THE HISTORY

OF

PROTESTANTISM

BY THE

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ILLUSTRATED.

"PROTESTANTISM, THE SACRED CAUSE OF GOD'S LIGHT AND TRUTH AGAINST THE DEVIL'S FALSITY AND DARKNESS "—*Carlyle.*

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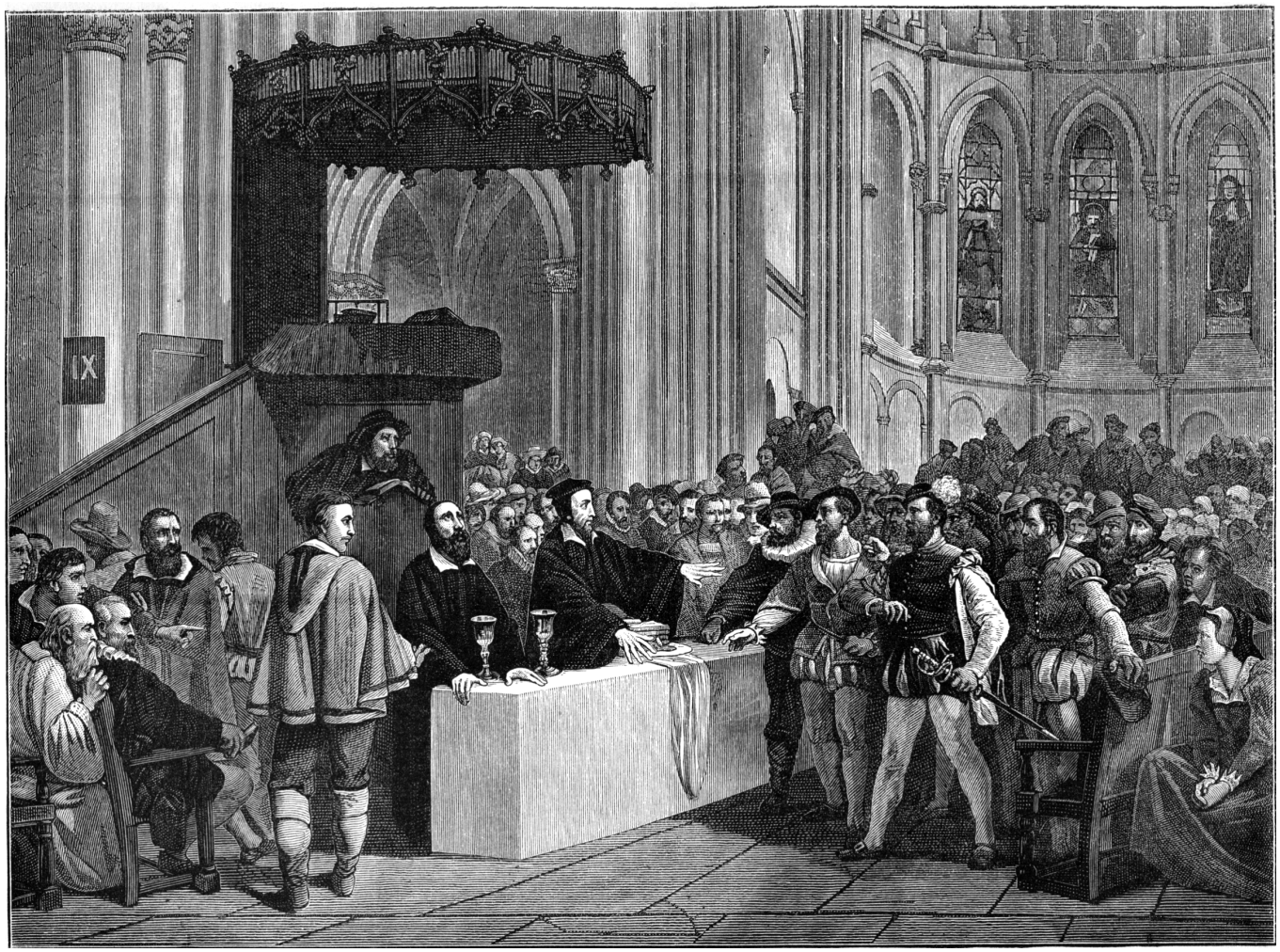

CALVIN REFUSING THE LORD'S SUPPER TO THE LIBERTINES, IN ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, GENEVA.
(Engraved by J. D. Cooper from a photograph of the Original Painting by Lugarden.)

Book Fourteenth.

RISE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTESTANTISM AT GENEVA.

CHAPTER I.

GENEVA: THE CITY AND ITS HISTORY.

Protestantism finds a New Centre—The Lake Leman—Geneva—Its Site—Its Diminutive Size—Sneers—History of Geneva—Four Names, Julius Caesar, Honorius, Charlemagne, the Reformation, indicate the Four Stages of its History—The Bishop its First Ruler—Intrigues of the Dukes of Savoy—Pope Martin V. takes from the Genevese the right of Electing their Bishop—Exercises it himself—Appoints a Prince of Savoy to be Bishop of Geneva—Its Independence on the point of being Extinguished—New Life—War between the Prince-Bishop and the Citizens—Bonnivard—His Picture of the Popes—Berthelier—His Devotion to his Country—Levrier—His Love of Justice— The War Then and Now—Wonderful Preservation of Geneva's Independence—A Higher Liberty Approaching.

PROTESTANTISM has now received its completed logical and doctrinal development, and a new and more central position must be found for it. Before returning to the open stage of the great Empires of France and Germany, and resuming our narrative of the renovating powers which the Reformation had called forth, with the great social and political revolutions which came in its train, we must devote our attention to a city that is about to become the second metropolis of Protestantism.

In leaving the wide arena of empire where Protestantism is jostled by dukes, prelates, and emperors, and moves amid a blaze of State pageantries, and in shutting ourselves up in a little town whose name history, as yet, had hardly deigned to mention, and whose diminutive size is all but annihilated by the mighty mountainous masses amid which it is placed, we make a great transition. But if the stage is narrow, and if Protestantism is stripped of all that drapery and pomp which make it so imposing on the wider arena, we shall here have a closer view of the principle itself, and be the better able to mark its sublimity and power, in the mighty impulses which from this centre it is to send abroad, in order to plant piety and nourish liberty in other countries.

In the valley which the Jura on the one side, and the white Alps on the other, enclose within their gigantic arms, lies the mirror-like Leman. At the point where the Rhone gushes from the lake a bulging rock bristles up, and, running in the form of a crescent a little space along the shore of the Leman, forms a pedestal for the city of Geneva. The little town looks down upon the

placid waters of the lake spread out at its feet, and beholds its own image mirrored clearly, but not grandly, for architectural magnificence is not one of the characteristic features of the city, especially in the times of which we write. A few miles away, on the other side, another rock shoots up, dark, precipitous, and attaining the dignity of a mountain—lofty it would seem in any other country, but here it has to compete with the gigantic piles of the Alps—and, bending crest-like, leans over Geneva, which it appears to guard. A few acres suffice to give standing-room to the city. Its population in the days of Calvin numbered only some 12,000, and even now does not much exceed 70,000. Its cantonal territory is the smallest in all Switzerland, that of Zug excepted. Its diminutive size provoked the sneer of the philosopher of Ferney, who could survey it all standing at his door. "When I dress my peruke," said Voltaire, "I powder the whole republic." The Emperor Paul sarcastically called the struggles of its citizens "a tempest in a teapot." In days prior to the utterance of these sarcasms and taunts—that is, in the latter part of the sixteenth century—this little town excited other emotions than those of contempt, and was the butt of other assaults than those of sarcasm. It brought pallor into the face of monarchs. It plucked the sceptre from the grasp of mighty empires, and showed the world that it knew how to extend and perpetuate its sway by making itself the metropolis, of that moral and spiritual movement which, whatever might be the fate of the city itself, even should its site become the bare rock it once was, would continue to spread abroad to all countries, and travel down to all the ages of the future.

Turning from its site to its history, Geneva dates from before the Christian era, and is scarcely, if at all, less ancient than that other city, that takes the proud name of "Eternal," and with which it has been Geneva's lot, in these last ages, to do battle. Buried amid the dense shadows of paganism, and afterwards amid the not less dense shadows of Popery, Geneva remained for ages unknown, and gave no augury to the world of the important part it was destined to play, at a most eventful epoch, in the history of nations. It comes first into view in connection with the great Julius, who stumbled upon it as he was pursuing his career of northern conquest, and wrote its name in his *Commentaries,* where it figures as "the last fortress of the Allobroges."[1] But the conqueror passed, and with him passed the light which had touched for a moment this sub-Alpine stronghold. It fell back again into the darkness. Under Honorius, in the fourth century, it became a city. It rose into some eminence, and even was possessed of a little liberty, in the days of Charlemagne. But a better day-spring awaited Geneva. The rising sun of the Reformation struck full upon it, and this small town became one of the lights of the world.

[1] *De Bello Gallico,* i. 6.

But we must glance back, and see what a long preparation the little city had to undergo for its great destiny. The dissolution of the Empire of Charlemagne set Geneva free to consider after what fashion it should govern itself. At this crisis its bishop stepped forward and claimed, in addition to its spiritual oversight, the right to exercise its temporal government. The citizens conceded the claim only within certain limits. Still preserving their liberties, they took the bishop into partnership with them in the civic jurisdiction. The election of the bishop was in the hands of the people, and, before permitting him to mount the episcopal chair, they made him take an oath to preserve their franchises.[1] In the middle of the thirteenth century the independence of Geneva began to be menaced by the Counts of Savoy. That ambitious house, which was labouring to exalt itself by absorbing its neighbours' territory into its own, had cast covetous eyes upon Geneva. It would round off their dominions; besides, they were sharp-sighted enough to see that there were certain principles at work in this little Alpine town which made them uneasy. But neither intrigues nor arms—and the Princes of Savoy employed both—could prevail to this end. The citizens of Geneva knew how it fared with them under the staff of their bishop, but they did not know how it might go with them under the sword of the warrior, and so they stubbornly declined the protection of their powerful neighbour.

In the fifteenth century, the Counts of Savoy, now become dukes, still persevering in their attempts to bring the brave little city under their yoke, besought the aid of a power which history attests has done more than all the dukes and warriors of Christendom to extinguish liberty. Duke Amadeus VIII., who had added Piedmont to his hereditary dominions, as if to exemplify the adage that "ambition grows by what it feeds on," petitioned Pope Martin V. to vest in him the secular lordship of Geneva. The citizens scented what was in the wind, and knowing that "Rome ought not to lay its paw upon kingdoms," resolved to brave the Pope himself if need were. Laying their hands upon the Gospels, they exclaimed, "No alienation of the city or of its territory—this we swear." Amadeus withdrew before the firm attitude of the Genevese.

Not so the Pope; he continued to prosecute the intrigue, deeming the little town but a nest of eaglets among crags, which it were wise betimes to pull down. But, more crafty than the duke, he tried another tack. Depriving the citizens of the right of electing their bishop, Martin V. took the nomination into his own hands, and thus opened the way for quietly transferring the municipal rule of Geneva to the House of Savoy. All he had now to do was to appoint a Prince of Savoy as its bishop. By-and-by this was done; and the struggle with the Savoy power was no longer outside the walls only, it was

[1] Spon, *Hist, de Genève,* iii., p. 108.

mainly within. The era that now opened to Geneva was a stormy and bloody one. Intrigues and rumours of intrigues kept the citizens in perpetual disquiet. The city saw itself stripped of its privileges and immunities one by one. Its annual fair was transferred to Lyons, and the crowd of merchants and traders which had flocked to it from beyond the Alps, from the towns of France, and from across the Rhine, ceased to be seen. Tales of priestly scandals—for the union of the two offices in their prince-bishop only helped to develop the worst qualities of both—passed from mouth to mouth and polluted the very air. If Geneva was growing weaker, Savoy was growing stronger. The absorption of one petty principality after another was daily enlarging the dominions of the duke, which, sweeping past and around Geneva, enclosed it as in a net, with a hostile land bristling with castles and swarming with foes. It was said that there were more Savoyards than Genevese who heard the bells of St. Pierre. Such was the position in which the opening of the sixteenth century found Geneva. This small but ancient municipality was seemingly on the point of being absorbed in the dominions of the House of Savoy. Its history appeared to be closed. The vulture of the Alps, which had hovered above it for centuries, had but to swoop down upon it and transfix it with his talons.

At that moment a new life suddenly sprang up in the devoted city. To preserve the remnant of their franchises was not enough; the citizens resolved to recover what liberties had been lost. In order to this many battles had to be fought, and much blood spilt. Leo X., about the same time that he dispatched Tetzel to Germany to sell indulgences, sent a scion of the House of Savoy to Geneva (1513) as bishop. By the first the Pope drew forth Luther from his convent, by the second he paved the way for Calvin. The newly-appointed bishop, known in history as the "Bastard of Savoy," brought to the episcopal throne of Geneva a body foul with disease, the fruit of his debaucheries, and a soul yet more foul with deceitful and bloody passions; but a fit tool for the purpose in hand. The matter had been nicely arranged between the Pope, the duke, and the Bastard.[1] "John of Savoy swore to hand over the temporal jurisdiction of the city to the duke, and the Pope swore he would force the city to submit to the duke, under pain of incurring the thunders of the Vatican."[2]

From that time there was ceaseless and bitter war between the citizens of Geneva on one side, and the duke and the bishop on the other. It is not our business to record the various fortune of that strife. Now it was the bishop who was besieged in his palace, and now it was the citizens who were butchered upon their own streets by the bishop's soldiers. Today it was the Bastard

[1] Ruchat, *Hist. Reform. Suisse,* tom. i., p. 325; Lausanne, 1835.

[2] Bern MS., discovered by D'Aubigné in the Library at Bern—*Hist. Reform, in Europe,* vol. i., p. 47

who was compelled to seek safety in flight, and tomorrow it was some leader of the patriots who was apprehended, tortured, beheaded, and his ghastly remains hung up to the public gaze as a warning to others. But if blood was shed, it was blood that leads to victory. The patriots, who numbered only nine at first, multiplied from year to year, though from year to year the struggle grew only the bloodier. The Gospel had not yet entered the gates of Geneva. The struggle so far was for liberty only, a name then denoting that which was man's noblest birthright after the Gospel, and which found as its champions men of pure and lofty soul. Wittenberg and Geneva had not yet become fused; the two liberties had not yet united their arms.

Among the names that illustrate this struggle, so important from what was to come after, are the well-known ones of Bonnivard, Berthelier, and Lévrier—a distinguished trio, to whom modern liberty owes much, though the stage on which they figured was a narrow one.

Bonnivard was a son of the Renaissance. A scholar and a man of wit, he drew his inspiration for liberty from a classic font. From his Priory of St. Victor this accomplished and liberal-minded man assailed Rome with the shafts of satire. If his erudition was less profound and his taste less exquisite than that of Erasmus, his courage was greater. The scholar of Rotterdam flagellated the man in serge, but spared the man in purple: the Prior of St. Victor dealt equal justice to monk and Pope. He lashed the ignorance and low vices of the former, but castigated yet more severely the pride, luxury, and ambition of the latter. He mistrusted the plan Rome had hit on of regenerating men in tribes and clans, and preferred to have it done individually. He thought too that it would be well if his "Holiness" possessed a little holiness, though that was a marvel he did not expect soon to see. "I have lived," he said, "to see three Popes. First, Alexander VI. [Borgia] a sharp fellow, a ne'er-do-weel . . . a man without conscience, and without God. Next came Julius II., proud, choleric, studying his bottle more than his breviary, mad about his Popedom, and having no thought but how he could subdue not only the earth, but heaven and hell. Last appeared Leo X., the present Pope, learned in Greek and Latin, but especially a good musician, a great glutton, a deep drinker; possessing beautiful pages, whom the Italians style *ragazzi* . . . . above all, don't trust Leo X.'s word; he can dispense others, and surely can dispense himself."[1] He brusquely allegorised the German Reformation thus: "Leo X. 'and his predecessors," said the prior, "have always taken the Germans for beasts; *pecora campi*, they were called, and rightly too, for these simple Saxons allowed themselves to be saddled and ridden like asses. The Popes threatened them with cudgelling (excommunications), enticed them

[1] *Adris et Deris de la Source de I'Idolatrie Papale,* p. 34— quoted by D' Aubigné, *Hist. Ref. in Europe,* vol. i., p. 160.

with thistles (indulgences), and so made them trot to the mill to bring away the meal for them. But having one day loaded the ass too heavily, Leo made him gib, so that the flour was spilt, and the white bread lost. That ass is called *Martin* like all asses, and his surname is *Luther*, which signifies *enlightener.*"[1]

The lettered and gentlemanly Prior of St. Victor had not a little of the cold, sneering, sceptical spirit that belonged to the Renaissance. He "put on his gloves" when he came in contact with the citizens of Geneva; they were somewhat too bluff and outspoken for him; nevertheless he continued steadfastly on their side, and, with not a few temptations to act a contrary part, proved himself a true friend of liberty. He was seized with the idea that were he Bishop and Prince of Geneva, he would have it in his power to liberate his native city. He even set off to Rome in the hope of realising a project which every one who knew who Bonnivard was, and what Rome was, must have deemed chimerical. It was found at Rome that he had not the grace for a bishop, and he returned without the mitre. It was a wonder to many that he was permitted to return at all, and the prior must have been thankful for his escape.

Berthelier was cast in another mould. He was the tribune of the people; he talked, laughed, and caroused with them; he sought especially to surround himself with the youth of Geneva; for this end he studied their tastes, and entered into all their amusements, but all the while he was on the watch for fitting occasions of firing them with his own spirit of hatred of tyranny, and devotion to the public welfare. He was sagacious, ready, indomitable, and careless of life. He knew what the struggle was coming to as regarded himself, but he did not bemoan the hard fate awaiting him, knowing that there was a mysterious and potent power in blood to advance the cause for which it was shed.

The third of a group, individually so unlike, yet at one in the cause of their country's ancient freedom, was Lévrier. He was calm, severe, logical; his ideal was justice. He was a judge, and whatever was not according to law ought to be resisted and overthrown. The bishop's regime was one continuous perversion of right; it must be brought to an end: so pleaded Lévrier. From time immemorial the men of Geneva had been free: what right had the Duke of Savoy and his creature, the bishop, to make slaves of them? Neither the duke nor the bishop was sovereign of Geneva; its true ruler was its charter of ancient franchises: so said the man of law. The duke feared the great citizen. Lévrier was quiet, but firm; he indulged in no clamour, but he cherished no fear; he bowed before the majesty of law, and stood erect before the tyrant:

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 80—quoted by D'Aubigné, vol. i., p. 161.

"Non vultus instantis tyranni,
Mente quatit solida."

Such were the men who were now fighting the battle of liberty at the foot of the Alps in the dawn of modern times. That battle has varied its form in the course of the centuries. In after-days the contest in Continental Europe has been to separate the spiritual from the temporal, relegate each to its own proper domain, and establish between the two such a poise as shall form a safeguard to freedom; and especially to pluck the sword of the State from the hands of the ecclesiastical power. But at Geneva, in the times we write of, the conflict had for its immediate object to prevent a separation between the two powers. Nevertheless, the battle is the same in both cases, the same in Geneva 300 years ago as in Europe in 1875. The Genevans had no love for the man who occupied their episcopal throne; it was no aim of theirs, in the last resort, to preserve a class of amphibious rulers, neither prince nor bishop, but the two mixed and confounded, to the immense detriment of both. The Prince-Bishop of Geneva was, on a small scale, what the Prince-Bishop of Rome was on a great. But the Genevans preferred having one tyrant to having two. This was the alternative before them. They knew that should they, at this hour, strip the bishop of the temporal government, the duke would seize upon it, and they preferred meanwhile keeping the mitre and the sceptre united, in the hope that they would thus not only shut out the duke, but eventually expel the prince-bishop.

Marvellous it truly was that so little a city should escape so many snares, and defy so many armed assaults; for the duke again and again advanced with his army to take it—nay, upon one occasion, was admitted within its walls. There were foes enough around it, one would have thought, to have swept it from off its rock, and buried it beneath the waves of its lake. And so would it have happened to Geneva but for the bravery of its sons, who were resolved that sooner than see it enslaved they would see it razed to the ground.

Had it been a great empire, its posts, dignities, and titles might have stimulated and sustained their patriotism; but what recompense in point of fame or riches could a little obscure town like Geneva offer for the blood which its citizen-heroes were ready every moment to pour out in defence of its freedom? A higher power than man had kindled this fire in the hearts of its citizens. The combatants were fighting, although they knew it not, for a higher liberty than Geneva had yet tasted. And that liberty was on the road to it. The snowy peaks around it were even now beginning to kindle with a new day. Voices were heard crying to the beleaguered and perplexed town, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings;

that publish peace!" It was the purpose of Him who putteth down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth the lowly, to lift this city to equality with the ancient capitals of Christendom—nay, to place it above them all. For this end would He make empty the episcopal throne in St. Pierre, that the Gospel might enter and seat itself upon it. Then would Geneva raise its head in the presence of the ancient and historic cities of Europe—Rome, Paris, Milan, Venice—with a halo round it brighter than had ever encircled their brow. It would stand forth a temple of liberty, in the midst of Christendom, its gates open day and night, to welcome within its walls, as within an impregnable fortress, the persecuted of all lands.

CHAPTER II.

GENEVESE MARTYRS OF LIBERTY.

Berthelier—Apprehended—Beheaded—His Remains publicly Exposed—Bonnivard—Banished—Castle of Chilion—Bishop of Geneva Dies—His Remorse—Lévrier—His Arrest by the Duke—Carried to the Castle of Bonne—His Execution—What Victories of Brute Force Lead to—Momentary Triumph of the Duke—He Flees from Geneva never to Return—Lessons learned by Genevese Exiles—They Return to Act them out—Geneva's Gates Open towards the Rising Sun.

BEFORE the day of Geneva's greatness should have arrived, many of its heroic defenders would be resting in the grave, the road thither for nearly all of them being by the scaffold. Let us recount the fate of the more prominent; and, first of all, of Berthelier. One morning, as he was going to breathe the fresh air outside the walls in his favourite meadow, bathed by the waters of the Rhone, he was arrested by the duke's soldiers.[1] He bore himself with calmness and dignity both at his arrest and during the few days now left him of life. He wrote on the walls of his prison a verse of Scripture, which permits us to hope that he had cast anchor in another world than that which he was so soon to leave. His head fell by the hand of the executioner at the foot of Cæsar's Tower, in the isle in the Leman, near the point where the Rhone issues from the lake.[2] His fellow-citizens beheld him die, but could not save him. The cruel deed but deepened their purpose of vengeance. The head of the patriot was fastened up on the bridge of the Arve. Blackening in the sun it was a ghastly memorial of Savoyard tyranny, and a thrilling appeal to the compatriots of Berthelier never to submit to the despot who had no other rewards than this for the noblest of Geneva's sons.

The fate of Bonnivard was less tragic, but has become better known to us, from the notice bestowed upon him by a great poet. He was deprived of his priory; and while a scaffold was set up for Berthelier at one extremity of the Leman, a dungeon was found for Bonnivard at the other. The modern tourist, as he passes along the lovely shores of the lake, beneath the magnificent amphitheatre of mountains that overhang Vevay, has his attention arrested by the massive and still entire walls of a castle, surrounded on all sides by the deep waters of the Leman, save where a draw-bridge joins it to the shore. This is the Castle of Chiffon, the scene of Bonnivard's imprisonment, and where the track worn by his feet in the rocky floor may still be traced, while the ripple of the water, which rises to the level of the loop-hole in the wall, may be heard when the wind stirs upon the lake.

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[1] Bonnivard, *Chron.*, ii. 369—*apud* D'Aubigne, i. 257.
[2] D'Aubigné, bk. i., chap. 20.

At this stage of the drama, the wretched man who had filled the office of bishop, and had been the duke's co-conspirator in these attempts upon the liberty of Geneva, died (1522) miserably at Pignerol, on the southern side of the Alps, on the very frontier of the territory of the Waldenses. His dying scene was awful and horrible. Around his bed stood only hirelings. Careless of the agonies he was enduring, their eyes roamed round the room in quest of valuables, which they might carry off whenever his breath should depart. The effigies of his victims seemed traced upon the wall of his chamber. They presented to him a crucifix: he thought it was Berthelier, and shrieked out. They brought him the last Sacrament: he fancied they were sprinkling him with blood; his lips, whitened with foam, let fall execrations and blasphemies. Such is the picture which a Romanist writer draws of his last hours. But before the dark scene closed something like a ray of light broke in. He conjured his coadjutor and successor, Pierre de la Baume, not to walk in his footsteps, but to defend the franchises of Geneva. He saw in the sufferings he was enduring the punishment of his misdeeds; he implored forgiveness, and hoped God would pardon him in purgatory.[1]

But Charles III., Duke of Savoy and Piedmont, still lived, and unwarned by the miserable end of his accomplice, he continued to prosecute his guilty project.[2] Another martyr of liberty was now to offer up his life. The man who most embarrassed the duke still lived: he must be swept from his path. Charles did not believe in patriotism, and thought to buy Lévrier.[3] The judge spurned the bribe. Well, the axe will do what gold cannot. He was arrested (Easter, 1524) at the gates of St. Pierre, as he was leaving after hearing morning mass. "He wore a long camlet robe, probably his judicial gown, and **a** beautiful velvet cassock."[4] Mounted hastily upon a wretched nag, his hands tied behind his back, and his feet fastened below the belly of his horse, the judge was carried, in the midst of armed men, who jeered at and called him traitor, to the Castle of Bonne, where the duke was then residing.

The Castle of Bonne, now a ruin, is some two leagues from Geneva. It stands in the midst of scenery such as Switzerland only can show. The panorama presents to the eye an assemblage of valleys, with their carpet-like covering, foaming torrents, the black mouths of gorges, pines massed upon the hill-tops, and beyond, afar off, the magnificence of snowy peaks. The tragedy enacted in this spot we shall leave D'Aubigné to tell, who has here, with his usual graphic power, set in the light of day a deed that was done literally in the darkness. "Shortly," says the historian, "after Bellegrade's"

[1] M. Roset, *Chron.,* 103. Ruchat, tom. i., pp. 330, 331. Galiffe, *Matériaux, &c.,* vol. ii.,, p. 303—*apud* D'Aubigné, vol. i., p. 289.

[2] Ruchat, tom. i., p. 331.

[3] D'Aubigné., vol. i., p. 321.

[4] D'Aubigné, vol. i., p. 331.

(the man who pronounced doom) "departure, the confessor entered, discharged his duty mechanically, uttered the sentence 'Ego te absolvo,' and withdrew, showing no more sympathy for his victim than the provost had done. Then appeared a man with a cord: it was the executioner. It was then ten o'clock at night. The inhabitants of the little town and of the adjacent country were sleeping soundly, and no one dreamt of the cruel deed that was about to cut short the life of a man who might have shone in the first rank in a great monarchy. . . . . The headsman bound the noble Lévrier, armed men surrounded him, and the martyr of law was conducted slowly to the castle-yard. All nature was dumb, nothing broke the silence of that funeral procession; Charles's agents moved like shadows beneath the ancient walls of the castle. The moon, which had not reached its first quarter, was near setting, and shed only a feeble gleam. It was too dark to distinguish the beautiful mountains, in the midst of which stood the towers whence they had dragged their victim; the trees and houses of Bonne were scarcely visible; one or two torches, carried by the provost's men, alone threw light upon this cruel scene. On reaching the middle of the castleyard the headsman stopped, and the victim also. The ducal satellites silently formed a circle round them, and the executioner prepared to discharge his office. Lévrier was calm, the peace of a good conscience supported him in this dread hour. . . . Alone in the night, in those sublime regions of the Alps, surrounded by the barbarous figures of the Savoyard mercenaries, standing in that feudal courtyard which the torches illumined with a sinister glare, the heroic champion of the law raised his eyes to heaven, and said, 'By God's grace, I die without anxiety for the liberty of my country and the authority of St. Peter!' The grace of God, liberty, authority, these main principles of the greatness of nations, were his last confession. The words had hardly been uttered when the executioner swung round his sword, and the head of the citizen rolled in the castle-yard. Immediately, as if struck with fear, the murderers respectfully gathered up his remains and placed them in a coffin. 'And his body was laid in earth in the parish church of Bonne, with the head separate.' At that moment the moon set, and black darkness hid the stains of blood which Lévrier had left on the court-yard."[1]

Charles of Savoy did not reflect that the victories of brute force, such as those he was now winning, but pave the way for moral triumphs. With every head that fell by his executioners, he deemed himself a stage nearer to the success he panted to attain. Some illustrious heads had already fallen; so many more, say twenty, or it might be thirty, and he would be Lord of Geneva: the small but much-coveted principality would be part of Savoy, and the object so intently pursued by himself and his ancestors for long years

[1] D'Aubigné, vol. i., pp. 338–340.

would be realised. The duke was but practising a deception upon himself. Every head he cut off dug more deeply the gulf which divided him from the sovereignty of Geneva; every drop of blood he spilt but strengthened the resolution in the hearts of the patriots that never should the duke call them his subjects.

> "They never fail who die
> In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;
> Their heads may sodden in the sun: their limbs
> Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
> But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
> Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
> They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
> Which overpower all others, and conduct
> The world at last to freedom."[1]

Nevertheless, what with stratagem this hour and violence the next—treachery within Geneva and soldiers and cannon outside of it—it did seem as if the duke were making way, and the proud little city must, by-and-by, lay its independence at his feet. In fact, for a moment, Geneva did succumb. On the 15th of September, 1525, the duke surprised the city with a numerous host. The patriots had nothing left them but massacre or speedy flight. Fleeing through woods or mountainous defiles, pursued by Savoyard archers, some escaped to Bern, others to Freiburg. The duke, having entered the city, summoned a council of such citizens as were still to be found in it, and with the axes of his halberdiers suspended over their heads, these spiritless and lukewarm men promised to accept him as their prince.[2] But the vow of allegiance given in the "Council of Halberds" today was revoked on the morrow. The duke was at first stunned, and next he was terrified, at this sudden revival of opposition, when he believed it had been trampled out. Influenced by this mysterious fear, he hastily left Geneva, never again to enter it, and let fall, after having seemingly secured it, what he and his ancestors had been struggling for generations to grasp.[3]

The duke had but scattered the fire, not extinguished it. The parts of Switzerland to which the patriots had fled were precisely those where the light of the Reformation was breaking. At Bern and Freiburg the exiles of Geneva had an opportunity of studying higher models of freedom than any they had hitherto come in contact with. They had been sent to school, and their hearts, softened by adversity, were peculiarly open to the higher teaching now

[1] Byron, *Marino Faliero,* act ii., scene 2.

[2] Bonnivard, *Chron.,* vol. ii., pp. 424—427. Galiffe, *Hist. de Geneve,* vol. ii., pp. 318—323. *Journal de Balard,* pp. 28–30—quoted by D'Aubigné, vol. i., p. 38b.

[3] *Registres du Conseil,* December, 1525.

addressed to them. How often in after-years was the same thing repeated which we see realised in the case of these early champions of freedom! Were not the patriotic citizens of Spain and Italy again and again chased to the. British shores? And for what end? That there they might study purer models, be instructed in deeper and sounder principles, have their views of liberty rectified and enlarged, and on their return to their own country might temper their zeal with patience, fortify their courage with wisdom, and so speed the better in their efforts for the emancipation of their fellow subjects. Fruitful, indeed, were the months which the Genevese exiles spent abroad. When they returned in February, 1526, after the flight of the duke, a new era returned with them. Their sufferings had elicited the sympathy, and their characters had won the admiration, of the noblest among the citizens of the States where they had been sojourning. They recognised the important bearing upon Swiss liberty of the struggle which Geneva had maintained. It was the extreme citadel of the Swiss territory towards the south; it barred the invader's road from the Alps, and it was impossible to withhold from the little town the meed of praise for the chivalry and devotion with which, single-handed, it had taken its stand at this Swiss Thermopylæ, and held it at all hazards. But it was not right, they felt, to leave this city longer in its isolation. For their own sakes, as well as for Geneva's, they must extend the hand of friendship to it. An alliance[1] offensive and defensive was formed between the three governments of Bern, Freiburg, and Geneva. If the conflicts of the latter city were not yet ended, it no longer stood alone. By its side were now two powerful allies. Whoso touched its independence, touched theirs. If the Gospel had not yet entered Geneva, its gates stood open towards that quarter of the sky which the rising sun of the Reformation was flooding with his beams.

[1] *Registres du Conseil,* March 12, 1526. *Journal de Balard,* p. 54. Spoil, *Hist, de Genève,* ii. 392. Ruchat, i. 331.

CHAPTER III.

THE REFORM COMMENCED IN LAUSANNE AND ESTABLISHED IN MORAT AND NEUCHÂTEL.

Geneva on the Road to Liberty—Her Advance—There needs the Sword of the Spirit to Conquer her Highest Liberty—Farel—No Second Field of Kappel—Farel goes to Aigle—Acts as Schoolmaster—Begins to Preach—Commotion—Retires from Aigle—Leaves behind him a little Reformed Church—Goes to Morat—Then an Important Town—Eventually won to the Gospel—Attempts Lausanne—Goes to Neuchâtel—Crowds flock to his Preaching—Plants the Reformed Faith at Meiry in the neighbouring Jura—Returns to Neuchâtel —Carries its Reformation by a *Coup.*

GENEVA had gone a long way towards independence. It had chased the duke across the mountains to return no more. It had formed an alliance with Bern and Freiburg without waiting for the consent of its prince-bishop; this was in effect to hold his temporal authority null, and to take the sovereignty into its own hands. Liberty had advanced a stage on its road. Free Europe had enlarged its area; and that of bond Europe had, to the same extent, been circumscribed: Rome saw the outposts of Progress so much nearer her own gates. The Pope beheld bold and spirited citizens ignoring the sceptre of their prince-bishop, converting it into a bauble; and the thought must have suggested itself to him, might not the day come when his own more powerful rod would be plucked from his hand, and broken in pieces, like that of his vassal-bishop in Geneva?

But though on the road, Geneva had not yet arrived at the goal. She was not yet crowned with the perfect liberty. A powerful oppressor had her in his grip, namely, Rome. The tyrant, it is true, had been compelled to relax his hold, but he might tighten his grasp unless Geneva should succeed in entirely disengaging herself. But she had not yet got hold of the right weapon for such a battle. Berthelier assailed Rome on the ground of ancient charters; Bonnivard hurled against her the shafts of a revived learning; Lévrier maintained the fight with the sword of justice; but it needed that a more powerful sword, even that of the Word of the living God, should be unsheathed, before the tyrant could be wholly discomfited and the victory completely won. That sword had been unsheathed, and the champions who were wielding it, advancing in their victorious path, were every day coming nearer the gates of Geneva. When this new liberty should be enthroned within her, then would her light break forth as the morning, the black clouds which had so long hung about her would be scattered, and the tyrants who had plotted her overthrow would tremble at her name, and stand afar off for fear of that invisible Arm that guarded her. Let us turn to the movements outside the city, which,

without concert on the part of their originators, fall in with the efforts of the champions of liberty within it for the complete emancipation of Geneva.

We have already met Farel. We have seen him, a mere lad, descending from the mountains of Dauphine, entering himself a pupil in that renowned seminary of knowledge and orthodoxy, the Sorbonne—contracting a close friendship with its most illustrious doctor, Lefevre, accompanying him in his daily visits to the shrines of the metropolis, and kneeling by the side of the venerable man before the images of the saints. But soon the eyes both of teacher and pupil were opened; and Farel, transferring that ardour of soul which had characterised him as a Papist to the side of the Reformation, strove to rescue others from the frightful abyss of superstition in which he himself had been so near perishing. Chased from France, as we have already related, he turned his steps toward Switzerland.

It is the second Reformation in Switzerland that we are now briefly to sketch. The commencement and progress of the first we have already traced. Beginning with the preaching of Zwingli in the convent of Einsiedeln, the movement in a little time transferred itself to Zurich; and thence it rapidly spread to the neighbouring towns and cantons in Eastern Helvetia, extending from Basle on the frontier of Germany on the north, to Choire on the borders of Italy on the south. The Forest Cantons, however, continued obedient to Rome. The adherents of the old faith and the champions of the new met on the bloody field of Kappel. The sword gave the victory to Romanism. The bravest and best of the citizens of Zurich lay stretched upon the battle-field. Among the slain was Zwingli. With him, so men said and believed at the moment, had fallen the Reformation. In the grave of its most eloquent preacher and its most courageous defender lay interred the hopes of Swiss Protestantism. But though the calamity of Kappel arrested, it did not extinguish, the movement; on the contrary, it tended eventually to consolidate and quicken it by impressing upon its friends the necessity of union, in after-years, when Geneva came to occupy the place in the second Helvetian movement which Zurich had done in the first, the division among the Reformed cantons which had led to the terrible disaster of 1531 was avoided, and there was no second field of Kappel.

Arriving in Switzerland (1526), Farel took up his abode at Aigle, and there commenced that campaign which had for its object to conquer to Christ a brave and hardy people dwelling amid the glaciers of the eternal mountains, or in fertile and sunny valleys, or on the shores of smiling lakes. The darkness of ages overhung the region, but Farel had brought hither the light. "Taking the name of Ursin," says Ruchat, "and acting the part of schoolmaster,[1] he

[1] Ruchat, tom.i., p. 353. Gerdesius, *Hist. Evang. Renov.*, tom. ii., p. 322. Œcolampadius to Farel, 27th December, 1526. Neuchatel MS.—quoted by D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 266; Edin., 1846.

mingled, with the elements of secular instruction, the seeds of Divine knowledge. Through the minds of the children he gained access to those of the parents; and when he had gathered a little flock around him, he threw off his disguise, and announced himself as 'William Farel,' the minister." Though he had dropped from the clouds the priests could not have been more affrighted, nor the people more surprised, than they were at the sudden metamorphosis of the schoolmaster. Farel instantly mounted the pulpit. His bold look, his burning eye, his voice of thunder, his words, rapid, eloquent, and stamped with the majesty of truth, reached the conscience, and increased the number of those in the valley of Aigle who were already prepared to take the Word of God for their guide. But not by one sermon can the prejudices of ages be dispelled. The cures were filled with wrath at the bold intruder, who had entered their quiet valley, had shaken their authority, till now so secure, and had disturbed beliefs as ancient, and as firmly founded, the mountaineers believed, as the peaks that overhung their valleys.

The priests and people raised a great clamour, being supported by the cantonal officials, in particular by Jacob de Roveréa, Lord of Cret, and Syndic of Aigle. Hearing of the opposition, the Lords of Bern, whose jurisdiction comprehended Aigle and its neighbourhood, sent a commission to Farel empowering him to explain the Scriptures to the people.[1] The mandate was posted up on the church doors;[2] but instead of calming the tempest this intervention of authority only stirred it into fourfold fury. It would seem as if the Gospel would conquer alone, or not at all. The priests burned with zeal for the safety of those flocks to whom before they had hardly ever addressed a word of instruction;[3] the Syndic took their side, and the placards of the magistrates of Bern were torn down. "That cannot be the Gospel of Christ," said the priests, "seeing the preaching of it does not bring peace, but war." This enlightened logic, of a piece with that which should accuse the singing of the nightingale in a Swiss valley as the cause of the descent of the avalanches, convinced the mountaineers. The inhabitants of the four districts into which the territory of Aigle was divided — namely, Aigle, Bex, Ollon, and the Ormonds—as one man unsheathed the sword.[4] The shepherds who fed their flocks beneath the glaciers of the Diablerets, hearing that the Church was in danger, rushed like an avalanche to the rescue. The herdsmen of the Savoy mountains, crossing the Rhone, also hastened to do battle in the good old cause. Tumults broke out at Bex, at Ollon, and other places. Farel saw the tempest gathering, but remained undismayed. Those who had received the Gospel from him were prepared to defend him; but were it not better to

[1] Ruchat, tom. i., p. 353.
[2] *Ibid.*, tom. i., p. 356.
[3] J. H. Hottinger, iii. 364. D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 268.
[4] Ruchat, tom. i., p. 356.

prevent the effusion of blood, to which the matter was fast tending, and go and preach the Gospel in other parts of this lovely but benighted land? This was. the course he adopted; but, in retiring, he had the satisfaction of thinking that he had planted the standard of the cross at the foot of the mighty Dent de Morcles, and that he left behind him men whose eyes had been opened, and who would never again bow the knee to the idols their fathers had served.[1] Soon thereafter, Aigle and Bex, by majorities, gave their voices for the Reform; but the parishes that lay higher up amid the mountains declared that they would abide in the old faith.

Whither should Farel go next? Looking from the point where the Rhone, rolling under the sublime peaks of the Dent du Midi and the Dent de Morcles, pours its discoloured floods into the crystal Leman, one espies, on the other side of the lake, the vine-clad hill on which Lausanne is seated. In Popish times this was a city of importance. Its tall cathedral towers soared aloft on their commanding site, while the lovely region held fast in the yoke of the Pope slumbered at their feet. Lausanne had a bishop, a college of rich canons, and a numerous staff of priests. It had besides an annual fair, to which troops of pilgrims resorted, to pray before the image of "Our Lady," and to buy indulgences and other trinkets: a traffic that enriched at once the Church and the towns-people. But though one could hardly stir a step in its streets without meeting a "holy man" or a pious pilgrim, the place was a very sink of corruption.[2] There was need, verily, of a purifying stream being turned in upon this filthy place. Farel essayed to do so, but his first attempt was not successful, and he turned away upon another tack.[3]

Repulsed from Lausanne, Farel traversed the fertile country which divides the Leman from the Lake of Neuchâtel, and arrived at Morat. This, in our day, insignificant place, was then a renowned and fortified town. It had sustained three famous sieges, the first in 1032 against the Emperor Conrad, the second in 1291 against the Emperor Rodolph of Hapsburg, and the third in 1476 against Charles, last Duke of Burgundy. Situated between France and Germany, the two languages were spoken equally in it. Farel brought with him an authorisation from the Lords of Bern empowering him to preach, not only throughout the extent of their own territories, but also in that of their allies, provided they gave consent.[4] Here his preaching was not without fruit; but the majority of the citizens electing to abide still by Rome, he retraced his steps, and presented himself a second time before that episcopal city that overlooks the blue Leman, and which had so recently driven him from its

[1] Gerdesius, *Hist. Reform.*, tom. ii., p. 322.

[2] We have already given a picture of the manners, lay and clerical, of Lausanne in the sixteenth century. See *ante*, vol. i., bk. viii., ch. 3, p. 419.

