in a different way. They realized that Christian victories in this life are not gained by the sword. This drove many to a re-examination of the Holy Scriptures, and they turned to the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Paulicians - different names for the same primitive Christians - who had always

circulated translations of the Bible in their native language and who had adopted a simple church service. Men of profound devotion and great learning were stirred by the needs of the masses. The twelfth century saw the emergence of three outstanding evangelical heroes.

First among these in point of time was Peter de Bruys. He was born in the Waldensian valley on the French side of the Alps which Urban II had declared to be infested with "heresy." This youth's blood ran warm with evangelical fervor. The decrees proclaiming that no church council could be assembled without the consent of the pope had aroused the indignation of southern France. Peter de Bruys began his work about 1104. One must read the writings of an abbot, a contemporary and an enemy, to secure much of what can be learned concerning this evangelical preacher.⁵⁴

For twenty years Peter de Bruys stirred southern France. There was a deep spiritual movement among the masses. He brought them back to the Bible and to apostolic Christianity. His message had the power to transform characters. He especially emphasized a day of worship that was recognized at that time among the Celtic churches of the British Isles, among the Paulicians, and in the great Church of the East; namely, that seventh day of the fourth commandment, the weekly sacred day of Jehovah. Five centuries later, during heated debates on the Sabbath, a learned bishop of the Church of England referred to Sabbathkeeping of the Petrobrusians.⁵⁵ For centuries evangelical bodies, especially the Waldenses, were called Insabbati or Ensavates, that is, Insabbatati, because of Sabbathkeeping.⁵⁶ "Many took this position," says Ussher.⁵⁷ The learned Jesuit, Jacob Gretzer, about 1600, recognized that the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Insabbatati were different names for the same people.⁵⁸ The thesis that they were called Insabbatati because of their footwear is indignantly rejected by the learned Robert Robinson.⁵⁹ To show how widespread this term, Insabbatati, was applied to the Waldenses, the following oath is quoted which the monks directing the Inquisition would extract from prisoners suspected of holding different religious views from those of the Church of Rome:

The oath by which a person suspected of heresy was to clear himself was this, to be taken in public. "I, Sancho, swear, by Almighty God and by these holy gospels of God, which I hold in my hand, before you lord Garcia archbishop, and before others your assistants, that I am not, nor ever have been, an Insabbatate Waldense, or poor person of Lyons, or an heretic of any sect of heresy condemned by the church; nor do I believe, nor have I ever believed, their errors, nor will I believe them in any future time of my life: moreover I profess and protest that I do believe, and that I will always hereafter believe, the catholic faith, which the holy apostolical church of Rome publicly holds, teaches and preaches, and you my lord archbishop, and other prelates of the catholic church publicly hold, preach and teach.⁶⁰

The worst criticism against the work of Peter de Brays was the branding of it as a revival of Manichaeism. This has been repeatedly proved to be false. Nevertheless, many modern historians whose thinking has been distorted by papal documents, repeat the charge. A century or more before Peter de Brays, Manichaeism had ceased to be a force in the world. All churches detested its wild teachings and its idolatrous practices. To make this accusation against innocent followers of primitive Christianity was to say all manner of evil against the Petrobrusians. Peter de Bruys was hounded and harassed by his enemies, and he was finally apprehended and burned at the stake about 1124. The name, Petrobrusians, was added by papists to the other names already given the evangelical bodies.

Henry of Lausanne

Another great hero of this age is Henry of Lausanne. While the Papacy was wasting the manpower of Europe in the Crusades, Henry of Lausanne, generally accepted as a disciple of Peter de Bruys, was

changing the characters of men. Henry was no visionary crusader; he wielded the sword of the Spirit, not the sword of steel.

