

# **THE HISTORY OF PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE**

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The history of Protestantism in France by Various

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**VARIOUS**

**THE HISTORY OF  
PROTESTANTISM  
IN FRANCE**



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THE HISTORY  
OF  
PROTESTANTISM  
IN FRANCE,

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE END OF THE  
REIGN OF CHARLES IX.

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THE HISTORY  
OF  
PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

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CHAPTER I.

PERIOD PREVIOUS TO LOUIS XII. A.D. 1497.

PERHAPS there is no country in the world, when we except the Holy Land, where the entire history of religion, taken in connexion with the circumstances which have surrounded it, has been at once more interesting and more painful, than in France.

In France, the Christian religion has uniformly been placed between two enemies;—on one side, superstition; on the other, infidelity. An escape from the former has too often caused a fall into the latter.

In no country has the history of persecution and martyrdom been more striking than in France, whether the persecutors were the furious worshippers of the gods of ancient Rome and Gaul, or the unhappily blinded and bigoted disciples of the church which succeeded them. In the first ages of Christianity, the martyrs

of Lyons and Vienne witnessed a good confession in the midst of pagan animosity; and, to mock their Christian hope of a joyful resurrection, their proud adversaries cast the ashes of their burned bodies into the river Rhone. But the spirit that animated them revived in many a future race: and the Protestants of professedly Christian France, under various denominations, and in various ages, have suffered for conscience' sake, with a constancy and zeal equal to that of the martyrs of heathen Gaul.

The name of Protestant is comparatively new, and custom has led to its not being applied, in general, to any period previous to the time of Martin Luther, or of the Reformation. Protestantism, however, is as old as the corruptions or errors of the Christian church. The disciples were called Christians, first at Antioch; and Christians were called Protestants, first in Germany: but applying the term as it will here be used, to all who protested against the errors which began to prevail in the church, from the time of its establishment as the religion of the Roman empire—we can find Protestants, or protesters, in every age. In searching for them, however, the inquirer should bear in mind, that, as the darkness of the professedly Christian world, and the errors and corruptions of the then extensively established church of Rome, drew on more deeply, all who in any way dissented from it or its errors, were styled heretics. And as the only