[3] Ruchat, tom. i., p. 357.

[4] *Ibid.*, tom. ii., p. 175.

gates. He was ambitious of subduing this stronghold of darkness to the Saviour. This time he brought with him a letter from the Lords of Bern, who had jurisdiction in those parts, and naturally wished to see their allies of the same faith with themselves; but even this failed to procure him liberty to evangelise in Lausanne. The Council of Sixty read the letter of their Excellencies of Bern, and civilly replied that "It belonged not to them, but to the bishop and chapter, to admit preachers into the pulpits." The Council of Two Hundred also found that they had no power in the matter.[1] Farel had again to depart and leave those whom he would have led into the pastures of truth to the care of shepherds who knew so ill to feed, but were so skilful to fleece their docks.

Again turning northwards, he made a short halt at Morat. This time the victory of the Gospel was complete, and this important town was placed (1529) in the list of Protestant cities.[2] Farel felt that a mighty unseen Power was travelling with him, opening the understandings, melting the hearts of men, and he would press on and win other cities and cantons to the Gospel. He crossed the lovely lake and presented himself in Neuchâtel, which had lately returned under the sceptre of its former mistress, Jeanne de Hochberg, the only daughter and heiress of Philip, Count of Neuchâtel, who died in 1503.[3] She regained in her widowhood the principality of Neuchâtel, which she had lost in the lifetime of her husband, Louis d'Orleans, Duke of Longueville. No one could enter this city without having ocular demonstration that religion was the dominant interest in it—meaning thereby a great cathedral on a conspicuous site, with a full complement of canons, priests, and monks, who furnished the usual store of pomps, dramas, indulgences, banquetings, and scandals. In the midst of a devotion of this sort, Neuchâtel was startled by a man of small stature, red beard, glittering eye, and stentorian voice, who stood up in the market-place, and announced that he had brought a religion, not from Rome, but from the Bible.

The men with shaven crowns were struck dumb with astonishment. When at length they found their voices, they said, "Let us beat out his brains." "Duck him, duck him," cried others.[4] They fought with such weapons as they had; their ignorance forbade their opposing doctrine with doctrine. Farel lifted up his voice above their clamour. His preaching was felt to be not an idle tale, nor a piece of incomprehensible mysticism, but words of power—the words of God. Neuchâtel was carried by storm.[5] It did not as yet formally declare for Reform; but it was soon to do so.

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[1] *Ibid.*, tom. ii., p. 178.
[2] Ruchat, tom. ii., pp. 176, 182.
[3] *Ibid.*, tom. ii., p. 179.
[4] Farellus Molano. Neuchâtel MS.—quoted by D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 323.
[5] Ruchat, tom. ii., p. 181.

Having kindled the fire, and knowing that all the efforts of the priests would not succeed in extinguishing it, Farel departed to evangelise in the mountains and valleys which lie around the smiling waters of Morat and Neuchâtel. It was winter (January, 1530), and cold, hunger, and weariness were his frequent attendants. Every hour, moreover, he was in peril of his life. The priests perfectly understood that if they did not make away with him he would make away with "religion"— that is, with their tithes and offerings, their processions and orgies. They did all in their power to save "religion." They suspended their quarrels with one another, they stole some hours from their sleep, they even stole some hours from the table in their zeal to warn their flocks against the "wolf," and impress them with a salutary dread of what their fate would be, should they become his prey. On one occasion, in the Val de Ruz, in the mountains that overhang the Lake of Neuchâtel, the Reformer was seized and beaten almost to death.[1] Nothing, however, could stop him. He would, at times, mount the pulpit while the priest was in the act of celebrating mass at the altar, and drown the chants of the missal by the thunder of his eloquence. This boldness had diverse results. Sometimes the old bigotry would resume its sway, and the audience would pull the preacher violently out of the pulpit; at other times the arrow of conviction would enter. The priest would hastily strip himself of stole and chasuble, and cast the implements of sacrifice from his hands, while the congregation would demolish the altar, remove the images, and give in their adhesion to the new faith. In three weeks' time four villages of the region had embraced the Reformed faith. The first of these was the village of Kertezers, the church of which had been given in the year 962 to the Abbey of Payerne, by Queen Berthe, wife of Rodolph II., King of Burgundy, foundress of the abbey. Since that time— that is, during 468 years— the religious of Payerne had been the patrons of that church, the cure of which was their vicar. As the Reformed were no longer served by him, they petitioned their superiors at Bern for a Reformed pastor. Their request was granted, and it was arranged that the Popish cure and the Protestant minister should divide the stipend between them.[2] The cups, pictures, marbles, and other valuables of the churches were sold, and therewith were provided stipends for the pastors, hospitals for the poor and sick, schools for the youth, and if aught remained it was given to the State.[3] The zeal of the citizens of Meiry outran their discretion. They overturned the altars and images before the Reformation had obtained a majority of votes. This furnished occasion to the Lords of Freiburg to complain to those of Bern that their subjects in the Jura were infringing the settlement that regulated the progress of the Protestant faith. A few weeks, however, put all right,

[1] Choupard, MS.—quoted by D' Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 331.
[2] Ruchat, tom. ii., pp. 184, 185.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

by giving a majority of votes in Meiry to the Reformation. Thus did the Gospel cast down the strongholds of error, and its preacher, in the midst of weakness, was triumphant. The spring and summer sufficed to establish the Reformed faith in great part of this region.

The Protestant hero Farel was now advancing to complete his conquest of Neuchâtel. During his absence the Reformation had been fermenting. He entered the city at the right moment. Despite the opposition of the princess, of George de Rive, her deputy, and the priests, who sounded the tocsin to rouse the people, the magistrates, after deliberation, passed a decree opening the cathedral to the Reformed worship; and the citizens, forming round Farel, and climbing the hill on which the cathedral stood, placed him in the pulpit, notwithstanding the resistance of the canons. The solemnity of the crisis hushed the vast congregation into stillness. Farel's sermon was one of the most powerful he had ever delivered, and when he closed, lo, a mighty wind, felt though it could not be seen, passed over the people! They all at once cried out, "We will follow the Protestant religion, both we and our children; and in it will we live and die."

Having restored the Gospel with its sublime doctrines and its worship in the spirit, the Neuchâtelans felt that they had no longer need of those symbols by which Popery sets forth its mysteries, and through which the material worship of its votaries is offered. They proceeded forthwith to purge the church: they dismantled the altars, broke the images, tore down the pictures and crucifixes, and carrying them out, cast them down from the summit of the terrace on which the cathedral stands. At their feet slept the blue lake, beyond was the fertile champaign, and afar, in the south, a chain of glittering peaks, with the snowy crown of Mont Blanc rising grandly over all; but not an eye that day was turned on this glorious panorama. They had broken from their own and their children's neck an ancient yoke, and were intent only on obliterating all the signs and instruments of their former slavery. In perpetual remembrance of this great day, the Neuchâtelans inscribed on a pillar of the cathedral the words—"On the 23rd October, 1530, idolatry was overthrown and removed from this church by the citizens."[1]

[1] Ruchat, tom. ii., pp. 276, 277.

CHAPTER IV.

TUMULTS—SUCCESSES—TOLERATION.

Second Vote on Religion at Neuchâtel—Vallangin—Disgraceful Trick—Popular Tempest—Triumph of Reform—Farel turns his eye toward Geneva—Evangelises at Orbe—Makes a Beginning—First Communion at Orbe—Peter Viret—His Character—Goes to Grandson—A Battle in the Church—The Affair carried to the Conference at Bern—Protestant Bern and Catholic Freiburg agree on a Policy of Toleration—Great Success of Farel—He turns towards Geneva.

WAS the storm that swept over Neuchâtel on the 23rd of October, and which cleansed its cathedral-church of the emblems of superstition, a passing gust, or one of those great waves which indicate the rising of the tide in the spiritual atmosphere? Was it an outburst of mob-violence, provoked by the greed and tyranny of the priests, or was it the strong and emphatically expressed resolution of men who knew and loved the truth? If the former, the idols would again be set up; if the latter, they had fallen to rise no more. This was tested on the 4th of November following. On that eventful day the citizens of Neuchâtel, climbing the hill on which stood the governor's castle, hard by the cathedral that still bore traces of the recent tempest, in altars overturned, niches empty, and images disfigured, presented themselves before the governor and deputies from Bern. They had assembled to vote on the question whether Romanism or Protestantism should be the religion of Neuchâtel . A majority of eighteen votes gave the victory to the Reformation. From that day (November 4, 1530) conscience was free in Neuchâtel; no one was compelled to abandon Popery, but the cathedral was henceforward appropriated to the Protestant worship, and the Reformation was legally established.[1]

Vallangin, the town of next importance in this part of the Jura, followed soon thereafter the example of Neuchâtel . The issue here was precipitated by a shameful expedient to which the Papists had recourse, and which was of a sort that history refuses to chronicle. It was a fair-day; Antoine Marcourt, the Pastor of Neuchâtel, was preaching in the market-place. A large and attentive congregation was listening to him, when a revolting spectacle was exhibited which was contrived to affront the preacher, insult the audience, and drive the Gospel from the place amid jeers and laughter. The trick recoiled upon its authors. It was Popery that had to flee. A sudden gust of indignation shook the crowd. The multitudes rushed toward the cathedral. Who shall now save the saints? The priests have unchained winds which it is beyond their power to control. Altar, image, and monumental statue, all went

[1] Recess de MM. de Bern, MS. Choupard, MS. Chambrier, *Hist. de Neuchatel.* Governor's letter to Princess de Longueville — *apud* D'Aubigné. Ruchat, tom. ii., pp. 277–280.

down before the tempest. The relics were scattered about. Even the rich oriels, which flecked, with their glorious tints, stone floor and massive column, were not spared. The edifice, all aglow but a few moments before with the curious and beautiful picturings of chisel and pencil, was now a wreck. The popular vengeance was not yet appeased. The furious multitude was next seen directing its course towards the residences of the canons. The terrified clerics had already fled to the woods, but if their persons escaped, their houses were sacked.

By-and-by the storm spent itself, and calmer feelings returned to the breasts of the citizens. They ascended the hill on which stood the castle of the Countess of Arberg, who governed Vallangin, under the suzerainty of Bern. The authorities trembled when they saw them approach, and were greatly relieved when they learned that they had come with no more hostile intent than to demand the punishment of the perpetrators of the outrage. The countess gave orders for the punishment of the guilty, though she was suspected of connivance in the affair. As to all beyond, the matter was referred to Bern, and their Excellencies decided that the townspeople should pay for the works of art which they had destroyed, and that the countess in return should grant the free profession of the Reformed faith. The sum in which the citizens were amerced we do not know, but it must have been large indeed if it did not leave them immense gainers by the exchange.[1]

By a sort of intuition it was Geneva that Farel all along had in his eye. The victories which he won, and won with such rapidity and brilliancy, at the foot of the Jura, and on the shores of its lakes, were but affairs of outposts. They were merely stepping-stones upon his road, towards the conquest of that heroic little city, which occupied a site where three great empires touched one another, and where he longed to plant the Protestant standard. The idea was ever borne in upon his mind that Geneva had a great part before it, that it was destined to become the capital of Swiss Protestantism, and, in part, of French and Savoyard Protestantism also; for its higher destiny he did not dare to forecast. Therefore he rejoiced in every victory he gained, seeing himself so much the nearer what he felt must be his crowning conquest. But like a wise general he would not advance too fast; he would leave behind him no post of the enemy untaken; he intended that Geneva should be conquered once for all; he would enter its gates only after he had subdued the country around, and hang out the banner of the Gospel upon its ramparts when Geneva had become mistress of a renovated region. And it pleased the Captain whom he served to give him his desire.

There was a short halt in the march of this spiritual conqueror. At St. Blaise, on the northern shore of the Lake of Neuchâtel , Farel was set upon

[1] D‘Aubigné, bk. xv., chap. 9.

by a mob, instigated by the priests, and almost beaten to death. Covered with bruises, spitting blood, and so disfigured as scarcely to be recognised by his friends, he was put into a small boat, carried across the lake, and nursed at Morat. He had barely recovered his strength when he rose from bed, and set out for Orbe to evangelise. Orbe was an ancient town at the foot of the Jura, on the picturesque banks of a stream of the same name. It lay nearer Geneva than Neuchâtel. Watered by rivulets from the mountains, the gardens that surrounded it were of more than ordinary beauty and luxuriance, but spiritually Orbe was a wilderness, a "land where no water was." The Reformer would have given it "living water;" but, unhappily, Orbe, with its numerous priests, its rich convents, and its famous sisters of St. Claire, some of whom were of royal lineage, did not thirst for such water. Its good Catholics strove to render Farel's journey of no avail. With this view they had recourse to expedients, some of which were tragic, others simply ludicrous. One of them is worth chronicling for its originality. It was agreed to outmanoeuvre the evangelist by staying away—a masterly policy in the case of a preacher so attractive—but in one instance the policy was departed from. One day, when Farel entered the pulpit, a most extraordinary scene presented itself. He beheld three adults only present, while the church was nearly filled with children—"brats." The latter lay perfectly flat as if sound asleep. But the moment Farel began to preach they jumped up, as puppets do when the string is pulled, and began to sing and dance, to laugh and scream. Farel's voice was completely drowned by the noise. This scene continued for some time; at length the little ragamuffins made their exit in an uproar of screaming and howling. Farel was now left in quiet, but with no one to listen to him. "And this," says a Popish chronicler, "was the first sermon preached in the town of Orbe."[1]

Nevertheless the Reformer persevered. Soon a small but select number of converts gathered round him, some of them of good position in society.

On Pentecost, the 28th of May, Farel celebrated the Lord's Supper, for the first time in Orbe, to a little congregation of seven. Having preached in the morning, the bread and wine were placed on the table, and the communicants received them kneeling. Farel demanded of them whether they forgave one another, and receiving an affirmative reply, he distributed the elements to them. In the afternoon the Papists entered the church, and commenced the chanting of mass.[2]

Farel was beginning to think that Orbe was already won, when unhappily these bright prospects were suddenly dashed by the indiscreet zeal of one of

[1] *Memoir e du Sire de Pierre four,* p. 35. D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 258. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 23.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 27.

the evangelists. Thinking to reform Orbe by a *coup de main*, this person, with the help of twelve companions, pulled down one day all the images in its seven churches.[1] The destruction of the idols but prolonged the reign of idolatry. A reaction set in, and it was not till twenty years thereafter that Orbe placed itself in the rank of Reformed cities.

But if Orbe remained Roman it had the honour of giving to the Reformation one of its loveliest spirits and most persuasive preachers. Peter Viret was born in this town in 1511. His father was a wool-dresser. Sweet, studious, and of elevated soul, the son gave himself to the service of the altar. He was educated at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he remained about three years. He attained the peace of the Gospel, like most of the Reformers, by passing through the waters of anguish; but in his case "the floods" were not so deep as in that of Luther and Calvin. When he returned to his native city, he entered the pulpit at the entreaty of Farel, and preached to his townsmen. The sweetness of his voice, the beauty of his ideas, and the modesty of his manner held his hearers captive. It was seen that he who distributes to his servants as he pleases for the edification of his body, the Church, had given to Viret his special gift. He did not possess the glowing imagery and burning ardour of Luther, nor the fiery energy of Farel, nor the thrilling power of Zwingli, nor the calm, towering, and all-mastering genius of Calvin; but his preaching, nevertheless, had a charm which was not found in that of any of those great men. Clear, tender, persuasive, aided by the silvery tones of his voice, and the moral glow which lighted up his features, its singular fascination and power were attested, in after-years, by the immense crowds which gathered round him in Switzerland and the south of France, whenever he stood up to preach. He was indeed a polished shaft in the hand of the Almighty.[2]

Farel had to fall back from before Orbe; but if he retreated it was to wage fresh combats and to win new victories. He next visited Grandson, at the western extremity of the Lake of Neuchâtel. The priests, alarmed at his arrival, rose in arms, and drove him away. Bern now interposed its authority for his protection. Their Excellencies would compel no one to become a Protestant, but they were determined to permit the two faiths to be heard, and the citizens to make their choice between the sermon and the mass. Taking with him Viret, Farel returned to Grandson, where he was joined by a third, De Glutinis, an evangelist from the Bernese Jura. They preached Sunday and weekday. The *heresy* was breaking in like a torrent. The priests strove to rear

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 28.

[2] Melch. Adam., *Vit. Theol.*, p. 120. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 25.—German Switzerland differs from French Switzerland or the Swiss Romande, in that the former was evangelised almost entirely by native preachers, as Zwingli, Œcolampadius, Haller, &c. Viret was, we may say, the only native Reformer that arose in French Switzerland. It was mainly evangelised by men who had been born beyond its frontier.

a bulwark against the devastating flood. They refuted, to the best of their ability, the Protestant sermons. They called to their aid popular preachers from the neighbouring towns, and they organised processions and sacred chants to invigorate the zeal and piety of their adherents. The tide, notwithstanding, continued to set in a contrary direction to that in which they wished to force it to flow. Arming themselves, they came to church to refute what they heard spoken there, not with arguments, but with blows. The sacristan threatened Farel with a pistol which he had concealed under his cloak; another attempted to assassinate Glutinis with a poignard. The ministers managed to mount the pulpits, but were pulled from them, thrown down on the floor, trampled upon, beaten, and when their friends rushed forward to defend them, the two parties fought over their prostrate bodies, and a regular battle was seen going forward in the church.[1]

But a great good resulted from these lamentable proceedings. The matter was brought before the Great Conference, which assembled, as we have previously related, at Bern in January, 1532. The Swiss were drifting toward a civil war. It was hopeless to think of conciliating the two parties that divided the nation, but was it necessary therefore that they should cut one another's throats? Might it not be possible rather to bear with one another's opinions? This was the device hit upon. It might appear to Rome, as it still appears to her, an execrable one, but to the Conference it appeared preferable to the crime and horror of internecine strife. Thus out of that necessity which is said to be the mother of invention, came the idea of toleration. We deem the mass idolatry, said Protestant Bern, but we shall prevent no one going to it. We deem the Protestant sermon *heresy,* rejoined Popish Freiburg, but we shall give liberty to all who wish to attend it. Thus on the basis of liberty of worship was the public peace maintained. This dates in Switzerland from January, 1532.[2] Toleration was adopted as a *policy* before it had been accepted as a *principle.* It was practised as a necessity of the State before it had been promulgated as a right of conscience. It was only when it came to be recognised and claimed in the latter character as a right founded on a Divine charter—namely, the Word of God—and held irrespective of the permission or the interdiction of man, that toleration established inviolably its existence and reign.

In this manner did Farel carry on the campaign. Every hour he encountered new perils; every day there awaited him fresh persecutions; but it more than consoled him to think that he was winning victory after victory. He remembered that similar foes had beset the path of the first preachers of the Gospel in the cities of Asia Minor at the beginning of the Christian

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 31–33.

[2] Mémoire du *Sire de Pierrefleur,* p. 74. Chou parch MS. D'Aubiginé, vol. iii., p. 291.

dispensation, to those which obstructed his own in the towns and villages of this region. But in the face of that opposition, how marvellous had his success been—not his, but that of the invisible Power that was moving before him! Among the towns won to the Gospel—the beginning of his strength—he could count Neuchâtel , and Vallangin, and Morat, and Grandson, and Aigle, and Bex, and partially Orbe. Every day the fields were growing ripe unto the harvest; able and zealous labourers were coming to his aid in the reaping of it. By-and-by he hoped to carry home the last sheaf, in the conversion of the little town which nestled at the southern extremity of the Leman Lake, to which his longing eyes were so often turned. What joy would be his, could he pluck it from the talons of Savoy and the grasp of Rome, and give it to the Gospel!

CHAPTER V.

FAREL ENTERS GENEVA.

Basin of the Rhone—Leman Lake—Grandeur of its Environs—The Region in Former Times a Stronghold of Popery—Geneva—The Duke of Savoy Entreats the Emperor to put him in Possession of it—The Hour Passes—Farel Enters Geneva—Preaches—The Perfect Liberty—The Great Pardon—Beginning of a New Geneva—Terror of the Priests—Farel and Saunier Summoned before the Council—Protected by Letters from Bern—A Tumult—Farel narrowly Escapes Death—Is Sent away from Geneva—Froment Comes in his Room—Begins as Schoolmaster—His New Year's Day Sermon—Popular Agitation—Retires from Geneva.

THERE is no grander valley in Switzerland than the basin of the Rhone, whose collected floods, confined within smiling shores, form the Leman. As one looks toward sunrise, he sees on his right the majestic line of the white Alps; and on his left, the picturesque and verdant Jura. The vast space which these magnificent chains enclose is variously filled in. Its grandest feature is the lake. It is blue as the sky, and motionless as a mirror. Nestling on its shores, or dotting its remoter banks, is many a beautiful villa, many a picturesque town, almost drowned in the affluent foliage of gardens and rich vines, which clothe the country that slopes upward in an easy swell toward the mountains. In the remoter distance the eye ranges over a vast stretch of pasture-lands and corn-fields, and forests of chestnuts and pine-trees. Above the dark woods soar the great peaks, as finely robed as the plains, though after a different manner—not with flowers and verdure, but with glaciers and snows.

But this fertile and lovely land, at the time we write of, was one of the strongholds of the Papacy. Cathedrals, abbacies, rich convents, and famous shrines, which attracted yearly troops of pilgrims, were thickly planted throughout the valley of the Leman. These were so many fortresses by which Rome kept the country in subjection. In each of these fortresses was placed a numerous garrison. Priests and monks swarmed like the locusts. The land was fat, yet one wonders how it sustained so numerous and ravenous a host. In Geneva alone there were nine hundred priests. In the other towns and villages around the lake, and at the foot of the Jura, they were not less numerous in proportion. Cowls and shorn crowns, frocks and veils, were seen everywhere. This generation of tonsured men and veiled women formed the "Church;" and the dues they exacted of the lay population, and the processions, chants, exorcisms, and blows which they gave them in return, were styled "religion." The man who would go down into this region of sevenfold blackness, and attack these sons of the Roman Anak, who here tyrannised so mercilessly over their wretched victims, had indeed need of a stout heart and a strong faith. He had need to be clad in the armour of God in going forth to

such a battle. This man was William Farel. The spiritual campaigns of the sixteenth century produced few such champions. “His sermons,” says D’Aubigné, “were actions quite as much as a battle is.” We have already chronicled what he did in these “wars of the Lord” in the Pays de Vaud; we are now to be engaged in the narrative of his work in Geneva.

We have brought down the eventful story of this little city to the time when it formed an alliance with Bern and Friburg. This brought it a little help in the battle which it had maintained hitherto single-handed against tremendous odds. The duke had left it, and placed the Alps between himself and it, but he had not lost sight of it. Despairing of being able to reduce it by his own power, he sent a messenger to Charles V. at Augsburg, entreating him to send his soldiers and put him in possession of Geneva. Most willingly would the emperor have put these haughty citizens under the feet of the duke, but his own hands were at that moment too full to attempt any new enterprise. The Lutheran princes of Germany, as stubborn in their own way as the Genevans were in theirs, were occasioning Charles a world of anxiety, and he could give the duke nothing but promises. The emperor’s plan, as communicated to the duke’s envoy, was first to “crush the German Protestants, and then bring his mailed hand down on the Huguenots of Geneva.”[1] Geneva meanwhile had respite. The Treaty of Nuremberg shortly afterwards set Charles V. free on the side of Germany, and left him at liberty to convert the promises he had made the duke into deeds. But the hour to strike had now passed; a mightier power than the emperor had entered Geneva.

Returning from the Waldensian synod in the valley of Angrogna, in October, 1532, Farel, who was accompanied by Saunier, could not resist his long-cherished desire of visiting Geneva. His arrival was made known to the friends of liberty in that city,[2] and the very next day the *elite* of the citizens waited on him at his inn, the Tour Perce, on the left bank of the Rhone. He preached twice, setting forth the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. The topic of his first address was Holy Scripture, the fountain-head of all Divine knowledge, in contradistinction to tradition of Fathers, or decree of Council, and the only authority on earth to which the conscience of man was subject. This opened the gates of a higher liberty than these men had yet understood, or aspired to. They had been shedding their blood for their franchises, but now the Reformer showed them a way by which their souls might escape from the dark dungeon in which tradition and human authority had succeeded in shutting them up. The next day Farel proclaimed to them the great pardon

[1] *Mémoire de M. de Bellegarde au sujet de l'audience qi'il a eu de S.M. Impériale touchant les differénds que. S. A. avait avec ceux de Genève.* This MS. of about 25 pages was discovered by Dr. D’Aubigné in the archives at Turin. (See *Hist. Reform. in Europe,* bk. *v.,* chap. 6.)

[2] Spanheim, *Geneva Restituta,* p. 43. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 175.

of God—which consisted, according to his exposition, in the absolutely free forgiveness of sinners bestowed on the footing of an absolutely full and perfect expiation of human guilt; and this he placed in studious opposition to the pardon of the Pope, which had to be bought with money or with penances. This was a still wider opening of the gates of a new world to these men. "This," said Farel, "is the Gospel; and this, and nothing short of this, is liberty, inasmuch as it is the enfranchisement of the whole man, body, conscience, and soul."[1] The words of the Reformer did not fall on dull or indifferent hearts. The generous soil, already watered with the blood of the martyrs of liberty, now received into its bosom a yet more precious seed. The Old Geneva passed away, and in its place came a New Geneva, which the wiles of the Pope should not be able to circumvent, nor the arms of the emperor to subdue.

The priests learned, with a dismay bordering on despair, that the man who had passed like a devastating tempest over the Pays de Vaud, his track marked by altars overturned, images demolished, and canons, monks, and nuns fleeing before him in terror, had come hither also. What was to be done? Effectual steps must be promptly taken, otherwise all would be lost. The gods of Geneva would perish as those of Neuchâtel had done.[2] Farel and Saunier were summoned before the town council.[3] The majority of the magistrates received them with angry looks, some of them with bitter words; but happily Farel carried letters from their Excellencies of Bern, with whom Geneva was in alliance, and whom the councillors feared to offend. The Reformers, thus protected, after some conference, left the council-chamber unharmed.

Their acquittal awakened still more the fears of the priests, and as their fear grew so did their anger. Armed clerics were parading the streets; there was a great flutter in the convents. "A shabby little preacher," said one of the sisters of St. Claire, with a toss of the head, "Master William Farel, has just arrived."[4] The townspeople were breaking out in tumults. What next was thought of? An episcopal council met, and under a pretext of debating the question it summoned the two preachers before them. Two magistrates accompanied them to see that they returned alive. Some of the episcopal council had come with arms under their sacerdotal robes. Such was their notion of a religious discussion. The Reformers were asked by what authority they preached? Farel replied by quoting the Divine injunction, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." The meek majesty of the answer only provoked a sneer. In a few minutes the council became excited; the members started to their

[1] Froment, *Gestes de Geneve,* p. 5. Sporp *Hist, de Geneve,* tom. i., p. 467. Choupard, MS. D'Aubigne, tom. iii., pp. 333,334.

[2] Choupard, MS.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 177.

[4] La Soeur.J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme.* p. 46.

feet; they flung themselves upon the two evangelists; they pulled them about; they spat upon them, exclaiming, "Come, Farel, you wicked devil, what makes you go up and down thus? Whence comest thou? What business brings you to our city to throw us into trouble?" When the noise had a little subsided, Farel made answer courageously, "I am not a devil; I am sent by God as an ambassador of Jesus Christ; I preach Christ crucified—dead for our sins—risen again for our justification; he that believeth upon him hath eternal life; he that believeth not is condemned." "He blasphemes; he is worthy of death," exclaimed some. "To the Rhone, to the Rhone!" shouted others; "it were better to drown him in the Rhone than permit this wicked Lutheran to trouble all the people." "Speak the words of Christ, not of Caiaphas," replied Farel. This was the signal for a yet more ferocious outbreak. "Kill the Lutheran hound," exclaimed they. Dom Bergeri, proctor to the chaplain, cried, "Strike, strike!" They closed round Farel and Saunier; they took hold of them; they struck at them. One of the Grand Vicar's servants, who carried an arquebus, levelled it at Farel; he pulled the trigger; the priming flashed.[1] The clatter of arms under the vestments of the priests foreboded a tragic issue to the affair; and doubtless it would speedily have terminated in this melancholy fashion, but for the vigorous interposition of the two magistrates.[2]

Rescued from the perils of the episcopal council hall, worse dangers, if possible, threatened them outside. A miscellaneous crowd of clerics and laics, armed with clubs and swords, waited in the street to inflict upon the two heretics the vengeance which it was just possible they might escape at the hands of the vicar and canons.[3] When the mob saw them appear, they brandished their weapons, and raising a frightful noise of hissing and howling, made ready to rush upon them. It looked as if they were fated to die upon the spot. At the critical moment a band of halberdiers, headed by the syndics, came up, and closing their ranks round the two Reformers escorted them, through the scowling and hooting crowd, to their inn, the Tour Perce. A guard was stationed at the door all night. Next morning, at an early hour, appeared a few friends, who taking Farel and Saunier, and leading them to the shore of the lake, made them embark in a small boat, and, carrying them over the quiet waters, landed them in the Pays de Vaud, at an unfrequented spot between Morges and Lausanne. Thence Farel and Saunier went on to Grandson. Such was the issue of Farel's first essay in a city on which his eye and heart

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 177–180.

[2] Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 5, 6. Choupard, MS. Spanheim, *Geneva Restituta*, p. 43.

[3] La Soeur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 48.

had so long rested. It did not promise much; but he had accomplished more than he at the moment knew.

In fact, Farel was too powerful, and his name was of too great prestige, to begin the work. The seeds of such a work must be deposited by a gentle hand, they must grow up in a still air, and only when they have taken root may the winds be suffered to blow. Of this Farel seems to have become sensible, for we find him looking around for a humbler and feebler instrument to send to Geneva. He cast eyes on the young and not very courageous Froment, and dispatched him to a city where he himself had almost been torn in pieces.[1] While Froment was on his way another visitor unexpectedly appeared to the Genevans. A comet blazed forth in their sky. What did it portend? War, said some; the rising of a Divine light, said others.[2]

Froment's appearance was so mean that even the Huguenots, as the friends of liberty and progress in Geneva were styled, turned their backs upon him. What was he to do? Froment recalled Farel's example at Aigle, and resolved to turn schoolmaster. He hired a room at the Croix d'Or, near the Molard, and speedily his fame as a teacher of youth filled Geneva. The lessons Froment taught the children in the school, the children taught the parents when they went home. Gradually, and in a very short while, the class grew into a congregation of adults, the school-room into a church, and the teacher into an evangelist. Reading out a chapter he would explain it with simplicity and impressiveness. Thus did he scatter the seed upon hearts; souls were converted; and the once despised evangelist, who had been, like a greater missionary, "a root out of a dry ground" to the Genevans, now saw crowds pressing around him and drinking in his words.[3]

This was in the end of the year 1532. The work proceeded apace. Among the converts were certain rich and honourable women; we mention specially Paula, the wife of John Levet, and Claudine, her sister-in-law. Their conversion made a great sensation in Geneva. By their means their husbands and many of their acquaintances were drawn to hear the schoolmaster at the Croix d'Or, and embraced the Gospel. From the Pays de Vaud, arrived New Testaments, tracts, and controversial works; and these, distributed among the citizens, opened the eyes of many who had not courage to go openly to the schoolmaster's sermon. Tradesmen and people of all conditions enrolled themselves among the disciples. The social principle of Christianity began to operate; those who were of one faith drew together into one society, and meeting at stated times in one another's houses, they strove to instruct and strengthen each other. Such were the early days of the Genevan Church.

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[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 179.

[2] Badollet MS. in Bern Library—*Hist. Helv.*, quoted by D'Aubigné, vol. iii., p. 375.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 180,181.

First came faith—faith in the free forgiveness of the Gospel—next came good works. A reformation of manners followed in Geneva. The Reformed ceased to frequent those fashionable amusements in which they had formerly delighted. They banished finery from their dress, and luxury from their banquets. They made no more costly presents to the saints, and the money thus saved they bestowed on the poor, and especially the Protestant exiles whom the rising storms of persecution in France compelled to flee to the gates of Geneva as to a harbour of refuge. There was hardly a Protestant of note who did not receive into his house one of these expatriated Christians,[1] and in this way Geneva learned that hospitality for which it is renowned to this day.

The congregation of Froment in a few weeks grew too large for the modest limits of the Croix d'Or. One day a greater concourse than usual assembling at his chapel door, and pressing in vain for admittance, the cry was raised, "To the Molard!" To the Molard the crowd marched, carrying with them the preacher. It was New Year's Day, 1533. The Molard was the market-square, and here, mounted on a fish-stall—the first public pulpit in Geneva—Froment preached to the multitude. It was his "New Year's gift," as it has been called. Having prayed, he began his sermon[2] by announcing that "free pardon"—the ray from the open heavens which leads the eye upward to the throne of a Saviour—which all the Reformers, treading in the steps of the apostles, placed in the foreground of their teaching. From this he went on to present to his hearers the lineaments of the "false prophets" and "idolatrous priests" as painted in the Old and New Testaments, pointing out the exact verification of these features in the Romish hierarchy of their own day. Froment's delineations were so minute, so graphic and fearless, that his hearers saw the prophets of Baal, and the Pharisees of a corrupt Judaism, living over again in the priests of their own city. The preacher had become warm with his theme, and the audience were kindling in sympathy, when a sound of hurrying footsteps was heard behind them. On turning round a band of armed men was seen entering the square. The lieutenant of the city, the procurator-fiscal, the soldiers, and a number of armed priests, exasperated by this public manifestation of the converts, had come to arrest Froment, and disperse the assembly. Had the preacher been captured, it is not doubtful what his fate would have been, but the band returned without their prey. His friends carried him off to a place of hiding.[3]

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[1] Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* pp. 16–18.

[2] The prayer and the sermon that followed it have been recorded by Froment himself in his *Gestes de Geneve.* They are given by D'Aubigné in his *History of the Reformation in Europe,* bk. v., ch. 12.

[3] Spanheim, *Geneva Restituta,* p. 52. Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* pp. 43, 44. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 185.

The agitation of the citizens and the violence of the priests made the farther prosecution of Froment's ministry in Geneva hopeless. He withdrew quietly from the city, and returned to his former charge in the village of Yvonand, at the foot of the Jura.[1] The foundations of Protestant Geneva had been laid: greater builders were to rear the edifice.

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 186.

CHAPTER VI.

GENEVA ON THE BRINK OF CIVIL WAR.

First Communion in Geneva—Plot to Massacre all the Converts—Canon Wernli—The Roman Catholics take Arms—The City on the Brink of Civil War—The Battle Averted—Another Storm—Canon Wernli Arms and Rings the Tocsin—He is Slain—Bern Interposes—The Council Permits by Edict the Free Preaching of the Gospel in Geneva—The Pope Commands the Bishop to Return to the City—He Blunders and Retires—Froment Returns—Farel and Viret Arrive in Geneva—Dejection of the Roman Catholics.

THE workman had retired, but the work went on. The Protestants, now grown to a goodly number, and full of zeal and hope, met in each other's houses—the catacombs of the young Church, as an old author styles these meetings. They read the Scriptures in Lefevre's translation; they elected Guerin, one of the more intelligent and esteemed among them, to "the charge of the Word," in the room of Froment; and they still further strengthened their bond of union by partaking together of the Lord's Supper. It occasioned them some anxiety where they should find a spot sufficiently secluded for the celebration of the ordinance. The place ultimately made choice of was a little walled garden near the city gates.[1] The time of year was the middle of March. The preparations were simple indeed—a few benches, a table spread with a white cloth, on which were displayed the bread and wine, that were to become to these disciples the memorials of Christ's death, and the token and seal of their interest in its blessings. Guerin took his seat at the head of the table, and began the service. At that moment the sun, rising over the Alps, shed his first rays upon the little company, an outward emblem of the *real* though *spiritual* presence of that Saviour of whom it was foretold—

> "His coming like the morn shall be,
> Like morning songs his voice."[2]

This seemed to them an auspicious token.[3] The growing numbers and zeal of the disciples again drew upon them the anger of the priests, and Guerin had to withdraw and follow Froment into exile at Yvonand.[4] Geneva, like a ship labouring in a tempestuous sea, was casting out one Protestant labourer after another, but it could not cast out the Gospel.

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[1] Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* p. 48. Spon, *Hist. de Genève,* i., p. 481.

[2] Hosea vi. 3.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 188. D'Aubigné, vol. iii., p. 432.

[4] D'Aubigné, vol. iii., p. 433.

Bern next appeared upon the stage, and demanded that its ally Geneva should grant liberty to the preaching of the Gospel in it.[1] The friends of the duke and of Rome—the Mamelukes, as they were called—saw that matters had come to a crisis. They must extirpate Lutheranism from Geneva, otherwise they should never be at rest; but Lutheranism they could hope to extirpate not otherwise than by extirpating all the Lutherans. The council hesitated and procrastinated, for the majority of its members were still Roman Catholic; but the canons, priests, and chief partisans of Romanism neither hesitated nor procrastinated. They met in the Vicar-General's council-hall (Thursday, 27th May, 1533); they came armed to the teeth, and the issue of their deliberations, which were conducted by torch-light, was to kill all the Protestants in Geneva without one exception.[2] The conspirators, raising their hands, bound themselves by a solemn oath.[3] They now dispersed for a brief repose, for the plot was to be executed on the day following.

The morrow came, and the conspirators assembled in the cathedral, to the number of 700.[4] The first to enter was Canon Wernli. He came clad in armour. He was as devoted a Romanist as he was a redoubtable warrior. He was a Samson for strength, and could wield his battleaxe as he might fling about his breviary. In waging war with the hydra of heresy which had broken into the Roman Catholic fold of Geneva he would strike once, and would not strike a second time. This zealous priest and valiant soldier was the real captain of the band, which was ostensibly led by Syndic Baud, in his "great hat and plume of feathers."

Having marshalled in front of the high altar of St. Peter's, this troop, which included 300 armed priests, put itself in motion. With banners displayed, crosses uplifted, axes and swords brandished, while the great bell of the cathedral sent forth its startling and ominous peals, it marched down the street of the Perron to the Molard, and drew up in battle array. Various armed detachments continued to arrive from other quarters, and their junction ultimately swelled the Roman Catholic host to about 2,500. They felt sure of victory. Here they stood, their cannons and arquebuses loaded, awaiting the word for action, and chafing at those little hindrances which ever and anon occurred to keep them back from battle, as chafes the war-horse against the bit that curbs his fiery impatience to plunge into the fight.[5]

This army, drawn up in order of battle in the Molard, received a singular reinforcement. The wives and mothers of the Romanists appeared on the scene of action, their aprons filled with stones, by their side their little

[1] MS. Archives of Geneva: Letter from Bern, 20th March, 1533.

[2] Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, p. 51.

[3] Spanheim, *Geneva Restituta*—''solenni sacramento?' Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 190.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 191.

children of from twelve to fourteen, whom they had brought to take part in this holy war, and into whose hands they had put such weapons as they were able to wield. So great was the zeal of these Amazons against heresy!

Meanwhile, what were the Protestants doing or thinking? At the first alarm they assembled in the house of Baudichon de la Maisonneuve, one of the most courageous of their leaders. His mansion was situated on the left bank of the Rhone, some 400 paces from the Molard. The converts felt how terrible was the crisis, but their hearts were fixed, trusting on him who holds the tempests and whirlwinds in his hands. He had but to speak, and that storm would dispel as suddenly as it had gathered. The plan of the Romanists was to march to Baudichon's house, set fire to it, and massacre the heretics one by one as they escaped from the flames. The proposal of burning them came to the ears of the Protestants; their numbers had now considerably increased; all were well armed and of good courage; they resolved to march out and stand for their lives. Descending into the street, they drew up five deep in presence of the enemy.

There was deep stillness. It would be broken the next moment by the shock of murderous battle. The cannons and arquebuses were loaded; the halberds grasped; the swords unsheathed; and stones and other missiles were ready to be poured in to complete the work of death. But it pleased the Great Disposer to stay the tempest when it seemed on the very point of bursting.

There chanced at that time to be seven Freiburg merchants sojourning in Geneva.[1] Touched by the lamentable spectacle of the citizens in arms to shed one another's blood, they came forward at the critical moment to mediate. "Blessed are the peacemakers." Going first to the Roman Catholics and then to the Reformed, they represented to the former how foolish it was to shed their blood "to satisfy the appetite of their priests,"[2] and pointed out to the latter how tremendous were the odds that stood arrayed against them. With much ado they succeeded in calming the passions of both parties. The priests, however, of whom 160 were in arms, refused to lend an ear to these pacific counsels. But finding that if they persisted they should have to fight it out by themselves, they at last came to terms.[3] The insane fury of the inhabitants having now given place to the natural affections, tears of joy welcomed fathers and husbands as at night they stepped across the thresholds of their homes. Terms of pacification were afterwards drawn up which left the balance inclining somewhat in favour of liberty of conscience.[4]

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[1] Ruchat, tom. iii , p. 193.

[2] Choupard, MS. D'Aubigné, vol. iii.., p. 470.

[3] Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* pp. 55–57. Roset, MS. *Chron. Council Registers*, 28th March, 1533. D'Aubigné, vol. iii., p. 472.

[4] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 194.

But soon again another storm darkened over that city within which two mighty principles were contending. The magistrates might issue edicts, the leaders of the two parties might sign pacifications, but settled peace there could be none for Geneva till the Gospel should have established its sway in the hearts of a majority of its citizens. On the 4th May, just five weeks after the affair we have narrated, another tumult broke out. Its instigator was the same bellicose ecclesiastic who figured so prominently on the 28th March—Canon Wernli. "This good champion of the faith," as Sister Jeanne, who kept a journal of these occurrences, calls him, had that morning celebrated, with unusual pomp, the Feast of "The Holy Winding-sheet," in St. Peter's. "Taking off his sacerdotal robes, he put on his breast-plate and cuishes, belted his sword to his side, seized his heavy halberd,"[1] and issued forth to do battle for the Church. Followed by a party of priests to whose hands the arquebus came quite as readily as the breviary, Wernli strode down the Perron to his old battle-field, the Molard. By this time night had fallen; alarming rumours were propagated through the city, and to add to the terror of the inhabitants, the tocsin began to ring out its thundering peals. Many on both sides, Roman Catholics and Reformers, mostly armed, rushed into the street. There Canon Wernli, unable to distinguish friend from foe in the darkness, was shouting out to his assailants to come on; but as no one answered the challenge, he fell to dealing blows right and left among the crowd. Some one slipped behind him, and espying an opening in his iron coat, thrust his poignard into his body. The shouts ceased, the tumult gradually subsided, the night passed, and when the morning broke Canon Wernli was found lying in his armour, on the doorsteps of one of the houses, stark dead.[2]

If the death of this Papal champion lessened the dangers of the Reformed within the city, it multiplied their enemies without. Wernli belonged to a powerful family of the Popish Canton of Friburg, and ambassadors from that State now appeared at Geneva demanding the punishment of all concerned in the canon's death—that is, of all the Reformed. The Reformation seemed about to be sacrificed on the tomb of Wernli. Protestant Bern instantly stepped forward in its defence. Bern proved itself the more powerful. Its ambassadors induced the syndics and council, as the only escape from the chaos that encompassed them, to proclaim liberty to all to abide by the mass, or to follow Protestantism, as their conscience might dictate.[3] This decree, which advanced the landmarks of liberty theoretically, but hardly as yet practically, brought matters to a head in Geneva.