As in the case of Peter de Bruys, much that is known of his teachings is found in a treatise written against him by an abbot.⁶¹ To let it be seen how little information the adversary of Henry possessed in order to write his treatise, it is only necessary to quote his own words:

After the immolation of Peter de Bruis at St. Giles, through which the zeal of the faithful in burning him was repaid, and that impious man has passed from temporal to eternal fire, Henry, the heir of wickedness with I know not what others, had not so much amended as altered his Satanic teaching; so that he lately published in a volume, said to have been dictated by him, not merely five but many articles. Against which the spirit is stirred again, to oppose Satanic words with holy speeches. But because I am not yet fully confident that he so believes and preaches, I will postpone my reply to such a time when I am fully confident concerning the things reported concerning him.⁶²

This writer confesses that his knowledge comes from hearsay. He discourses generously about the doctrines of the followers of Peter de Bruys and of Henry, and at the same time admits that his information is inadequate. This book of Henry, mentioned by Peter of Cluny, could hardly have failed to influence both Arnold of Brescia and Peter Waldo, two reformers who followed after him.

As Henry traveled, labored, prayed, and preached to raise the masses to triumphant truth, he was assailed by the most commanding figure in the papal world. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, was the only man with force enough to whip superstitious Europe into the frenzy of a second crusade. The first crusade had flickered out so disastrously that the Papacy was compelled to subpoena the services of Bernard. The word of this champion was powerful enough to decide even the choice of popes. A number of his poetical compositions, having had the good fortune to be set to charming music, have been placed by his admirers in Protestant hymnbooks. He entertained and directed the Irish bishop who did more than any other man to betray the Celtic Church in Ireland. He trained the Irish monks who returned home to overthrow the followers of Patrick. He is called "the oracle of those times." It was this Bernard who poured forth his biting invectives against Henry. Though he could determine the choice of popes, though he could throw crusading armies of Europe into Asia, though he could help to direct the Normanizing and the Romanizing of the Celtic Church in the British Isles, he could not cower the indefatigable Henry. Bernard summoned the count of St. Giles to stop Henry by imprisonment and death. He said:

How great are the evils which I have heard and known that the heretic Henry has done and is daily doing in the churches of God! A ravening wolf in sheep's clothing is busy in your land, but by our Lord's direction I know him by his fruits. The churches are without congregations, congregations without priests, priests without their due reverence, and, worst of all, Christians without Christ. Churches are regarded as synagogues, the sanctuary of God is said to have no sanctity, the sacraments are not thought to be sacred, feast days are deprived of their wonted solemnities.... This man, who says and does things contrary to God is not from God. Yet, O sad to say, he is listened to by many, and he has a following which believes in him.... The voice of one heretic has put to silence all the prophets and apostles.⁶³

Bernard was a relentless persecutor of Peter de Bruys, Henry of Lausanne, and Arnold of Brescia. Besides assailing them in particular writings, he took occasion to launch forth his diatribes against the whole evangelical movement of his day. A letter from a neighboring clergyman in Germany, namely,

Evervinus, bishop of Cologne, asked Bernard to explain why these so-called heretics went to the stake rejoicing in God. When Bernard wrote an answer to this question, he called these heretics Apostolicals, giving as his reason for so naming them that no one could trace them back to the name of any particular founder. He admitted that the Arians had Arius for a founder; that the Manichaeans had Mani (or Manes); and the Sabellians had Sabellius; the Eunomians had Eunomius; and the Nestorians had Nestorius.⁶⁴ He recognized that all the foregoing bodies bore the name of their leaders, but he could find no such founder under whom he might tabulate the hated churches he was fighting, unless, as he concluded, they were the offspring of demons. The fact that Bernard declared the name of these Christians to be Apostolicals and that they called themselves after no human founder, singles them out as descendants of the early primitive church.

The unity of these believers in essential doctrines and the fact that they were the forerunners of Luther and Calvin has been recognized by eminent authorities. Thus, Francois Mezeray indicates that there were two sorts of "heretics": the one ignorant and loose, somewhat of the nature of the Manichees; the other, more learned and less disorderly, maintaining much the same doctrines as the Calvinists, and called Henricians and Waldenses.⁶⁵ Allowance must be made for the papal attitude of this writer. He did not clearly bring out the fact that the followers of Peter de Bruys and Henry were probably confounded with the Manichaeans by the bishop and clergy.

