for propounding. Claude found two parties in his diocese, one of which favoured his schemes of church reform ; and after his death (according to the authority of Dungalus) it was called the sect of Claude. Thus it is certain that Vi­gilantius, and after him Claude, left disciples in these parts,@@1 just where we are looking for them ; but we have no ground for maintaining that the Valdenses were in a state of seces­sion from the provincial bishops of France or Italy, within whose dioceses they were situated, at either of the periods to which we have just referred, the fourth and the ninth centuries. In those days, and for two or three hundred years after Claude, the truth might be held, and public tes­timonies for the truth might be given, and protests against the errors of Rome might be made, without the necessity of separation from the church called catholic : witness the great Iconoclastic question which agitated Christendom in the ninth and tenth centuries. There is reason therefore to believe that, until a much later period, congregations of the Cottian Alps may have continued to maintain a purer faith than that of Rome, without leading to any proceedings in those parts, which could be called acts of schism on the one side, or of persecution on the other.

The accusing and remonstrating voice within the church, and not open secession from her, may have distinguished the Valdensian from the Romanist, for a series of ages ; and the political condition, as well as the natural position of the territory, to which he belonged, may have proved his security. There was no occasion for him to separate, so long as he was not compelled to do violence to his con­science ; so long as the civil rights enjoyed in Ostro-gothic and feudal Italy protected him.@@2 In some parts of the south of France, as well as in the Cottian Alps, opinions were held at variance with those of the great body of the church, without bringing the dissidents into violent collision with it. There the Gothic Christians, to whom Alcuin addressed an epistle of expostulation,@@3 professed their disbelief in the virtue of auricular confession and sacramental absolu­tion, and remained unmolested ; and there the Christians of Narbonne, in 820, (if we interpret rightly the metrical@@1 description of Theodulphus, bishop of Orleans,) had an ecclesiastical system of their own, which savoured of reli­gious principles very different from those held at Rome, without being denounced as schismatics. Until the bishop of Turin, acting upon the system introduced by Innocent the Third, obtained the authority of the Emperor Otho in 1210, to persecute the Valdenses, we have no instance of any public act of oppression committed in the Piedmontese valleys of the Alps against religious freedom. Up to that time the strongholds of nature, and the protection of the Lombard law,@@5 which, in its code of personal legislation, permitted every man to choose the national law under which he would be governed, gave the people in these Alpine fastnesses, pri­vileges of which even pontifical tyranny could not deprive them, and offered a permanent settlement to the assertors of primitive Christianity, who, while they protested against superstitious novelties, communicated with the established clergy, as Wesleyan Methodists now profess to do, and vindicated their claim to be considered members of the church of Christ. The mass of historical documents which the commission at Turin has published since 1836,@@® exhi­bits too many marks of suppression not to excite our fears that much information relating to the “ Evangelical Valleys of Piemont” has been withheld. Enough has however been brought to light, to satisfy us, that the political con­dition of the Cottian Alps, and of the people whom some ecclesiastical writers are fond of deriding under the term “brutæ gentes Alpium,” (between the age of Claude and the first public persecution of the Valdenses) was exactly such as to secure religious objectors from molestation, and to justify the language, which the Valdenses have invariably held in all their petitions to their sovereigns, when their religious liberties have been threatened—“ We have asserted our right to enjoy liberty of conscience,” "da ogni tempo,” “ da tempo immemoriale,” from time immemorial. “ Is it not extraordinary,” says the historian Leger, “ that it has never once happened that any one of our princes or their ministers should have offered the least contradiction to their Valdensian subjects, who have again and again asserted in their presence, 'We are descended from those who, from father to son, have preserved entire the apostolical faith, in the valleys which we now occupy. Permit us therefore to have that free exercise of our religion, which we have enjoyed from time out of mind, before the dukes of Savoy became princes of Piemont ?’ ”

The supreme authority of the princes of the house of Savoy was not fully established in Piedmont until the middle of the thirteenth century, (before that time the emperors of Germany exercised all the rights of suzerainté) and it is a curious fact, that the house of Savoy arrived at abso­lute power by means of the public confidence which it enjoyed, in consequence of its equitable government, and faithful adherence, for many ages, to compacts made with its subjects. These compacts were the origin and the pre­servatives of the religious liberties of the Valdenses. “ We, are obliged to tolerate heresy in the valleys of our realm,” was the confession of a duke of Savoy in l602.@@7 It was a matter of solemn stipulation, recorded in the ancient char­ters and documents now under publication at Turin, that the inhabitants of certain townships, communes, and vil­lages, should remain in the undisturbed possession of their accustomed rights and franchises; and some of the very communes and hamlets which are now the dwelling places of the Valdenses, are named among those entitled to such privileges.

In allusion to these immunities of the Valdenses, bas­ed on *charter,@@\** Archbishop Seyssel made the following bittet complaint: “It has contributed not a little to the toleration of their heresy, that it has never wanted persons to protect and favour it, and among those especially who ought to be the guardians of the Christian religion, inas­much as they rule and reign over provinces and kingdoms.”@@®

We have no well-authenticated record which will enable us to say, when the feeble tie was broken, which still kept the Valdenses in communion with the provincial bishops of Turin and Embrun, while they protested against Romish corruptions. Sclopis, a Piedmon tese writer on jurisprudence, of great celebrity, who has made it his business to search into the' history of the laws and customs of his country, declares that he cannot assign any period to the first ap­pearance of schism in the subalpine valleys, nor can he discover the origin of the name *Valdenses@@.1*

It is probable, however, that being excommunicated at

@@@1 It is curious to observe, how, from Philastrius, who died in 387, down to Ratherius, who died in 974, and again, from Peter of Clugny, who wrote in 1127, to the Reformation, *mountain districts* are stated to have been the *latibula,* or placés of security, where nonconformity with the dominant church lurked.

@@@\* These immunities were of a very ancient date. See the privileges granted to Gothic and other unorthodox soldiers by Justinian,

523, xii. Cod. de Hær.

@@@\* Alcuini Epistola 26, aliter 71, ad Gothos.

@@@\* See Theodulphi Parænesis ad Judices.

@@@l See Guizot’s Lectures on European Civilization, lecture 3. In Germany as well as in Lombardy there was a succession of Chris­tian congregations, with more or less of othodoxy, who must have been connected with the sectarians of whom Evervinus complained to St Bernard in 1140. “ We and our fathers,” said they, “ are apostolical in our doctrine and life.”

@@@• Historiæ Patriæ Monumenta.

@@@7 Raccolta degi’ Editti delli Duchi di Savoya, p. 24.

@@@8 Especially those of 1448, 1466, 1473, 1499, and 1509 ; cited in Raccolta, p. 5.

@@@, Cl. Seyssel adv. Val. fol. 8.

@@@10 See Sclopis, Storia del. Antic. Legis, del Piedmonte, p. 487.