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[1] La Soeur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme,* pp. 61, 62. D'Aubigné, vol. iii., p. 494.

[2] Froment, *Gestes de Geneve,* p. 59. La Soeur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme,* p. 63. *Council Registers* 4th and 23rd May, 1533. D'Aubigné, vol. iii., pp. 500,501

[3] "Permettre a chacun de suivre les mouvements de sa conscience, en telle sorte que personne ne soit con- traint." *(Council Registers,* 27th May, 1533.)

For some time many eyes had been watching from abroad the struggle going on in this little town on the shores of the Leman. The extraordinary bravery and energy of its citizens had invested it with a charm that rivetted upon it the eye of both friend and foe, and inspired them with the presentiment that it had a great part to play in the new times that were opening. It caused many an hour of anxious thought to Clement VII. in the Vatican. Charles V. could not but wonder that, while so many great kingdoms owned his sway, this little city resisted his will. He had written to these haughty burghers peremptorily commanding them to forsake the evil paths of heresy. They had gone their own way notwithstanding. Strong measures must be taken with this rebellious town. Its prince-bishop, Pierre de la Baume, was absent from Geneva, and had been so for some while. The free manners of the citizens did not suit him, and he took up his abode at Arbois, on the other side of the Jura, in a quiet neighbourhood, where the wine was good. The prince-bishop cared for his Church, of course, but he cared also for his dinner; but Geneva was on the point of being lost; and the Pope, at the risk of spoiling the bishop's digestion, ordered him, under pain of excommunication, to return thither, and try his hand at reducing to their obedience his mutinous subjects. Pierre de la Baume had but little heart for the task, but it was enjoined upon him under a threat which he trembled to incur, and so, provided with an armed escort, he returned (1st July, 1533) to Geneva.

He but helped to ruin the cause he had come to uphold. He would give Lutheranism, not an open execution, but a secret burial. Accordingly, inviting the chiefs of the Protestant movement to his palace, no sooner had they entered it than the bishop closed the doors, threw his guests into irons, and proceeded to dispose of them by consigning one to this dungeon, and another to that. In this summary proceeding of their bishop the council saw a flagrant violation of the franchises of Geneva. It was the attack on liberty, not religion—for three of the four syndics were still Roman Catholic— that awakened their indignation. The senators produced their ancient charter, which the bishop had sworn to observe, and claimed the constitutional right, in which it vested them, of trying all inculpated citizens. The bishop found himself caught in the trap he had so cunningly set for others. If he should open his dungeons, he would confess to having sustained a most humiliating defeat; if he should retain his prisoners in bonds, he would draw upon his head one of those popular tempests of which he was so greatly afraid. Choosing the former as the less formidable alternative, he gave up his prisoners to their lawful judges. But even this did not restore the bishop's tranquillity. His guilty imagination was continually conjuring up tumults and assassinations; and, fleeing when no man pursued, he secretly quitted Geneva, just fourteen

days after he had entered it.[1] He left the cause of home in a worse position than he had found it, and the Pope saw that he had better have left the craven bishop to enjoy his quiet and his wine at Arbois.

When the shepherd of the flock had fled, what so likely to happen as that the "wolf" would return? The "wolf "did return. Froment, with a companion by his side, Alexander Canus, reappeared upon the scene which the bishop had been in such haste to quit. These evangelists preached in private houses, and when these no longer sufficed for the crowds that assembled, they proclaimed the "good news" in the streets. The bishop, who learned what was going on, fulminated a missive from his quiet asylum, in the hope of driving the destroyer out of the fold he had deserted. "Why," said the Genevans, "did he not remain and keep the door closed?" The priests complained to the council, laying the bishop's letter upon the table. Their remonstrance only served to show that the tide was rising. "*Preach the Gospel*" answered the council, "*and say nothing that cannot be proved by Holy Scripture.*" These words, which are still to be read in the city registers, made Protestantism a *religio licita* (a tolerated faith) in Geneva.[2] The bishop, in his own way, threw oil upon the fire by a second and more energetic letter, forbidding the preaching in Geneva, secretly or publicly, of "the *holy page*" of "the *holy Gospel.*"[3] Further, Furbity, a frothy and abusive preacher of the Dominican order, was brought to oppose the Reformed. The violence of his harangues evoked a. popular tumult, and the waters of liberty retreating for a moment from the limits which they had reached, Froment and Canus had to retire from Geneva.

But speedily the tide turned, this time to overpass a long way its furthest limits hitherto. On the 21st December, 1533, Farel entered the gates of Geneva, not again to leave it till the Reformation had been consummated in it. The Roman Catholics felt that a life-and-death struggle had commenced. The citizens assembled to the sermons of Farel with helmets on their heads, and arquebuses and halberds in their hands. The priests, divining the true source of the movement, published from all the pulpits on the 1st of January, 1534, an order commanding all copies of the Bible, whether in French or in German, to be burned.[4] For three days and nights the city was under arms; the one party arming to defend, the other to expel the Bible. Froment arrived to the help of Farel. There came yet another—Viret, who joined them in a few weeks. Farel, Viret, Froment—the three most powerful preachers in the French tongue—are now in Geneva. These three are an army. Their weapon is the Word of God. Clad in the panoply of light, and wielding the sword of

[1] Roset, MS. *Chronicles.* Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* pp. 62, 63. D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 248.

[2] D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 253.

[3] Gaberel, *Lettres Patentes de l'Eveque.* D'Aubigné, vol. iv., p. 255.

[4] Roset, MS. *Chronicles,* bk. iii., chap. 17.

the Spirit, these three warriors will do more to batter down the stronghold of Rome than all that the nine hundred priests in Geneva can do to uphold it. The knell of the Papacy has sounded in this city; low responsive wailings begin to be heard along the foot of the Alps and the crest of the Jura, mourning the approaching fall of an ancient system. The echoes travel to France, to England, and to Germany, and wherever they come the friends of the Gospel and of liberty look up, while the adherents of Rome hang their heads, weighed down by the presentiment of a terrible disaster about to befall their cause.

CHAPTER VII.

HEROISM OF GENEVA.

Conspiracy against Geneva—Detection—Protestants gain Possession of one of the Churches—The Gospel in Geneva—Glories Near but Unseen—An Army of Pilgrims—A Hunting Party—The Game not Caught—Roman Catholic Exodus—The Duke and the Emperor Combine against Geneva—Perils of the City—Heroic Resolution of the Citizens—The Suburbs Demolished—The Citizens Wait the Assault.

GENEVA had much to dare and to endure during the year and a half that was yet to elapse before its struggles should be crowned with victory. Three powerful parties—the prince-bishop, the Duke of Savoy, and their excellencies of Freiburg—jointly conspired against the liberties of the brave little town.[1] The bishop secretly appointed a lieutenant-general to govern in his name, investing him with all the powers of the State; the duke sent blank warrants to be filled in with the names of those whom it might be necessary to apprehend and execute, and the Lords of Friburg were to cooperate with the Mamelukes within the city. All had been excellently planned; but the blow which the bishop meditated against the State of Geneva fell upon himself and his accomplices. The plot was discovered; the agents who were to have executed it suffered the doom of traitors; the bishop, caught plotting, became nearly as odious to the Roman Catholics as he already was to the Protestants; and the popular reaction which ensued filled the curule chairs, at next election, with the friends of the Reform.

The Reformers, now numerous, and taunted sometimes with worshipping in holes and corners, resolved no longer to submit to the stigma of being obliged to celebrate their worship in private houses. They said to the magistrates, "Give us one of the churches of the city." The Council, wishing to hold the balance even between them and the Roman Catholics, excused themselves by saying that this was a matter that lay outside their jurisdiction; but, added they, "you are strong, and if you are pleased to take one of the churches of your own accord, we cannot prevent you. "The converts did not delay to act upon the hint. The brave Baudichon de la Maisonneuve marching at their head, they proceeded to the Convent of the Rive and appropriated for their use the "Grand Auditory," or cloister,[2] which might contain from four to five thousand persons. They rang the bells; the report ran that Farel was to preach; and crowds from every part of the city came streaming to the Rive. The monks could only stare. Rising up in his ordinary dress, Farel preached to the overflowing congregation.

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[1] Roset, *Chron* bk. iii., chap. 21. *Registres du Conseil*, February 8th and 10th, 1534.

[2] Froment, *Gestes dec Genève*, p. 82. *Registres du Conseil*, March, 1534.

That was a day much to be remembered in Geneva. It needs neither many nor learned words to proclaim the Gospel. It is a message from the throne of heaven to the guilty children of earth, to this effect, that God, having sent his Son to suffer in their room, offers them a free pardon. The Genevans were amazed to find that the Gospel was so simple a matter, and could be so soon told. They had been taught from their cradle that it needed gorgeous cathedrals, blazing tapers, splendidly apparelled priests, chants, and incense to set it forth, and that wanting mystic rites it refused to impart its efficacy to the worshipper; now they found that one attired in a plain dress, and in a single plain sentence, could declare it all. But that little sentence they found was a ray that revealed to them a whole world of glory. The chant of the priest had entered the ear only, Farel's words sunk into the heart: the taper had but flashed its light on the eye, the Gospel shed its glory on the soul. A moral phenomenon was now accomplished before this people, analogous to the natural one which often takes place in this same region. So long as the mists and clouds veil the Alps, these mountains, even to the men living at their feet, are as if they did not exist. But let the clouds lift, or let the breeze make an opening in the mist, and lo! a world of Alpine grandeurs is suddenly revealed to the eye of the spectator. A moment ago there hung before him a curtain of dull vapour; now there is seen a glorious array of mountains, with their gorges, rocks, and pine forests, their snows and flashing pinnacles. As near, yet as unseen, were the evangelical glories of the spiritual world to the Genevans. These glories were completely hidden by the black cloud of ignorance and superstition that hung between them and the Bible. But the moment that cloud began to be parted by the preaching of the Gospel and the breath of the Spirit, a new world was disclosed, a world of truth. It stood out, distinct, palpable, complete, in an affluence of spiritual glory, and a fulness of moral power, which made the Genevans wonder what blinding influence it was that had hidden from their eye what was all the time so near, and yet so entirely unseen.

The Gospel had entered Geneva. The city was taken. How much the Reformation had gained, and how much Rome had lost, in the conquest of that little town, future years were to enable men fully to understand. But the Protestants of Geneva had many efforts and sacrifices yet to undergo if they would retain the victory which had in reality been won.

Geneva was far too important a post for the Romanists to let it slip without another great effort. This was resolved upon. In the middle of May the priests of the surrounding districts organised a great procession of pilgrims, who knew how to handle other things than their rosaries. The pious troop appeared at the gates of Geneva, duly furnished with banners, crosses, and relics; but the citizens, recollecting the story of the Trojan horse, and fearing that if the pilgrims entered their devotions might take a militant turn, and the

war-cry be raised for the psalm, refused to admit the devout host. They could pray outside the walls. So this danger passed away.

The next army that marched to assail the little town, where the light of the Gospel was burning more brightly every day, came not in the guise of pilgrims, but of soldiers. The bishop had formed a new plot. The Romanist Lords of Vaud and Savoy, at the instigation of the bishop and the duke, had arranged a hunting party for the last day of July, 1534, the real game which the armed sportsmen meant to run down being the Genevan Lutherans. The Papists within the city were to act in concert with those without. Some 300 armed foreigners had been secretly introduced into the town; the keeper of the artillery had been bribed; the midnight signals agreed upon; and the bishop, dividing the prey before he had caught it, had confiscated in favour of his followers the goods of the Genevan heretics. In short, everything had been done to insure success.

The night came; the peasants of the surrounding country, having armed themselves, began to move on Geneva, some by land, others by water. The Bailiff of Chablais and the Baron de Rollo alone led 8,000 men. The Papists in the city had armed secretly, and were assembling in one another's houses.[1] The citizens, all save the accomplices of the bishop, were ignorant of the plot, and many of them had already gone to rest as usual. All was progressing as the invaders wished. But that Providence which had been ploughing this field for more than twenty years, was not to abandon it to the enemy at the very moment when the seed which had been sown in it was shooting up, and the harvest at hand. A friend of the Gospel, Jacques Maubuisson,[2] from Dauphine, solicited an interview with the premier syndic at an early hour of the evening. He was admitted, and startled the magistrate by telling him that the city was surrounded with armed men. Instantly the citizens were aroused and got under arms.

The host outside the walls were meanwhile straining their eyes to catch through the darkness the first gleam of the torches, which were to be waved on the tops of the houses of their friends as the signal to begin the assault. All suddenly a brilliant light shone forth from the summit of the steeple of St. Peter's. That was the place, the invaders knew, where the city-watch were usually stationed. It was plain the plot had been discovered. "We are betrayed! we are betrayed!" they exclaimed; "we shall never enter Geneva!"[3] Fiercer and yet fiercer, as it seemed to the eyes of the Savoyards, glared that beacon-light. Panic seized their ranks, and when the morning broke the citizens of Geneva beheld from their steeples and ramparts the armies of their

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 325, 326.

[2] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., p. 326.

[3] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., p. 327.

invaders in full retreat. By the time the sun rose the last foe had disappeared. As a dream, short but terrible, so did the events of that night appear to the Genevans.[1]

The miscarriage of the plot was followed by an exodus of Romanists from the city. Many of the Mamelukes, as they were termed, fled, and thus the priests were left without flocks, the churches without worshippers, and the images without votaries. The Protestants were more than ever masters of the situation. In the final struggles of the Papacy in Geneva we behold what has since been repeated in our own day, on the wider arena of Europe, that every attempt to raise it up has only helped to cast it down.

Yet another effort—that is, as things were going with the Papacy, another plunge, the last and the deepest. The duke and the bishop were but the more enraged by their repeated discomfitures. They resolved that they would extinguish Lutheranism, or sweep the little town in which it had entrenched itself from off its rock, and make it, like old Tyre, a place for the spreading of nets by the shores of its lake. Considering the resources which the duke had at his command, neither he nor any one else could see how he should not be able to do his pleasure upon the audacious little city. Geneva had an enemy, it may be said, in every man outside her walls. The castles that hemmed her in on all sides were filled with armed men ready to march at the first summons. Before beginning the war which was to make the rebellious town put its haughty neck under his feet, Duke Charles III. sent his ultimatum to the citizens. They must send away their preachers—Farel, Viret, and Froment; they must take back their bishop, and return within the bosom of their holy mother the Church. On these terms the duke, good and kind man, would give them his forgiveness.[2] The Genevans made answer that sooner than do this they would bury themselves beneath the ruins of their city. Even their good ally, Bern, despairing of their success, or else gained by the flatteries of the duke, counselled the Genevans to submit. A Diet of the Swiss cantons met at Lucerne in January, 1535, to determine on the matter. They had no other advice to give Geneva than submission.[3] This was unspeakably disappointing, but worse was behind. The great Emperor Charles V. came forward and announced that he cast his sword into the scale of the duke. The cause of Geneva, already desperate, was now hopeless apparently. Could this little town of only 12,000 inhabitants resist the Empire? Could the Genevans stand alone against the world? All help has failed them on earth; nevertheless, their resolution is as inflexible as ever. Geneva shall be a sanctuary of the

[1] Froment, *Gestes de Genève,* p. 125. Roset, *Chron.,* bk. iii., chap. 27. *Registres du Conseil,* July 31st, 1534, and January 25th, 1537. D'Aubigné, *Hist. Reform.,* vol iv., pp. 400–402.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 337.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 343.

Protestant faith and a citadel of liberty, or its sons will "set fire to its four corners," and make it their own funeral pile.

It was now that a terrible resolution was taken by its heroic citizens. Outside the walls of Geneva were four large suburbs, with a population of 6,200 souls.[1] In fact, there were two cities, one within and another without the walls, and the latter, it was obvious, would afford cover to the advancing foe, and prevent the free play upon him of the cannon on the ramparts. On the 23rd of August, 1534, the Council of Two Hundred resolved to demolish these suburbs, and clear the ground all round the city.[2] This was to sacrifice one half of Geneva to save the other half. The stern decree was carried out, although not without many heavy sighs and bitter tears. Rich and poor pulled down their homes with their own hands, although many of the latter knew not where they were to lay their heads at night. Villa and hovel shared an equal fate; convents and temples of a venerable antiquity were razed to the ground. The monastery of St. Victor, of which Bonnivard was prior, and which was the oldest edifice in Geneva, having been founded in the beginning of the sixth century, fell by the same sentence, and mingled its ruins with those of fabrics that were but of yesterday. The pleasant gardens, the sparkling fountains, and the overshadowing trees which had graced so many of the dwellings were all swept away. By the middle of January, 1535, the work of demolition was finished; and now a silent and devastated zone begirt the city[3]

It was not enough to pull down, the citizens had to build up. The stones of the overturned edifices were taken to repair and strengthen the fortifications. Amid the drifts of winter the men might be seen building on the walls, and the women carrying earth and stones. The bells of the demolished churches and convents were melted and cast into cannon. Though the idols were pulled down, the Roman Catholics were protected in their worship.[4] The Genevans would not stain the glory of the prodigious sacrifices they were making for their own religious liberty by invading that of others. A little band of armed Protestants kept watch at the church door while the few canons who remained in the city sang their matins on Christmas morning.[5] All was now ready, and the heroic inhabitants, their eyes lifted unto heaven,

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[1] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., p. 354.

[2] *Registres du Conseil,* August 23rd, 1534.

[3] Misson in 1688 found Geneva still without suburbs. The four suburbs demolished were Rive, St. Victor, St. Leger, and Corraterie. (Misson, vol. ii., part ii., p. 410. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 379.)

[4] "Les Catholiques avaient une pleine liberte de pratiquer publiquement leurs ceremonies, et de faire généralement par toute la ville tons les autres exercices de leur religion." (Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 342.)

[5] *Registres du Conseil,* January 24th, 1534.

awaited the hour when the foe should gather round them on all sides, and deliver his assault. Let him strike. Their resolution was immovable. Geneva must be the temple that would enshrine their religion and their liberties, or the mausoleum that would contain their ashes.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROME FALLS AND GENEVA RISES.

New Foothold for Protestantism—Conditions Necessary in it—Freiburg and Bern Abandon Geneva—Resolution of the Citizens—The Bishop Removes his Court—Geneva assumes its own Government—Castle of Peney—Atrocities—Attempt to Poison the Protestant Ministers—Conversion of the Franciscan Monks—Public Disputation—Miracles—Discoveries—Bodies of St. Nazaire, &c.—Relics—Souls from Purgatory.

MUCH, we may say everything, depended on the battle now raging around the little town on the shores of the Leman Lake. Unless Geneva were won to Protestantism, the victories already gained by the Reformation would be but of small account; many of them would melt away and be lost. In Germany the spiritual principle of the Reformation was becoming overshadowed by the political. The princes, with their swords, were putting themselves in the van, and the Reformers, with the Bible, were falling into the rear. This was to reverse the right order. It was clear that the German Reformation had passed its prime. It was necessary to seek a new foothold for Protestantism—some spot where the SPIRITUAL, planted anew, might unfold itself, segregated from the political; and where, unfettered and unaided by the temporal power, it would, in virtue of its own heavenly might, continue to wax in stature and spreading wide its boughs cover the nations with its grateful shadow, and solace them with its precious fruits. It was not necessary to select, as its seat, a great empire or a renowned capital; a little town such as this at the foot of the Alps would serve the purpose better than a more conspicuous and more expansive stage. The territory selected must be separated from the other countries of Christendom, Popish and Reformed, and yet it must be near to them; and not near only, but in the midst of them. Moreover, it must in some way be protected from external violence while working out its great problem. If around it there rises no massy bulwark frowning defiance on the foe; if there musters at its gates no powerful army to do battle with the invader; if the great mountains are too remote to serve as walls and ramparts to it; if earthly defence it has none, all the more evident will it be that it owes its safety to an Invisible Arm that is stretched out in its behalf, and that it is environed by ramparts which the foe is unable to see, and equally unable to scale.

Here will stand the true “Threshold of the Apostles.” The doors of this shrine will open to the holy only; it will be visited by enlightened and believing hearts from every land; and its highways will be trodden and its portals thronged, not by dissolute and superstitious crowds, but by the confessors and exiles of Christ. Here Christianity, laid in its grave at Rome a thousand years before, with crowned Pontiffs and lordly hierarchs keeping watch

around its corpse, shall have its resurrection. Rising from the tomb to die no more, it will attest, by the order, the liberty, the intelligence, and the virtue with which it will glorify its seat, that it has lost none of its power during its long entombment, but that, on the contrary, it returns with invigorated force for the execution of its glorious mission, which is that of making all things new. Will such a spot be found in Geneva? Shall the bishop and the duke be chased from it, that it may be given to the men in whom are found the embodiment of the highest ideal, intellectual and spiritual, of Protestantism? This is the question which is to receive its answer from the conflict now waging on the shores of the Leman. The issue of that conflict is at hand.

We left Geneva reduced to the last extremity. Roman Catholic Freiburg had terminated its alliance with the Lutheran town, after a friendship of eight years. The reflection of Scultetus on the dissolution of the treaty between the two States is striking and suggestive. "The love of liberty," says he, "had united the two towns in the closest bonds; but liberty opened the door for religion, and *its* influence separated chief friends! But what is most remarkable is, that the alliance lasted so long as the independence of Geneva required it, and ceased when its dissolution helped to promote the Reformation."

While its allies are drawing off from the little town on the one side, its enemies are approaching it on the other. Every day they are redoubling their efforts to take it, and it would seem as if, left to fight its great battle alone, its fall were inevitable.

The duke is raising army after army to force an entrance into it. The bishop is fighting against it with both spiritual and temporal arms. Pierre de la Baume had fulminated the greater excommunication against it, and published it in all the churches and convents of the neighbouring provinces.[1] The Pope had added his heavier anathema; and now, in the eyes of the inhabitants of the towns and villages around, Geneva was a "dwelling of devils," and all were ready to assail, burn, or lay waste a place which the bishop and the Pontiff had cursed. To crown the misfortunes of the Genevans, the emperor, unsheathing his great sword and holding it over their heads, demanded that they should open their gates and receive back their bishop. What was to be done? Shall they crouch down under the old yoke? They had obtained a glimpse of a new world, and their former slavery appeared more horrible than ever. To go back to it was the most dreadful issue which their imaginations could picture. Come victory and life, or come defeat and death, they could not go back; they must and would advance with firm step in the path on which they had entered.

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 330. Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Genève*, vol. i., p. 115.

The same cause which had repelled the Popish Freiburg from Geneva, as narrated above, will draw the Protestant Bern closer to its side; so one would think. Yet no! the threatening attitude of the Popish powers, and its own complications, made Bern shy of giving open aid to Geneva in its fight for liberty and the Reformed faith.[1] Some Bernese ambassadors, won by the gracious manners of the duke, and forgetting in the lighter matters of courtesy the greater matters of liberty, went to Geneva, and counselled the citizens to send away their preachers, and take back their bishop. Astounded at such a proposal from the men of Bern, the Council of Geneva replied, "You ask us to abandon our liberties and the Gospel of Jesus Christ." At its sorest need the little State was forsaken of every earthly aid. But this only serves to show how rapidly the tide of devotion to the Reformed faith was rising within its walls. It was its religion that saved it. But for it, Geneva never would have won its liberty. "We are resolved," said the Council to the Bernese ambassadors, "to sacrifice our property, our honours, our very children, and our own lives for the Word of God. Tell the duke we will rather with our own hands set fire to the four corners of our city, than part with the Gospel."

Meanwhile, the number of the Reformed within the city was daily increasing, partly from conversions from Popery, and partly from the numerous disciples chased from France by the storms of persecution, and now daily arriving at the gates of Geneva. On the other hand, those Romanists who disliked or feared to dwell in a place cursed by the Church, and hourly sinking deeper in the gulf of heresy, quitted Geneva in considerable numbers. Thus the proportion between the two parties was growing every day more unequal, and the quiet of the city more assured. The bishop, moreover, by way of visiting the Protestants with a special mark of his displeasure, did them a signal favour. He removed his episcopal council and his judicial court from Geneva to Gex, in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy.[2] Thereupon the Council of Geneva met and resolved, "That, as the bishop had abandoned the city to unite himself with its most deadly foe, and had undertaken divers enterprises against it, even to the length of levying war, they could no longer regard him as the pastor of the people." They declared the see vacant.[3] Before taking this step, however, they invited the canons to elect a new bishop; this the canons declined to do. They next lodged an appeal at Rome; but the Pope gave them no answer. This observance of forms greatly strengthened the legal position of the Council. The Vatican would not interfere, the canons would neither elect a new bishop nor bring back the old one; the city was without a ruler, and the Council was by no means sorry to step into the vacant

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 348.

[2] Ruchat. tom. iii., p. 335.

[3] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., pp. 336, 337.

office. To the last the Council followed rather than preceded the people and the preachers. The political situation, so full of dangers, made it imperative that they should weigh every step, and especially that they should be satisfied that the Reformation had established itself in the hearts of the people before establishing it by edict.

If the number of malcontents who were leaving the city lessened the difficulties within the walls, it greatly increased the dangers without. The Castle of Peney, on the precipitous banks of the Rhone, about two leagues from Geneva, belonged to the bishop. It was a strong and roomy place, and now it swarmed with men breathing vengeance against the city they had left. From this nest of brigands there issued every day ferocious bands, who laid waste the country around Geneva, cut off the supplies coming to its markets, waylaid its citizens, and, carrying them to their stronghold, tortured them in its dungeons, and then beheaded or otherwise dispatched them. A former Knight of Malta, Peter Goudet, a Frenchman, who, having embraced Protestantism, had found refuge in Geneva, was entrapped by these bandits, carried to their den, and, after a mock trial, burned alive.[1] Nor were these ruffians alone in their barbarities and cruelties. The gentry of Savoy and of the Pays de Vaud, following their worshipful example, armed their retainers, and, scouring the country around, showed that they equalled in zeal, by equalling in atrocity, the freebooters of Peney.[2]

A yet darker crime stains the attempt to uphold the Roman Catholic cause in Geneva. The sword of the duke had failed: so had the excommunication of the bishop, although backed by that of the Pope. Other means must be thought of. A plot was laid to cut off Farel, Viret, and Froment, all three at once, by poison. The circumstance that they lodged together in the same house, that of Claude Bernard, an intelligent and zealous friend of the Gospel, favoured the design. A woman, a native of Bresse, was suborned to leave Lyons, on pretence of religion, and come to Geneva. She entered the service of Bernard, with whom the preachers lived. She began, it is said, by poisoning her mistress. A few days thereafter she mixed poison with the soup which had been prepared for the ministers' dinner. Happily only one of them partook of the broth. Farel was indisposed, and did not dine that day, Froment made his repast on some other dish, and Viret alone ate of the poisoned food. He was immediately seized with illness, and was at the point of death. He recovered, but the debilitating effects of the poison remained with him to the end of his days. The wretched woman confessed the crime, but accused a canon and a priest of having instigated her to it. The two ecclesiastics were

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii.p. 352.

[2] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., pp. 338, 339, 341;

permitted to clear themselves by oath, but the woman was condemned to death on the 14th April, and executed.[1]

This wickedness, which was meant to extinguish the movement, was closely connected with its final triumph. To guard against any second attempt at poison, the three preachers had apartments assigned them by the Council in the Franciscan Convent de Rive. The result of the Reformers being lodged there was the conversion of nearly all the brethren of the convent, and in particular of James Bernard, a citizen of good family, and brother of Claude mentioned above. The latter had been one of the more ardent champions of Popery in Geneva, and, as his change of mind was now complete, he thought it would be well, at this crisis, to hold a public disputation on religion, similar to those which had taken place elsewhere with such good results. His design was approved by the Reformers to whom he had communicated it. It was further sanctioned by the Council.

Accordingly Bernard offered to maintain the following propositions against all who chose publicly to impugn them:[2]—

1st. That we are to seek justification in Jesus Christ alone, and not in our good works.

2nd. That we are to offer our worship to God only, and that to adore the saints and images is idolatry.

3rd. That the Church is to be governed by the Word of God alone, and that human traditions and the constitutions of the Church, which ought rather to be styled Roman or Papal ordinances, are not only vain, but pernicious.

4th. That Christ's oblation is the sole and sufficient satisfaction for sin, and that the sacrifice of the mass and prayers to the saints are contrary to the Word of God, and avail nothing for salvation.

5th. That Jesus Christ is the one and only Mediator between God and man.[3]

It was the foundations of the two faiths that were to be publicly put on their trial.

The Town Council made the arrangements for the discussion. They had the theses printed and published. Copies of them were affixed to the doors of the churches of the city, and of all the churches of the neighbourhood. They were, moreover, posted up in the towns of Savoy that were under the jurisdiction of Bern, and messengers were dispatched to placard them in the distant cities of Grenoble and Lyons. Men of learning, generally, whether lay or clerical, were invited; all were assured of safety of person and liberty of

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 346, 347. Roset, *Chron.*, bk. iii., chap. 31. Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Genève*, vol. i., pp. 125 —128; *Genève*, 1853.

[2] Gaberel, vol. i., p. 156.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 357, 358. Roset, *Chron.*, iii. 35.

speech; eight members of Council were appointed to preside; and four secretaries were to take down all that was said on both sides.

The disputation opened on the 30th of May in the grand hall of the Convent de Rive. It continued four weeks without intermission, and ended on the 24th of June. Bernard himself took the lead, assisted by Farel and Viret. The two opposing champions were Peter Caroli, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and John Chapuis, a Dominican of Geneva. These days of combat were days of joy to the friends of the Gospel. Each day some old idol was dethroned. The ancient cloud was lifting, and as fold after fold of the murky vapour rolled away, Truth came forth in her splendour, and showed herself to eyes from which she had long been hidden.

> "As fair Aurora, in her purple pall,
> Out of the east the dawning day doth call,
> So forth she comes: her brightness broad doth blaze.
> The heaps of people, thronging in the hall,
> Do ride each other, upon her to gaze:
> Her glorious glittering light doth all men's eyes amaze."[1]

In the end, both Caroli and Chapuis acknowledged themselves vanquished, and declared, in presence of the vast assembly, their conversion to the Reformed faith.[2]

The verdict of the public on the disputation was not doubtful, but Farel and some of the leading citizens wished the Council also to pronounce its judgment. Three of its four members were now on the Protestant side; nevertheless, it would give no decision. Its policy, for the present, was to curb rather than encourage the popular zeal. It visited with frowns and sometimes with fines the demolition of the images. "When asked to give the Magdalen and St. Peter's for the use of the preachers, whose congregations daily increased, its reply was, "Not yet." The Council had not lost sight of the duke and the emperor in the distance, and they knew that the duke and the emperor had not lost sight of them. Meanwhile, to speed on the movement, there came some startling revelations of the frauds by which the falling superstition had been upheld.

It is a doctrine of the Church of Rome that infants dying unbaptised are consigned to limbo, a sort of faubourg of hell. To redeem such wretched babes from so dreary an abode, what would not their unhappy mothers be willing to give! But was such a thing possible? Outside the gates stood the Church of Our Lady of Grace. To this Virgin was ascribed, among other

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[1] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene,* bk. i., cant, iv., st. 16.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 359,360. Spanheim, p. 79. Roset *Chron.,* bk. iii., chap. 35. Gaberel, vol. i., pp. 156–158.

marvellous prerogatives, the power of resuscitating infants for so long as would suffice for their receiving the Sacrament. The corpse was brought to the statue of Our Lady, and being laid at its feet, its head would be seen to move, or a feather placed on its mouth would be blown away. On this the monks, to whom an offering had previously been made, would shout out, "A miracle! a miracle!" and ring the great bell of the church, and salt, chrism, and holy water would instantly be brought and the child baptised. The Council ordered an investigation into the miracle, and the verdict returned was the plain one, that it was "a trick of the priests."[1] The syndics forbade all such miracles in time to come.

There came yet another edifying discovery. It was an immemorial belief at Geneva that the bodies of St. Nazaire, St. Celsus, and St. Pantaleon reposed beneath the high altar of St. Gervais. Indeed, the fact could not be doubted, for had not the worthy saints been heard singing and talking together on Christmas Eve and similar occasions? But in an evil hour for this belief the altar was overturned, and the too curious eyes of Protestants peered beneath its foundation-stones. They found not Nazaire and his two venerable companions; they saw, instead, a curious mechanism in the rock, not unlike the pipes of an organ, with several vessels of water, so placed that their contents could be forced through the narrow tubes, making a hollow sound, not unlike the voices of men singing or conversing in the bowels of the earth. The Genevans were hardly in circumstances to make merry; nevertheless, the idea that the saints should amuse themselves below ground by playing upon musical glasses seemed so very odd, that it raised a laugh among the citizens, in which, however, the monks did not join.[2]

This little town on the shores of the Leman had the distinction of possessing the brain of St. Peter, which lay usually upon the high altar. It was examined and pronounced to be a piece of pumice-stone. Again the monks looked grave, while smiles mantled every face around them. The spiritual treasury of the little town was further enriched with the arm of St. Anthony. The living arm had done valorous deeds, but the dead arm seemed to possess even greater power; but, alas! for the relic and for those who had kissed and worshipped it, and especially those who had profited so largely by the homage paid it, it was found, when taken from its shrine, to be not a human arm at all, but part of a stag. Again there were curling lips and mocking eyes.[3] Nor did this exhaust the list of discoveries. Curious little creatures, with livid points of fire glowing on their bodies, would be seen moving about, at "dewy

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 355, 356. Roset, *Chron.* bk. iii. 35.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 375, 376. Roset, *Chron.*, bk. iii., chap. 50. Spanheim, pp. 25, 26.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 375.—"Cervi veretrum, pro Antonii brachio repertum est. O sacrum non ridiculum modo, sed detestabile et vere pudendum!"' (Spanheim, pp. 24, 25.)

eve," in the churchyards or in the cathedral aisles. "What could they be? These, said the priests, are souls from purgatory. They have been permitted to revisit "the pale glimpses of the moon" to excite in their behalf the compassion of the living. Hasten with your alms, that your mothers, fathers, husbands may not have to return to the torments from which they have just made their escape. The appearance of these mysterious creatures was the unfailing signal of another golden shower which was about to descend on the priests. But, said the Genevans, before bestowing more masses, let us look a little more closely at these visitors. We never saw anything that more nearly resembled crabs with candles attached to them than these souls from purgatory. Ah, yes! the purgatory from which they have come, we shrewdly suspect, is not the blazing furnace below the earth, but the cool lake beside the city; we shall restore them to their former abode, said they, casting them into the water. There came no more souls with flambeaux to solicit the charity of the Genevans.[1]

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 378, 379. Gaberel, i. 128–131.

CHAPTER IX.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTESTANTISM IN GENEVA.

Symbol of St. Francis—Monstrous Figure in the Dominican Convent—Mass Forbidden by the Council—Interview of Syndics with the Canons, &c.—Edict of the Reformation—Wrath of the Duke of Savoy—Blockades Geneva—Friburg Breaks its Treaty with Geneva—Bern also Forsakes it—The City nearly Taken—Successful Sorties of the Besieged—Bern comes to the Help of the Genevans—The Savoyard Army Retreats—The Duke Deprived of his Kingdom by Francis I.—Geneva Completes its Reformation—Farel and the Council—Sermons—Social Regulations—School—Oath of the Citizens—City Motto—Tablet of Brass—Greatness of the Victory.

THERE came discoveries of another kind to crown with confusion the falling system. In the Convent of the Cordeliers de la Rive a tablet was discovered on which St. Francis of Assisi, the patriarch of the order, was represented under the figure of a great vine, with numerous boughs running out from it in the form of Cordeliers, and having underneath the inscription, "John xv. 1: I am the vine, ye are the branches."[1] This showed a faculty for exegesis of a very extraordinary kind. The schoolmen might have relished it as ingenious: the Genevans, who had begun to love the simplicity of the Scriptures, condemned it as blasphemous.

It was not a little curious that at that same hour, when the Papacy was tottering to its fall in Geneva, another tablet, also highly suggestive, should have been drawn from the darkness in the Convent of the Dominicans. It represented a monster, with seven heads and ten horns, in the act of being delivered of a horrible brood of Popes, cardinals, and monks, which were being dropped into a huge cauldron, round which flames circled and devils danced. Underneath was a prophecy in Latin rhyme, to the effect that the hour was approaching when God would destroy the power and glory of Rome and cause its name to perish. The picture was in all likelihood made by Jacques Jaqueri, of the city of Turin, in the year 1401, He is supposed to have been a Waldensian, who probably had had to do penance in the Inquisition for this exercise of his art, and hence the fact that the picture was found in one of the convents of the Dominicans, the order to which, as is well known, this department of the Church's work had been assigned.[2]

The hour was now fully come. The enormities of the Genevan priesthood had first awakened indignation against the Papacy; subsequent revelations of the cheats to which the system had stooped to uphold itself, had intensified that indignation; but it was the preaching of Farel and his companions: that planted the Reformation—that is, converted the movement from one of

[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 378.

[2] *Ibid.*, tom, iii., p. 378.

destruction to one of restitution. On the 10th of August, 1535, the Council of Two Hundred assembled to take into consideration the matter of religion.[3] Farel, Viret, and many of the citizens appeared before it. With characteristic eloquence Farel addressed the Council, urging it no longer to delay, but to proclaim as the religion of Geneva that same system of truth which so great a majority of the Genevans already professed. He offered, for himself and his colleagues, to submit to death, provided the priests could show that in the public disputation, or in their sermons, he and his brethren had advanced anything contrary to the Word of God.[1]

After long discussion the Council saw fit to lay its commands on both parties. The Protestants were forbidden to destroy any more images, and were considered as bound to restore those they had already displaced, whenever the priests should prove from Holy Scripture that images were worthy objects of religious veneration. The Roman Catholics, on their part, were enjoined to cease from the celebration of mass until the Council should otherwise ordain. So stood the matter on the 10th of August. The step was a small one, but the gain remained with the Reformation.

Two days after, the Council summoned before them the Cordeliers, the Dominicans, and the Augustines, and having read to them a summary of the disputation held in the city a few days previously, they asked them what they had to say to it. They answered, one after the other, that they had nothing to object. The Council next offered that, provided they made good the truth of their dogmas and the lawfulness of their worship from the Word of God, their Church should be re-established in its former glory. They declined the challenge, and submitted themselves to the Council, praying to be permitted to live as their ancestors in times past had lived.[2]

The same day after dinner three syndics and two councillors, by appointment of the Senate, waited on the grand-vicar of the bishop, the canons, and the parochial cures. Briefly recounting the religious conflicts which had disturbed the city these ten years past, they made the same offer to them which they had made to the monks in the morning. But the prospect of rendering Romanism once more supreme in Geneva, could not tempt them to do battle for their faith; they had no desire, they said, to hear any more sermons from Farel; nor, indeed, could they dispute on religious matters without leave from their bishop. They craved only to be permitted to exercise their religion without restraint. The deputation announced to them the order of Council that they should cease to say mass, and then retired.[3]

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[1] Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 371. Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Geneve*, vol. i., p. 161.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 372, 373.

[3] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., p. 375.

From that day mass ceased to be said in the churches and convents, and on the 27th of August a general edict was issued, enjoining public worship to be conducted according to the rules of the Gospel, and prohibiting all "acts of Popish idolatry." From that day forward Farel and his two colleagues preached, dispensed the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, celebrated marriages, and performed all other religious acts freely.[1] The monastery of La Rive was converted into a public school, and the convent of St. Claire into an hospital. The goods of the Church, and of the religious houses, due provision having been made for existing incumbents, were applied to the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, of schools, and of the poor.[2]

The priests, monks, and nuns were very courteously treated. It was entirely in their own choice to remain within the city or to leave it. The nuns of St. Claire, whom Sister Jussie's narrative has made famous, chose to withdraw to Anneci. They had been haunted by the terrible idea of being compelled to marry, and thought it better to "flee temptation" than remain in Geneva. Some of the sisters had not been outside the walls of their convent for thirty years. To them, every sight and sound of the country was strange; and it is impossible to withhold a smile in perusing Ruchat's account of their journey, and thinking of the terrors into which the good sisters were thrown at the sight of the sheep and oxen in the fields, which they mistook for lions and bears.[3]

From the 27th of August, 1535, the Popish faith ceased to be the religion of Geneva. But the victory, though great, did not terminate the war, or justify the Genevans in thinking that they had placed their liberties on an impregnable basis. On the contrary, never, apparently, had they been in greater danger than now, for the step of proclaiming themselves Protestant had filled up their cup in the eyes of their enemies. The duke, roused to fury by this daring affront on the part of a city that had scarcely a soldier to defend it, and that was without an ally in Europe, resolved to make this handful of burghers repent of their madness. He would concentrate all his power in one terrible blow, and crush a heresy that was so full of insolence and rebellion in the ruins of the city in which it had found a seat. He blockaded Geneva on the land side by his army, and on the side of the lake by his galleys. The gates that would not open to his soldiers must open to famine, and he would see how long these haughty burghers would hold fast their heresy and rebellion when they had not bread to eat. And, in sooth, the prospects of the little city seemed desperate. The blockade was so strict that it was hardly possible to

[1] *Ibid.*, tom. iii., pp. 375, 376.

[2] So ran the decree. Calvin had afterwards to complain of the misappropriation of these funds to private uses.