There is also the remarkable statement by Gilbert Genebrard who states definitely that the spiritual fathers of the Calvinists were the Petrobrusians, the Henricians, and the Albigenses.⁶⁶

The numerous disciples raised up by Peter de Bruys and Henry of Lausanne occasioned the calling of ecclesiastical councils to combat the rising tide of evangelism. In 1119 Pope Calixtus assembled a council at Toulouse, France, in which "the sentence of excommunication was thundered out against a sect of heretics in those parts, condemning the eucharist, the baptism of infants, the priesthood, all ecclesiastical orders, and lawful marriages."⁶⁷ By lawful marriages the papists referred to the opposition of the evangelicals to calling marriage a sacrament, and requiring it to be performed only by a priest.

When Pope Innocent II held a council at Pisa, Italy, in 1134, "the doctrines taught by a hermit named Henry, were declared heresies and condemned with their author and all who taught or held them."⁶⁸ This same pope convened a general council in Rome five years later to which all the princes of the West were summoned, and it was a large council. "By the twenty-third canon of the present council the opinions of Arnold of Brescia were declared repugnant to the doctrine received by the Catholic Church, and condemned as such."⁶⁹ Naturally, such a council would not be held unless it was to deal with large propositions. As all of these councils were held many years before Peter Waldo appeared on the scene, the reader can see that evangelism had grown to be a mighty force before Waldo's time.

Arnold of Brescia

To Arnold of Brescia belongs the glory of openly denouncing the overgrown empire of ecclesiastical tyranny. In his soul were the spirit of both the evangelist and the general. Arnold was from Brescia, a city with an independent spirit like Milan and Turin. From there comes the beautiful Brixianus manuscript, exemplar of the beloved Itala, the first translation of the New Testament from Greek into Latin, three centuries before Jerome's Vulgate. Born amid such traditions, Arnold needed only to sit at the feet of the renowned Abelard to receive the full flame of freedom which was already glowing within him. From his studies under Abelard he returned to Brescia where his voice was with power. His

words were heard in Switzerland, southern Italy, Germany, and France. In this latter land, the sensitive ears of Bernard detected an ominous note in his teachings.

Arnold was far ahead of his age. In fact, he did what the reformers failed to do. He attacked the union of church and state. Arnold's idealism and eloquence aroused the people to a high pitch of enthusiasm. Papal bishops and clergy combined against him. A church synod - ever a potential enemy of progress - was called, and in 1139 Arnold was condemned to silence and to expulsion from Brescia.

He fled to Zurich, Switzerland, and again took the field against the wealth, luxury, and the temporal power of the clergy. He called for a democratic type of ministry, and he mightily stirred those regions. Even the papal legate, a future pope, came over to his side. Bernard of Clairvaux promptly reduced that prospective pope into submission. The bishop of Constance came out for Arnold, but Bernard frightened him out of any further participation in Arnoldism. The lordly Cistercian monk demanded that all of Arnold's books and writings be burned. This was done.

But in spite of this bitter opposition, Arnold labored on. The soil was good, and the reformer scattered the seeds far and wide. Who knows but that the future strength of Switzerland in her stand for freedom and religious liberty was due in some measure to the sowing of Arnold. The papists could not forgive his opposition to certain doctrines. He preached against transubstantiation, infant baptism, and prayers for the dead.⁷⁰ Because of this, Bernard of Clairvaux continually pressed for the execution of Arnold.

Meanwhile events were taking place in Rome. That city had come out for civil government. The pope fled, but as he went out, Arnold came in. The people welcomed him in a frenzy of enthusiasm. Here is where Arnold compromised his truly evangelical lead by sanctioning, if not directing, the masses in using force. Here is where a flaw affected his vision. Possessing unopposed leadership, however, he divorced religion from the civil government in the city. He restored the Roman senate. The old glories of Italy returned. His opposition to tradition, to unacceptable ceremonies, and to unscriptural doctrines encouraged the believers in the New Testament. Primitive Christians lifted up their heads, and their followers multiplied everywhere. Papal writers promptly declared that a new sect had been founded, whom they called the Arnoldists.