[3] Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 381, 382i Spon, *Hist, de Geneve* tom. i., pp. 371, 372. Roset, *Chron.** bk. iii., chap. 37.

bring in any provisions, and no one could go or come but at the risk of being waylaid and killed. The bare and blackened zone outside the city walls, so recently a rich girdle of stately villa and flourishing garden, was but too exact an emblem of its political nakedness, now entirely without allies. Even Bern, in this, the hour of Geneva's sorest need, stood afar off. Every day the stock of provisions in the beleaguered city was growing less. The citizens could count the hours when gaunt famine would sit at every board, and one by one they would drop and die. Well, so be it! They would leave the duke to vanquish Geneva when, from a city of patriots, it had become a city of corpses. This was the illustrious triumph they would prepare for him. Their resolve was as unalterable as ever. Be it a nation or be it an individual, every truly great and noble career must have its commencement in an act of self-sacrifice. It was out of this dark night that the glorious day of Geneva sprang.

The Genevans found a messenger expert enough to escape detection and carry tidings to Bern. The powerful Bern, at ease as regarded its own safety, listened in philosophic calmness to the tale of Geneva's perils,[1] but after some days it thought right to interfere so far in behalf of its former companion in the battles of liberty and religion as to open negotiations with the duke, The duke was willing to receive any number of protocols, provided only the Bernese did not send soldiers. While their Lordships of Bern were negotiating, famine and the duke were steadily advancing upon the doomed city, But now it happened that the Bernese were themselves touched, and their eyes opened somewhat roughly to the duke's treachery and the folly of longer indulging in the pastime of negotiation. The Lord of Savoy had taken the Chatelain of Muss, a titled freebooter, into his service. The Chatelain, with his band of desperadoes, made an irruption into the districts of Orbe, Grandson, and Echelons, which were the common property of Bern and Friburg, and spoiled them in the duke's name. Bern hesitated no longer. She declared war against the Duke of Savoy, thinking it better to fight him at Geneva than wait till he had come nearer to her own gates.[2]

Having at length resolved to act, Bern, it must be confessed, did so with vigour. On the 13th of January, 1536, the Council came to the resolution of declaring war. The following day they sent notice of their determination to the Swiss cantons, praying them to unite their arms with theirs in what, beyond question, was the common cause of the Confederacy, the repulsion of a foreign tyranny. On the 16th they issued their proclamation of war; on the 22nd their army of 6,000 began their march. They gave its command to Jean Francois Næguli, who had served with honour in the wars in Italy. On the

[1] Ruchat, tom. iv., p. 6.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iv., p. 7.

2nd of February the Bernese army arrived at the gates of Geneva.[1] The joy their appearance caused and the welcome accorded them may be easily imagined.

Meanwhile the dangers within and outside Geneva had thickened. Despite the necessities of the citizens, certain rich men kept their granaries closed. This led to disorders. On the 14th of January the Council assumed possession of these stores, and opened them to the public, at the same time fixing the price at which the corn was to be sold, and so too did they as regarded the wine and other necessaries. The dangers outside were not so much in the control of the Council.

The Savoyard army had resolved to attempt scaling the walls, the same night, at three points. The assault was made between nine and ten. One party advanced on the side of St. Gervais, where the city was defended only by a palisade and ditch; the others made their attempt on that of the Rive and St. Victor. The latter, having crossed the ditch, were now at the foot of the wall with their ladders, but the Genevans, appearing on the top, courageously repelled them, and forced them to retire. On the 16th of January came the good news, by two heralds, that Bern had declared war in their behalf. This reanimated the Genevans; though weakened by famine they made four sorties on the besiegers. In one of these, 300 Genevans engaged double that number of Savoyards. The duke's soldiers were beaten. First the duke's cavalry galloped off the field, then the infantry lost courage and fled. Of the Savoyards 120 were slain and four taken prisoners. The Genevans did not lose a man; one of their number only was hurt by the falling of his horse, which was killed under him.[2]

This was only the beginning of disasters to the duke's army. A few days thereafter, the Bernese warriors, who had continued their march, despite that the five Popish Cantons had by deputy commanded them to stop, appeared before Geneva. They rested not more than a single day, when they set out in search of the enemy. The Savoyard army was already in full retreat upon Chambery. The Bernese pushed on, but the foe fled faster than they could pursue. And now came tidings that convinced the men of Bern that the farther prosecution of the expedition was needless. Enemies had started up on every side of the duke, and a whole Iliad of woes suddenly overtook him. Among others, the King of France chose this moment to declare war against him. Francis I. had many grudges to satisfy, but what mainly moved him at this time against the duke was his desire to have a road to Milan and Italy. Accordingly, he moved his army into Savoy, wrested from the duke Chambery, the cradle of his house, chased him across the Alps, and, not permitting him

[1] *Ibid.*, tom. iv., pp. 9–24.

[2] Ruchat. tom. iv., p. 15.

to rest even at Turin, took possession of his capital. Thinking to seize the little territory of Geneva, the duke had lost his kingdoms of Savoy and Piedmont. He retired to Vercelli, where, after seventeen years of humiliation and exile, he died.[1] How many tragedies are wrapped up in the great tragedy of the sixteenth century!

The duke off the scene, the movement at Geneva now resumed its march. The edict of the 27th August, 1535, which had dropped somewhat out of sight amid sieges and battles, and the turmoil of war, came again to the front. That edict proclaimed Protestantism as the religion of Geneva. But Farel did not deceive himself with the fiction that the decree which proclaimed Geneva Protestant had really made it so. The seat of religion, he well knew, is the hearts and understandings of a people, not the edicts of a statute-book; and the great task of making the people really Protestant was yet to be done. There were in Geneva a goodly number who loved the Gospel for its own sake, and it was the strength of these men which had carried them through in their great struggle; but the crown had yet to be put upon the work by making the *lives*, as well as the *profession*, of the people Protestant.

This great labour was undertaken jointly by Farel and by the Council. The temporal and spiritual powers, yoked together, drew lovingly the car of the Reform, and both having one aim—the highest well-being of the people—neither raised those questions of jurisdiction, or felt those rivalries and jealousies, which subsequent times so plentifully produced. There is a time to set landmarks, and there is a time to remove them.

Farel, occupying the pulpit, sent forth those expositions of the Reformed doctrine which were fitted to instruct the understandings and guide the consciences of the Genevans: while the Council in the Senate-house framed those laws which were intended to restrain the excesses and disorders into which the energetic and headstrong natures of the citizens were apt to impel them. This, all will admit, was a tolerably fair division of the labour. Farel's teaching laid a moral basis for the Council, and the Council's authority strengthened Farel, and opened the way for his teachings to reach their moral and spiritual ends. A close examination of the matter, especially under the lights of modern science, may, it is true, result in disclosing instances in which the Council did the work of Farel, and Farel did the work of the Council; but we ought to bear in mind that modern society was then in its infancy; that toleration was only in its dawn; and that punctiliousness would have marred the work, and left Geneva a chaos.

Not only was the standard of Protestantism displayed in the August preceding again raised aloft, but the moral and social regulations which had accompanied it, in order to render it a *life* as well as a *creed*, were brought into

[1] Ruchat, tom. iv., pp. 24–33.

the foreground. There never was a class of men who showed themselves more anxious to join a moral with a doctrinal Reformation than the Reformers of the sixteenth century. The separation which at times has been seen between the two is the error of a later age. Re-entering this path, the first labour of the Council and Farel was to establish a perfect concord and unity among the citizens. Of those even who were with the Reform, and had fought side by side against the duke, there were two parties—the zealous and the lukewarm. Hates and mutual reproaches divided them. On the 6th of February, 1536, the Council-General—that is, the whole body of the citizens—assembled, and passed an edict, promising by oath to forget all past injuries, to cease from mutual recriminations, to live henceforward in good brotherhood, and submit themselves to the Syndics and Council.[1]

Next came the matter of public worship, The number, place, and time of the sermons were fixed. Four ministers and two deacons were selected to preach on the appointed days. Moderate stipends were assigned them from the ecclesiastical property. The Sunday was to be religiously observed, and all the shops strictly closed. On that day, besides the other services, there was to be sermon at four in the morning, for the convenience of servants. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be dispensed four times in the year. Baptisms were to take place only in the church at the hours of public worship. Marriage might be celebrated any day, but the ceremony must be in public, and after three several notifications of it.[2]

Last of all came the rules for the reformation of manners. Since the beginning of the century Geneva had been, in fact, a camp, and its manners had become more than rough. It was necessary, in the interests of morality, and of liberty not less, to put a curb upon the wild licence of former days. They had banished the duke, they must banish the old Geneva. The magistrates forbade games of chance, oaths and blasphemies, dances and lascivious songs, and the farces and masquerades in which the people had been wont to indulge. They enjoined all persons to attend the sermons, and other exercises of religion, and to retire to their homes at nine o'clock at night. They specially commanded the masters of hotels and cabarets to see that their guests observed these regulations. That no one might plead ignorance, these rules were frequently proclaimed by sound of trumpet.

The education of the youth of the State was an object of special care to the magistrates, who desired that they should be early grounded in the principles of virtue and piety, as well as in a knowledge of the classical tongues, and the *belles lettres.* For this end they erected a school or academy, with competent professors, to whom they gave suitable salaries. There was a

[1] MS. Chouet, p. 40. Roset, bk. iii., chap. 62. Ruchat, tom. iv., p. 108.

[2] MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. iv., p. 109.

school in Geneva in Popish times, but it was so badly managed that it accomplished nothing for the interests of education. The Council-General, by a decree of May 21st, 1536, established a new seminary in the convent of the Cordeliers on the Rive, and appointed as headmaster Antony Saunier, the countryman and friend of Farel. The latter sought, in divers places, for learned men willing to be teachers in this school.[1]

On the same 21st of May there was witnessed a solemn sight at Geneva. The whole body of the citizens, the magistrates and ministers at their head, assembled in the Cathedral of St. Peter, and with uplifted hands swore to renounce the doctrine of the Roman. Church, the mass and all that depends upon it, and to live according to the laws of the Gospel. This national vow included the regulations we have just enumerated, which were regarded as necessary deductions from the great Christian law.

Soon after this Farel composed, in conjunction with Calvin, who by this time had joined him, a brief and simple Confession of Faith, in twenty-one articles,[2] which was sworn to by all the citizens of the State, who appeared before the Council in relays of tens, and had the oath administered to them. This was in the November following.[3]

To mark the laying of the foundations of their Protestant State, and the new age therewith introduced, the Genevans struck a new coin and adopted a new motto for their city. In the times of paganism, being worshippers of the sun, they had taken that luminary as their symbol. Latterly, retaining the radical idea in their symbol, they had modified and enlarged it into the following motto: *Post tenebras spero lucem—i.e.,* "After the darkness I hope for the light:" words which look like an unconscious prophecy of a time of knowledge and truth in the future. Having established their Reformation, the Genevans changed their motto once more. *Post tenebras lucem*—"After darkness, light "—was the device stamped on the new money of the State, as if to intimate that the light they looked for was now come.[4]

Finally, as an enduring monument of this great event, the citizens placed a tablet of brass in front of the Town-house, with the following inscription engraven on it:—

QUUM ANNO M. D. XXXV.
PROFLIGATA
ROMANI ANTICHRISTI

[1] Roset, bk. iii., chap. 68. MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. iii., pp. 110, 111.

[2] A summary of this Confession will be found in the following chapter.

[3] MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. iii., p. 111. A copy of this first Helvetic Confession from the original document, communicated to M. Ruchat by M. Jacob Bordier, Pastor of the Church of Geneva, and Librarian, is to be found in Ruchat's *History*, tom. iv., pp. Ill—122.

[4] Ruchat, iii., 591, 592. Misson, *Travels,* ii., 417.

TYRANNIDE,
ABROGATISQUE EJUS SUPERSTITIONIBUS
SACROSANCTA CHRISTI RELIGIO
HIC IN SUAM PURITATEM
ECCLESIA
IN MELIOREM ORDINEM
SINGULARI DEI BENEFICIO REPOSITA;
ET SIMUL PULSIS FUGATISQUE HOSTIBUS,
URBS IPSA IN SUAM LIBERTATEM
NON SINE INSIGNI MIRACULO
RESTITUTA FUERIT:
SENATUS POPULUSQUE GENEVENSIS
MONUMENTUM HOC PERPETLVU MEMORISE
FIERI,
ATQUE HOC LOCO ERIGI
CURAVIT:
QUO SUAM ERGA DEUM GRATITUDI-
NEM AD POSTEROS TESTATAM
FACERET.[1]

Never did more modest tablet record greater victory. That victory was too great, in truth, to be represented by any monument of marble. No pomp of words, no magnificence of art, could express its value. Protestantism, now planted on this spot, which the struggles, the blood, and the prayers of believing men had won for it in the midst of Christendom, rising aloft in its own majesty, and shining by its own splendour, must be its own monument; or, if other memorial it is to have, it must be just such simple record of accomplished facts as this tablet contains.

But, in truth, when the Genevans placed their memorial-stone in the front of their Senate-house, they did not know half the worth of the victory they had won. No man, at that day, could even guess at the many brilliant triumphs

[1] " When in the year 1535 the tyranny of the Roman Antichrist had been overthrown and his superstitions abolished, the most holy religion of Christ in its purity, and the Church in its good order, were, by the singular mercy of God, here re-established. And at the same time its enemies having been beaten and put to flight, the city itself, not without the most manifest Divine interposition, was restored to its liberty. The Senate and People of Geneva decreed that this monument, in eternal memory of the event, should be prepared and set up in this place. By this they desire to testify their gratitude to God to all posterity."—Michael Roset says that a similar tablet was placed above the gate of the Corraterie; and the historical calendar, which is placed before the greater part of the old edition of the French Psalms, translated into verse by Marot and Beza, gives the date of the edict of the Reformation as the 27th of August, 1535.

which lay folded up in this one triumph. It required a century to evolve them. What is it that the men of Geneva have done, according to their own account? They have rescued a little city from tyranny and superstition, and consecrated it to liberty and pure Christianity. This does not seem much. Had it been a great throne, or a powerful realm, it would have been something; but a third-rate town, with only a few leagues of territory, what is that? Besides, Geneva may be lost tomorrow. May not Spain and France come in any hour and extinguish its liberties? They believe they may, and they make the attempt, but only to find that while their armies are melting away, and their empires dissolving, the sway of the little Protestant town is every year widening. Very diminutive is the spot; but the beacon-light does not need a continent for a pedestal; a little rock will do; and while the winds howl and the billows shake their angry crests, and roll their thundering surges around its base, its ray still burns aloft, and streaming far and wide over the waves, pierces the black night, and guides the bark of the mariner. What was it the ancient sage demanded in order to be able to move the world? Only a fixed point. Geneva was that fixed point. We shall see it in the course of time become the material basis of a great moral empire.

CHAPTER X.

CALVIN ENTERS GENEVA—ITS CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION.

Calvin at the Gates of Geneva—Farel Told—Meeting of Farel and Calvin—Is this the Author of the *Institutes?*—Adjuration—Calvin Remains in Geneva—Commences as Lecturer in the Cathedral—His Confession of Faith—Excommunication—What is it?—Morality the Corner-stone of the New State—Civil Constitution of the Republic—The Council-General—The Council of Two Hundred—The Council of Twenty-five—The Syndics—The Consistory or Church-Court—Distinction between the Civil and Ecclesiastical Powers—Calvin's Ideas on the Relations between Church and State—Guizot's Testimony—Calvin's *Ideal* in Advance of his Age.

ONE day, towards the end of August, 1536, a stranger, of slender figure and pale face, presented himself at the gates of Geneva. There was nothing to distinguish him from the crowds of exiles who were then arriving almost daily at the same gates, except it might be the greater brightness that burned in his eye. He had come to rest only for a night, and depart on the morrow. But as he traversed the streets on his way to his hotel, a former acquaintance—Du Tillet, say some; Caroli, say others—recognised him, and instantly hurried off to tell Farel that Calvin was in Geneva.

When, nearly a year ago, we parted with Calvin, he was on his way across the Alps to visit Rénée, the daughter of Louis XII. of France, and wife of Hercules d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. "He entered Italy," as he himself said, "only to leave it,"[1] though not till he had confirmed the illustrious princess, at whose court he sojourned, in her attachment to the Protestant faith, in which, despite the many and peculiar trials to which her constancy exposed her, she steadfastly continued to her life's end. His eldest brother dying, Calvin recrossed the mountains, on a hasty journey to his birthplace, most probably to arrange the family affairs,[2] and leave Noyon for ever. Where shall he next go? The remembrance of the studious days he had passed at Basle returned to him with irresistibly attractive force, and now, accompanied by his brother Antoine, and his sister Maria,[3] he was on his way to his former retreat; but the direct road through Lorraine was blocked up by the armies of Charles V., and this compelled him to make a *detour* by Switzerland, which brought him to the gates of Geneva.

With startled but thankful surprise Farel received the news that the author of the *Christian Institutes* was in the city. God, he thought, had sent, at a

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini;* Geneva, 1575.
[2] Ruchat, iv., 133.
[3] Beza, *Vita Calvin.*

critical moment, the man of all others whom he most wished to associate with himself in the work of reforming Geneva.

Farel had begun to feel the difficulty of the task he had in hand. To break this people from their habits of lawless indulgence, nurtured by the contests in which they had won their liberty, would indeed be no easy matter. They would spurn all attempts to coerce them, and yield only to the force of a stronger will, and the sway of a loftier genius. Besides, the highest organising skill was demanded in the man who should set up a moral tribunal in the midst of this licentious city, and found on this unpromising spot an empire which should pervade with its regenerating spirit nations afar off, and generations yet unborn. Believing that he had found in Calvin one who possessed all these great qualities, Farel was already on his way to visit him.

Farel now stands before the author of the *Institutes.* He beholds a man of small stature and sickly mien. Were these the shoulders on which he should lay a burden which would have tasked the strength of Atlas himself? We can well believe that Farel experienced some moments of painful misgivings. To re-assure himself he had to recall to mind, doubtless, the profound wisdom, the calm strength, and the sublimity of principle displayed on every page of the *Institutes.* That was the real Calvin. Now Farel began to press his suit. He was here combating alone. He had to do daily battle against an atrocious tyranny outside the city, and against a licentious Libertinism within it. Come, he said to the young Reformer, and be my comrade in the campaign.

Calvin's reply was a refusal. His constructive and practical genius was then unknown even to himself. His sphere, he believed, was his library; his proper instrument of work, his pen; and to cast himself into a scene like that before him was, he believed, to extinguish himself. Panting to be at Basle or at Strasburg, where speaking from the sanctuary of a studious and laborious privacy, he could edify all the Churches, he earnestly besought Farel to stand aside and let him go on his way.

But Farel would not stand aside. Putting on something of the authority of an ancient prophet, he commanded the young traveller to remain and labour in Geneva, and he imprecated upon his studies the curse of God, should he make them the pretext for declining the call now addressed to him.[1] It was the voice not of Farel, but of God, that now spoke to Calvin; so he felt; and instantly he obeyed. He loved, in after-life, to recall that "fearful adjuration," which was, he would say, "as if God from on high had stretched out his hand to stop me."[2]

Calvin's journey was now at an end. He had reached the spot where his life's work was to be done. Here, in this grey city, clinging to its narrow

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini.*
[2] *Præfatio ad Psalmos—Opp. Calvini.*

rocky site, the calm lake at its feet, and the glories of the distant mountains in its sky, was he for twenty-eight years to toil and wage battle, and endure defeat, but to keep marching on through toil and defeat, to more glorious victory in the end than warrior ever won with his sword, and then he would fall on sleep, and rest by the banks of that river whose "arrowy" stream he had crossed but a few minutes before. He gave his hand to Farel, and in doing so he gave himself to Geneva.

If the destiny of Calvin was from that moment changed; if from a student he became a legislator and leader; if from being a soldier in the ranks he became generalissimo of the armies of Protestantism, not less was the destiny of Geneva from that moment changed. Calvin had already written a book that constituted an epoch in Protestantism, but he was to write it a second time; though not with pen and ink. He would display before all Christendom the *Institutes,* not as a volume of doctrines, but as a system of realised facts—a State rescued from the charnel-house of corruption, and raised to the glorious heritage of liberty and virtue—glorious in art, in letters, and in riches, because resplendent with every Christian virtue. To write Protestantism upon their banners, to proclaim it in their edicts, to install it as a worship in their Churches, Calvin and all the Reformers held to be but a small affair; what they strove above all things to achieve was to plant it as an operative moral force in the hearts of men, and at the foundations of States.

Calvin was now at the age of twenty-seven. The magistrates of Geneva welcomed him, but with a cautious reserve, if we may judge from the first mention of his name in the registers of the city, about a fortnight after his arrival, as "that Frenchman!" He was appointed to give lectures on the Scriptures, and to preach.[1] Beza styles him "doctor or professor of sacred letters," but as yet no academy existed, and his prelections were delivered in the cathedral. As regards the latter function, that of preacher, it was some time before Calvin would assume it. When at length he appeared in the pulpit as pastor, he spoke with an eloquence so simple and clear, yet so majestic and luminous, that his audiences continued daily to grow. He had already done a winter's work, but had received scarcely any wages, for we read in the *Council Registers,* under date February 13th, 1537: "Six gold crowns are given to Cauvin or Calvin, seeing that he has hitherto scarcely received anything."[2]

It was not long till Calvin's rare genius for system and organisation began to display itself. Within three months from the commencement of his labours in Geneva, he had, in conjunction with Farel, compiled a brief but comprehensive creed, setting forth the leading doctrines of the Christian faith. To this he added a Catechism;[3] not that, in question and answer, for children,

[1] Ruchat, tom. iv., 133. Beza, *Vita Calvini.*
[2] Bungener, *Calvin: his Life, his Labours, and his Writings,* p. 102; Edin., 1863.
[3] Beza, *Vita Calvini.*

which we now possess, but one adapted to adults. The Genevans, with uplifted hands, had embraced Protestantism: Calvin would show them what that Protestantism was which they had professed, and what were the moral duties which it demanded of all its adherents. The Genevans had lifted up their hands: had they bowed their hearts? This was the main question with him. He had no trust in blind obedience. Knowledge must be the corner-stone of the new State, the foundations of which he was now laying.

We can give here only the briefest outline of this Confession of Faith. Placing the Word of God in the foreground, as the one infallible authority, and the one and sole rule, it proceeds, in twenty-one articles, to declare what Scripture teaches, touching God, and the plan of redemption which he has provided for man fallen and helpless. It proclaims Christ the one channel of all blessing; the Spirit, the one Author of all good works; faith, "the entrance to all these riches;" and then goes on to speak of the apparatus set up for offering redemption to men, the Sacraments and ministers. Then follow articles on the Church, "comprehending the whole body of true believers;" on excommunication, or the exclusion from the Church of all manifestly unholy and vicious persons, till they shall have repented; and, in fine, on magistracy, "an ordinance of God," and to be respected "in all ordinances that do not contravene the commandments of God." On the 10th of November, 1536, this Confession was received and approved of by the Council of Two Hundred.[1]

To the half-Protestantised citizens of Geneva the sting of this document was in the end of it—excommunication. The other articles had simply to be professed; this one was heavier than them all, inasmuch as it had to be borne. What did this power import? Was the Protestant excommunication but the Papal anathema under another name? Far from it. It carried with it no cruel infliction. It operated in no preternatural or mystic manner, inflicting blight upon the soul. It did not even pronounce on the state of the man before God. It simply found that his life was manifestly unholy, and, therefore, that he was unfit for a holy society, and in token of his exclusion it withheld from him the Sacraments. No society can exist without laws, or rules; but of what use are laws without an executive or tribunal to administer them? and without the right of inflicting penalties, a tribunal would be powerless; and a lighter penalty than "excommunication" or expulsion it would be impossible to conceive or devise. Without this power the Church in Geneva would have been a city without walls and bulwarks; it would have been dissolved the moment it was formed.

It is necessary at this stage to refer to the Constitution—civil and ecclesiastical—of Geneva, in order that the course of affairs may be clearly

[1] Ruchat, tom. iv., pp. 111–122. Bungener, *Calvin*, pp. 104–108.

intelligible. The fundamental principle of the State was, that the people are the source of power. In accordance therewith came, first, a Convention of all the citizens, termed the Council-General. This was the supreme authority. To obviate the confusion and turbulence incident to so large an assembly, a Council of Two Hundred was chosen, termed the Great Council.[1] Next came the Little, or ordinary Council, consisting of twenty-five members, including the four Syndics of the city. This last, the Council of Twenty-five, was the executive, and possessed moreover a large share of the judicial and legislative power. The constitutional machinery we have described in detail was popularly summed up thus—the PEOPLE, the COUNCIL, and SENATE of Geneva.

The Council-General—that is, the People—was convoked only once a year, in November, to elect the four Syndics. Besides this annual assembly, it met on important emergencies, or when fundamental changes were to be determined upon, and then only. The actual government of the State was mainly in the hands of the Council of Twenty-five, which was by constitution largely oligarchical. Such was the republic when Calvin became a member of it.

With Protestantism there arrived a new power in Geneva—the religious, namely—and we complete our picture of the government of the little State when we describe the provision made for the exercise of the ecclesiastical authority. The court or tribunal which took cognisance of Church scandals was the Consistory. The Consistory was composed of the five ministers of the city and twelve laymen.[2] It met every Thursday, and the highest penalty it had power to inflict was excommunication, by which is meant expulsion from the Church. If this failed to reclaim the offender, the Consistory had the right to report the case to the Council, and require it to proceed therein according to the laws.

In judging of this arrangement time and circumstances are to be taken into account. The course of affairs at Geneva inevitably tended to graft the ecclesiastical upon the civil government, and to some extent to build up the two in one. It was Protestantism that had called Geneva into existence as a free State. Protestantism was its soul, the centre and citadel of its liberties,

[1] The Council-General—that is, the People—elected the Council of Two Hundred. In 1542 this was changed, and the election given to the Council of Twenty-five. Calvin saw the danger of the step, and conjured the magistrates to allow the Two Hundred to be named at all times by the Council-General. He foretold conflicts in the future, for the people would be sure some time or other to retake the power of which they had been deprived. "It was," says M. Gaberel, in his *History of the Church of Geneva*, "perhaps the only time in which Calvin was not listened to. If the election of Two Hundred had been left to the Council-General, the revolutions of the eighteenth century would never have caused blood to flow on the Genevese territory." (Tom. i., p. 522.)

[2] Two Syndics, four members of the Council of Twenty-five, and six of the Council of Two Hundred. (Ruchat, tom. v., p. 158.)

and whatever tended to weaken or overthrow that principle tended equally to the ruin of the republic. Encompassed on all sides by powerful enemies, this one principle was the bond of their union and the shield of their freedom; and this went far to impart, in many cases, a two-fold character to the same action, and to justify the Church in regarding certain acts as sins, and visiting them with her censures, while the State viewed the same acts as crimes, and meted out to them its punishments.

Calvin took the Jewish theocracy as his model when he set to work to frame, or rather to complete, the Genevan Republic. What we see on the banks of the Leman is a theocracy; Jehovah was its head, the Bible was its supreme code, and the government exercised a presiding and paternal guardianship over all interests and causes, civil and spiritual. Geneva, in this respect, was a reproduction of the Old Testament state of society. We of the nineteenth century regard this as a grave error. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that Calvin grasped the essential distinction between things civil and things ecclesiastical, and the necessity of placing the two under distinct jurisdictions or powers. But his theocratic views produced a dimness and confusion in his ideas on that head, and he was more successful in settling the just limits of the ecclesiastical authority, than he was in defining those of the civil jurisdiction. He would not allow a particle of civil power to the Consistory, but he was not equally careful to withhold ecclesiastical power from the Council. This error arose from his making the Old Testament a model on a point which, we believe, was temporary and local, not permanent and universal. Nevertheless, the Reformer of Geneva stood ahead in this great question of all his predecessors. We may quote here the words of a great statesman, and a countryman of Calvin's, who has done justice to the Reformer on this point. "A principle," says Guizot, "we should rather say a passion, held sway in Calvin's heart, and was his guiding star in the permanent organisation of the Church which he founded, as well as in his personal conduct during his life. That principle is the profound distinction between the civil and the religious community. Distinction, we say, and by no means separation. Calvin, on the contrary, desired alliance between the two communities and the two powers, but each to be independent in its own domain, combining their action, showing mutual respect, and lending mutual support. . . . In this principle and this fundamental labour," continues the historian, "there are two new and bold reforms attempted in the very heart of the great Reformation of Europe, and over and above the work of its first promoters." In proof, Guizot goes on to instance England, where the "royal supremacy" was accepted; Switzerland, where the Council of State held the sovereign authority in matters of religion; and Germany, where the magistrate was the chief bishop; and continues: "In this great question as to the relations between Church and State, Calvin desired and did more than his predecessors

. . . . in spite of the resistance often shown him by the civil magistrates, in spite of the concessions he was sometimes obliged to make to them, he firmly maintained this principle, and he secured to the Reformed Church of Geneva, in purely religious questions and affairs, the right of self-government, according to the faith and the law as they stand written in the Holy Books."[1]

In this statement of facts, Guizot is undoubtedly correct. Only we think that he is mistaken in believing that it was the Church of Rome, and the "independence of its head," which taught the Reformer the "strength and dignity" conferred on the Church by having "an existence distinct from the civil community." Calvin learned the idea from a Diviner source. Nor was he quite so successful in extricating the spiritual from the civil jurisdiction, either in idea or in reality, as Guizot appears to think. As regarded the idea, he was embarrassed by the Old Testament theocracy, which he took to be a Divine model for all times; and as regarded the actuality, the opposition which he encountered from the civil authority at Geneva made it impossible for him to realise his idea so fully as he wished to do. But it is only justice to bear in mind that his ideal was far in advance of his age, as Guizot has said.

[1] Guizot., *Hist. France*, vol. iii., pp. 236, 237; Lond., 1874.

CHAPTER XI.

SUMPTUARY LAWS—CALVIN AND FAREL BANISHED.

Geneva Stands or Falls with its Morality—Code of Morals—Dances, &c.—The Sumptuary Laws Earlier than Calvin's Time—Rise of the Libertine Party—Outcries—Demand for the Abolition of the New Code—The Libertines obtain a Majority in the Council—Bern Interferes adversely—Question of Unleavened Bread—Confusion and Disorders in Geneva—Calvin and Farel Refuse to Dispense the Communion at Easter—Tumult in the Churches— Farel and Calvin Banished by the Council.

CALVIN'S theological code was followed by one of morals. There were few cities in Christendom that had greater need of such a rule than the Geneva of that day. For centuries it had known almost nothing of moral discipline. The clergy were notoriously profligate, the government was tyrannical, and the people, in consequence, were demoralised. Geneva had but one redeeming trait, the love of liberty. The institutions of learning were neglected, and the manners of the Genevans were as rude as their passions were violent. They revelled, they danced, they played at cards, they fought in the streets, they sung indecent songs, uttered fearful blasphemies; indulged, in short, in all sorts of excesses. It was clear that Protestantism must cleanse the city or leave it. Geneva was nothing unless it was moral; it could not stand a day. This was the task to which Calvin now turned his attention.

This introduces the subject of the sumptuary laws, which were sketched at this time, though not finished till an after-period. The rules now framed forbade games of chance, oaths and blasphemies, dances,[1] lascivious songs, farces, and masquerades. The hours of taverners were shortened; every one was to be at home by nine at night, and hotelkeepers were to see that these rules were observed by their guests. To these were added certain regulations with a view of restraining excess in dress and profusion at meals. All were enjoined to attend sermons and the other religious exercises.[2]

Even before the time of Calvin, under the Roman Church, most of these practices, and especially dances, had been forbidden under severe penalties. Forty years after his death, under Henry IV. of France, similar edicts were

[1] Those who condemn Calvin for having forbidden dances, little dream of what sort these dances were. Ruchat, the historian of the Swiss Reformation (tom. v., p. 244), tells us that there was in Lausanne a society of youths who at certain seasons "paraded the streets entirely naked, or in masques, representing the god Bacchus, dancing and singing lewd songs." Of a similar kind were the dances in Geneva. These laws, as we have seen in the previous chapter, were already enacted by the Council. Calvin found them in operation when he entered Geneva.

[2] Ruchat, tom. iv., p. 110.

promulgated.[1] The British Government at this day adopts the principle of the Genevan regulations, when it forbids gambling, indecent pictures and plays, and similar immoralities; and if such laws are justifiable now, how much more so in Calvin's time, when there were scarcely any amusements that were innocent!

The second battle with the citizens proved a harder one than the first with the priests, and the reformation of manners a more difficult task than the reformation of beliefs. The citizens remembered the halcyon days they had enjoyed under their bishop, and contrasted them with the moral restraints imposed upon them by the Consistory. The reproofs which Calvin thundered against their vices from the pulpit were intolerable to many, perhaps to most. The population was a mixed one. Many were still Papists at heart; some were Anabaptists, and others were deeply tainted with that infidel and materialistic philosophy which had been growing quietly up under the shade of the Roman Church. The successful conflict the Genevans had waged for their political independence helped, too, to make them less willing to bow to the Protestant yoke. Was it not enough that they had shed their blood to have the Gospel preached to them? It was mortifying to find that very Protestantism which they had struggled to establish turning round upon them, and weighing them in its scales, and finding them wanting.

Loud and indignant cries were raised against Calvin for neglecting his office. Appointed to be an expositor of Scripture, who made him, asked his calumniators, a censor of morals and a reprover of the citizens? Religion, in the age gone by, had been too completely dissociated from morality to make the absurdity of this accusation palpable. The Libertines, as the oppositionists began now to be called, demanded the abolition of the new code; they complained especially of the "excommunication." "What!" said they, "have we put down the Popish confessional only to set up a Protestant one?" and mounting party badges, they wore green flowers in mockery of the other citizens, calling them "brothers in Christ."[2] The Government began to be intimidated by these clamours. The majority of the citizens being still on the side of the ministers, the Council ventured on issuing an edict, commanding the Libertines to leave the city. But it had not the courage to enforce its own order; and the Libertines, seeing its weakness, grew every day more insolent. At length the elections in February, 1538, gave a majority in their favour in the Council; three out of the four Syndics were on the side of the Libertines.[3] This turn of affairs placed the pastors in a position of extreme difficulty. They stood in front of a hostile Council, pushed on from behind by a hostile

[1] Bungener, *Calvin,* p. 110.

[2] Roset, MS. *Chron.*

[3] *Ibid.* Ruchat, tom. v., p. 57.

population. Calvin remained firm. His resolution was taken unalterably to save his principle, come what might to himself. He was determined at all hazards not to give holy things to unholy men; for he saw that with that principle must stand or fall the Reformation in Geneva.

While these intestine convulsions shook the city within, invasion threatened it without. The strifes of the citizens were the signal to their old enemies to renew their attempts to recover Geneva. The inhabitants fortified the walls, cast the superfluous bells into cannon, and placed them upon the ramparts.[1] Alas! this would avail but little, seeing they were all the while pulling down that which was their true defence. With their morality was bound up their Protestantism, and should it depart, not all their stone walls would prevent their becoming once more the prey of Rome.

At this stage the matter was still further embroiled by the interference of Bern. The government of that powerful canton, ambitious of assuming the direction of affairs at Geneva, counselled the Genevese to restore certain ceremonies which had been retained in the Bernese Reformation, but cast off in the Genevan one; among others, holidays, and the use of unleavened bread in the Communion.[2] Calvin and Farel demurred to the course recommended.

The moment the sentiments of the pastors became known, a vehement zeal seized the Libertines to have the Lord's Supper dispensed with unleavened bread. The Government decided that it should be as the Libertines desired. With Calvin a much greater question was whether the Communion should be given to these persons at all. As Easter approached, the fury of the party increased. They ran through the streets at night vociferating and yelling. They would stop before the pastors' houses, calling out, "To the Rhone! to the Rhone!" and would then fire off their arquebuses. They got up a masquerade in which they parodied that very ordinance which their scrupulous consciences would not permit them to receive save with unleavened bread. Frightful confusion prevailed in Geneva. This is attested by eye-witnesses, and by those who had the best opportunities of knowing the truth of what they have narrated. "Popery had indeed been forsworn," says Beza, "but many had not cast away with it those numerous and disgraceful disorders which had for a long time flourished in the city, given up as it was for so many years to canons and impure priests."[3] "Nothing was to be heard," says Roset, "but informations and quarrels between the former and present lords (the old and new members of Council), some being the ringleaders, and others following in their steps, the whole mingled with reproaches about the

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 57, 58.

[2] Beza, *Vita Calvini,*

[3] Beza, *Vita Calvini.*

booty taken in the war, or the spoils carried off from the churches."[1] "I have lived here," says Calvin himself, describing those agitations, "engaged in strange contests. I have been saluted in mockery of an evening before my own door, with fifty or sixty shots of arquebuses. You may imagine how that must astound a poor scholar, timid as I am, and as I confess I always was."[2] It was amid these shameful scenes that the day arrived which was to show whether the Libertines backed by the Council, or Calvin "Supported by his own great principle, would give way.

On the morning of Easter Sunday, 1538, the great bell Clemence rung out its summons, and all the quarters of the city poured out their inhabitants to fill the churches. Farel ascended the pulpit of St. Gervais, Calvin occupied that of St. Peter's. In the audience before them they could see the Libertines in great force. All was calm on the surface, but a single word might let loose the winds and awake the tempest. Nevertheless they would do their duty. The pastors expounded the nature of the Lord's Supper; they described the dispositions required in those who would worthily partake of it; and appealing to the disorders which had reigned in the city in the past weeks, in proof that these were not the dispositions of the majority of those now assembled, they concluded by intimating that this day the Holy Supper would not be dispensed. Hereupon, outcries drowned the voice of the preachers. The uproar was specially great in St. Gervais; swords were unsheathed, and furious men rushed toward the pulpit. Farel waited with his arms crossed. He had long since learned to look on angry faces without trembling. Calvin in St. Peter's was equally resolute. Sooner should his blood dye the boards he stood upon, than he would be guilty of the profanation demanded of him. "We protest before you all," he said, "that we are not obstinate about the question of bread, leavened or unleavened; that is a matter of indifference, which is left to the discretion of the Church. If we decline to administer the Lord's Supper, it is because we are in a great difficulty, which prompts us to this course."

Farel had borne the brunt of the tempest in the morning, it was to be Calvin's turn in the evening. On descending to the Church of Rive, the former Convent of St. Francis, near the shores of the lake, he found the place already filled with an assembly, many of whom had brought their swords with them. Whatever apprehensions the young Reformer may have felt, he presented to the assembly, which hung upon the edge of the storm, a calm and fearless front. He had not been more than eighteen months in their city, and yet he had inspired them with an awe greater than that which they felt even for Farel.

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[1] M. Reset, *Citron, de Geneve,* bk. iv., chap. 15.

[2] Bonnet, *Lettres Francoises,* tom. ii., p. 575.

These two were men of the same spirit, as of the same office, and yet they were unlike, and the Genevans saw the difference. Farel was the man of oratory, Calvin was the man of power. In what attribute or faculty, or combination of faculties, his power lay, they would have had great difficulty in saying. Certainly it was not in his gestures, nor in his airs, nor in the pomp of his rhetoric, for no one could more sedulously eschew these things; but that he did possess power—calm, inflexible, resistless power—they all knew, for they all felt it. Farel's invectives and denunciations were terrible; his passion was grand, like the thunderstorms of their own Alps; but there was something in the noise that tempered his severity, and softened his accusations. Calvin never thundered and lightened. Had he done so it would have been a relief; the Genevans would have felt him to be more human and genial—a man of like passions with themselves, at least, of like passions with Farel, whom they regarded with a mixture of love and fear, and whom they could not help half-forgiving, even when he was rousing their anger by his reproaches. But in his terrible calmness, in his passionless reason, Calvin stood apart from, and rose above, all around him—above Farel—even above the Council, whose authority was dwarfed before the moral majesty that seemed to clothe this man. He was among them like an incarnate conscience; his utterances were decrees, just and inflexible, like the laws of heaven themselves. Whence had he come, this mysterious and terrible man? Noyon was his birth-place, but what influences had moulded such a spirit? and what chance was it which had thrown him into their city to hold them in his spell, and rule them as neither bishop, nor duke, nor Pope had been able to rule them? They would try whether they could not break his yoke. For this end they had brought their swords with them.

The historians who were eye-witnesses of the scene that followed are discreet in their accounts of it. It did not end so tragically as it threatened, and instead of facts that would not redound to the honour of their city, they treat us to felicitations that the affair had no worse a termination. What the words were that evoked the tempest we do not know. It was not necessary that they should be strong, seeing the more violent the more welcome would they be. While Calvin is preaching we see a dark frown pass suddenly over the faces of the assembly. Instantly there come shouts and outcries; a moment after, the clatter of weapons being hastily unsheathed salutes our ears; the next, we are dazzled by the gleam of naked swords. The tempest has burst with tropical suddenness and violence. The infuriated men, waving their weapons in the face of the preacher, press forward to the pulpit. One single stroke and Calvin's career would have been ended, and not his only—with him would have ended the career of Geneva as the new foothold of the Reformation. Farel had felt the burden too heavy for him; and had Calvin fallen, we know of no one who could have taken his place. What a triumph for

Rome, who would have re-entered Geneva over the mangled corpse of the Reformer! But what a disaster to Europe, the young day of which would have been quenched in the blackness of a two-fold night—that of a rising atheism, and that of a returning superstition!

But the movement was not fated so to end. He who had scattered the power of emperors and armies when they stood in battle array against the Reformation, stilled the clamours of furious mobs when they rose to extinguish it. The same buckler that covered Luther in the Diet of Worms, was extended over the head of Calvin amid the glittering swords in the Church of Rive. In that assembly were some who were the friends of the Reformer; they hastily threw themselves between the pulpit and the furious men who were pressing forward to strike. This check gave time to the less hostile among Calvin's foes to recover their senses, and they now remonstrated with the more violent on the crime they were about to commit, and the scandal they would cause if they succeeded in their object. Their anger began to cool; first one and then another put back his sword into its sheath; and after some time calm was restored. Michael Roset, the chronicler and magistrate, who appears to have been present, says, with an evident sense of relief, "The affair passed off *without bloodshed;*" and the words of the syndic Guatier, who reckoned its peaceable ending *a sort of miracle,* show how near it had been to having a very different termination.[1] The Reformer's friends did not think it prudent to leave him undefended, though the storm seemed to have spent itself. Forming an escort round him, they conducted him to his home.