Then the pope and the emperor leagued against Arnold. He soon learned that they who take the sword shall perish by the sword. The fickle crowd deserted him and his political friends took to cover. After the pope at the head of an army had driven Arnold out of Rome, he was taken by the armed forces of the emperor. His body was burned and his ashes were thrown into the Tiber River.

Thus perished a fearless leader who, single-handed, dared to denounce the unholy union of church and state. He had no visible support upon which to rely except the vigorous assent of the human mind to the greatness of his message. His effect upon future generations was far-reaching. "The Waldenses look up to Arnold as to one of the spiritual founders of their churches; and his religious and political opinions probably fostered the spirit of republican independence which throughout Switzerland and the whole Alpine district was awaiting its time."⁷¹

That the provinces of southern France were crowded with the followers of Peter de Bruys and Henry long before Waldo or his followers began to labor there is seen in the letter written about 1150 by the archbishop of Narbonne to King Louis VII: "My Lord the King, we are extremely pressed with many calamities, amongst which there is one that most of all affects us, which is, that the Catholic faith is extremely shaken in our diocese, and St. Peter's boat is so violently tossed by the waves, that it is in

great danger of sinking."⁷²

Still further testimony is given by Pope Leo, as is recorded in The Annals of Roger de Hoveden in the year 1178 as follows:

Wherefore, inasmuch as in Gascony the Albigeois, and other places inhabited by the heretics whom some style "Catam," others "Publicani" and others "Paterini," and others call by other names, their damnable perverseness has waxed so strong that they practice their wickedness no longer, in secret as elsewhere, but publicly expose their errors, and draw the simple and weak to be their accomplices, we do decree them and their protectors and harborers to be excommunicated.⁷³

The Nobla Lecon

If no spiritual movement among men is great unless it has produced a glorious literature, then the message of the Waldenses can be called great. Among other products remaining from the writings of this martyred and wonderful people mention should be made of the *Nobla Lecon* (Noble Lesson) written in the Romaunt tongue, the common language of the south of Europe from the eighth to the fourteenth century. Its opening words claim that the date of the composition was 1100. On it the people to whom the treatise belongs is definitely called the Vaudois, and this is nearly a century before Peter Waldo. Much study has been made to determine whether the statement regarding 1100 is from the author or authors of the *Nobla Lecon*, or is from another hand. There has also been considerable thought given to the commencement of the 1100 years.

The *Nobla Lecon* begins, "Hear, oh brothers, a Noble Lesson." Then there appears before the reader a sublime presentation of the origin and the story of the plan of redemption. The *Nobla Lecon* stands for the eternal moral obligation of the Ten Commandments, and in that light it presents the great expiation on the cross. One is led along step by step in considering what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon man in such divine provisions for his ransom from the fall. Its soft and glowing terms stir the soul. No one can read the chapter by Peter Allix in which he analyzes and presents the message of the *Nobla Lecon* without feeling that a great contribution has been made to the world's literature.

Peter Waldo

Mention is now made of that famous individual, Peter Waldo. Some authorities claim that the name Waldo was derived from the Waldenses because of his prominent work among them. Whether this is true or not, we do know that from his time on the name Waldenses was more generally used to indicate those large reforming bodies which had previously been called "men of the valleys," or Vallenses, Albigenses, Insabbatati, Berengarians, Subalpini, Patarines, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, and other names.

Peter Waldo of Lyons, France, began his work somewhere between 1160 and 1170. He was a wealthy merchant who gave away all his goods and began to preach the genuine doctrines of the New Testament. He claimed the Papacy to be the "man of sin," and the beast of the Apocalypse. He devoted much time to translating and distributing the Bible.