On the morrow the Council of Two Hundred met, and pronounced sentence of banishment upon the two ministers. This sentence was ratified on the following day by the Council-General or assembly of the people. On the decision being intimated to Calvin, he replied with dignity, "Had I been the servant of man, I should have received but poor wages; but happy for me it is that I am the servant of him who never fails to give his servants that which he has promised them." The Council rested its sentence of banishment upon the question of "unleavened bread." Herein it acted disingenuously. The pastors had protested that the question of leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist was with them an open one. The real ground of banishment is one on which the magistrates of Geneva, for obvious reasons, are silent—namely, the refusal of Farel and Calvin to celebrate the Lord's Supper, on account of the blasphemies and immoralities indulged in by many of those who demanded admission to the Communion-table. Before being condemned, Calvin asked to be heard in his defence before the Council-General, but his request was refused.[2]

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[1] Roset, MS. *Chron.*, bk. iv., chap. 18. Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 65, 66.

[2] Roset, MS. *Chron.* Beza, *Vita Calvini. Registry* 23rd April, 1538.

It is important to mark, at this stage, that the principle on which the Reformer rested his whole scheme of Church government was—holy things are not to be given to the unholy. This principle he laboured to make inviolable, as being the germ, in the first place, of purity in the Church; and, in the second, of morality and liberty in the State. The principle was, as we have seen, on this its first attempt to assert itself, cast out and trodden under foot of an infidel democracy. That party, in the days of Calvin, was only in its first sprouting: it has since grown to greatness, and put forth its strength on a wider theatre, and the world has seen it, particularly in France, pull down and tread into the dust kings and hierarchies. But Calvin's principle, being Divine, could not perish under the blows now dealt it. It was overborne for the moment, and driven out of Geneva in the persons of its champions; but it lifted itself up again, and, re-entering Geneva, was there, fifteen years afterwards, crowned with victory.

CHAPTER XII.

CALVIN AT STRASBURG—ROME DRAWS NEAR TO GENEVA.

Farel at Neuchêtel—Calvin at Strasburg—His Labours there—Disorders at Geneva—Calvin's Poverty—Efforts of Rome to Retake Geneva—Cardinal Sadoleto—His Letter to the Genevans—Who shall Reply to it?—Calvin does so—Rising Tide of the Reformation—Ebb of Romanism—Conference between the Protestants and Romanists at Frankfort—Calvin goes thither—No Fruit of the Conference—Calvin and Melanchthon's Interviews—Calvin's Confidence in Melanchthon—His tender Love for him—Calvin and Luther never Meet—Luther placed amid the Teutonic Peoples, Calvin amid the Latin Nations—Wisdom of this Arrangement.

WITH steps slow and sad, and looks cast behind—for it was hard to relinquish all hope of a city on which they had bestowed so much labour—did the two banished ministers pursue their uncertain way. After an ineffectual attempt on the part of Bern and Zurich to compose the quarrel, Farel went to Neuchâtel, which became the field of his future labours, and thus he completed the building of which he had laid the foundations in years gone by. Calvin, journeying by way of Basle, and halting awhile in a city which he loved above all others, ultimately repaired to Strasburg, to which he had been earnestly invited by the two pastors of that city, Bucer and Capito. Three years of honourable labour awaited him in Strasburg. Distinguished foreigners, exiles for the Gospel, gathered round him; the French refugees, said to be about 15,000 in number, forming themselves into a congregation, made him their pastor; and the Town Council, appropriating the Church of the Dominicans to his use, appointed him to give lectures on the Scriptures. His audience was a more erudite and polished one than any Geneva could then furnish, for only through Calvin was Geneva to become learned. The love of Strasburg was as balm to the smitten and wounded heart of the exile.[1]

The expulsion of the two ministers did not calm the tempest that raged in the little State on the banks of the Leman. The Council, perhaps to show that they could govern without Calvin, published some new edicts for the reformation of manners; but, alas! moral power had departed with the ministers, and the commands of the magistrates were unheeded. The more distant the retreating steps of Farel and Calvin, the louder grew the disorders in the city they had left. The preachers, Marcourt and Morand, who now occupied the vacated pulpits, were simply objects of contempt.[2] They soon quitted the city

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 84–86.

[2] Morand was minister at Cully, on the shores of Lake Leman. Marcourt was minister at Neuchâtel. Some have said that Marcourt was the writer of the famous *Placards*, which Florimond Ræmond attributes to Farel. These violent manifestoes first thoroughly awoke that spirit of bloody persecution from which the Protestants suffered so long in France. It

in disgust. The Council thought to make the two rectors of the school which Farel had opened—for though there were 900 priests there was not a schoolmaster in Geneva—supply their place. The two teachers rose up and shook the dust from their feet, and the school was closed. The dominant faction had demanded "liberty," and now, left without either religious guide or secular instructor, they were in a fair way of being as free as their hearts could wish, and eminently pious to boot, if there be truth in the maxim that "ignorance is the mother of devotion."[1]

Calvin, in his new sphere at Strasburg, preached four times a week, and discharged all the other duties, private and public, of a faithful pastor. He lectured every day on theological science to the students of the Academy, taking as his text-book the Gospel of St. John and the Epistle to the Romans, which he expounded. The fame of his lectures drew students from other countries, and Strasburg promised to rival Wittenberg as a school of theology.[2] The Reformer had asked no salary from the magistrates, and they were in no haste to assign him one, and now he was in deep poverty. He appears to have been still in receipt of a small sum from his paternal inheritance, which he strove to supplement by the sale of his books. Painful it must have been to him to part with these, but he had no alternative, for we find him writing to Farel at this time that he "did not possess a farthing." The Senate of Strasburg afterwards appointed him a stipend, but so small that it did not suffice for his wants. But we return to Geneva.

Calvin being gone, the Pope now drew near. He had been watching the ripening of the pear for some time, and now he deemed it fit to be plucked. Cardinal Sadoleto was employed to write a letter to the people of Geneva, which, it was thought, was all that was needed to make them re-enter the old fold. Than Sadoleto no fitter man could have been found for this task. Having passed his youth at the court of Leo X., he was quite as much a son of the Renaissance as a son of the Church. He overflowed with that mild tolerance which, bred of indifferentism, is sometimes mistaken for true liberality. He could write any number of fine sentiments in the purest Latin. He was of irreproachable life. The Protestants sometimes thought that he was about to become one of themselves. But no: he loved the calm of letters, and the aesthetic delights of art. Above all, he rejoiced in the security and comfort of an infallible Church. It saved the toil of inquiry and the torment of doubt.

His letter "to the Senate and People of Geneva" was such as might have been expected from such a man. He began by protesting his ancient affection for them; he praised their many noble qualities; and he "drowned his page"

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has never been certainly proved whose work they were, but they are more likely to have emanated from Marcourt than from Farel.

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 100, 101.

[2] *Ibid.*, tom. v., pp. 123, 124.

with his poignant grief at their misfortunes. Alas! that they had suffered themselves to be seduced into Protestantism, which, however, he was good enough to say contained a modicum of truth. And so, tasking the elegance of his pen to the utmost, he coined some glowing compliments in praise of Holy Writ, of Christ as the sole Author of salvation, and of the doctrine of Justification by faith. In thus expressing himself, Sadoleto had not the remotest intention of becoming a disciple of the Protestant faith; he was only beckoning back the Genevans to repose beneath the tiara. In an infallible Church only could they find escape from such storms as the exercise of private judgment had let loose upon them.

The letter had the very opposite effect from that which it was expected to produce. It helped to show the men of Geneva the brink to which they were drawing nigh. Are we then, they said to themselves on reading the cardinal's letter, so near to Rome that the Pontiff believes he has only to open the gates in order that we may come in? Moreover it made them feel the loss they had sustained in the banishment of Calvin; they looked around for a man to reply to Sadoleto, for they felt that his letter must not remain unanswered, but they looked in vain. One name was on every lip as that of the man who alone was adequate to the task of replying, but with the ink not yet dry in which the banishment of the man who bore that name was written, they dared not utter it. This showed, however, that the tide had begun to turn. Calvin meanwhile got a copy of the cardinal's letter at Strasburg, and without waiting to be asked by the Genevans he answered it forthwith, and in such fashion that Sadoleto made no second attempt of the sort.[1] Calvin's reply to Sadoleto was the work of six days, and it remains a monument of his genius. He begins by paying a fine compliment to the cardinal's learning and eloquence, and goes on to express his wonder at the "singular love and goodwill" which Sadoleto, an entire stranger to the people of Geneva, had so suddenly conceived for them, "of which nevertheless no fruit ever appeared." "If," continues Calvin, "it was ambition and avarice," as Sadoleto had hinted, which moved him in separating from Rome, what a blunder had he fallen into! "Certain it is," said he, "if I had paid regard to my personal advantage, I should never have separated from your faction." "Was not," he asks, "our shortest way of attaining to wealth and honours to accept from the first the conditions which you have offered us?" Apostates you call us, says Calvin. "The men of Geneva, extricating themselves from the slough of error in which they were sunk, have returned to the doctrine of the Gospel, and this thou callest abandoning the truth of God. They have withdrawn from Papal tyranny, and this thou sayest is to separate from the Church!" "We contradict the Fathers!" exclaims the Reformer, adverting to another charge the cardinal

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini.* Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 115,116. Bungener, pp. 136–145.

had brought against the Protestants, “we are more nearly in agreement with antiquity than you our opponents, as thou knowest, Sadoleto, and we ask for nothing else than to see restored that ancient face of the Church which has been torn to pieces and almost destroyed by the Pope and his faction.” And after reminding the cardinal of what his learning made him well acquainted with, namely, the condition of the Church during the days of both the Greek and the Latin Fathers, Calvin asks him, “Wilt thou call that man an enemy of antiquity who, full of zeal for ancient piety, longs to restore in their first splendour the things which are now corrupted? With what right are we accused of having subverted the ancient discipline by the very party that has abolished it?”

With a few strokes Calvin next draws a picture of the state in which the Reformers found the schools and the pulpits: nothing taught in the first but “pure sophistries,” “tangled and twisted scholastic theology,” “a kind of secret magic.” And as for the pulpits, “there were no sermons from which foolish old women did not learn more dreams than they could relate in a month by their own fireside.” Was it a crime to have replaced that rubbish by a theology drawn from the Word of God, and to have silenced the monks by filling the pulpits with preachers of the ancient Gospel?

There follow some noble passages on justification by faith, on Christ’s sole mediatorship, on worship, the Lord’s Supper, the ministry, the Church, and then comes the close, in which the Reformer reproduces, though in a contrary sense, Sadoleto’s prosopopoeia. The cardinal had cited Calvin and his brethren as criminals before the judgment-seat of God. Calvin obeys this trumpet-summons. He comes to the dread tribunal to which the cardinal had cited him, and he thus pleads: “I saw Christ cast into oblivion, and become unprofitable; what was I to do? I saw the Gospel stifled by superstition; what was I to do? I saw the Divine Word voluntarily ignored and hidden; what was I to do? If he is not ‘to be reputed a traitor who, seeing the soldiers dispersed and scattered, raises the captain’s ensign, rallies them, and restores their order,’ am I a traitor for having raised amid the disbanded Church the old banner of Jesus Christ? For it is not a new and ‘strange ensign which I have unfurled, but thy noble standard, O Lord!’” He adds, with reference to Sadoleto’s taunt that they had broken the peace, “Did they [the Romanists] not most suddenly and furiously betake themselves to the sword and the gibbet? Did they not think that their sole resource was in arms and cruelty?” They have given us in default of other consecration that of tribulation and of blood. We know what we have done, and in whom we have believed, and “heaven grant, Sadoleto, that thou and thine may one day be able to say as much sincerely.”[1]

[1] *Ad J. Sadoletum Responsio—Opp. Jo. Calvini,* vol. viii., pp. 105–115; Amstel., 1667.

Thus did Calvin, though banished, continue to cover Geneva with his shield. The writing ran quickly through Europe. Luther read it and was delighted beyond measure with it. His eye at once discerned its freedom, strength, and majesty. "Here," said he, "is a writing which has hands and feet. I rejoice that God raises up such men. They will continue what I have begun against Antichrist, and by the help of God they will finish it."

Calvin has now become, or is very soon to become, the centre of the movement, whose present position in Christendom is somewhat perilous. A crisis had arrived in the great conflict between Romanism and Protestantism. It was clear to both parties that the breach that divided them must be healed now, and that if a settlement was much longer delayed the controversy would grow into an embittered and sanguinary war, prolonged from decade to decade, and it might be for a still longer period. During the years that Calvin resided at Strasburg, the Popish and Protestant worlds assembled in not fewer than four successive conventions, to try whether it was not possible to frame a basis on which the two Churches might come together, and peace be restored to Christendom. The initiative of these conferences was taken by the emperor on the part of the Romanists; and indeed of the two parties it was the latter that had the stronger reasons for holding out the olive-branch. Twenty-five years had now passed away in their efforts to put down Protestantism, and instead of being able to recount a series of victories, they had little to show save a list of defeats. All things worked contrariwise for them. If they held a disputation, it was only to expose the weakness of their champions; if they convoked a synod, it was only to hear a Protestant Confession; if they held a conference, it was to have some new concession wrung from them; if they planted stakes, they found they were but sowing the seed of new martyrs; if they leagued among themselves in order to strike a combined blow, some untoward event fell out, some ally betrayed them, or the ominous figure of the Turk started up, and so their plans came to nothing. The bow broke just as the arrow was about to be let fly.

And, then, what at this hour was the attitude of the several nations as regarded their obedience to the Papal chair? One half of the European States had placed themselves, or were hastening to do so, beneath the banner on which was inscribed: "An open Bible and a free conscience." The two Saxonys, Prussia, Hesse-Cassel, Wurtemberg, with some smaller States, and a multitude of free cities, were now ranged round the great PROTEST. The better half of Switzerland was lost to Rome. Few, save the herdsmen of the mountains, now received her pardons and sent their money in return. Denmark and Sweden had revolted. The powerful kingdoms of England and France were at that hour trembling in the balance. Everywhere men were kicking against Rome's ancient and sacred sway, and soon, on the north of the Alps, few subjects would remain to her. Parliaments were passing laws

to check her usurpations; her bulls were dishonoured; palls were at a discount; tithes, annats, reservations, and expectatives were but as the gleanings after the harvest; palmers and anchorets were disappearing from her highways; men were burying her relics instead of worshipping them; the cowl and frock were being abandoned for the garb of honest labour; schools and hospitals were replacing monasteries and convents; the reading of the Scriptures was supplanting the counting of beads, and the preaching of the Gospel the chanting of litanies and masses.

And then, in addition to all these losses, when the Romanists looked at the other side they could not conceal from themselves the strength of the Protestant position. Not only did the Reformation divide Christendom—not only did it receive the support of States, princes, and free cities—but, further, it had created a multitude of agencies, which were continually at work multiplying its adherents, and extending still farther its area. Foremost among these were the *Sacred Oracles* in the mother-tongue of the nations. In the rear of this Divine instrumentality came nearly all the men of thought, of letters, and of eloquence which the age could boast. Ever and anon Luther's pen was darting flashes of light over Europe. Recently had come that magnificent demonstration, the *Institutes.* That work was moving up and down in Christendom, an embattled phalanx of argument, compared with which the legions of the emperor were as weakness. Around the two great chiefs, Luther and Calvin, were a hundred keen and disciplined intellects; ready to expose a sophism, to confront a falsehood, to laugh at folly, and to castigate hypocrisy and arrogance. Moreover, the habit of free inquiry, and the art of combining—of which the Schmalkald League furnished an example, which was not lost upon its opponents—had come to the aid of that cause which had given them birth. In fine, among the forces on the side of Protestantism, not the least was the spirit of its disciples. They could face the dungeon and the rack, the scaffold and the stake, and not quail; and in the room of those who were burned to ashes today, hundreds would start up tomorrow to grasp the falling standard, and bear it onward to victory. These considerations could not but force themselves upon the minds of the Romanists, and weigh with them in the overtures they now made to the Protestants. From the far-off banks of the Tagus came a letter full of not unfriendly professions. Writing in the Alcazar at Toledo, the 25th of November, 1539, the emperor invited the Protestant princes of Germany to meet and try whether they could not devise measures of conciliation.'[1] Charles intimated at the same time that the King of France, with whom he was then at peace, was equally solicitous on this point with himself.

[1] Sleidan, *Hist. Reform.*, bk. xii., p. 245.

In pursuance of this letter, the princes assembled next February at Frankfort. Eldo, Archbishop of Lunden, represented the emperor at the conference. Calvin, accompanied by Sturm, went thither, at the urgent solicitations of his brethren, mainly with the view of watching over the interests of the Swiss Churches, and of having the pleasure of meeting and conferring with Melanchthon. The debates were long, but the conclusions reached were of no great moment. All resulted in a truce, which was to last for fifteen months, to permit a convention of theologians and learned men to meet and discuss the steps necessary for quieting the religious troubles. Without the truce the members would not have been sure of their heads. Meanwhile, prosecutions against the Protestants in the imperial chamber were to be dropped, and no one on either side was to be disturbed on account of his religion. The Protestants thought they saw the cloven foot in the attempts to confine this agreement to those of the Augsburg Confession. The emperor had the best reasons for excluding the Swiss from its benefits. He knew that should the German and Swiss Reformers combine, and form one Protestant camp, extending from the Baltic to the banks of the Rhone, and the foot of the Pennine mountains, the cause of Rome would be lost north of the Alps, and his own dynastic projects along with it.[1]

We turn with a peculiar pleasure from the chamber of conference, to the yet more sacred chamber where the Reformation's greatest scholar, and its greatest theologian, were about to commune together. From the first moment Melanchthon and Calvin understood each other. Of Melanchthon's inviolable loyalty at heart to the Protestant creed Calvin had not a doubt. The unwise concessions into which his love of peace at times betrayed him, though they drew forth Calvin's rebuke, never shook his confidence in him. A free interchange of sentiments on the nature of the Eucharist took place, and Calvin, as we learn from his letters to Farel, was delighted to find that Melanchthon's opinions approximated to his own, although his veneration for Luther kept him from saying so in public. Future discussions, however, showed that the unanimity was not quite so great as Calvin had hoped. Their friendship, nevertheless, continued unbroken throughout their lives, and yielded its fruits to the Church of God. How deep and tender Calvin's love for Melanchthon was, is shown by the touching words written after the grave had closed over the latter; "O Philip Melanchthon—for it is thou whom I address—thou who now livest at the hand of God with Christ, awaiting us on high till we are gathered with thee into blessed repose—a hundred times hast thou said to me when, wearied with toil and vexation, thou didst lean thy head upon my bosom—Would to God, would to God, that I might die upon that bosom! As for me, later, a hundred times have I wished that it had been granted us to be

[1] Sleidan, bk. xii$_o$ p. 247.

together. Certainly thou wouldst have been bolder to face struggles, more courageous to despise envy and calumny. Then, also, would have been suppressed the malignity of many whose audacity increased in proportion to what they called thy pusillanimity."[1]

There is one other meeting that would have had greater interest for us than even that which we see now taking place. It was intensely longed for on one side at least. Writing to Luther, Calvin says, "Oh, if I could fly towards thee, and enjoy thy society, were it but for a few hours! "One cannot help asking, had Luther and Calvin met, which would have appeared the greater? Would the breach in the Protestant host have been healed, and the Wittenberg and Genevan camps been merged into one? Would the splendour of Luther have paled before the calm majesty of Calvin, or would the mighty strength of the latter have bowed before the swift intuition and dazzling genius of the former? But it was not to be that these two men should ever see one another in the flesh. They were formed to dwell in spheres apart. The impetuous Luther was given to the Teutonic nations, which needed his enthusiasm to kindle them. Calvin was placed amid the excitable and volatile peoples of the South, where his severe logic and love of order helped to curb their tendency to excess and their passion to theorise. Had Luther gone to France—and there was a moment, outside the gate of Augsburg, on the occasion of his flight from Cajetan, when he thought of turning his horse's head in that direction—he would have kindled a conflagration by his eloquence, which, after speedily blazing up, would as speedily have sunk down and died out. And had Calvin, when he first visited Strasburg, instead of turning southward to Basle, gone forward to Wittenberg, and made Germany the scene of his labours, as he had some thoughts of doing, he would there doubtless have been able to plant his system of Church order, but without that amount of enthusiasm on the part of those who submitted to it, necessary to give it permanency, or to carry it over Christendom, while the South would have become a prey to the pantheistic theories of such men as Ochin and Servetus. What a beautiful ordering in the gifts of these two men, in the place assigned to each in the field, and the time when they entered it! Luther had been the centre in the first act of the great drama. That was now closing, and at the centre of the second act, which was about to open, Calvin stands up, with an enthusiasm as great, but a logic more severe, to complete and crown the work of his predecessor.

[1] Bungener, p. 152.

CHAPTER XIII.

ABORTIVE CONFERENCES AT HAGENAU AND RATISBON.

Convention at Hagenau—Attempt to Steal a March on the Protestants—Firmness of the German Princes—Conference at Ratisbon—Perplexities of Charles V.—Cardinal Contarini—Programme—Auspicious Beginning of Conference—Agreement on several Doctrines—The Dead-lock of Transubstantiation—Hopes come to Nothing—Would Conciliation have been a Blessing to Christendom?—It would have given Entombment to Protestantism, and New Life to Atheistic Revolution.

THE next convention was held at Hagenau, the 25th of June, 1540. The assembly was presided over by King Ferdinand. The Protestant princes were represented by their deputies. A great number of divines were present, and among others Calvin. Melanchthon was taken ill on the road, and was thus unavoidably absent. Ferdinand, on the ground that the Protestant princes were not present, adjourned the assembly, to meet at Worms on October 28th.[1] Meanwhile, it was attempted to steal a march on the Protestants by requiring them to restore the buildings, lands, and revenues which they had taken from the Papists, and to promise that no new members should be received into the Schmalkald League. These proposals were indignantly rejected. First, let the religious question be decided, said the Protestants, and then the details will adjust themselves. They had robbed no man: the appropriated Church revenues they had devoted to the religious instruction of the people, to the support of schools, and the relief of the poor. And as to refusing the protection of the League to those who were persecuted for righteousness' sake, they spurned the idea of binding themselves to so dastardly a policy.[2] Calvin, who was not readily imposed upon, nor easily satisfied, bears the highest testimony in his letters to the zeal of these men, as he witnessed it at Frankfort. Sooner than dissolve their League, and abandon defenceless provinces and towns to the will of the emperor and the Pope, they would see their cities ploughed as a field, their castles razed, and themselves led to the scaffold.[3]

The conference assembled at Worms, as appointed, but on the third day came letters from the emperor dissolving it, and summoning it to meet, with greater solemnity, at Ratisbon, in January, 1541.[4] The members not arriving in time, the Diet of Ratisbon opened only in April. Calvin, deputed by the city of Strasburg, went thither, though he expected little from the conference, mistrusting the sincerity of the Roman managers, and knowing, perhaps

[1] Sleidan, bk. xiii., p. 268.
[2] *Ibid.*, bk. xiii., pp. 267, 268.
[3] Calvin's Letter to Farel, April, 1539—Jules Bonnet, vol. i., p. 114.
[4] Sleidan, bk. xiii., p. 270. Ruchat, tom. v., p. 151.

better than any other man, that an impossible task had been assigned to them when they were required to reconcile essentially antagonistic creeds. And yet many things seemed to prognosticate a prosperous issue to this the fourth attempt, within the space of two years, to effect the pacification of Christendom. First, the position of the emperor's affairs made it clearly his interest to be on friendly terms with the princes of the Protestant League. He was raising armies, expending vast sums, wasting his years and strength, and taxing his genius in toilsome expeditions and mighty undertakings, and yet the perplexities around his throne were thickening instead of lessening. Verily, he had no need to court new difficulties. Charles spoke truth, doubtless, when, by the mouth of Grenville, he opened the Diet with these words: "When he perceived how religion had torn and rent asunder the Empire, and given occasion to the Turk to pierce almost into the bowels of Germany, it had been a great grief to him, and, therefore, for many years past he had, with their own consents, been essaying ways of pacification."[1]

The Pope, Paul III., leaned scarcely less than the emperor towards conciliation. In token of his friendly disposition he sent Gaspar Contarini as his legate to the conference. A patrician of Venice by birth, Cardinal Contarini was of pure life, of devout disposition, and of liberal opinions. He had been a member of "The Oratory of Divine Love," an association which sought to promote a large reform of Church abuses, and on the important doctrine of justification approximated very closely to Luther. Not less desirous were the Protestant divines of healing the breach, provided it could be done without burying the Reformation. When they thought of the sacrifices which the continuance of the struggle implied—the desolations of war, and the blood that must flow on field and scaffold—they shrunk from the responsibility of hastily closing the door against any really well-meant attempt at union. At no former moment had peace seemed so near.

The proceedings began by Grenville presenting to the conference a book, which he said had received the emperor's approval, and which he wished them to adopt as the basis of their discussions. The book consisted of a series of chapters or treatises on the doctrines, the rites, the Sacraments, the orders, and the constitution and powers of the Church. The members were to say what in it they agreed with, and what in it they dissented from.[2] The Pope naturally wished the weighty point of his supremacy to be first taken in hand and settled; but Contarini, departing from his instructions in this matter, postponed the question of the Pope's powers to the end, and gave precedence to the doctrines of the Christian system. For some time all went smoothly enough. A very tolerable unanimity was found to exist between the two sides

[1] Sleidan, bk. xiii., p. 275.
[2] Sleidan, bk. xiii., pp. 276, 277.

of the assembly on the doctrines of original sin, free-will, and justification. Calvin was astonished to find the Romanists conceding so much. "We have retained," says he, writing to Farel, "all the substance of the true doctrine. If you consider with what kind of men we have had to agree, you will acknowledge that much has been accomplished."[1] As yet, no cloud appeared in the sky of the conference.

Next came the subject of the Church. The conference was agreed on the constitution of the Church; as regards its authority it began to be seen that there were two parties in the assembly. To obviate immediate danger, it was proposed to pass on to other questions, and leave this one for future settlement.[2]

The Sacraments followed. The Diet was nearing the more critical questions. There was here some jarring, but the Protestants conceded the ceremonies as things indifferent, and the conference was able to proceed. At last came the consideration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "There," said Calvin, "stood the impassable rock which barred the way to farther progress."[3] "I had," continues Calvin, "to explain in Latin what were my sentiments. Without fear of offence, I condemned that peculiar local presence; the act of adoration I declared to be altogether insufferable."[4]

We now behold the representatives of the Popish and Protestant worlds gathered in presence of the Roman sphinx—the stupendous mystery of transubstantiation. If they shall solve the riddle— reconcile the dogma to Scripture, to reason, and to sense—all will be well; they will have united the two Churches and pacified Europe; but if they shall fail, there awaits Christendom a continuance of divisions, of strifes, of wars. One after another comes forward with his solution, in the hope that, like another Œdipus, he will read the riddle, disarm the monster, and avert from Christendom the untold calamities with which it is threatened. First come the Protestants. "Philip and Bucer," says Calvin, "have drawn up ambiguous and insincere formulas, to try whether they could satisfy the opposite party by yielding nothing."[5] He bears his testimony to their "best intentions," but expects nothing of their "equivocation." Next come the Romanists. They enveloped the whole in a cloud of mystification. The riddle is still unread; the mystery still stands unsolved, despite the learning, the wit, and the sophistry which have been expended upon it to make it comprehensible; it is as defiant of Scripture, of reason, and of sense as ever.[6]

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[1] Letters of Calvin—Jules Bonnet, vol. i., p. 236.
[2] Letter to Farel, 11th May, 1541—Jules Bonnet.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Letter to Farel, 11th May, 1541—Jules Bonnet.
[6] Sleidan, bk. xiv., pn. 278—282. Calvin, *Letters*, Nos. 63, 65, 67, 70. Paul Henry, *Life and Times of Calvin*, vol. i., pp. 230—237.

At this stage an incident partly tragic and partly grotesque came to diversify the proceedings of the convention. One day, the veteran controversialist, Dr. Eck, being worsted by Melanchthon in an argument on the Eucharist, went home in a rage, and drank so deep at supper as to drown his sense of discomfiture and contract a fever at the same time. His gruff stentorian voice was heard no more in the debates, nor his tall, broad-shouldered and burly form seen in the conference hall.[1]

Afterwards the questions of private masses, invocation of saints, and the Pope's supremacy received a languid discussion, but with no satisfactory results. The skies, so fair when the conference assembled, were now overcast with heavy clouds. The promise of peace had failed. The emperor dissolved the Diet, with the promise, always forthcoming when affairs had got into a dead-lock, that a General Council would speedily convene, and that should the Pope refuse to call such, he himself would convoke a Diet of the Empire for the settlement of all the religious differences of Christendom.[2]

So ended the Diet of Ratisbon. Had it succeeded in uniting the two Churches, the history of he world would henceforward have been different. Would it have been better? We answer unhesitatingly, it would have been worse. God's plans are not only larger and wiser but more beneficent than the thoughts of man. A union on only such terms as were then possible would have closed the career of Protestantism; for a half-Reformation would have been no Reformation. Would then the Church of Rome, her doctrines modified, we shall suppose, her worst abuses corrected, and her sway become more tolerant, have resumed possession of Europe, and pursued her course unobstructed by rival or opponent? We reply emphatically, it would not. The Popish champions altogether overlook the forces which were at work in Christendom, when they lay the misfortunes of their Church at the door of Protestantism. The Church of Rome was morally bankrupt before the Reformers arose. The nations had lost faith in her. The pantheistic principles which had been springing up ever since the twelfth century were fast coming to a head, and but for the moral breakwater which Luther and Calvin erected, they would by the end of the sixteenth century have broken out and swept over Europe in all the fury of a destructive revolution. Protestantism did not awaken, it mitigated the angry feelings of which Rome was the object, and diverted them into the channel of Scriptural Reformation. The Christendom of that day was called to make its choice between the teachers of morality and order, such as Calvin, and the apostles of atheism, with its attendant crimes, revolutions and woes, such as Castellio and Servetus. Unhappily the Roman Church mistook her friends for her foes. We would ask, how has it

[1] M. Adamus, *Vita Melanchthonis*, p. 340. Calvin, however, calls it apoplexy (Ep. 32). Eck died two years later of a second attack of apoplexy. (Seckendorf, ii., parag. 112.)

[2] Sleidan, bk. xiv., p. 283.

fared with her in those countries which remained Popish? Is it in lands where the Reformation established itself, or in those where it was suppressed, that the "Church" has been most exempt from spoliation, and her priests from violence? and to what shore is it that they flee in those oft-recurring tempests of revolution that sweep across the Popish world?

The Reformation in its Lutheran form had now culminated. It had planted in the mind of Christendom the great radical principle of renovation, "salvation through grace;" but, instead of building upon it an organised Church, to act as a moral breakwater against the godless principles ready to rush in and fill the void caused by the partial demolition of Romanism, the Reformation in Germany was passing into political action; it was running to seed. What was needed was a vigorous Church, what was formed was a political league. A new centre had to be found for the principle of Protestantism, where, disentangling itself from political alliances, it might grow into a great purifying and restraining power, and be seen by the world, not simply as a body of doctrines, but as a new and holy society. While a number of cunning artificers at Ratisbon are trying to repair the old fabric and keep it from falling, a new building is rising elsewhere.

CHAPTER XIV.

CALVIN RETURNS TO GENEVA.

The Movement must resume its March—Calvin at Strasburg—The Libertines at Geneva—Calvin's Four Persecutors Perish—Tide Turns at Geneva—Deputations to entreat Calvin's Return—The Idea of going back Terrible to him —Bucer's Adjuration—Starts on his Return Journey—Enters Geneva—Reception—Lessons Learned in Exile— Returns Fitter for his Work—Idelette de Bure—His Salary, &c.

HAD the Diet at Ratisbon succeeded in finding, what both parties in the convention so sincerely laboured to discover, a basis of agreement, Calvin would not have returned to Geneva. There would have been no need to seek a new centre for a Reformation which had run its course, and was about to disappear from the stage. It was saved, however, from the entombment which agreement would have given it. The movement is again to resume its march. Its second and grandest act is about to open, and accordingly Calvin is on his way back to Geneva.

While living honoured in Strasburg, each day occupied in fruitful labours, interrupted only by attendances at imperial Diets, the public feeling respecting the Reformer had been undergoing a great change on the banks of the Leman. The faction of the Libertines, reinforced by Anabaptists and Papists, grew every day more ungovernable. Licentiousness and tumult ran riot now that Calvin was gone.[1] The year 1539 passed in the most outrageous saturnalia.[2] The Council, helpless in the face of these disorders, began to repent of what they had done. The four syndics who had been mainly active in the banishment of Calvin were now out of the way. One had perished on the scaffold, charged with the crime of surrendering Genevese territory; another, accused of sedition, had attempted to escape by his window, but, falling headlong, broke his neck. His fellow-citizens, on learning his tragic end, called to mind that he had said tauntingly to Calvin, "Surely the city-gate was wide enough to let him go out."[3] The two remaining syndics, implicated in the same charges, had betaken themselves to flight. All this happened in the same year and the same month.

It was now 1540. The city registers show the daily rise in the tide of popular feeling for Calvin's recall. September 21st: the Council charged Amy Perrin, one of its members, "to find means, if he could, to bring back Master

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 96.

[2] The two foreign pastors, Marcourt and Morand, we find complaining to the Council in February, 1539, of the dissoluteness of Geneva, the masquerades, indecent songs, balls, dances, blasphemies, and of persons walking naked through the town to the sound of drums and fifes. (Ruchat, v. 112.)

[3] M. Roset, MS. *Chron*. Beza, *Vita Calvini.*

Calvin." October 13th: it was resolved to write a letter "to Monsieur Calvin that he would assist us." October 19th: the Council of Two Hundred resolved, "in order that the honour and glory of God may be promoted," to seek all possible means to have "Master Caulvin as preacher." October 20th: it was ordered in the General Council, or Assembly of the People, "to send to Strasburg to fetch Master Jean Calvinus, who is very learned, to be minister in this city."[1] The enthusiasm of the citizens is thus described by an eyewitness, Jacques Bernard: "They all cried out, 'Calvin, Calvin! we wish Calvin, the good and learned man, and true minister of Jesus Christ!'"[2]

Three several deputations did Geneva send to entreat the return of the man whom, two years before, it had chased from its gates with contumely and threats. The same two cantons, Bern and Zurich, whose approaches in the way of mediation it then repulsed, were now asked to use their good offices with the magistrates of Strasburg, in order to overcome their unwillingness to forego Calvin's services. In addition to the Senate's advances, numerous private citizens wrote to the Reformer in urgent terms soliciting his return. These letters found Calvin already on his way to the Diet at Worms, whither the deputy of Geneva followed him.[3] The repentant city opens its gates. Shall he go back?

It was a critical moment, not in Calvin's history only, but in that of Christendom; though neither Calvin nor any other man could then estimate the momentous issues that hung upon his decision. The question of going back threw him into great perplexity. The two years he had already passed in Geneva, with the contradictions, perils, and insults with which they were filled up, rose vividly before him. If he returns, shall he not have to endure it all over again? Going back was like lying down on a bed of torture. The thought, he tells us, filled him with horror. "Who will not pardon me," he writes, "if I do not again willingly throw myself into a whirlpool which I have found so dangerous?"[4] He appeared to himself of all men the most unfit for a career so stormy as that which awaited him at Geneva. In a sense he judged correctly. He was naturally shy. His organisation was exquisitely strung. Sensitive and tender, he recoiled from the low arts and the coarse abuse of rough and unprincipled opponents. It was sympathy and love that he sought for. But it is exactly on a constitution like this that it is possible to graft the finest and loftiest courage. Qualities like these, when found in combination with high conscientiousness and lofty aims, as they were in Calvin's case, become changed under discipline, and in fitting circumstances develop into their op-

[1] Bungener, pp. 147, 148.

[2] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 155.

[3] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 152.

[4] Calvin to Farel, 27th October, 1540—Jules Bonnet, No. 54.

posites. The shrinking delicacy or timidity which quails before a laugh or a sneer disappears, and a chivalrous boldness comes in its room, which finds only delight in facing danger and confronting opposition. The sense of pain is absorbed in the conscious grandeur of the aim, and the sensitive man stands up in a courage which the whole world can neither bend nor break.

Calvin disburdened his mind to his brethren, telling them with what apprehensions this call to his former field of labour had filled him, yet that he would obey, should they deem it his duty to go. They knew his worth, and were reluctant indeed to part with him; but when they thought on Geneva, situated on the borders of Italy and France, and offering so many facilities for carrying the light into these countries, they at once said, "This is your post of service." Not yet, however, could Calvin conquer his aversion. The city on the banks of the Leman was to him a "chamber of torture;" he shuddered to enter it. Bucer stood forward, and with an adjuration similar to that which Farel had formerly employed to constrain him to abide in Geneva, he constrained Calvin to return to it. Bucer bade him beware of the punishment of Jonas for refusing to go and preach repentance to the Ninevites.[1] This was enough; the die was cast: mobs might rage, faction might plot, a hundred deaths might await him in Geneva, he would go nevertheless, since duty called him.

He now began to prepare for his journey. Loaded with many marks of honour by the magistrates of Strasburg, he bade adieu to that city. A mounted herald, sent from Geneva, rode before him. He travelled slowly, halting at Neuchâtel to compose some differences which had sprung up in the flock of Farel, and solace himself a little while in the society of the most loved of all his friends, before crossing the territory of the Vaud, and resuming his great task. On the 13th of September we behold him entering the gates of Geneva, his face still pale, but lighted up with his earnest look and eagle eye. He climbs, amid the reverend gaze of the citizens, the steep and narrow Rue des Chanoines, and takes up his abode in a house prepared for him beforehand at the head of that street, with its little garden behind, and a glorious vista of lake and mountains beyond—the broad blue Leman, with the verdant and woody Jura on this hand, and the great Alps, in all their snowy magnificence, on that. It has been often asked, was Calvin insensible to these glories? And it has been answered, he was, seeing he says not a word about them in his letters. No more does St. Paul in his, though his labours were accomplished amid scenes of classic fame, and physical beauty. The general, in the heat of action, has no time to note the scenery that may lie around the battle-field. What to Calvin was Geneva but a battle-field? it was the centre of a great

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini.* Ruchat, tom. v. p. 157. Letter to James Bernard, 1st March, 1541—Jules Bonnet, No. 62.

conflict, which enlarged year after year till it came to be co-extensive with Christendom, and every movement in which Calvin had to superintend and direct. The grandeur of the natural objects that surrounded him, at times, doubtless fixed his eye and tranquillised his soul, but with the alternations of hope and fear, sorrow and triumph, filling his mind as the battle around him flowed or ebbed, he may well be excused if he refused to sink the Reformer in the painter.

In being sent into exile Calvin was, in fact, sent to school. Every day of his sojourn at Strasburg his powers were maturing, and his vision enlarging, and when at last he returns to Geneva he is seen to be fully armed for the great fight that awaits him there. The study of his character, previous to his expatriation, reveals these defects, which, if not corrected, might have seriously marred his success. He yearned too strongly for sympathy—we do not say praise—with his work and his aims. His own delight in what was true and lofty was so intense that he reckoned too readily on finding the same in others, and was in the same proportion discouraged when he failed to find it. He must learn to do the work for the work's sake, irrespective altogether of censure or sympathy, save the sympathy of One, the Master even. This first infirmity begat a second, a guilelessness bordering on simplicity. He thought that he had but to show himself actuated by upright and high aims in order to disarm opposition and conciliate friends and fellow-labourers. He did not make sufficient allowance for the short-sightedness, the selfishness, the craft, the cruelty that are in the heart of man. But the deep wound he received in "the house of his friends" helped to cure him of this weakness. He knew better than before what was in man. The sharpest injuries he saw were to come not from the Romanists, but from professed Protestants. He now stood armed on this side.

But the greatest defect in the character of the Reformer grew out of one of his more notable excellences. We refer to the intensity and tenacity with which he laid hold on his object. This was apt to lead to the too exclusive concentration of his powers on the task or the spot that engaged him for the time. It tended, in short, to isolation. Up to his first coming to Geneva he had lived only in French circles; the greater world of the Reformation he had not entered; and had he never made acquaintance with a wider sphere, there was a danger of his being only the man of Geneva, and giving to a little State what was meant for Christendom. He must go forth, he must tread German earth, he must breathe German air, he must survey from this post of observation the length and breadth of the great movement, at the centre of which is his own permanent place, and for three successive years must his eye be kept fixed on that wide field, till what is merely national or denominational has dropped out of view, or at least assumed its proportional importance, and only what is œcumenical and eternal remains. Here at Strasburg he will

associate not with scholars and burghers only, but with practical Reformers, with princes, and with the leading minds of many various nationalities; and thus we find that when a second time he presents himself at the gates of Geneva, he is no longer the Frenchman simply, he is of no nation because of all nations. To the clear, sharp-cut, beautiful genius of France he now adds the robustness of the Teuton. He feels as deeply as ever the necessity of guarding the purity of the Communion-table, for it is the point from which he is to work outward for the regeneration of the Church in the first place, and the State in the second, and accordingly his aims are no longer bounded by the limits of Geneva; they stretch wide around, and the little city becomes the pedestal simply on which he places that spiritual apparatus by which he is to regenerate Christendom.

Calvin, the stern, the severe, insensible alike to Alpine grandeurs and to female loveliness, had married while at Strasburg.[1] Idelette de Bure, the woman who had given her hand to the Reformer, came from Liege, one of the earliest among the cities of the Netherlands which embraced the Gospel. She was a widow. Her modest yet courageous deportment as evinced in facing the perils to which the profession of the Gospel exposed her, her devoted affections and deep-seated piety as shown in ministering to the sick, and watching tenderly over the two children whom she had borne to her former husband, Jean Storder, had won the esteem of Calvin. Many friends from a distance testified their sympathy and joy by attending his nuptials. But why is not his Idelette de Bure by his side when he re-enters Geneva? She is to follow, and to be the modest, loving, and noble-minded companion of the Reformer, during nine of the most laborious and stormy years of his life. Three horses, a carriage, and a sum of money are sent her by the Senate, to bring her to Geneva. A piece of cloth was presented to Calvin for a gown,[2]

[1] Had this been a biography, we should have dwelt at some length on Calvin's matrimonial negotiations; but in a history such details would press out graver matters. The Reformer devolved on his friends the task of providing a wife for him. They *nominated* and he exercised a *veto.* First a lady of noble birth and rich dower was found for him. He did not choose to mate with one above his own degree. He proposed that the lady should learn the French tongue; and, as Calvin had foreseen, she refused. Another lady was named, and Calvin had made advances, but, happily, he discovered in time sufficient reasons for not going farther. At last Bucer proposed one who had lately become a widow, Idelette de Bure, or Van Buren. She was a lady of deep piety, elevation of soul, and Christian courage, "a most choice woman," says Beza. These were the qualities that suited Calvin. The nuptials took place in the end of August, 1540. She was a girdle of strength to her husband. The reader cannot but remark the similarity of the names, Catherine de Bora and Idelette de Bure. They were noble women, but as the wives, the first of Luther and the second of Calvin, both stand in a sort of twilight.

[2] "Pour la robe de Maistre Calvin." His salary was fixed at 500 Genevese florins, about .£120 sterling of our day. He had besides twelve measures of corn, and two casks of wine. For a dwelling the mansion Freyneville was purchased at 260 crowns.

and the pulpit in St. Peter’s was prepared for the preacher: it was fixed against a massive pillar, and placed low, that the speaker might be distinctly audible to all.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL ORDINANCES.

Assembly in the Cathedral—Calvin's Address—Resolves to Stem the Tide of Moral Ruin—Proposal to the Council—The Ecclesiastical Ordinances Drafted—Voted by the People—His Ecclesiastical Government—Four Orders of Ministers—Two in Reality—The *Venerable Company*—Election of Pastors—Consistory—Its Functions—The Council Punishes in the Last Resort—The Ecclesiastical Ordinances the Laws of the State—Freely Accepted by the People—Is this the Inquisition over again?—No—A Theocratic Republic established at Geneva— Bungener's Defence of it.

THE first act done by Calvin and the Senate and people of Geneva was to bow themselves in humiliation before the Eternal Sovereign. Only a day or two after the Reformer's arrival, the great bell Clemence rung out its deep, far-resounding peal over city, lake, and champaign. The citizens flocked to the cathedral to hear again the voice that was dearer to them than ever. Calvin addressed them, dwelling briefly on those awful events which gave so deep a solemnity to the passing time. In the East the Turk was overrunning Hungary, and shedding Christian blood in torrents. Nearer to them the pestilence was ravaging the cities of Germany and the towns on the Rhine. In France and England their brethren were falling by the sword of the persecutor. In Barbary, whither he had gone to fight the Moors, the emperor's fleet and army were perishing by the tempests of the sky. The Reformer called on them to see in these mingled events the hand of God, punishing the nations in his anger. The Sacrament was then dispensed, and the services of the day were closed with a solemn prayer, in which the little city, environed on every side by powerful enemies, cast itself upon the arm of the Almighty.[1]

Without a moment's delay Calvin set about his great task. Everywhere, over the entire face of Christendom, moral ruin was at work. The feeble restraints of the Roman Church were dissolved. The power of the German Reformation was decaying, the political element having acquired the predominance. An outburst of pantheistic doctrines was about to drown Europe in a flood of hideous immoralities and frightful disorders. What was needed was a great moral power, strong enough to awe the atheism that was lifting up its portentous head. This was the Herculean labour to which Calvin was called. He understood it. In his clear, calm judgment, and constructive skill—in his powers of memory and of logic—in a genius equally fitted for speculation or for business—in his intellectual vision which extended wide, yet penetrated deep—in his indomitable patience, inflexible conscientiousness, and profound submission to the Bible, he was the one man, of all then living,

[1] Paul Henry, *Life and Times of Calvin,* vol. i., p. 331. Sleidan, bk. xiv., pp. 284–286.

who possessed the gifts necessary for the work. He would begin by regenerating Geneva, and from Geneva as a centre there would go forth a regenerating influence over the face of Christendom.

Accordingly, on his first appearance before the Council, and before he had been many hours within their walls, he demanded the erection of a court of morals, or ecclesiastical discipline. "Immediately after I had offered my services to the Senate," says he, writing to Farel, "I declared that a Church could not hold together unless a settled government should be agreed on, such as is prescribed to us in the Word of God, and such as was in use in the ancient Church. I requested that they would appoint certain of their number who might confer with us on the subject. Six were then appointed."[1] The Senate's consent had, in fact, been given when it supplicated him to return, for it well knew that he could return not otherwise than as a Reformer.

Such dispatch did Calvin and his colleagues use in this matter, that the draft of the ecclesiastical discipline was presented to the Council on the 28th of September. Its examination was begun and continued till the 27th of October. The project, as definitely amended, was, on the 9th of November, adopted by the Council of Two Hundred; and on the 20th by the Council-General, or Assembly of the People. These ecclesiastical ordinances were farther remodelled, and the final vote of the people took place on the 2nd of January, 1542. "It is," says Bungener, "from that day that the Calvinistic Republic legally dates."[2]

We shall briefly consider this ecclesiastical order and government,—the inner organisation of the Reformation;—the instrument for the regeneration, first of Geneva, next of Christendom. Calvin and the Council are seen working together in the framing of it. The Reformer holds that the State, guiding itself by the light of revelation, can and ought to make arrangements and laws conducive to the maintenance of the Church of God on the earth. He at the same time made what provision the circumstances permitted for the separate and independent working of the Church and the State, each within its own sphere. His plan of Church order was borrowed avowedly from the New Testament. He instituted four orders of men for the instruction and government of the Church—the Pastor, the Doctor, the Presbyter or Elder, and the Deacon., We have here strictly viewed but two orders—the Presbyter and the Deacon—though we have four names. The Presbyter embraces those who both preach and govern, as also others who govern but do not preach. By the Deacon is meant the officer who administered the Church's financial affairs.

The city clergy, the professors of theology, and the rural pastors formed the body known as the *Venerable Company*. The election of pastors was

[1] Calvin to Farel; Geneva, 16th Sept., 1541 —Jules Bonnet, No. 76.
[2] *Calvin: his Life, Labours, and Writings,* bk. iii., chap. 1, p. 180.

conducted in the following manner:—When a pulpit fell vacant, the Company united in a deputation to the Council. In presence of the magistrates the ministerial candidates were subjected to a severe examination, especially as regarded their ability to expound Holy Scripture. The magistrates then retired, and the Company, by a majority of votes, elected one as pastor. The newly-elected, if approved by the Council, was announced to the congregation from the pulpit next Sunday, and the people were invited to send in their objections, if they had any, to the magistrates. The silence of the people confirmed the election, and eight days afterwards the new minister was ordained as pastor, the moderator of the Company presiding at the ceremony. The triple action of the government, the people, and the clergy in the election was a sufficient guarantee against intrigue and favour.[1]

The ecclesiastical authority was wielded by the Consistory, or tribunal of morals. The Consistory was composed of the ministers of the city and twelve laymen. These twelve laymen were elected by the Little Council, confirmed by the Great Council, and finally approved by the people with whom remained the power of objecting to any or all of them if they saw cause. The Consistory met every Thursday. It summoned before it those reported as guilty of immoralities. It admonished them, and, unless they promised amendment, excommunicated them—that is, deposed them from membership in the Church—and in consequence thereof withheld from them the Sacraments. The Consistory had no power to compel attendance before it, and no power to inflict a civil punishment. "It was," says Ruchat, "a purely ecclesiastical chamber, possessing no civil jurisdiction whatever, which it left entirely to the magistrate."[2] It "gives notice" to the Council, and the Council "sees to it." In the infliction of its censures it exercised a rigorous impartiality. It knew nothing of rank or friendship, "punishing," says M. Gaberel, "with equal severity the highest magistrate and the meanest burgess, the millionaire and the peasant."[3]

If the action of the Consistory effected the reformation of the offender, he was straightway restored to his place in the Church; if he remained incorrigible, the case came under the cognisance of the civil jurisdiction. The Council summoned him to its bar, and inflicted punishment—it might be imprisonment, or it might be banishment. The Spiritual Court, looking at the act as an offence against the ecclesiastical ordinances, had visited it with an ecclesiastical censure; the Council, looking at it as a breach of the civil laws, awarded against it a temporal punishment. We ask why this double character of the same act? Because in Geneva the nation was the Church, and the ecclesiastical ordinances were also the laws of the State. They had not only

[1] Gaberel, vol. i., pp. 255, 256.
[2] Ruchat, v., 158, 159.
[3] *Hist, de l'Eglise de Genève;* 1862.

been enacted by the Senate, they had been twice solemnly and unanimously voted by the people. "The people could not afterwards allege," says M. Gaberel, "that they were deceived as to the bearing of the laws they were sanctioning. For several weeks they could meditate at leisure on the articles proposed; they knew the value of their decision, and when twice—on the 20th of November, 1541, and again on the 2nd of January, 1542—they came to the Cathedral of St. Peter's, and, after each article, raised their hands in acceptance of it, the vote was an affair of conscience between God and themselves, for no human power could impose such an engagement. They were 20,000 citizens, perfectly free, and masters of their own town. The Genevese people were absolutely sovereign; they knew no other limit to their legislative power than their own will, and this people voted the ordinances from the first chapter to the last. They engaged to frequent public worship regularly, to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord, to renounce all debauchery, all immoral amusements, to maintain simplicity in their clothing, frugality and order in their dwellings."[1]

It is asked, is not this discipline the old *regime* of Rome over again? Do we not here see an ecclesiastical court investigating and passing sentence, and a civil tribunal coming in and carrying it out? Is not this what the Inquisition did? There are, however, essential differences between the two cases. At Rome there was but one jurisdiction, the Pontifical; at Geneva there were two, the ecclesiastical and the civil. At Rome simple opinions were punishable; at Geneva overt acts only. At Rome the code was imposed by authority; at Geneva it was freely voted by the people. If it was the Inquisition, it was the people who set it up. But the main difference lies here: at Rome the claim of infallibility put conscience, reason, and law out of court; at Geneva the supreme authority was the Constitution, which had been approved and sanctioned by the free conscience of the people.

What was established at Geneva was a theocratic republic. The circumstances made any other form of government hardly possible. The necessities of the city made it imperative that in its legislation the moral should predominate; its very existence depended on this. But even the genius of Calvin could not find means, in so small a State, to give free expression to his views touching the distinction between things spiritual and things secular, nor could he prevent the two jurisdictions at times overlapping and amalgamating. It is strange to us to see blasphemy, unchastity, and similar acts visited with imprisonment or with banishment; but we are to bear in mind that the citizens themselves had made abstinence from these vices a condition of citizenship when they voted the Constitution. They were not only offences against morality, they were breaches of the social compact which had been freely and

[1] Gaberel, tom. i., pp. 269, 270.

unanimously formed. Those who, while the Constitution existed—and it could not exist a moment longer than the majority willed—claimed to be permitted these indulgences, were *logically*, as well as legally, incurring expatriation. Calvin made this very plain when, on one occasion, he advised the Libertines to withdraw, and build a city for themselves. Such a city, verily, would have had neither a long nor a tranquil career.

"The more this legislation has been studied," remarks M. Bungener, "the more is it seen to be in advance of all anterior systems of legislation. The form sometimes surprises us a little by its quaint simplicity, but the grandeur of the whole is not the less evident to those who seek it, and this was about to manifest itself in the history of the humble nation to whom this legislation was to give so glorious a place in the intellectual as well as in the religious world."

"Neither absorbing nor degrading the State," adds M. Bungener, "the Church maintained herself at its side, always free, so far as the Reformer had intended her to be so. This was, indeed, an important, an indispensable element of her influence abroad. A Church visibly in the power of the magistrates of so small a State would have been hearkened to by none. But the Church of Geneva had been put into possession of a free and living individuality. Henceforth it mattered little whether she was small or great, or whether she was at home under the shelter of a small or mighty State. She was the Church of Geneva, the heiress of Calvin. None in Europe, friend or foe, thought of asking more."[1]

[1] *Calvin: his Life, Labours, and Writings,* pp. 186. 187.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW GENEVA.

The Ministry—The Weekly Exercise Visiting Calvin—His Sermons—Studies—Correspondence—From the Centre Watches the Whole Field—Geneva the Dwelling of a Righteous People—Calvin's Aim to make it a Model City—Character of Calvin's *Commentaries*—Two Genevas—The Libertines—Geneva becomes the Thermopylæ of Christendom.

WE have surveyed only the grand outlines. To see the completeness and efficiency of the scheme which Calvin elaborated and set a-working in Geneva for the reinvigoration of the Reformation, let us glance a moment at the details.

First the ministry was cared for. To guard against the entrance of unworthy and incompetent persons into its ranks, candidates were subjected to repeated tests and examinations previous to ordination. The ministry organised, arrangements were made, to secure its efficiency and purity. The pastors were to meet once a week in conference for mutual correction and improvement; each in his turn was to expound a passage of Scripture in presence of the rest, who were to give their opinions on the doctrine delivered in their hearing. The young were to be kept under religious instruction till qualified by their knowledge and their age for coming to the Communion table. Every Friday a sermon was to be preached in St. Peter's, which all the citizens were to attend. Once a year every family was to be visited by a minister and elder, and once every three years a Presbyterial visitation of all the parishes of the State was to take place. Care was also taken that the sick and the poor should be regularly visited, and the hospitals attended to. Never before, nor since perhaps, has a community had the good fortune to be placed under so complete and thorough a system of moral and spiritual training. Calvin must first reform Geneva, if through Geneva he would reform Europe.

It was a Herculean task which the Reformer had set himself. He could find no one to share it with him. Viret and Farel could not be spared from Lausanne and Neuchâtel, and it was on his shoulders alone that the burden rested. The labours which from this time he underwent were enormous. In addition to his Sunday duties as pastor of the parish of St. Peter's, he preached every day of the alternate week. He delivered three theological lectures weekly. Every Thursday he presided in the Consistory. Every Friday he gave a public exposition in St. Peter's. He took his turn with the other ministers in the visitation of the sick, and other pastoral duties. When the plague was in Geneva he offered himself for the service of the hospital, but the Council, deeming his life indispensable to the State, would not hear of his shutting himself up with the pestilence. Day by day he pursued his studies

without intermission. He awoke at five o'clock; his books were brought him and, sitting up in bed, he dictated to an amanuensis. When the hour came to mount the pulpit, he was invariably ready; and when he returned home, he resumed, after a short rest, his literary labours. Nor was this all. From every part of Christendom to which the Reformation had penetrated—from Poland, Austria, Germany, and Denmark, and from the nearer lands of Switzerland, France, and England—came letters daily to him. There were Churches to be organised, theological questions to be solved, differences to be composed, and exigencies to be met. The Reformer must maturely weigh all these, and counsel the action to be taken in each. Without diminishing his tale of daily work, he found time for this immense correspondence.

Calvin had pitched his tent at the centre of a great battle, and his eye ranged over the whole field. There was not a movement which he did not direct, or a champion for whose safety he did not care. If anywhere he saw a combatant on the point of being overborne, he hastened to his aid; and if he descried signs of faint-heartedness, he strove to stimulate afresh the courage of the desponding warrior, and induce him to resume the battle. The froward he moderated, the timid he emboldened, the unskilful he instructed, and the erring he called back. If it happened that some champion from the Roman or from the pantheistic camp stepped forth to defy the armies of Protestantism, Calvin was ever ready to measure swords with him. The controversy commonly was short but decisive, and the Reformed Church usually, for some time after, had rest from all similar attacks. To those on their way to the stake, Calvin never failed to send greeting and consolation, and the martyrs in their turn waved their adieus to him from their scaffolds. The words, "We who are about to die, salute thee!" which greeted the emperor in the Roman circus, were again heard, cried by hundreds of voices, but in circumstances which gave them an ineffably greater sublimity.

While he watched all that was passing at the remote boundary, he did not for one moment neglect the centre. He knew that so vast a plan of operations must repose on a solid basis. Hence his incessant toil to reform the manners, enlarge the knowledge, and elevate the piety of Geneva. He would make it the dwelling of a righteous nation. All who might enter its gates should see, and those at a distance should hear, what that Christianity was which he was seeking to restore to the world, and what mighty and blessed transformations it was able to work on society. Its enemies branded it as heresy, and cursed it as the mother of all wickedness. Come, then, was in effect Calvin's reply; come and examine for yourselves this heresy at its head-quarters. Mark the dens of profligacy and crime rooted out, the habits of idleness and beggary suppressed, the noise of blasphemy and riot extinguished! And with what have they been replaced? Contemplate those nurseries of art, those schools of letters, those workshops where industry plies its honest calling, those

homes which are the abode of love, those men of learning rising up to adorn the State, and those patriots ready to defend it. Blessed heresy that yields such fruits! It was this—a great living proof of the Gospel's transforming power—that Calvin had in view to create in all his labours, whether in his study, or in his chair, or in the pulpit.

And in enlightening Geneva he enlightened Christendom; in instructing his contemporaries he taught, at the same time, the men of after-ages.

Though his pen produced much, it sent forth nothing that was not fully ripened. His writings, though composed in answer to the sudden challenge of some adversary, or to meet an emergency that had unexpectedly arisen, or to fulfil the call of daily duty, bear traces neither of haste nor of immaturity; on the contrary, they are solid, terse, ever to the point, and so fraught with great principles, set forth with lucidity and beauty, that even at this day, after the lapse of three centuries, during which the works of numberless authors have sunk into oblivion, they are still widely read, and are acting powerfully on the mind of Christendom. As an expositor of Scripture, Calvin is still without a rival. His *Commentaries* embrace the whole of the Old and New Testaments, with the exception of the Apocalypse; but though the track is thus vast which his mind and pen have traversed, what a flood of light has he contrived to shed throughout it all! How penetrating, yet how simple; how finely exegetical, yet how thoroughly practical; how logical in thought, yet how little systematic in form are his interpretations of the Holy Oracles! Nor is the unction his *Commentary* breathes its least excellence. Its spirit is that of the Bible itself; its fragrance is of heaven, and the reader's soul is refreshed with the celestial air that he is inhaling.

We now behold Calvin at his post, and we hang with intense interest upon the issue of his experiment. The question is not merely shall he *protestantise* Geneva, but shall he extricate the Reformation from its dead-lock; restore it to its spiritual path; and, having developed it into new vigour and soundness in Geneva, plant it out in other countries. For five years all went smoothly, nothing occurred to obstruct the regular working of the spiritual and intellectual machinery he had set a-going in this little but wisely-selected territory. The fruits were appearing. "By the blessing of God on the labours of Calvin," says Ruchat, "the Church of Geneva put on a new face."[1] But the Libertinism of Geneva had been scotched, not killed. In 1546, it again lifted up its head, and the struggle was renewed. There were, in fact, two Genevas: there was the religious and orderly Geneva, composed of the native disciples of the Gospel, the foreign refugees of Protestantism, and the youth of various nationalities here training under Calvin to bear the banner of the Reformation in the face of fire and sword through all parts of Europe; and there was the

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 159.

infidel and the disorderly Geneva, a small but ominous band, the pioneers in their beliefs and in their practices of those bodies which afterwards at various intervals filled Popish Christendom with their swarms, and made themselves a terror by the physical and moral horrors that marked their career.

"One day, in the large hall of the Cloister, behind the cathedral, Calvin was giving his lecture on divinity. Around his chair hundreds were thronging, and amongst them numbers of future preachers and of future martyrs. Suddenly they hear outside laughter, cries, and a great clamour. This proceeds from fifteen or twenty Libertines, who, out of hatred to Calvin, are giving a specimen of their manners, and of what they call liberty.

"Such is the picture of the two Genevas. One of the two must necessarily perish."[1]

Among the Libertines, however, there were two classes. There was the class of which we have just had a specimen, and there was a class of a much less malignant and dangerous kind. The latter was composed of the old families of Geneva. They loved to dance, to masquerade, to play. Hating the moral restraints which the new Constitution imposed upon them, they raised the cry that the ancient charters had been subverted, and that liberty was in danger. The other party joined in this cry, but under it they meditated far deeper designs than their confederates. Their aim was to root out the belief of a God, and so pull down all the fences of order, and dissolve all the obligations of morality. Both united against Calvin. In Wittenberg, the battle of Protestantism had been against Romanism; in Geneva, it was against Romanism and pantheism combined. Two hosts were now in arms, and their victory would have been equally fatal to Rome and to Geneva. In fact, what we behold at this crisis is an uprising of old paganism. Its Protean vices, the austere and the gay, and its multiform creeds, the superstitious and the pantheistic, are marshalled in one mighty army to overwhelm the Gospel, and devastate the kingdoms of Europe. Geneva must be the Thermopylae of Christendom.

[1] Bungener, p. 208.

CHAPTER XVII.

CALVIN'S BATTLES WITH THE LIBERTINES.

Pierre Ameaux—His Wife—The Spiritual Libertines—A Public Confession—Jacques Gruet—An Execution—Practical Reforms—Amy Perrin—His Ambition—Francois Favre—Madame Perrin Imprisoned—Rage of the Favre Family—The Law Triumphs—The Disorders Renewed—Calvin's Appearance before the Council—His Magnanimity—Peace Restored—Calvin meanwhile Labours indefatigably—Growing Renown of Geneva—The Favres again "Lift up the Horn"—Perrin made First Syndic—Personal Outrages on Calvin—Comparison between Luther and Calvin in their Sufferings—Sublimity of Calvin—His Wife, Idelette de Bure, Dies.

THE battle lasted nine years, and during all that time Calvin "guided Geneva as a vessel on fire, which burns the captain's feet, and yet obeys him."[1] It began in the following way:—Pierre Ameaux was a maker of playing-cards by trade, and a member of the Council of Two Hundred. In 1546, his wife was cited before the Consistory "for several monstrous propositions." She had given herself up to the grossest immorality *on principle.* "It is in this sense," she said—and in this she spoke the common sentiments of the spiritual Libertines —"we ought to take the communion of saints, spoken of in the Apostles' Creed; for this communion can never be perfect till all things are common among the faithful—goods, houses, and body." From the Consistory, Madame Ameaux passed to the Council, which sent her to prison. Her husband, from whom she had learned these doctrines, saw himself condemned in his wife's condemnation. Besides, he had a grudge at Calvin, who had injured his trade by forbidding card-playing. One night, when merry at supper, he said to his friends that "his religion was the true religion, whereas Calvin's religion was deceit and tyranny, and that the magistrates who supported him were traitors."[2] On the words being reported to the Council, Ameaux was compelled to apologise. Calvin deemed this a too lenient sentence for an offence that struck at the fundamental settlement of the State. He demanded that the Council should inflict a more adequate punishment, or put himself and the other ministers on their trial. The Council, who were resolved to uphold the moral discipline, cancelled their first sentence, and pronounced a second and harder one. They adjudged Pierre Ameaux to walk through the streets bareheaded, carrying a lighted candle, and to make confession of his fault on his knees. The anger of the Libertines was great. A few days after, knowing that Calvin was in the pulpit, they rushed into the church and made a disturbance. The Council, feeling that with the Gospel must fall

[1] Bungener, p. 207.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

the republic, set up a gibbet in the Place St. Gervais. The hint was understood and respected.

In the following year (1547) events of greater consequence occurred. One day a paper was found affixed to the pulpit of St. Peter's, full of abuse of the ministers, and threatening them with death.[1] Suspicion fell on Jacques Gruet, who had been seen loitering about the cathedral. From a canon in the Roman Church, Gruet had passed to the ranks of the Libertines, to whose principles his notorious profligacy did honour. The Council arrested him. A domiciliary visit brought to light another trait of his character, which until then was unknown, save to his more intimate friends. His shorn head had not prevented him becoming an infidel, and an infidel of a very malignant type. Certain writings, his own composition, breathing an envenomed hatred of Christ, were discovered in his house. A clue, moreover, was there found to a correspondence tending to deliver up Geneva to the duke. The billet affixed to the pulpit was forgotten in the graver discoveries to which it led. Gruet confessed his guilt, and was condemned and beheaded.[2]

The Council maintained its ground in presence of the Libertines. So far from receding in the way of relaxing the moral code, it advanced in the path of practical reformation. It closed the taverns; it placed under surveillance certain places in the city where jovial parties were wont to assemble; it forbade the baptising of infants by the names of Popish saints, a practice which was understood to be a manifesto against the Protestant rule; and it prohibited the performance of the *Acts of the, Apostles,* a comedy designed, its patrons alleged, for the edifying of the people, but which, in the opinion of the Council, profaned the Word of God, and wasted the public money, "which it were better to expend on the necessities of the poor Protestant refugees with which Geneva was now beginning to be filled." These decided measures only inflamed the rage of the Libertines.[3]

This party now found a leader in an unexpected quarter. We have already mentioned the name of Amy Perrin. Six years before, he had gone all the way to Strasburg to prevail on Calvin to resume his place at Geneva. But he was not to remain always by the side of the Reformer. Perrin was irascible in temper, frivolous in manners, a lover of fêtes and magnificent dresses, and as ambitious of power as he was devoid of the talents for exercising it. He

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[1] Letter to Viret, July 11, 1547. Roset, *Chronicle,* 1546 (from MS. extracts by John M^{c}Crie, son of the biographer of Knox and Melville). Mr. John M^{c}Crie, a young man of the greatest promise, resided some time at Geneva, and made copious extracts from the Town Council Registers, and Roset's *Chronicle,* for the use of Dr. M^{c}Crie, his father, who then meditated writing the Life of Calvin. The Author was most obligingly favoured with the use of these MS. extracts by his late valued friend, the younger M^{c}Crie.

[2] Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 318—320. Bungener, p. 210. Calvin to Viret, July 11, 1547.

[3] Roset, *Chronicle* (MS. extracts by John M^{c}Crie).

aped, in Geneva, the part of Cæsar at Rome; but Calvin saw that his vein fitted him for the comic rather than the heroic, and styled him at times "Cæsar the Comedian." He had been raised, by the voice of the people, to the chief military command in the republic. He was thus not without the means of aiding his party, and of damaging his opponents.

The wife of Perrin was the daughter of François Favre, who was now closing a life that had been not unprofitable to the State, with an old age of shameless immorality. His flagrancies compelled the notice of the Council. His daughter, Madame Perrin, gave a ball, by way of showing how little she regarded either Consistory or Senate. This was a transgression of the ecclesiastical ordinances. All concerned in the affair, including one of the syndics, were summoned before the Consistory. Only two, of whom Perrin was one, acknowledged their fault; the rest set the Ecclesiastical Court at open defiance, and, in accordance with the constitutional law and practice, were summoned before the Council, and ordered to prison. Madame Perrin was among the incarcerated. Her rage knew no bounds; and what added to it was the circumstance of her father being imprisoned about the same time for "debauchery and adultery." The humiliation of the family of Favre was now complete, and their indignation was fierce in proportion. They loudly demanded the abolition of the ecclesiastical laws, and denounced Calvin as bringing back, under another name, the tyranny of the Roman Church.[1] The captain-general, Perrin, took the part of his wife and his father-in-law, and used all his influence both in the Council and in the city against Calvin.

The party increased in numbers and in audacity. They demanded that the Council should strip the Consistory of the power to excommunicate, and take it into its own hands. They hoped, no doubt, that in the hands of the Council excommunication would remain a dead letter, and thus the mainspring of the Calvinistic discipline would be broken.

Calvin saw how much was at stake, and resolved to continue the battle till he should fall at his post or be driven from it. With him it was no trial of strength between himself and the Favre family, which of the two had the greater influence in Geneva, and which should bow the head before the other. The question to be decided was whether the Reformation, in its re-invigorated spiritual phase, should be propagated over Europe or be trampled underfoot by Genevan Libertinism. If it was to spread to other countries, its purity and vigour must be maintained at all hazards in Geneva, its centre. It was from this calm elevation that Calvin surveyed the struggle. Writing to Farel, he says: "I told them that so long as they were in Geneva, they should strive in vain to cast off obedience to the laws; for were there as many diadems in the house of the Favres as frenzied heads, that that would be no

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 317.

barrier to the Lord being superior."[1] As Calvin had foretold, so it happened: the law held its course. The Favres had to digest their humiliation as best they could; the law knew no distinction between them and the lowest citizen.

The battle, however, was not ended; nay, it grew still fiercer. Geneva became yet more divided and demoralised. On the 12th December, 1547, we find the pastors going to the Hotel de Ville "to show that a great deal of insolence, debauchery, dissoluteness, and hatred was prevalent, to the ruin of the State." On the 16th December the Council of Two Hundred met to discuss the measures to be taken. The contention was so hot, and the threats uttered against the pastors, and especially against Calvin, were so violent, that their friends ran to beg the ministers not to appear that day before the Council. Calvin proceeded to the Hotel de Ville alone. An excited crowd was gathered at the door of the Council-hall. "I cast myself," says Calvin, "into the thickest of the crowd. I was pulled to and fro by those who wished to save me from harm." But he adds, "The people shrank from harming me as they would from the murder of a father."[2] Passing through the crowd, Calvin entered the Council-chamber. There fresh combats awaited him. On his entrance the cries grew louder, and swords were unsheathed. He advanced undismayed, stood in the midst of them, and looked round on the scowling faces and naked swords. All were silent. "I know," said Calvin, addressing the members of the Council, "that I am the primary cause of these divisions and disturbances." The silence grew yet more profound, and the Reformer proceeded: "If it is my life you desire, I am ready to die. If it is my banishment you wish, I shall exile myself. If you desire once more to save Geneva without the Gospel, you can try." This challenge brought the Council to their senses. It recalled the memory of the disorders that had made it necessary to implore the interposition of the very man they were now seeking to drive away, to save the republic when on the brink of ruin. The recollection cooled the most irritated spirits present. A republic, of course, could bestow the title of king upon no one; but all felt that the man before them, though he had no crown, was in reality a king. He wore his pastor's cloak right royally, and looked more august than monarch in his robes of state. His magnanimity and wisdom procured him a submission that could not have been more instant or more profound though he had carried sceptre and sword. Peace was established between the two parties, and Calvin, in prospect of the Communion at the approaching Christmas, held out his hand to Perrin.[3] The members of Council, holding up their right hands, signified their desire that past feuds

[1] Letter to Farel, No. 163—Bonnet, vol. ii., p. 39.

[2] Letter to Viret, No. 211—Bonnet, vol. ii., p. 135. This scene made so deep an impression on the mind of Calvin that he recalled it seventeen years afterwards, on death-bed, in his farewell to the ministers of Geneva.

[3] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 327. Bungener, p. 215.

should be buried, and in token of conciliation a banquet took place at the town-hall.[1]

But the Reformer cherished no delusive hopes: he knew that between parties so diametrically divided in principle there could be no lasting truce. The storm had lulled, but all through the year 1548 it continued to mutter. In the midst of these tempests, his pen was not for a moment idle. His genius, with concentrated power, continued to produce and send forth those defences and expositions of the Protestant system which were so mightily useful in extending the Reformation and building it up in other lands, and which, year by year, lifted higher into the world's view, and invested with a greater glory, that city from which they emanated, although a powerful faction was seeking to expel from it the man who was its strength and glory. Not a week which might not be Calvin's last in Geneva. And yet when men spoke of that valorous little State, growing day by day in renown, it was Calvin of whom they thought; and when the *elite* of other countries, the most enlightened and scholarly men in Europe, some of them of the highest rank, flocked to its gates, it was to see Calvin, to enjoy Calvin's society, and to share Calvin's instructions.

Again the storm darkened. The house of Favre, which had been compelled to "lower the head "in 1547, once more "lifted up the horn" in 1549. In the end of 1548, Perrin, Favre's son-in-law, was restored to his place in the Council, and to his office of "Captain-General," of both of which he had been deprived. Restored to office and honours, he so ingratiated himself with the citizens that early in 1549 he was elected to the Syndicate, and, contrary to custom, was made First Syndic. This gave fresh courage to his party. It was now that the tide of popular contumely and derision around the Reformer rose to the full. The hero of the Libertine populace-—"the pillars of the Tavern," as Farel called them when addressing the Council during a visit which he made about this time to Geneva—was, of course, Captain Perrin, the First Syndic. To ingratiate themselves with Perrin was an easy matter indeed; they had only to do what already they were but too well disposed to do—indulge their spite against the Reformer. They hit upon a method of annoyance which, doubtless, they thought very clever, but which was only very coarse. They called their dogs by the name of Calvin. At times, to make the insult more stinging, they pronounced the word as Cain.[2] Those who could not indulge themselves in this ingenious and pleasant pastime, not being the owners of a mastiff, could nevertheless as they passed the Reformer hiss or put out the tongue. Such were the affronts to which Calvin at this time was daily subjected, and that too from men who owed to him the very liberty which

[1] Roset, *Chronicle* CMS. of John M^{c}Crie).

[2] Beza, *Calv. Vita*, an. 1548. Reset (MS. of John M^{c}Crie).

they abused: men whose city he was making illustrious all over Europe, and the streets of which, the moment he should cease to tread them, would become the scene of internecine carnage. Verily, it was no easy matter for Calvin to endure all this, and preserve his consciousness of greatness. To pass from the sublime labours of his study to such revilings as awaited him out-of-doors was like passing into another sphere of being. This was a depth of persecution into which Luther had never been called to descend. Opposition Luther had encountered, peril he had known, death he had confronted, but respect had ever waited upon his person, and his sufferings had ever in them an element of greatness that alleviated their pain. But Calvin, while equally with Luther an object of hatred to the great, was also the scoff of the base. But he bore all—the fierce threats of men who occupied thrones or stood at the head of armies, and the ribald jest and hiss of the poor Libertine by his side—with equal equanimity. He remembered that a Greater had been "the song of the drunkard," and that he was but treading a path which Blessed feet had trodden before him. With a sublime grandeur of soul, which laudation could not enhance, and which the basest contumely could not degrade, he purged off these foul accretions, maintained the lofty mood of his mind, and went on in the performance of his mighty task.

It was not possible, one would think, that the sky could grow darker above Calvin; and yet darker it did become. He whom we see already so sorely stricken is to be yet more deeply wounded. All these years Idelette de Bure had been by his side. Tender of heart, magnanimous of soul, loving, confiding, constant, she soothed her husband in his trials, watched by his sick-bed, exercised hospitality to his friends and numerous visitors, or in her closet prayed, while Calvin was being assailed by the ribald insults and outrages of the street. The love and entire devotion of his wife was among his chief joys. But, alas! her frail and delicate health gave way under the pressure of a protracted illness, and early in 1549, Idelette de Bure died. "Oh, glorious resurrection!" were her last words. "God of Abraham and of all our fathers, not one of the faithful who have hoped in thee, for so many ages, has been disappointed; I also will hope."[1] These short sentences were rather ejaculated than distinctly spoken. "Truly mine is no common source of grief," said her husband writing to Viret; "I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life, of one who, had it been so ordered, would have been not only the willing sharer of my indigence, but even of my death. During her life she was the faithful helper of my ministry." But we drop the curtain, as Calvin himself did, on his great sorrow.

[1] Ruchat, tom. *v.*, p. 380.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CALVIN'S LABOURS FOR UNION.

Misfortunes of Protestantism in Germany—Death of Paul III.—Election of Julius III.—The Conclave—Jubilee—The Golden Hammer—Francis I. Dies—Henry II.—He Looks Two Ways at Once—Calvin Turns with Hope to England—Edward VI. on the Throne—What Calvin Judged Necessary for England's Reformation—Scotland—Spain—Philip II.—All Things being Shaken—Calvin's Labours for the Union of the Church—The Eucharist the Point of Division—Zwingli's and Calvin's Views—They are Substantially One—The *Consensus Tigurinis*—Its Teaching Accepted by Switzerland, France, and England—Germany Stands Aloof—Theodore Beza Arrives at Geneva—His Youth and Studies—Becomes Calvin's Associate in Labour—Distinguished Group around Calvin—Outer and Wider Group—The Man at the Centre.

DURING these years, while an abyss was opening at Geneva, the grave, as it seemed, of Calvin and his work, the battle was going against the Reformation all over Europe. Luther was sleeping in the Schloss-kirk, and the arms of the emperor were overrunning Protestant Germany. The theological school at Wittenberg was broken up; the Schmalkald League was dissolved, and its two chiefs, the captives of Charles, were being carried about in chains, in the wake of the emperor. The Interim had replaced the Confession of Augsburg, the Protestant ministers had been driven away, and their flocks scattered; the free cities had capitulated, and in many of them the mass was being substituted for the sermon. The noble edifice which the hands of Luther had reared appeared to be falling into ruins. He who was to become Philip II., but who had not yet assumed the title, or opened his career of blood, was making a progress through the towns of Flanders, in company of his father; and the emperor, in the hope of perpetuating his mighty despotism, was exacting from the cities of the Low Countries an oath of allegiance to Philip.[1]

In Italy, Paul III., the worthy successor of Borgia, had just died (1549), and his feet, extended through an iron grating, had been duly kissed by the Roman populace. All Rome was yet ringing with a terrible book which had just been published, containing the life of the defunct Pope, when the cardinals assembled in that city to elect his successor, the ceremony usual on such occasions being carefully observed. Duly morning by morning each cardinal came from his darkened chamber, with its solitary taper, and after mass and prayer, wrote the name of the person for whom he gave his vote upon a bit of paper, and folding it up, dropped it into the silver chalice upon the crimson-covered table before the altar of the chapel. This was repeated day by day, till a majority of two-thirds of the votes were recorded in favour of one candidate. Our own Cardinal Pole was just on the point of being elected, but

[1] Sleidan, bk. xxi., p. 485.

the suspicion of Lutheranism which attached to him, caused him the misfortune or the happiness of missing the tiara. On the 7th of February, 1550,[1] John Maria de Monte, who had presided in the Council at Trent, and afterwards at Bologna, when the cardinals crossed the mountains, was elected, and ascended the Papal chair under the title of Julius III. It was the year of Jubilee, for although, when first instituted by Boniface VIII., A.D. 1300, that great festival was ordained to be held only on the first year of each century, the period had since been shortened, and the Jubilee came round once every half-century. Paul III. had earnestly desired to see that great day of grace, but the grave closed over him before it came. That festival was reserved to signalise the opening of his successor's Pontificate. Rome was full of pilgrims from all countries, who had come to share in the inestimable benefits which the year of Jubilee brings with it to the faithful. Two days after his election, Julius III., with the golden hammer in his hand, proceeded to the golden gate, and broke it open, that the imprisoned flood of celestial virtues and blessings might freely flow forth and regale the expectant and rejoicing pilgrims.

The golden hammer, with which the new Pope had broken open the gate—ever a much-coveted treasure—was this year bestowed on the Bishop of Augsburg. On being jocularly interrogated by some of his friends what use he meant to make of the gift, the bishop replied "that he intended to knock the Lutherans on the head with that hammer."[2] The other pilgrims carried back to their distant homes, as the record of the cost and toil of their journey, besides the forgiveness of their sins, "bits of the lime and rubbish" of the demolished gate, to be kept as "precious jewels."[3]

Francis I. of France had gone to the grave. Literature, war, gallantry, had engaged him by turns. Today he snubbed the monks, tomorrow he burned the Lutherans. The last years of his reign were disgraced by the horrible massacre of the Vaudois of Provence, and embittered by the painful disease, the result of his vices, which carried him to the grave in his fifty-fifth year. His son, Henry II., brought to the throne, which he now filled, all the evil qualities of his father, and only some of the good ones. He was the husband of Catherine de Medici, Pope Clement VII.'s niece, but the wife was the real sovereign. The Protestant princes of Germany, with Maurice of Saxony at their head, besought his aid in the war they were then waging with the emperor, Charles V. He entered into alliance with them, but before setting out for the campaign he lighted up his capital with the lurid blaze of Lutheran martyr-piles. This was his way of notifying to the world that if he was the enemy of the emperor, he was nevertheless the friend of the Pope; and that

[1] Sleidan, bk. xxi., pp. 491, 492.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 492.

[3] Sleidan, bk. xxi., p. 492.

if he was the confederate of the German Protestants in arms, he was not a partaker with them in heresy.[1] In the direction of France, then, there was no clearing of the sky. The air was thick with tempest, which in coming years was to strew the soil of that land with more terrible wrecks than any that had as yet disfigured it.

The only quarter of the heavens to which the eye of Calvin could turn with any pleasure was England. There, during the years we speak of, there was a gleam of sunshine. Henry VIII. now slept in "dull cold marble." His "sweet and gracious" son, Edward VI., succeeded him. The clouds that had overhung the realm during all the reign of the father, and which let fall, at times, their tempests, and ever and anon threatened to burst in more furious storms, were dispersed by the benign rule of the son. With Edward VI. on the throne, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector of the Kingdom, in the Cabinet, and Archbishop Cranmer in the Church, the Reformation of England was advancing at a rate that promised to give it precedence of both France and Germany, and make its Church one of the bright stars in the heavens of Protestantism. The counsel of Calvin was sought by the Protector and the Primate, and the frankness, as well as fidelity, with which it was given, shows the interest the Reformer took in the Church of England, and the hopes he rested on its Reformation. In his letter to Somerset, June, 1548, he expounds his views on the transformation needed to be wrought on England. First, it must adopt the principle, the only fruitful one, of justification by faith; secondly, this principle, in order to become fruitful, must thoroughly permeate the people, which could only be by *living* and powerful *preaching;* thirdly, the Word of God must be the rule as regards what is to be retained and what abolished, otherwise the Reformation is not the work of God, but the work of man, and would come to nothing; and fourthly, means must be taken for reducing morals into harmony with faith. After the fall of the Protector, Calvin corresponded with the young monarch, who, notwithstanding the loss of his able and faithful adviser, continued to prosecute vigorously the Reformation of his kingdom. The seed sown by Wicliffe two centuries before was springing rapidly up, and promised an abundant harvest. But the clouds were to return after the rain.

The young prince went to his grave. With Mary came a swift and terrible reaction. The Reformers of the previous reign became the martyrs of the succeeding one, and a night thick with gloom and lurid with fire closed in once more around the realm of England.

Scotland was awakening. The stakes of Hamilton and Wishart had already lighted up its skies. But its Reformation was too little advanced, and the country too remote, to fix the eye of the great Reformer. John Knox had

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 484.

not yet crossed the sea, or entered the gates of Geneva, to sit at Calvin's feet, and on his return continue in his native land the work which Calvin had begun in Geneva. But Scotland was not to be veiled for ever in the northern mist, and the yet denser shadow of Papal superstition. The Gospel, that mighty mother of civilisation, was to enter it, and lead thither her fair daughters, letters, science, arts, and liberty. The culture which Rome failed to give it, Scotland was to receive from Geneva.

We turn for a moment to Spain. Worn with toil and care, and sick of grandeur, Charles was about to lay down the Empire. Fortune, like a fickle maiden, had deserted him, so he complained, for younger soldiers. He would show that he could bear the slight, by turning his back on a world which was turning its back on him. He made partition of his goods. The magnificent Empire of Spain was to be given to his son Philip. This man was fated to develop into a Nero. His little finger was to be bigger than his father's loins. The astute ambition of Charles, the sanguinary violence of Henry, the ferocious bigotry of Francis, were all to be forgotten in the monstrous combination of cruelty, bigotry, and blood which was about to reveal itself to the world in Philip II. Alas for the Protestantism of Spain. It was to have ten brief years of flourishing, and when about to "shake with fruit," and fill the realm of Iberia, it was to be mowed down by the scythe of the Inquisition, and garnered in the burning-grounds of Valladolid, of Madrid, of Seville, and of other cities.

As the great chief of Protestantism looked from his narrow foot-hold, he beheld around him a world groaning and travailing in pain to be delivered from the bondage of the old, and admitted into the liberty of the new. All Christendom was in agony. The kingdoms were moved; monarchs were falling; there was distress of nations; the sea and the waves roaring. But Calvin knew that these were but the shaking of those things which are destined to be removed, in order that those things which cannot be removed may be introduced. If the old was passing away, it was the more necessary to lay the foundations of that kingdom which was to long outlast the Empire of Charles and of Francis, and to stretch its sceptre to tribes and nations which theirs had never reached. It was now that he engaged in attempts to promote the union of the Church.

In the great and blessed work of union Calvin began at home. His first aim was to unite the Churches of Geneva and Zurich. In prosecuting this endeavour, however, he studied to frame such a basis of agreement as might afterwards serve as a platform for a greater union. His aims reached forth to the Lutherans of Germany, whom he wished to comprehend in visible fellowship with the Churches of France and England, and so draw together into one body all the Churches of Protestantism. His hopes of ultimately reaching this grand result were strengthened when he reflected that the Churches were

divided mainly by one point—a misunderstanding touching the Lord's Supper. There is a real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, said they all; but they differed in their answer to the question, In what manner is he present? He is present bodily, said Luther, who attributed ubiquity or indefinite extension to our Lord's humanity. So far from a bodily presence, said Zwingli, the Eucharist is only a memorial and sign of Christ. No, said Calvin, it is more; it is a seal as well as a sign.

So stood the matter; and such, in brief, were the distinctive opinions of the three clusters of Protestant Churches, when Calvin, rousing himself from his great sorrow for Idelette, and setting out with Farel in the fine spring days of 1549, arrived in Zurich to confer with the ministers there—the first step toward the rallying of the whole Protestant Church around its one standard, the Bible; and its centralisation in its one Head, even Christ. A far longer way would the Reformer have been willing to go, if it could have promoted the cause on which his heart was so deeply set. "I am ready to cross ten seas," he wrote to Cranmer, "for the union of the Church."

Between the views of Calvin and those of Zwingli on the Eucharist there was really, after all, no essential difference. Zwingli indeed, by way of removing himself to the farthest distance from Rome, and of getting rid of all her unintelligible mysticism on that head, had called the Eucharist an "empty sign"—that is, a sign not filled by the material body of Christ. But Zwingli's teaching regarding the Lord's Supper logically covers all that Calvin held. It is the "commemoration" of Christ's death, said Zwingli, but the character and significance of that "commemoration" are determined by the character and significance of the event commemorated. Christ's death was a death endured for mankind, and is the ground on which God bestows the benefits of the New Covenant. When, therefore, we commemorate that death, we do an act, not of simple remembrance, or mere commemoration, but of appropriation. We express by this commemoration our acceptance of the benefits of the New Covenant, and we receive the Eucharist as God's attesting sign or seal of his bestowal of these benefits upon us: and in so doing we have real communion with Christ, and a real participation in all the blessings of his death. "Christ," said Calvin, "unites us with himself in one life."

These were substantially the explanations put before the Pastors of Zurich by Calvin. The conference, which was held in the presence of the Civic Council, continued several days. A. formulary was drawn up, known as the Consensus Tigurinis, or Zurich Confession,[1] on which the Churches of Geneva and Zurich united. This Confession was afterwards subscribed by all the Churches of Helvetia and of the Grisons. It was communicated to the

[1] "Formulaire de consentement dans la doctrine de la Sainte Cène entre les Eglises de Zurich et do. Genève." (Ruchat, tom, v., pp. 370–378.)

Reformed in France, and to Bucer in England, and in both countries was hailed with joy. The faithful in Switzerland, France, and England had now been brought to be of one mind on the doctrine of the Eucharist; their union had been virtually established, and Calvin was comforted after his great sorrow.[1]

But the greater union Calvin was not to see. The Lutherans of Germany still held aloof, and the Protestant world still continued to present the appearance as of two armies. Melanchthon, as the result of his interview with the Reformer at Worms (1540), had come into somewhat close agreement with Calvin on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The Consensus of Zurich, he acknowledged, shed a yet clearer light on the question, and had brought him still nearer to the Genevan Reformer.[2]

But the more zealous spirits of the party, such as Flaccius, Osiander, and especially Westphal, clung to the consubstantiation of Luther with even greater tenacity than when its great expounder was alive, and both Melanchthon and Calvin saw with sorrow a union, which would have closed a source of weak ness in the Protestant ranks, and made patent to the whole world the real Catholicism of the Reformation, postponed to a day that has not even yet fully come.

We have seen one companion fall by the side of the Reformer, we are now to see another raised up to fill the vacant place. Within a month after the death of Idelette de Bure, eight French gentlemen, whom persecution had driven from their native land, arrived at the gates of Geneva. One of them, in particular, was distinguished by his noble mien and polished manners. Calvin recognised in him an acquaintance of his youthful years. This was Theodore Beza, of Vezelay, in Burgundy. Beza had enjoyed the instructions of Melchior Wolmar, first at Orleans, and next at Bourges, and he had acquired from him, not only a knowledge of Greek, but some taste for the Reformed doctrine, which, however, was overlaid for the time by a gay and worldly spirit. Not unlike to Calvin's had been his course of study. His first devotion was law; but his genius inclined him more to the *belles lettres.* He was a great

[1] Ruchat, tom. v., p. 379. Beza, Calvini Vita, ann. 1549. Bungener, p. 297.

[2] Some of the Lutherans accused Calvin of having changed sides, and become a convert to Zwingli. To show that the charge is without foundation, Ruchat quotes Calvin's statements of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, first in 1535, in the Institutes, and secondly in 1537, in the Formulary of Union presented to Bern. These are to the following effect:—First: "In the Lord's Supper there is neither transubstantiation, nor con-substantiation, nor impanation, nor any other change physical or corporeal." Second : "The Sacrament is not an empty sign, but in it we truly partake of the body and blood of Christ by faith." (Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 379, 380.) Similar is his statement to Bullinger: "We are thereby made partakers of the body and blood of Christ, so that he dwells in us and we in him, and thus enjoy his universal benefits." (P. Henry, vol. ii., pp. 78, 79.)

admirer of the Latin poets, he read them much, and composed verses in imitation of them. After the manner of the times he followed his models somewhat too freely, and his Popish chroniclers have taken occasion, from the lascivious phrases of his verse, to assail his life, which, however, they have never been able to prove to have been other than pure. His uncle procured him a living in the Church, and to preserve himself from the vices into which others had fallen, he contracted a private marriage, in the presence of Laurence de Normandie and Jean Crespin. An illness, which brought him to the brink of the grave, awoke his conscience, and now it was that the religious impressions which his early preceptor had made upon him revived.

Brought back from the grave, Beza renounced Popery, openly avowed his marriage, quitted France, and setting out for Geneva, presented himself, as we have seen, before Calvin. He discharged for a short time the office of Greek professor and theological lecturer at Lausanne. Returning to Geneva, he became from 1552 the right hand of Calvin, for which his talents, his eloquence, his energy, and his courage admirably fitted him; and when the great chief of the Reformation was laid in the grave, no worthier than Beza could be found to succeed him.

Beza did not stand alone by the side of Calvin. A brilliant group was now gathering round the Reformer, composed of men some of whom were of illustrious birth, others of distinguished scholarship, or of great talent, or of venerable piety. Among them may be mentioned Galeaceo Caracciolo, Marquis of Vico, who had forsaken house and lands, wife and children, for the Gospel's sake; and Peter Martyr Vermili, whom Calvin called the "Miracle of Italy."[1] But the exiles are to be counted, not in hundreds only, but in thousands, of whom there scarce was one but contributed to brighten, by his rank, or genius, or learning, that galaxy of glory which was gathering round Geneva. Each brought his stone to that intellectual and spiritual edifice which was rising on the shores of the Leman.

Others there were, nearer or farther off, who acknowledged in Calvin their centre, and who, though parted from him and from one another by mountains and oceans, formed one society, of which this sublime spirit was the centre. There was Melanchthon, and the group of which he was the chief, and who, although they bore the name of Lutheran, felt that they were in spirit one with those who were styled Reformed, and especially with the Catholic-hearted man who stood at their head. There was Bullinger in Zurich, and the group around him, which embraced, among many others, Pellicanus, and the fervent, loving Musculus. There was the peace-loving Bucer in

[1] "Miraculum Italia."

England, and John à Lasco, the learned and accomplished Pole.[1] And among the men of those days, who looked up to Calvin and sought his counsel, we must likewise rank the young monarch and the venerable Primate of England. There were the Turretinis of Italy, and the Colignys of France, representative men. There were Margaret, Queen of Navarre, her great daughter Jeanne d'Albret, and Renee, Duchess of Ferrara.[2] There were thousands and thousands, humble in station but elevated in character, spread over all countries and speaking many tongues, but forgetting diversity of country, of rank, and of speech, in the cause that made them all of one heart and one mind. We behold in this great multitude a refined, an intellectual, a holy fellowship, than which there never perhaps existed sublimer on earth. Verily, the man who formed the centre of this brilliant assemblage, who kept his place in the presence of so many men so dignified in rank and so powerful in intellect; whom all confessed to be first, and whom all loved and reverenced as a father, must have been, whatever his enemies may affirm to the contrary, a man of many sides. He must have possessed varied as well as great qualities; he must have been large of heart, and catholic in sentiment and sympathy; he must have been rich in deep, tender, and loving sensibilities, though these may often have been repressed by labour or veiled by sorrow, and could be seen only by those who stood near to him; while those who were farther off could but mark the splendour of those gifts that shone in him as the Reformer, and of which the world was continually receiving new proofs, in the expositions and defences of Protestant truth, which he was almost daily sending forth. But whether near or afar off, all who stood around the Reformer, from the innermost to the most distant circle, were ever ready to confess that he was as inflexible in principle as he was colossal in intellect, that he was as unselfish in aim as he was grand in conception, and as untiring in patience as he was unconquerable in energy and courage.

[1] John à Lasco was a member of a Polish family which had given many distinguished names to the State, the camp, and the Church. He was the intimate friend of Erasmus and other scholars, a correspondent of the Queen of Navarre and other royal persons. Zwingli first sowed the seeds of the Protestant truth in his mind. He became the founder of the Reformed Church of Friesland, but his views on the Lord's Supper corresponding with those of the Swiss Church, he was persecuted by the Lutherans. He was invited to England by the Protector Somerset and Archbishop Cranmer. He left England on the accession of Queen Mary, and ultimately settled in Poland, where he laboured, not without success, in the Reformation of the Polish Church. (See Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer;* M^{c}Crie, *Italy;* Krasinski, *Slavonia.)*

[2] Daughter of Louis XII., and who but for the Salic law, or as she herself expressed it, the circumstance that nature had denied her a beard, would have been sovereign of France.

CHAPTER XIX.

SERVETUS COMES TO GENEVA AND IS ARRESTED.

Toleration—Servetus's Birth—Genius—Studies—Commission to Reform all Religions—Malignant Attacks on Christianity—Publishes his *Restitution of Christianity*—Sends the Book to Calvin—Its Doctrine Pantheism—Servetus Condemned to Death at Vienne—Escapes—Comes to Geneva—Is Imprisoned—His Indictment drawn by Calvin—Haughtiness of his Defence—Servetus and Calvin face to face—Indecencies and Blasphemies against Christianity—The Question at Geneva, Shall it be a Pantheistic Republic ruled by Servetus, or a Theocracy ruled by Calvin?

WE now come within the shadow of a great tragedy. But the horror which the act we are about to narrate awakens is, in truth, a homage to Protestantism. If a deed which not only called forth no condemnation from the age in which it was done, a few personal enemies of Calvin excepted, but which, on the contrary, was pronounced by the best and most enlightened men then living to be just and necessary, awakens our abhorrence—that abhorrence is, in fact, the measure of our advance in toleration since the sixteenth century. But it is Protestantism that we have to thank for that advance.

It is the melancholy and tragic story of Servetus which we are now to record. Michael Servetus[1] was a Spaniard, born in the same year as Calvin, 1509. Nature had endowed him with a lively but fantastic genius, an active but illogical mind, an inordinate ambition, and a defective judgment.[2] He studied with characteristic versatility law, divinity, physic, and some have said astrology. After a short but distinguished career as a lecturer on the physical sciences in Paris,[3] he ultimately established himself at Vienne, in Dauphiné, as a medical practitioner.[4] In this profession he discovered superior skill, and in his first work, *On the Errors of the Trinity* (1531), he anticipated the great discovery of our own Harvey of the circulation of the blood.[5] His mind, speculative, daring, lawless, of the scholastic rather than the Reformation type, followed its bent, which was ethical, not physical. He spent fully twenty years of his life in wandering up and down in Christendom, visiting Germany, Italy, Switzerland, venting his fancies and reveries, unsettling the minds of men, and offending every one he came in contact with by his

[1] Not to be confounded, as Lupus has done, with Andrew Servetus, Professor of Law at Bologna, and afterwards Senator of the Kingdom of Arragon.

[2] Henricus Ab. Allwoerden, *Historia Michaelis Serveti,* p. 7; Helmstadt, 1727.

[3] Allwoerden, p. 33.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[5] Bungener, p. 240. His theory of the circulation of the blood occurs in bk. v. of the above work. It is given by Allwoerden in the appendix to his *Historia Michaelis Serveti,* pp. 232–234. A striking proof, surely, of the subtle, penetrating intellect of the man, and of the benefits he might have conferred on the world, had his genius been wisely directed.

pride, self-sufficiency, and dissimulation.[1] He believed that he possessed the power, and had received a commission, to remodel all knowledge, and establish the world on a new basis. The more fundamental doctrines of Christianity became the object of his settled dislike, and his most virulent attack. But it was against the doctrine of the Trinity mainly that his shafts were levelled. Romanism he had renounced in his youth, but neither did the Reformation satisfy his grand ideal. Christianity, he held, had been lost at an early age, if indeed it ever had been fully promulgated to the world. Servetus undertook to restore and re-institute it.[2] About the year 1546 he wrote to Calvin from Vienne, to the effect that the Reformer had stopped too soon, that he had preached as yet only a half-Reformation; and modestly offered to initiate him into his new system, and assign him the post of leader in that great movement by which mankind were to be led into a grander domain of truth. He accompanied his letter with a volume in MS., in which Calvin should see, he said, "stupendous and unheard-of things."[3] The unhappy man had virtually arrived at pantheism, the final goal of all who in these high matters forsake the path of Divine revelation.

Calvin saw in the "stupendous things" of Servetus only stupendous follies. Writing to Farel, 13th February, 1546, the Reformer said: "Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long volume of his delirious fancies, with the thrasonic boast that I should see something astonishing and unheard-of. He takes it upon him to come hither, if it is agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his safety, for if he shall come, I will never permit him to depart alive, provided my authority be of any avail."[4]

The eye of Calvin saw that the creed of Servetus was essential pantheism. He knew too that such a creed struck at the whole settlement of Church and State in Geneva, and would sweep away the basis on which had been placed the republic. Further, the Reformer foresaw that if Servetus should come to Geneva, and attempt propagating his doctrine, he would be placed under the painful necessity of choosing between a pantheistic and a theocratic republic, between Servetus and the Reformation. Sharing in the universal opinion of his age, that heresy is to be punished with the sword of the magistrate, and deeming this heresy to be, as indeed it was, subversive not only of the religious belief, but also the civil order of Geneva, Calvin did not hesitate to

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[1] Allwoerden, pp. 23–26. P. Henry, ii., pp. 167–176.

[2] *De Trin. Error.*, lib. vii., fol. 3, 6—*apud* P. Henry, vol. ii,, pp. 167–169.

[3] Allwoerden, p. 42.

[4] Letters of Calvin—Jules Bonnet, vol. ii., No. 154: "Sed nolo fidem meam interponere, ham si venerit, modo valeat mea authoritas, vivum exire non patiar." The original letter is in the Bibliotheque du Roi at Paris. The author was told by his late friend, the younger M^{c}Crie, that he examined the letter, and was sorrowfully convinced of its authenticity. Bolsec quotes a letter of Calvin's to Viret to the same effect, but its authenticity is doubtful.

avow his preference for the Protestant over the pantheistic republic, and declared that should Servetus come to Geneva, he would use his influence that he should "not depart alive." These words from any pen would fill us with horror, but coming, as they do, from the pen of Calvin, they inspire us with a double horror. And yet the truth is that we know of no Reformer of that age, not even Melanchthon himself, who would not, in Calvin's position, most probably have written them.[1] Again we must repeat, they caused no horror to the age in which they were written; nay, they were the verdict of that age on the case of Servetus; and if it is impossible that ours could utter such a verdict, or the Protestant world of our day repeat the crime of the Protestant world of the sixteenth century, we see in this one of the proudest of the triumphs of that Protestantism which was then struggling into existence against the mighty opposing forces of Romanism on the one hand and of pantheism on the other.

In 1552, Servetus published clandestinely at Vienne the MS. volume which he had sent to Calvin in 1546. It bore the title of *Restitutio Christianismi*, or "Christianity Restored." This led to his apprehension by the authorities of Vienne, where he was tried by the Inquisition. He managed to give his judges the slip, however, and was condemned in absence to be "burned alive, at a slow fire, till his body be reduced to a cinder." The award of the court was carried out by the substitution of the effigy of Servetus for Servetus himself.[2] Escaping from Vienne he came, of all places, to Geneva! "If ever poor fanatic thrust himself into the flames," says Coleridge, "it was Servetus."

"I know not what to say of him," exclaimed Calvin in astonishment, "except that he must have been seized with a fatal madness to precipitate himself upon destruction." He arrived in the middle of July, and took up his abode at the "Auberge de la Rose," near the lake.

Calvin had not induced Servetus to come to Geneva; he had in fact, by refusing him a safe-conduct, warned him off the territory of the republic; nevertheless, now that he was come, he did what the constitutional laws of Geneva required of him;—he reported his presence in the city to the Council, and demanded his apprehension.[3] Servetus was committed to prison on the

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[1] The doom which the Reformers awarded to others for false dogmas, they accepted for themselves, should they teach what was contrary to the faith. "When I read Paul's statement," says Farel, writing to Calvin, "that he did not refuse to suffer death if he had in any way deserved it, I saw clearly that I must be prepared to suffer death if I should teach anything contrary to the doctrine of piety. And I added that I should be most worthy of any punishment whatever if I should seduce any one from the faith and doctrine of Christ." (8th September, 1553—*Calvini Opp., tom.* ix., p. 71.) If we condemn the Reformers for their intolerance, we surely cannot but admire their devotion.

[2] Allwoerden, p. 54.

[3] "One of the syndics, at my instigation, committed him to prison." (To Sultzer, 9th September, 1553.) Spon, in his *History of Geneva*, says that Servetus had begun to dogmatise

13th of August. The law required the accuser to go to prison with the accused till the charge should be so far substantiated as to warrant its being taken up by the public prosecutor. Nicholas de la Fontaine, a young student, and secretary to the Reformer, entered himself as accuser.[1] The articles of accusation, extracted from the writings of Servetus, were drawn up by Calvin, and presented next day to the tribunal.

Fontaine was unequal to the task of confronting so subtle and eloquent an opponent as Servetus. The Council saw this, and at its second meeting all the ministers were requested to appear. Calvin now at length stood face to face with his adversary. The Reformer's severe logic soon unmasked the real opinions of the man, and forced him to admit the frightful conclusions to which they led; but if he put forth all his power in arguing with Servetus, it was not to procure a conviction, but a recantation, and save the unhappy man from the flames. "No great danger hung over him," he declared, "if he could possibly have been brought to his senses."[2] "Would," he sorrowfully exclaimed at a later period—"Would that we could have obtained a recantation from Servetus, as we did from Gentilis!"[3]

It must be acknowledged that Servetus on his trial, both at Vienne and Geneva, showed neither courage nor truthfulness. At the former place he behaved badly indeed. He disowned his books, denied his handwriting, uttered repeatedly falsehoods on oath, and professed himself a son of his "holy mother the Church." Swollen with insolence and venting defiance while at liberty, he proved a very craven before the Inquisition. How different from the noble sincerity and courage of the martyrs of Protestantism, who at that very time were expiring amid the flames at Lyons! His behaviour before the Council at Geneva was characterised by alternate insolence and cowardice. When confronted only with Nicholas de la Fontaine, he professed that he had not intended to blaspheme, and that he was ready to recant.[4] When Calvin was introduced, he broke into a tempest of rage, denounced the Reformer as his personal enemy, again and again called him a liar, and styled him a corrupter of the Word of God, a foe to Christ, a sorcerer, "Simon Magus." This coming after twenty years' vituperation and abuse, to which Calvin's reply had been a dignified silence, was more than the Reformer could bear, and he became heated in his turn and, as he himself said to Farel, "answered him as he deserved."

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in the city. Bolsec says that he was arrested on the day of his arrival. It is now generally admitted that he remained a month in Geneva.

[1] *Registers of the Council*, 14th August, 1553.

[2] Calvin, *Refut. Err. Servet.*, p. 517.

[3] P. Henry, vol. ii., p. 194.

[4] P. Henry, vol. ii., p. 195.

The scene revealed the man to his judges. The blasphemies which he avowed, and not less the haughtiness with which he defended himself, shocked and revolted them. The Trinity he styled "a three-headed Cerberus,"[1] "a hell-hound." Some of the suppositions he made to discredit the Incarnation were simply indecent, and we pass them by. "If the angels," he said, "were to take the body of asses, you must allow they would be asses, and would die in their asses' skins. So too you must allow that, on your supposition being right, God himself might become an ass, and the Holy Spirit a mule. Can we be surprised if the Turks think us more ridiculous than mules and asses?" Calvin truly divined the deeper error beneath these—the denial of a personal God—that is, of God. "His frenzy was such," says the Reformer, writing to Farel,[2] "that he did not hesitate to say that the Divinity dwells even in devils. The Godhead is essentially communicated to them as it is to wood and to stones." "What, unhappy man," replied Calvin, "if any one treading upon this floor should say to you that he was treading your God under his feet, would you not be scandalised at such an assertion?" He answered, "I, on the contrary, do not doubt but that this footstool, or anything else which you may point out, is the substance of God." When it was again objected to him, "Then will the devil actually be God," he answered with a peal of laughter, "And can you doubt it? "[3]

We have narrated in former chapters the war now waging between Calvin and the Council of Geneva. The First Syndic, Perrin, was the Reformer's mortal enemy. Other members of the Council, less influential, were equally the determined opponents of the Reformer, and were labouring for his overthrow. It was, in a word, the crisis of Calvin's power in Geneva—that is, of Protestantism, for a licentious Libertinism was struggling to establish itself upon the ruins of all the Reformed laws and institutions of the republic. M. Rilliet of Geneva, in his Life and Trial of Servetus,[4] has conjectured that what tempted Servetus to enter Geneva at that time was his knowledge of the State of Parties there, and the hope of replacing Calvin, then in daily danger of banishment from the city. Be this as it may, the fact is undoubted that the Libertines perceived the advantage they might derive by playing Servetus off against the Reformer; and Servetus, on the other hand, was aware of the advantage that might accrue to him from strengthening the Libertines against Calvin. As the battle went with Calvin, as the Libertines seemed now to prevail against him, and now to fall before him, Servetus was contemptuous and defiant, or timid and craven. But the tacit union of the two helped to bring

[1] Allwoerden, p. 71.
[2] August 20th, 1553.
[3] Calvin, *Refut. Err. Servet.*, p. 522.
[4] *Relation du Procès Criminel Intente d Geneve en* 1553, *contre Michael Servet, redigée d'apres les documents originaux, par Albert Rilliet;* Genève, 1844.

on the ruin of both. The patronage of the pantheist by the Libertines wrought ill for Servetus in the end, by opening the eyes of the Council to the real issues at stake in the trial. The acquittal of Servetus, they saw, meant the expulsion of Calvin, and the triumph of the Libertines. This put the personal interference of the Reformer in the matter out of court, even if his influence had not at that moment been at zero. The magistrates felt that it was a question of life and death for the republic, and that they must decide it irrespective altogether of the wishes of Calvin, and on the high grounds of the interests of the State.[1]

[1] Such is the conclusion at which Rilliet has arrived from a careful study of the records of the trial.

CHAPTER XX.

CALVIN'S VICTORY OVER THE LIBERTINES.

Another Arena—Excommunication—Council Grasps the Ecclesiastical Power—Berthelier Excommunicated—Spiritual Sentence Annulled by the Senate—The Libertines make Common Cause with Servetus—New Indictment against Servetus—Calvin Fighting Two Battles at the Same Time—Communion Sunday—Consistory's Remonstrance with the Council—The Council Changes Nothing in its Decree—Sunday, 3rd September, 1553—A Momentous Issue to be Determined—The Communion-table in St. Peter's—The Libertines Approach—Calvin Debars them—The Reformation Saved—Moral Grandeur of the Act—The Two Beacons—Worms a Triumph over Tyrannical Power—St. Peter's a Triumph over Godless Democracy.

LEAVING Servetus in prison, let us repair to another arena of combat. It is another, and yet the same, for the affair of Servetus has entered the sphere of Genevan politics, and awakened into fresh intensity the slumbering conflict between the two parties that divide the republic. Perrin was labouring to undermine, step by step, the power of Calvin. The pastors had been expelled from the Council-General—the assembly of the whole people. There followed a more direct attack upon the ecclesiastical authority. It was proposed to transfer the power of excommunication from the Consistory to the Senate. This was to strike a fatal blow at the principle on which Calvin had based the Reformation of the State. Should this principle be overturned, his work in Geneva would be at an end; and he might leave it the next hour, so far as any good purpose was to be served by remaining in it. The Consistory stripped of all independent jurisdiction, moral order would fall, and those halcyon days would return when men could go to the tavern at all hours of the day and night, drink as deep as they had a mind, and disport themselves in dances like those in which the pagans of old honoured the god Bacchus.

About a year and a half before this, Philip Berthelier had been debarred the Communion-table by the Consistory. Philip was the son of that Berthelier who, in 1521, had spilt his blood for the liberty of the Fatherland. As the father had ennobled the State by his virtues, the son thought he had a right to disgrace it with his vices. "He was," says Bayle, "a bad liver." He submitted quietly to the excommunication of the Consistory for a year and a half; but now, deeming the moment opportune, inasmuch as the tide was running against the Reformer and his policy, he appeared before the Council and demanded that it should annul the sentence of the Spiritual Court, and so restore him to communion with the Church. The Reformer hastened to the Council, and warned it of the fatal consequences of complying with Berthelier's request. He urged strongly that the edicts of the republic gave the Council no power concerning excommunication, and that to bind and loose ecclesiastically was to effect a revolution. The Reformer's remonstrance was

disregarded. The Council released Berthelier from the spiritual sentence, and opened his way to the Communion-table. The axe was laid at the root of the ecclesiastical discipline, and the days of the Genevan Republic were, to all appearance, numbered.

From the council-chamber, where the fatal measure in which the Libertines saw the approaching downfall of the spiritual authority had been passed, Calvin hurried to the prison, where he and his colleagues were to be confronted with Servetus. This day (1st September, 1553) it was resolved by the Council that the oral debates between the prisoner and the pastors should be dropped, and that the discussion should henceforward be carried on in writing. This change was supported by Perrin and Berthelier, who were there, flushed with the victory of the morning. The proposal made in the interests of Servetus,[1] who was supposed to be more eloquent with his pen than with his voice, was adopted, and it brought with it a marked change in his demeanour, which Rilliet thus describes: "What demonstrates with the clearest evidence the hope which the prisoner placed in the power of his protectors, is the language which from that time he adopted, and the open, furious, mortal war which he waged against the Reformer, now become the object of his direct attacks. Servetus threw himself, with all the ardour of a man well-nigh sure of victory, into a path where, by his own confession, he wished to pursue his opponent, 'even till the cause be terminated by the death of him or me.'"

At the same meeting of Council,[2] Calvin was ordered to draw up anew articles of indictment from the works of Servetus, in the form of plain statements, without any reasoning for or against, the crisis which had arisen in the matter of the ecclesiastical discipline might well, one should think, have engrossed all the Reformer's thoughts, but he gave himself with his might to this new labour. He reproduced from the works of the prisoner thirty-eight propositions, and appending neither note nor comment, and giving simply references to the text, he handed them to the Council. This done, he turned his thoughts to the graver matter that weighed upon him. The resolution of the Council touching excommunication was simply a breaking into pieces of the lever with which he hoped to elevate the republic. The Reformer must fight two battles at the same time.

Time pressed. The day after the morrow was the first Sunday of September, when, according to a custom universal in the French Reformed churches, the Communion was to be celebrated,[3] and, unless the edict were revoked, Berthelier would then present himself at the sacred table with the warrant of the Council in his hand. The Reformer, without a moment's delay, assembled all the pastors, alike of town and country, and putting himself at their head,

[1] Rilliet, *Relation du Proofs Criminel*, &c., p. 160.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 162.
[3] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 38.

proceeded to the Great Council. He showed, with characteristic energy, the brink to which the decision of the Little Council had brought the republic; that that decision was a manifest violation of both the laws of the State and the rules of Scripture; and that if persisted in it would sweep away all that had been done during the past ten years for the reformation of manners, and render hopeless all efforts in the future. In short, it was a revolution. The whole people, he said, had with uplifted hands adopted the edict establishing the spiritual power in the spiritual court, and "he would die rather than tolerate, contrary to his conscience, an excommunicated man at the sacred table."[1] In this protest the pastors to a man joined, all declaring that rather than suffer the contemplated profanation they would "lay down their offices and leave their churches."[2] The Council answered that it "changed nothing in its decree."[3] In taking into its own hands the spiritual authority, the Council, it might be unwittingly, assumed the right of trying and adjudging Servetus. It said to the Consistory, Stand aside; you are dissolved as a court having jurisdiction; we assume the function and responsibility of giving judgment on all persons and causes, civil and spiritual.

To Perrin and the Libertines victory was following on victory. The coming day, they hoped, would crown this series of successes. Whichever way Calvin might turn he would, they were sure, encounter defeat. If he should obey the edict of the Council, he would be disgraced before the people; if he should disobey it, he would rebel against the magistrate: either way his power was at an end. They had not yet taken the true measure of the Reformer; or rather, they had not yet learned how much better is a little wisdom than great cunning. By the simple strategy of going right forward, the Reformer broke all the toils the Libertines had woven round him, and swept away alike the victories they had already won and those which they made themselves sure of winning in the future.

Sunday morning, the 3rd of September, dawned. No more eventful day had for centuries risen over Geneva, or indeed over Christendom. This day it was to be seen whether Protestantism, which had retreated within its last stronghold, would recruit its powers and reorganise its forces, and from hence go forth to reconquer Christendom, or whether it would relinquish the battle as beyond its strength. Twice already the great Protestant movement, after giving promise of emancipating the world, had failed. First the Albigensian revival, next the Bohemian uprising, overborne by violence, had disappointed the hopes they had inspired. Was this third movement, which had come nearer the goal than either of the two preceding ones, after all to fall short of it, and leave the world still under the dominion of the darkness? The

[1] Rilliet, p. 164. Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 38.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[3] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 38.

moment was the most critical that had occurred since Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms. In Germany, the Reformed phalanx was demoralised, thanks to the sword and yet more to the Interim of Charles. France, under Henry II., was blazing with martyr-piles. With Mary, in England, had come a fiercer tempest of persecution than that country had ever before known. Where now, alas! we hear Calvin pathetically exclaim, where now are Cranmer, and Ridley, and John à Lasco, and the hundreds of others in England which the Reformation numbered aforetime amongst its children? Some of them, leaving their bodies to the flames, had mounted on high, and were now living with God. Others, crossing seas and mountains, had found a home in foreign lands. On every side, up to the limits of the Genevan territory, the Reformation was pursued by the tyrant and the inquisitor. And even here, if the sword was still restrained, new and hideous foes had risen to assail the Gospel. The abyss of Atheistic Pantheism had suddenly opened, and a monstrous birth had come up out of it, which sought to strangle the infant Reformation, where the Hydra sought to strangle the infant Hercules—in its cradle. Such were the portents that deformed the time.

The customary hour of public worship was now come. The great bell Clemence had tolled out its summons. The throng of worshippers on their way to the cathedral had rolled past, and now the streets, which had resounded with their tread, were empty and silent. Over city, plain, and lake there brooded a deep stillness. It was around the pulpit of St. Peter's, and the man with pale face, commanding eye, and kingly brow who occupied it, that the heart of Geneva palpitated. The church was filled with an uneasy crowd. On the benches of the Consistory sat, unmoved, the pastors and elders, resolved to bear the greatest violence rather than not do their duty. A confused noise was heard within the temple. The congregation opened with difficulty, and a numerous band of men, of all ranks, their hands upon their sword-hilts, forced their way in presence of the holy table. The *elite* of the Libertines had decided to communicate. Berthelier did not appear as yet. He reserved himself till the last moment.[1] Calvin, calm as ever, rose to begin the service. He could not but see the group of Libertines in the vast congregation before him, but he seemed as if he saw them not. He preached on the state of mind with which the Lord's Supper ought to be received. At the close, raising his voice, he said,[2] "As for me, so long as God shall leave me here, since he hath given me fortitude, and I have received it from him, I will employ it, whatever betide; and I will guide myself by my Master's rule, which is to me clear and well known. As we are now about to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, if any one who has been debarred by the Consistory shall

[1] Gaberel, *Hist, de l'Eglise de Geneve,* tom. i., p. 311.
[2] Buchat, tom. vi., p. 39.

approach this table, though it should cost my life, I will show myself such as I ought to be."[1]

When the liturgies were concluded, Calvin came down from the pulpit and took his stand before the table. Lifting up the white napkin he displayed the symbols of Christ's body and blood, the food destined for believing souls. Having blessed the bread and wine, he was about to distribute them to the congregation. At that moment there was seen a movement among the Libertines as if they would seize the bread and the cup. The Reformer, covering the sacred symbols with his hands, exclaimed in a voice that rang through the edifice, "These hands you may crush; these arms you may lop off my life you may take; my blood is yours, you may shed it; but you shall never force me to give holy things to the profane, and dishonour the table of my God."[2] These words broke like a thunder-peal over the Libertines. As if an invisible power had flung back the ungodly host, they slunk away abashed, the congregation opening a passage for their retreat.[3] A deep calm succeeded; and "the sacred ordinance," says Beza, "was celebrated with a profound silence, and under a solemn awe in all present, as if the Deity himself had been visible among them."[4]

Than the transaction we have just narrated, we know nothing more truly sublime in the whole history of the Reformation, that epoch of heroic men and of grand events. The only thing we can compare with it is Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms. If we abstract the dramatic accompaniments of the latter scene—the gorgeous hall; the majesty of the emperor; the blaze of princely and knightly rank gathered round him; the glitter of stars and decorations; the men-at-arms; the lackeys and other attendants—and look only at the principle at stake, and the wide and lasting good achieved by the prompt vindication of that principle, the act of Calvin in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, in 1553, stands side by side, its equal in spiritual sublimity and heroism, with the act of Luther in the Hall of Worms, in 1521. "I cannot," said Luther. "I will not," said Calvin. The one repelled the tyrant, the other flung back the mob; the one stemmed the haughtiness of power, the other bridled the raging fury of ungodliness; in both the danger was equal, in both the faith and fortitude were equal, and each saved the Reformation at a great crisis.

These two acts, Luther's at Worms and Calvin's in St. Peter's, were in fact two beacon-lights kindled by Providence for the instruction of Europe. They were hung out at the opening of a new epoch, to enable Christendom

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[1] Rilliet, pp. 166, 167. Rilliet quotes the passage from the unpublished *History of Geneva* by Gautier. The sermon was taken down by a notary, translated by Beza, and sent to Bullinger, at Zurich. The sermon, says Rilliet, "is not in the MS. collection at Geneva, where the discourses of the year 1553 are wanting."

[2] Gaberel, tom. i., p. 312; Genfeve, 1853.

[3] Bungener, p. 220.

[4] Beza, ann. 1553.

to pilot itself past two tremendous dangers that lay right in its course. The one of these dangers was only beginning to be visible. The conflict waged in St. Peter's on Sunday, the 3rd of September, 1553, showed how that danger was to be avoided. A Protestant Church, scripturally constituted, and faithfully governed, was the only possible breakwater against that lawless pantheism which was even then lifting up its head and threatening society with ruin. Such was the lesson taught by the heroic act in St. Peter's. Calvin was the first man against whom the foul and furious tide of communism dashed itself; it broke against the pulpit of St. Peter's before it precipitated itself upon the throne of France. It has since with swelling and triumphant crest overwhelmed parliaments and dynasties, laid prostrate thrones and devastated kingdoms; but in contemplating these dismal tragedies it becomes us to call to mind that the Reformer of Geneva confronted this communism 300 years ago, that he confronted it single-handed, and conquered it. Had the principles of Protestantism been rooted and grounded in every parish of France, yielding the same spiritual fruits as they did at Geneva, how different would have been the history of a people to whom nature has given a genius so manifold that it would have shone equally in the beauty of their arts and in the grace and brilliancy of their literature; in the valour of their arms, and the equity of their jurisprudence; in the purity of their homes, and in the freedom and stability of their public institutions. But continuing under the malign power of a corrupted and a corrupting faith, this race, so richly endowed, has had its great qualities transformed into headlong passions which have entailed upon country and throne three centuries of calamities and woes.

CHAPTER XXI.

APPREHENSION AND TRIAL OF SERVETUS.

"Here I stand," &c.—Calvin expects to be Banished—Takes Farewell of his Flock—Servetus—Resume—Servetus asks to Dispute with Calvin—The Magistrates Refuse—Nicholas de la Fontaine—Enters himself as Prosecutor for Calvin—Examination of Servetus—Defended by Berthelier—Calvin comes forward—The Council take the Prosecution into their own hands—Indictment of the Attorney-General—Sedition the Main Charge against Servetus—Servetus pleads for Free Inquiry—His Cause Mixed up with the Libertines'—Boldness of Servetus—Calvin's Struggle with the Council—Shall the Reformer Quit Geneva?—His Influence with the Magistrates at Zero.

IT seemed, indeed, a small matter whether Calvin should give the Sacrament to Berthelier or withhold it. But the question in another form, as Calvin clearly saw, was whether he should maintain the Reformation or abandon it. The moment he should put the consecrated elements into the hands of the Libertine, that moment he would lay the spiritual prerogative at the feet of the civil power, and Geneva would fall as the bulwark of Protestantism. To Berthelier, therefore, with the edict of the Council in his hand, and his Libertine hordes at his back, Calvin said, No. It was the "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me, God," repeated over again, at a moment equally critical, and in the face of a danger equally great.

The Reformer had escaped the greater danger, even death, which the Libertines hinted would be the penalty of refusal, but exile still hangs over him. In the evening of the same Sunday he ascended the pulpit, to take farewell of the flock from which he expected the coming day would see him parted probably for ever. He chose as the subject of his discourse Paul's farewell address to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, and the scene witnessed that night on the banks of the Leman was almost as touching as that enacted fifteen centuries before on the shores of the Ægean.[1] Closing his sermon and spreading out his hands over his loving flock, for the last time as he believed, he said, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace." The words were mingled with the sobs and tears of those to whom they were spoken.

But no order of banishment came on the morrow, though he waited hour after hour for it. The Reformer perceived that so far the victory remained with him. Left undisturbed, he turned his thoughts to the other matter which was then engrossing him, for he was grappling with two foes at once. We shall now turn with him to this, in every view of it, sad affair.

In order to an accurate idea of the trial, and of the various interests that combined to guide it to its deplorable issue, we must briefly review the steps already taken. On the 13th of August, Calvin, having learned that Servetus was in Geneva, demanded his arrest. But Genevese law required the *accuser*

[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 39.

to go to prison along with the accused till he had shown reasonable grounds for his accusation. Nicholas de la Fontaine, the secretary of Calvin, gave himself up in the stead of the Reformer. Next day a complaint in thirty-eight articles, drawn up, as we have said, by Calvin, was presented against Servetus. On the morrow the Council assembled in the Criminal Audience Chamber in the prison, and Servetus, having been interrogated on the articles, demanded a public disputation, promising to confute Calvin from Scripture and the Fathers. The prisoner further urged that it did not become a civil court to adjudicate on such matters. Here was a door opened for the Council to escape responsibility, had it chosen. "But," says Rilliet, "the magistrates refused to entertain the proposal, though Calvin for his part agreed, and protested that, as far as regarded him, 'there was nothing that he more desired than to plead such a cause in the temple before all the people.'" Why, we ask, this refusal on the part of the magistrates? Rilliet answers, "The Council feared, no doubt, that it would thus dispossess itself of the cognisance of an affair which stood connected with the prerogatives of which it had recently appeared so jealous;"[1] that is, the Council was then struggling to shut out the Consistory, and to secure to itself the spiritual as well as the civil government of Geneva.

The preliminary examination of Servetus ended, the Council, having regard to "his replies," found that the charges were true, and accordingly Nicholas de la Fontaine was discharged from prison, under obligation to appear as often as he might be called, and to prosecute his case. The Council, in coming to the conclusion that Servetus was guilty, appear to have been influenced less by his opinions on the Trinity than by his views on baptism. The frightful excesses of the Anabaptists in Germany and Switzerland, which were fresh in their memory, made the Council, doubtless, view this as the most dangerous part of his creed.

Tomorrow (16th August) when the Council assembled to prosecute the affair, two new parties appeared on the arena. These were Philibert Berthelier, the Libertine opponent of Calvin, and M. Germain Colladon, a Protestant refugee, and a man learned in the law. Colladon was associated with Fontaine in the defence and prosecution. These two—Berthelier and Colladon—were representatives of the two parties into which Geneva was divided, and their appearance indicated that the affair was tending to wider issues than any personal to Servetus; in short, it was becoming the battle-ground on which the question was to be determined whether Libertine Pantheism or the Protestant faith should hold possession of Geneva. Such is the inference of Rilliet, who says: "Each of the antagonists saw behind the proceedings carried on in the bishop's palace, the interest of the parties who disputed for Geneva."[2]

[1] Rilliet (Tweedie's translation), p. 107.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

It appears from the minutes that, at this meeting of Council, Berthelier undertook the defence of Servetus, and strongly argued in favour of his peculiar doctrines as well as of himself; Colladon attacked with equal ardour both the errors and their author; the violence of the debate extended itself to the Council, and the sitting, which was a stormy one, was abruptly terminated.[1]

This scene brought forward a more powerful man than any who had hitherto appeared in the prosecution. Berthelier was at that moment under excommunication by the Consistory, and he had a petition lying on the table of the Council to have the sentence of the spiritual court cancelled. It was thus tolerably plain that his championship of Servetus was inspired not so much by the wish to defend the prisoner, as by his desire to overthrow the Consistory. "Calvin felt," says Rilliet, "that the moment had arrived for him to appear, and boldly to resist the hostilities against himself, of which Servetus was about to become the occasion,"[2] if he would not see his whole work in Geneva swept away; accordingly the very next day he declared that he would appear as accuser. "The Reformer was now invited by the Council to assist, 'in order that his errors might be better demonstrated,' and to have 'whomsoever he chose with him ' at the examinations of the prisoner."[3] At the first meeting after this, at which Calvin was present, a sharp debate took place between him and Servetus. The issue was that the Council found that the charges contained in the indictment were proven from the books given in, in evidence, and the prisoner's own confessions.[4] Fontaine had previously been discharged from prison; now he was released from his obligation to prosecute, and the affair was taken entirely into the hands of the Attorney-General.[5]

The second act of the trial opened on the 21st of August. Their Excellencies in Council assembled resolved as follows:—"Inasmuch as the case of heresy of M. Servetus vitally affects the welfare of Christendom, it is resolved to proceed with his trial."[6] At this sitting, Calvin and the ministers, his colleagues, were introduced by the Attorney-General. They were wanted to give their evidence as to the meaning of the word *person*, as used in certain passages of the Fathers. Servetus taught that the *person* of the Son of God had no existence prior to the Incarnation. He held that Christ existed from all

[1] Berthelier's defence of Servetus is mentioned also by Roset (lib. v., chap. 50, 51), and Beza (ann. 1553).

[2] Rilliet, p. 113.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

[4] The nature of these errors we have already stated, but it does not concern us to go at large into their truth or atrocity, seeing either way we condemn the burning of Servetus. Our duty is to show, as fairly and clearly as we can, the exact connection which the Reformer and the Reformation had with this sad affair.

[5] Rilliet, pp. 120,121.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

eternity only as an *idea*, not as a *person*, in the essence or bosom of God, and that the term *Son of God* is applied in Scripture to Christ Jesus as a man.[1] He cited passages from Tertullian, Irenæus, and Clement, favourable as he thought to this opinion; and it was to give judgment on Servetus' interpretation of these passages that the pastors were now summoned. The service asked of them they rendered. At the meeting on the 23rd, the Attorney-General produced a new indictment against Servetus. It differed considerably from that which Fontaine had given in when the prisoner was first arrested, and which had been drawn up by Calvin. This new indictment dropped the theological errors of Servetus out of view altogether, well-nigh, and gave marked prominence to his offences against society. Its title ran thus:—"These are the interrogations and articles upon which the Attorney-General of this city desires to question Michael Servetus, a prisoner, guilty of blasphemies, of heresies, and of disturbing Christendom." "If Servetus had had, in the eyes of Genevese justice," says Rilliet, "no other fault than that of which De la Fontaine had declared him guilty in regard to Calvin, his acquittal had been sure." "If Calvin alone," he continues, "had been concerned in the affair of Servetus, all his efforts would have been unavailing to secure the condemnation of his adversary." "Servetus was tried," says he again, "and, as we shall mention below, condemned by the majority of his judges, not at all as the opponent of Calvin—scarcely as a heretic—but essentially as seditious. Politics acted a much more important part than theology, towards the close of this trial—they came on the stage with the Attorney-General."[2] Servetus saw the new position in which he stood, and strove to defend himself against the charges of the Attorney-General, not by denying that his opinions were theologically false, but by trying to show that they were not socially dangerous. This defence he followed up with a petition to the magistrates, in which he laboured to convince them that his opinions at the worst were only speculative errors, and not practical seditions; and, adds Rilliet, had he been able to make it appear that they were "divested of all *practical* results, the issue of his trial would not have been fatal."[3]

There came, at this stage of the business, a series of discussions on points which we cannot help thinking were irrelevant. Servetus was interrogated respecting his persistency in publishing his opinions, seeing he knew they were condemned by ancient Councils and imperial decrees, and the evil he had done or wished to do society by maintaining them. He replied, with ability and apparent frankness, that believing it to be the truth which he held, he

[1] Allwoerden, *Hist. M. Serveti*, p. 109.

[2] Rilliet, p. 131. Such is the dispassionate judgment of one who has thoroughly weighed the documentary and historical evidence of this melancholy affair, and who has suffered himself to be blinded by no veneration for Calvin, or sympathy with his work.

[3] Rilliet, p. 140.

would have offended God if he had not published it; that the ecclesiastical edicts and imperial decrees, which menaced him with death for these opinions, dated from a period when the Church had become more or less corrupt, and that the Church in apostolic times knew no such edicts, nor approved the doctrine of repelling opinion by force. These were truths, and the only mistake about them—to Servetus a very serious one—was that they came three centuries too soon, and were addressed to judges who were incapable of feeling their force. But when the prisoner affirmed that he had hardly ever spoken to any one on his peculiar opinions, he stated what it was impossible to reconcile with the known fact of his twenty years' active diffusion of his sentiments in Germany and France.

This was the very week in which the struggle between Calvin and the Libertines came to a crisis.[1] The authority, and it might be the life of the Reformer, hung upon the issue of that contest. Servetus from his prison watched the ebb and flow of the battle, and was humble and bold by turns, as victory appeared to incline now to Calvin and now to the Libertines. The approaching Sunday was that of the September Communion, and Berthelier, as we have seen, held an order from the Council, authorising him to appear at the holy table.

This seemed the death-warrant of Calvin's power. We can trace the influence of this turn of affairs upon Servetus. The Council had ordered Calvin to extract from his works, and to present without note or comment, those propositions in them which he deemed false. In obedience to the order, the Reformer drew up thirty-eight articles,[2] which were given to the prisoner to be answered by him. But Servetus' reply bore the character of a bitter attack upon the Reformer, rather than that of a defence of himself. "Wretch," said he, apostrophising Calvin, "do you think to stun the ears of the judges by your barking? You have a confused intellect, so that you cannot understand the truth. Perverted by Simon Magus, you are ignorant of the first principles of things— you make men only blocks and stones, by establishing the slavery of the will."[3] To write thus within the walls of a prison, was to be very sure of victory!

Nay, Servetus, looking upon Calvin as already fallen, no longer has recourse to subterfuges; he no longer seeks to show that his doctrines are innocuous. Throwing aside the veil, he openly avows that he held the opinions imputed to him in his indictment. He had drawn up his self-accusation with his own hand.

Calvin instantly wrote an answer to the paper of Servetus, as the Council had required. His strong hand thrust back the unhappy man into his former

[1] See previous chapter.
[2] Rilliet, p. 163.
[3] Rilliet, p. 171.

position. “Injurious words against Servetus,’’ says Rilliet, “are not spared, but these were a coin so current in those days that, instead of being deemed excessive, they fell from the pen without observation.” The Reformer’s answer was given in to the judges, signed by all the ministers of the Church of Geneva, fourteen in number. No sooner has Calvin laid down the pen than, seeing his own position and work are at that moment trembling in the balance, he turns to the other and graver conflict. On Saturday, the 2nd of September, he appeared before the Little Council to demand the cancelling of the warrant given to Berthelier to receive the Lord’s Supper. The Council declined to comply. It retained in its own hands the power to admit or to exclude whomsoever it would from the Communion-table. It stripped Calvin and the Consistory of all ecclesiastical authority and power, and, of course, of all responsibility for censures and punishments of an ecclesiastical kind. This power the Council took solely upon itself. The use it made of it will afterwards appear.

The scene that took place in the Cathedral of St. Peter’s the very next day we have already narrated. But the Reformer did not account it enough that he refused to obey in a matter which the laws of the State gave no right to the Council to command; he resolved, although at the risk of life, to maintain the battle, and reconquer the lost prerogative, without which he would not remain in Geneva.

On the 7th September, Calvin and his colleagues went to the Little Council, with the text of the Ecclesiastical Ordinances, and appealing to the letter of the law he showed the Council that the Ordinances gave it no power concerning excommunication, and that what it had done was a subversion of the Constitution of Geneva. He further craved the Council to make known its final determination upon the point, that he and his colleagues might be able to regulate their conduct as regarded resigning or retaining their functions in Geneva. The Council took three days to consider the matter, and, adds the Register, it “commanded that meanwhile M. Calvin must preach and do his duty.” On the 18th September, the Council passed a resolution declaring that “it would adhere to the edicts as it had hitherto done.”[1] This reply, in point of ambiguity, was almost Delphic. Interpreted by recent acts, it meant that the Council saw nothing inconsistent with the edicts in what they had done, and would still retain in their own hands the ecclesiastical government. Still the Reformer did not view it as justifying him in abandoning his work in Geneva, and Farel and other friends wrote at this crisis earnestly beseeching him not to quit his post.

Meanwhile Servetus was busy in his prison with his annotations on Calvin’s reply. The unhappy man, believing that his friends, the Libertines, who

[1] Rilliet, pp. 179—181.

communicated with him through the gaoler, were on the eve of triumphing, and that the Reformer was as good as fallen, was no longer at pains to conceal his intense hatred of the latter. Writing between the lines and on the margin of Calvin's document, he expressed himself in the following melancholy terms:—"You howl like a blind man in desert places, because the spirit of vengeance burns in your heart. You lie, you lie, you lie, you ignorant calumniator."[1] There followed a good deal more in the same vein. The Reformer was shown the writing, but leaving to Servetus the last word, he deigned no reply.

At this stage of the affair the magistrates of Geneva resolved (19th September) to consult the Helvetic Churches. Servetus himself had expressed a wish to that effect. A messenger of State, Jacquemoz Jernoz, was dispatched on the 21st to the Churches of Bern, Zurich, Schaffhausen, and Basle. He carried letters to the magistrates as well as to the pastors of the four cities, as also the requisite documents—namely, the articles of accusation, the papers exchanged between Servetus and Calvin, and a copy of the *Christianismi Restitutio.*

From this moment Calvin quits the scene. The course of the affair was precisely what it would have been although he had not been in Geneva at all. His influence with the Council was then at zero. We think we can see the end served thereby, though Calvin could not. To him it was only mortifying as betokening impending overthrow to the Reformation in Geneva. Writing to Bullinger at Zurich, on the 7th of September, he says: "Were I to declare that it is day at high-noon, they [the Council] would immediately begin to doubt it." That is all which he could put on paper, but, adds he, "our brother Walther [the son-in-law of Bullinger] will tell you more." This shows that the idea entertained by some that the Reformer was at that time all-powerful with the Council, and that he dictated the sentence it was to pronounce, is an entire misapprehension.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 184,185. Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 41.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONDEMNATION AND DEATH OF SERVETUS.

The Swiss Churches Consulted—Servetus Demands Calvin's Impeachment—Answer of the Swiss Churches—Their Verdict Unanimous—Council Condemns Servetus to be Burned—Calvin Intercedes that the Sword be Substituted for the Stake—Sentence Communicated to Servetus—Farel—Interview between Servetus and Calvin—Servetus Summoned to Execution—His Terror—The Procession—View from Champel—Farel's Last Conversation with Servetus—The Pile Kindled—Servetus Dies—Gibbon—Jurisprudence of the Age—No Romanist can Condemn Calvin.

IN the resolution to which the magistrates of Geneva had come, to lay the affair of Servetus before the Swiss Reformed Churches, we see the Churches of Helvetia formed into a jury. Pending the verdict, which it would seem Servetus did not for a moment doubt would be entirely in his favour, the accused took another step against Calvin. From his prison, on the 22nd of September, he sent to the Council a list of "articles on which M. Servetus wishes J. Calvin to be interrogated." He there accuses Calvin of having falsely imputed to him the opinion that the soul is mortal. "If I have said that—not merely said it, but publicly written it— to infect the world, I would condemn myself to death. Wherefore, my lords, I demand that my false accuser be punished, *paena talionis,* and that he be detained a prisoner like me, till the cause be decided for his death or mine, or other punishment."[1] Servetus had formerly declined the civil jurisdiction in matters theological; he now, in the hope of placing the Reformer in the same hazard as himself, accepts that jurisdiction in those very matters in which he had before declined it. And further, he makes it plain that he was not more liberal than his age, in holding that a conviction for heresy ought to draw after it the punishment of death.

Meanwhile the State messenger was making his circuit of the four cities, sojourning long enough in each to permit the magistrates and pastors to consider the documents, and make up their minds. At the end of nearly a month, the messenger returned. The answers of the cities and pastors were given into the Council on the 18th of October: they were eight in all, there being a deliverance from the Government and a deliverance from the Church in each case. The verdict eight times pronounced, with awful unanimity, was death. Thus, outside the territory of Geneva, was the fate of Servetus decided.[2] About the same time that the suffrages of the Swiss Churches were given in,

[1] Rilliet, p. 189.

[2] The replies of the magistrates and pastors of the four cities will be found in Ruchat, tom. vi., pp. 43–48; and Dr. Tweedie's translation of Rilliet, *Relation du Procès Criminel,* &c. (Appendix).

an officer arrived at Geneva from the tribunal of Vienne. This man carried an order from his masters empowering him to demand the surrender of the prisoner, and bring him to Vienne, that he might undergo the sentence that had been passed upon him. Their Lordships of Geneva replied that it was not their custom to give up one charged with a crime till he had been either acquitted or condemned. However, confronting Servetus with the Viennese officer, they asked him whether he would remain with them or go back with the person who had come to fetch him. The unhappy man with tears in his eyes replied, "Messieurs of Geneva, judge me according to your good pleasure, but do not send me back with the hangman." This interference of the Roman Catholic authorities of Vienne hastened the fate of the prisoner.[1]

The Council of Geneva assembled on the 26th of October to give judgment. The discussion was a stormy one. Perrin, with the Libertines, fought hard to save the accused; but the preponderating majority felt that the case could have but one issue. Servetus had already been condemned by the Popish tribunal of Vienne; the tribunal of the Swiss Reform had unanimously condemned him; the codes of Theodosius and Justinian, which still formed the basis of the criminal jurisprudence of Geneva, condemned him; and the universal opinion of Christendom, Popish and Protestant, held him to be worthy of death. To these considerations was added the horror his sentiments had inspired in all minds. Not only did his opinions outrage the fundamental doctrines of the then common creed of Christendom; they assailed with atrocious blasphemy the persons of the Trinity; and they tore up, in their last consequences, the roots of society, by striking down conscience within man, and the power of law without him. What day the Council acquitted Servetus, it pronounced the dissolution of the State, political and religious, and opened the flood-gates on Christendom of those horrible impieties and massacring crusades which had already inflicted fearful havoc in many of the provinces of Germany. Europe, they believed, would not hold them guiltless if they let loose this plague a second time. Therefore, without consulting Calvin, without even thinking of him, and viewing the question as a *social* rather than a *theological* one, and dealing with it as *sedition* rather than *heresy*—for, says Rilliet, "the principles of order, as then understood, did not permit them longer to hesitate as to whether or not they should see in them [i.e., the opinions of Servetus] the crime of treason against society"[2]—the magistrates of Geneva closed their Diet of the 26th of October with a decree condemning Servetus to death. "Let him," so ran the decree of the Council, as inscribed

[1] Gaberel, tom. ii., p. 256.

[2] Rilliet, p. 205.

in the Registers, "be condemned to be led to Champel, and there burned alive, and let him be executed tomorrow, and his books consumed."[1]

We record with horror the sentence, but it is the sentence not of the magistrates of Geneva only, nor of the magistrates and pastors of Reformed Switzerland only: it is the sentence of the Christendom of that age, for the Inquisition on one side, and Melanchthon on the other, are heard expressing their concurrence in it. At this supreme hour one man alone comes forward to attempt a mitigation of the punishment of Servetus. Who is that man? He is John Calvin. He earnestly interceded with the Council, not that the unfortunate victim might be spared, but that the sword might be substituted for the fire; but he interceded in vain. "It is to him, notwithstanding," says Rilliet, "that men have always imputed the guilt of that funeral pile, which he wished had never been reared."[2]

We must pursue this affair to its appalling and scandalous termination. Farel, who had been watching from Neuchâtel the progress of the trial, came suddenly to Geneva at its close. He was present with the unhappy man when the message of death was brought him. Up till that moment Servetus had clung to the hope of acquittal. He was horror-struck when the dreadful reality disclosed itself to him. "He was at intervals," says Calvin, "like one mad—then he uttered groans, which resounded through his chamber—anon he began to howl like one out of his senses. In brief, he had all the appearance of a demoniac. At last his outcry was so great that he without intermission exclaimed in Spanish, striking his breast, 'Mercy! mercy!'" A terrible picture! and one cannot but wish that, with its graphic touches, there had mingled a little more of that pity which it needs must awaken for the sufferer in the heart of every one who reads it. When his first paroxysm had subsided, Farel, addressing Servetus, besought him "to repent of his sins, and confess the God who had thrice revealed himself."[3] This appeal but re-kindled the polemical pride of the unhappy man. Turning to the aged evangelist, he asked him to produce a single passage from Scripture where Christ was called the Son of God previous to his coming in the flesh. Farel quoted several such passages; but Servetus, though he had nothing to reply, remained unconvinced, and continued to mingle cries for mercy, and appeals to Christ as his Saviour, with his disputation with Farel, in which he maintained that Christ was not eternal, nor otherwise the Son of God except as regards his humanity.[4]

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[1] *Ibid.,* p. 208.

[2] We have followed chiefly in this narration the authority of Rilliet, because he has examined all the existing documents, and speaks throughout with the dispassionateness of a judge. Any bias he indicates is in favour of Servetus, and against Calvin.

[3] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 51. Henry, *Life of Calvin,* vol. ii., p. 218; Lond., 1849.

[4] Gaberel, tom. ii., p. 262.

After this he requested, or at least consented, to see Calvin. The Reformer was accompanied to the prison by two members of Council, for it was just possible that the condemned would make a retractation, and the terrible necessity of his death be avoided. Being asked by one of the councillors what he had to say to Calvin, Servetus answered that he desired to ask his pardon. "I protest," replied the Reformer, "that I have never pursued against you any private quarrel." Mildly, yet with the utmost fidelity, Calvin went on to remind Servetus of the pains he had been at to prevent him plunging into these destructive errors; and he counselled him, even now, to turn to God, and cast himself by repentance and faith on his Son for pardon.[1] But Calvin had no better success than Farel; and, finding that he could effect nothing, he withdrew.

Whose heart does not bleed for the unhappy man? We feel a compassion and sorrow for Servetus such as we feel for no martyr. The men who died for the Gospel were upheld by the greatness and justice of their cause. Instead of falling prostrate before their judges, they stood erect, their faces shining with the light of faith. They trod the path to the fire, not with serenity only, but with songs of holy triumph, knowing that "one like unto the Son of Man" would descend and stand beside them, in the midst of the flames. But, alas! where shall Servetus look for consolation in his hour of agony? On whose arm shall he lean when he goes forth to die! and who will be his companion when he stands at the stake? The Trinity was to him "a Cerberus." From that Son to whom the Father said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," and who is "able to save to the uttermost," and from that Holy Spirit "who is the Comforter," his creed shut him out. And now, when the storm comes down upon him in a violence so terrific, he is without a shelter. No rock can he find on which to stay his feet amid the surging billows. At the gates of the new dispensation on which Christendom is entering stands Servetus, a monument of salt, to show the world how little power there is in a creed emptied of all the great verities of revelation, to sustain the soul amid the grand and dread eventualities of existence.

As yet Servetus was ignorant that he was to die by fire. Calvin had earnestly besought the Council that the miserable man might be spared this terrible surprise, but he had pleaded in vain. The magistrates would not permit him to influence their proceedings in the matter, even to the extent of substituting the sword for the stake. It was the morning of the 27th of October, the day named for execution; Farel and some country ministers were with Servetus as early as seven o'clock. The precious hours would seem to have passed, in wretched polemical discussions on the part of the condemned, who seemed more intent on triumphing in the argument with the pastors, than

[1] Rilliet, p. 212. Rudi at, tom. vi., p. 51. Henry, vol ii.. pp. 218, 219.

prevailing in his suit at the gates of the Eternal Mercy. It was now eleven o'clock in the forenoon. The Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by the Secretary of Justice, entered the prison, and addressed Servetus in the customary words, "Come with me and hear the good pleasure of my lords."[1] He was led before the court. "The staff was broken over his head,"[2] as was the wont with criminals adjudged to death, and the sentence was then read by the presiding syndic. Scarcely had the last words, which doomed him "to be fastened to a stake, and burned alive, till his body be reduced to ashes," fallen on his ears, when he cast himself at the feet of his judges, entreating that he might be permitted to die by the sword,[3] saying that if he had erred, he had erred through ignorance, and that his opinions were conformable to the Word of God. The syndics remained inexorable. Turning to the prisoner, Farel said that he must first disavow his errors, and then ask forgiveness. Again Servetus obtested his innocence, saying that he was being led to death as a sacrifice, and that he prayed God to forgive his accusers. Farel, with a sternness which is at least remarkable, threatened, should Servetus persist in these protestations of innocence, to leave him, and not go with him to the stake. The wretched man, feeling that in parting with Farel he was parting with the last poor remnant of human sympathy and comfort left him, held his peace.[4]

Doom has been spoken, and now the procession is marshalled and descends the steps of the town-hall. The Lord Lieutenant and the Herald, in the insignia of their office, head the way on horseback. Aghast, trembling, and pallid with terror, the white-haired Farel by his side, Servetus appears in the midst of the archers that form his escort. A crowd, smaller than usually assists at such sights, brings up the rear. The executioners had gone on before to prepare the funeral pile. The procession issued from the city by the gate of St. Anthony. They leave on the left the spot, now bare, where stood the celebrated Faubourg and Church of St. Victor, razed in 1534 for the defence of the city; on the right are the downs of Plain Palais, the *Campus Martins* of Geneva. The one recalled the sacrifices of the citizens for liberty, the other their gala-days of civic festival and military pomp. In the south, about a mile from the city gates, rose the little eminence of Champel, on the summit of

[1] Rilliet, p. 213.

[2] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 51.

[3] Allwoerden, p. 113.

[4] Gaberel, tom. ii., p. 264.—On both sides we see a resoluteness, a tenacity, and a depth of conviction which many in this age will have great difficulty in understanding. On the one side there is not a word of yielding; on the other not a word of consolation. It does not seem to have occurred to Servetus, to his credit be it said, to save himself by a false retractation; nor does Farel believe it possible to utter one word of comfort or hope till Servetus has been brought to renounce those doctrines which he held to be fatal. This imparts to the one side the air of obstinacy, to the other the aspect of severity. The earnestness of the sixteenth century is, we believe, the key to a scene that appears to us extraordinary.

which the stake had been fixed.[1] Sobs and ejaculatory prayers burst from Servetus as he pursued his brief and bitter pilgrimage to the fire. "O God!" he cried, "deliver my soul. Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father, have mercy on me." Farel has no word of solace to offer; he moves along by the side of Servetus, half in sorrow, half in anger; this to us looks heartless—nay, cruel; but Farel doubtless felt that consolation he could not offer without being insincere, and doing violence to his own convictions. It was his uprightness that made him look so stern, for the more earnest he was for the true welfare of the unhappy man he was accompanying to the stake, all the more did he strive to bring him to place his eternal hopes, not upon the man-God, but upon the God-man.[2]

The melancholy procession had now arrived at Champel. The stake that rose on its summit was the one dark object in a scene otherwise full of light and beauty. The vast plain, which lay outspread around the spot, wore a carpet of the richest foliage, now beginning to be chequered with the autumnal tints. The far-off mountains were tipped with the first silver of winter. In the centre of the immense picture gleamed the blue Leman, a mirror of polished steel. On the south of it were seen, rushing along in their winding course, the snow-grey waters of the Arve. On the north was the mighty amphitheatre of the woody Jura, which, entering France and sweeping down towards Savoy, showed its massy rampart cleft in the southwest to give passage to the Rhone. In this assemblage of riches one object alone appeared in naked desolation. At some distance rose the steep, barren, rocky Saleve, its blackness typical of the tragedy transpiring on the summit of the little Champel, on which it looked down.

Farel asks him whether he has wife or child, and would wish to make his will? Servetus makes him no answer.[3] He asks again whether he has anything else to say, hoping till the last moment to hear him confess a Divine Redeemer. Sighing deeply, Servetus exclaims, "O God! O God!" Farel bids him ask the prayers of the people. He does so; Farel uniting his own exhortations to the same effect to the bystanders.[4] While these supplications are being offered in silence, Servetus mounts the pile and seats himself on the log of wood which had been placed there for that purpose. He was fastened to the

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[1] On the level or summit of Champel, says Rilliet, and not at the spot called Champ du Bourreau, should be placed the theatre of executions. The latter place was the cemetery of the executed. *(Relation,* &c., p. 222, foot-note.)

[2] Servetus supplicated Christ as the "Son of the Eternal Father," but he would not acknowledge him as the "Eternal Son of the Father." In short, he saw in the Incarnation, not "God in the likeness of flesh," but flesh in the likeness of God.

[3] Allwoerden, p. 123.

[4] See extract from Farel's letter to Hottinger—Euchat, tm. vi., pp. 51, 52. *Calvini Opp.—Refut. Error. Serveti.*

stake by an iron chain put round his body, and a rope twisted round his neck. The executioner now kindled the torch, and, approaching the pile, set fire to the wood. At the first glare of the flames Servetus gave a shriek so terrible that it made the crowd fall back.[1] On his head was a wreath, woven of straw and leaves, sprinkled with brimstone, the sooner to suffocate him. His book, *Restitutio Christianismi*, was bound to his side, to be consumed with him.[2] The fire burned but slowly, and he lived for half-an-hour at the stake.[3] Some narrators say that a little before expiring he cried aloud, "Jesus, Thou Son of the Eternal God, have mercy upon me. Farel says, on the other hand, that he protested "in the midst of the flames, and in defiance of the whole Christian world, against the doctrine of the Trinity."

A great historian exclaims that the stake of Servetus caused him greater horror than all the. *autos-da-fé* of Rome. A signal inconsistency—as the burning of Servetus in a Protestant republic was—may no doubt strike one more than does a course of crime steadily and persistently pursued; but surely that mind is strangely constituted which is less moved to commiseration by thousands of victims than by one victim. The same century which witnessed the pile of Servetus saw some thirty or forty thousand fires kindled by the Church of Rome[4] for the burning of Protestants. But we by no means plead the latter fact as a vindication of the former. We deplore—we condemn—this one pile. It was a violation of the first principles of Protestantism. To say more on this head, writing as we do in the nineteenth century, would be simply to declaim.

But let us not commit the injustice of Gibbon and those who have followed him. Let us not select one of the actors, and make him the scapegoat of his age. We have striven to give an impartial statement of facts, that the reader may know the precise share which Calvin had in this transaction, and the exact amount of condemnation to mete out to him. Calvin informed the Council of Servetus' arrival in Geneva; he drew up the articles of indictment from the writings of Servetus, the first time at his own instance, and the second time at the Council's order; and he maintained these when face to face with Servetus before the syndics. All this he could not decline to do without neglect of duty as president of the Consistory. All this he was bound to do

[1] Allwoerden, p. 124.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] "Everywhere else but in a Reformed city," says Rilliet, "he [Servetus] might have perished without his memory recalling anything but a funeral pile and a victim" (p.223). And we may add that, but for the "fierce light that burns" on Calvin, and the fact that his official duty connected him with the trial, his name would have been scarcely more associated with the death of Servetus than is that of Melanchthon or Viret, or any other Reformer who was then alive, and who shared the responsibility of the affair equally with him.

by the law of the State. If we are to be discriminating in our censure, we must go farther back than the denunciation given in to the Council, and come to the order of things established at Geneva, which rendered this form of procedure in such cases imperative. It was a vicious jurisprudence; but it was the jurisprudence of former ages, and of that age, and the jurisprudence freely adopted by the citizens of Geneva. Those who condemn Calvin for conforming to it in a matter of public duty, are in reality condemning him for not being wiser in judicial matters than all previous ages, his own included, and for not doing what there is no proof he had power to do, namely, changing the law of the State, and the opinions of the age in which he lived. Beyond what we have stated Calvin had no influence, and tried to exert none.

We further grant that Calvin wished a conviction, and that he approved of the sentence as just —nay, expressed his satisfaction with it, having respect to the alternative of acquittal—namely, the expulsion of the Reformation from Geneva. We condemn him for these views; but that is to condemn him for living in the sixteenth and not in the nineteenth century, and we condemn not him alone, but his age, for all who lived with him shared these views, and believed it a duty to punish heresy with death; although even already Calvin, as appears from his book of the following year, had separated himself from the Romish idea that heresy is to be punished as heresy—is to be smitten by the sword, though it should exist only in the depth of one's bosom. He would have the heretic punished only when he promulgates his opinions to the disturbance of society. This is to come very near—nearer perhaps than any other man of his day came—to the modern doctrine of toleration.

But further, it is only Protestants who are entitled to find fault with Calvin. No Romanist can utter a word of condemnation. No Romanist of Calvin's own age did condemn him,[1] and no more can any Romanist of ours. The law of the Romish world to this day awards death by burning to heresy; and the Romanist who condemns the affair of Servetus, condemns what his Church then accounted, and still accounts, a righteous and holy deed; and so condemns his Church, and himself not less, as a member of it. He virtually declares that he ought to be a Protestant.

To Calvin, above all men, we owe it that we are able to rise above the error that misled his age. And when we think, with profound regret, of this one stake planted by Protestant hands, surely we are bound to reflect, with a

[1] Bolsec, the bitterest of all Calvin's enemies, speaking Of Servetus, says that he experienced "no regret at the death of so monstrous a heretic," and adds that "he was unworthy to converse with men." (Bungener, p. 239.)

gratitude not less profound, on the thousands of stakes which the teaching of Calvin has prevented ever being set up.[1]

[1] We are precluded from hearing Calvin in his own defence, because the death of Servetus was not brought as a charge against him during his lifetime. Still he refers twice to this affair in rebutting general accusations, and it is only fair to hear what he has to say. In his *Declaration upon the Errors of Servetus*, published a few months after his execution, Calvin says: "I made no entreaties that he might be punished with death, and to what I say, not only will all good people bear witness, but I defy even the wicked to say the contrary." In 1558 he published his *Defence of the Secret Providence of God.* The book was translated into English by the Rev. Henry Cole, D.D., of Clare Hall, Cambridge. In that work, pp. 128, 129 (English translation), is the following passage, in which Calvin is appealing to his opponents:—"For what particular act of mine you accuse me of cruelty I am anxious to know. I myself know not, unless it be with reference to the death of your great master, Servetus. But that I myself earnestly entreated that he might not be put to death his judges themselves are witnesses, in the number of whom at that time two were his staunch favourers and defenders." This would be decisive, did the original fully bear out the English rendering. Calvin's words are—" Saevitiam meam in quo accuses, audire cupio: nisi forte in magistri tui Serveti morte, pro quo tamen me fuisse deprecatum testes sunt ipsi judices, ex quorum numero tunc duo erant strenui ejus patroni." *(Opp. Calvini,* vol. viii., p. 646.) The construction of the words, we think, requires that the important clause should be read thus—I myself know not that act, unless it be with reference to your master, Servetus, for whom I myself earnestly interceded, as his judges themselves are witnesses, *&c.* If Calvin had said that he earnestly entreated that Servetus should not be put to death, we should have been compelled to believe he had changed his mind at the last moment. But we do not think his words imply this. As we read them they perfectly agree with all the facts. Now that M. Rilliet de Candolle has published the whole process, the following propositions are undeniable:—1. That Calvin wished for a capital sentence: he had intimated this as early as 1546 in his letter to Farel. 2. That when the time came the Council of Geneva had taken both the ecclesiastical and civil power into their own hands. 3. That the part Calvin acted was simply his statutory duty. 4. That he had no power either to condemn or save Servetus. 5. That the only party in Christendom that wished an acquittal were the Libertines. 6. That their object was the overthrow of the Reformation in Geneva. 7. That the sentence of the Council was grounded mainly on the political and social consequences of Servetus' teaching. 8. That Calvin laboured to substitute decapitation for burning,

CHAPTER XXIII.

CALVIN'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH MARTYRS, REFORMERS, AND MONARCHS.

Calvin at the Centre—Stages of his Life—His Work Advancing—Missionaries—The "Dispersed in the Isles"—The Martyrs—How Calvin Comforted them—The Collar of the Order of Martyrs—The Five Martyrs of Lyons—Their Behaviour at the Stake—Calvin Surveying the Field and the Fallen around him—Counsels Princes—Edward VI. —Calvin's Letter to Somerset on the Reformation of England—Letter to Edward VI.—Archbishop Cranmer—Union—Calvin's Longings for it.

INTENSE interest still attached to the great movement and its head-quarters, the little town of Geneva, around which the clouds of war and danger were gathering heavier every day, though an unseen Hand withheld them from bursting.

There sat the man whom the death of Luther had left the one great chief of the movement. With brow erect, and eye steadfast and calm, he surveys the scene of threatening and agitation which discloses itself far and near around him. He was assailed by all passions, and by every party, by the democracy below and by the kings above; the Reformer, nevertheless, pursued his task with Herculean strength, and saw his work year by year taking deeper root, and extending wider on all sides. Luther's energies declined as his years advanced, and he had the mortification, before he went to his grave, of seeing the Reformation in Germany beginning to lose the purity to which it owed the splendour of its early morning, and the power that made it in its noon the ruler of the Teutonic nations. But Calvin's latter years were his most triumphant, for neither did his powers decay nor his work stand still; on the contrary, the one continued to strengthen, and the other to advance, till his last hour on earth. His first years had been spent in elaborating the scheme of Christian doctrine: his next were passed in constructing a spiritual machinery, through which his doctrine might operate, and its influence be tested in purifying and elevating society; hence his efforts to hold Geneva, and to quell the infidel democracy, whose instincts taught it that its greatest enemy was Calvin's Gospel, and that it must crush it or be crushed by it. Having made good Geneva as a basis of Protestant operations, Calvin's third period was passed in planting his system abroad, and guiding, by his writings and letters, the Reformation in France, England, Switzerland, Poland, and other countries. There was no land where Calvin was not present.

Geneva, while the Reformer lived in it, was continually opening its gates to give asylum to the persecuted of other countries. The same gates were continually opening to let those go forth who were returning to the field of labour, or it might be of martyrdom. We can give here only a few instances.

One day, in the summer of 1553, a missionary was commissioned to carry a letter from Calvin, “To the faithful dispersed in some isles of France.” His name was Philibert Hamelin, and he was on his way to the coast of Saintonge, where a young flock were much in want of some one to organise and instruct them. Hamelin, a native of Tours, was the first preacher of the Reformed doctrine in Saintes. He was seized in that town, but escaping death by almost a miracle, he came to Geneva, where he followed the calling of a printer. But the ardour of his zeal would not suffer him to remain in his asylum. He set out to revisit his brethren, “dispersed among the isles,” with this letter, in which Calvin, addressing these young converts, said: "We are nowise of opinion that you should be in a hurry to partake of the Holy Supper until you have some order established among you. . . . . Nay, it would not be lawful for a man to administer the Sacraments to you, unless he recognised you as the flock of Jesus Christ, and found among you the form of a Church.” The devoted missionary, in an apostolate of four years, organised their Churches. He never returned to the great captain who had sent him forth, to tell what success had attended his labours. Taken anew, he was burned alive at Bordeaux, the 18th April, 1557.[1]

Whilst there was one stake in the Place Champel, surrounding countries were lit up with a multitude of blazing stakes. But there was not one of these piles at which Calvin was not present, nor was there one of these sufferers who was not refreshed by his words amid the flames. In the July of 1553 two confessors were expecting death in the prisons of Lyons. Calvin received the tidings during the trial of Servetus, and when he was in the thick of his contest with the Libertines. He hastened to their dungeon, as it were, and by words from his own courageous yet tender heart comforted theirs. “That God,” he told them, “who had called them to the honour of maintaining His truth, would lead them to martyrdom as by the hand.” He bade them think of the “heavenly immortality” to which the “cross and shame and death” conducted, and of Him who waited, the moment these were ended, to wipe away all tears. One of these sufferers, who had been reached by the words of Calvin, thus thanked him:—“ could not tell you, sir and brother,” wrote Louis Marsac, “the great comfort I received from the letters which you sent to my brother, Denis Peloquin, who found means of passing them to one of our brethren who was in an underground cell above me, and read them to me, because I could not read them, inasmuch as I can see nothing in my dungeon. I pray you, therefore, to persevere in aiding us always with like consolation, which invites us to weep and pray.” When the little company of martyrs, of which Louis Marsac was one, were led forth to be burned, all appeared with halters round their necks except Louis. His enemies had spared him this

[1] Bonnet, *Letters of Calvin*, vol. ii., No. 327; and footnote, p. 414.

indignity on the ground of his being nobly born. But so far from reckoning this as a favour, he even deemed the denial of it a dishonour, and asked why he was refused the collar of that "excellent order" of martyrs.[1]

Of all the martyrdoms of the period, the most touching perhaps is that of "the five martyrs of Lyons." Natives of France, and desirous of taking part in the Reformation of their own country, they repaired to Lausanne to study theology and qualify themselves for the ministry. Having completed their course, they received licence to preach, and set out to begin their labours in France. They rested a few days in Geneva, and then passed on to their destined field, their spirits invigorated, we can well believe, by their brief stay in the capital of Protestantism, and especially by their converse with its great chief. Light they were destined to impart to their native France, but not in the way they had fondly hoped. On their journey to Lyons they met at the Bourg de Colonges, nigh to L'Ecluse, a stranger who offered himself as their fellow-traveller. They harboured no suspicion, and maintained no disguise in the company of their new acquaintance. Soon after their arrival at Lyons, they were arrested and thrown into prison. Their companion had betrayed them. Their fate having awakened great interest, powerful influence was used in their behalf[2] at the court of France. The Bernese Government interceded for "their scholars" with the king. Some among the Romanists even, touched by their pure lives and their lovely characters, interested themselves for their safety. Meanwhile their trial proceeded at Lyons. The brutality of the judges was as conspicuous as the constancy of the prisoners. From the sentence of the Lyonnese court, which adjudged them to death, they appealed to the Parliament of Paris.

On the 1st of March, 1553, the decree arrived from the capital confirming the sentence of the court below. So, then, it was by their burning pile, and not by the eloquence of their living voice, that they were to aid in dispelling the darkness that brooded over their native land. There was mourning in Lausanne and Geneva, and in other places on the shores of the Leman, when it was known that those who had so lately gone forth from them, and for whom they had augured a career of the highest usefulness, were so soon to meet a tragic death.

"We have been, for some days past, in deeper anxiety and sadness than ever," writes Calvin to them, when he had learned the final decision of their persecutors. Turning away from the throne of Henry II., "We shall," says he, "do our duty herein by praying to Him that He may glorify Himself more and more in your constancy, and that He may by the consolation of His Spirit

[1] Laval., *His., of Reformation in France*, vol. i., p. 82; Loud., 173.

[2] The names of these five students were Martial Alba, of Montauban; Peter Ecrivain, of Gascony; Charles Favre, of Blanzac in Angoumois; Peter Naviheres, of Limousin; and Bernard Seguin, of La Reole.

sweeten and endear all that is bitter to the flesh, and so absorb your spirits in Himself, that in contemplating that heavenly crown you may be ready without regret to leave all that belongs to this world. If He has promised to strengthen with patience those who suffer chastisement for their sins, how much less will He be found wanting to those who maintain his quarrel! *He who dwells in you is stronger than the world.*"[1]

How calm these words, when we think who spoke them, and that they were spoken to men about to expire in the fire! They breathe not the enthusiasm of *feeling,* but the enthusiasm of *faith.* These five young men were to die for the Gospel, but this was an every-day service in those days. Every disciple was supposed to be ready to lay down his life, and to do so with the calm magnanimity of the soldier who does his duty and nothing more. Calvin himself was prepared at any hour to walk to the stake with the same absence of ostentation, the same obliviousness of doing a grand act, as if he had been stepping into his pulpit. Was there, then, no enthusiasm in those days'? Yes, enthusiasm indeed there was; but it was an enthusiasm that sustained itself, from day to day and from hour to hour, at so lofty a pitch that it could rise no higher. It could have no spasm, no burst. Hence, neither was boast in the mouth of the men who did the act, nor applause in the mouths of those who witnessed it. The spectacle is all the more sublime.

On the 16th of May the five young students were led to the fire. They died with a heroism worthy of their age. "Being come to the place of execution," says Crespin, "they ascended with a joyful heart the pile of wood, the two youngest first. The last who ascended was Martial Alba, the eldest of the five, who had a long time been on both his knees praying to the Lord. He asked Lieutenant Tignac to grant him a gift. The lieutenant said to him, 'What willest thou?' He said to him, 'That I may kiss my brethren before I die.' The lieutenant granted it to him. Then the said Martial kissed the four who were already bound, saying to each of them, 'Adieu, adieu, my brother.' The fire was kindled. The voices of the five confessors were heard still exhorting one another: 'Courage, my brethren, courage!' And these," continues Crespin, "were the last words heard from the said five valiant champions and martyrs of the Lord."[2]

What, one cannot refrain from asking, were the thoughts of Calvin, as he was told that another and another had fallen in the conflict? The feelings of a Cæsar or of a Napoleon, as he surveys the red field of his ambition, we can imagine. Every corpse stretched out upon it, every drop of blood that moistens its soil, is a silent accusation, and cries aloud against him. Far other were the feelings of Calvin as he cast his eye over the field around him, where so

[1] Bonnet, vol. ii-, p. 374, No. 308,
[2] Crespin, *Hist, des Mart.* iii., 228–236; Geneva, 1570.

many, and these the noblest and purest of their age, languished in dungeons, or quivered on the rack, or were expiring amid flames. These were not soldiers who had been dragged into battle, and who had died to place a crown upon the brow of another. They were men who had been fighting the battles of their Saviour, and who in dying had won for themselves the crown of life. Nor did the Reformer for one moment despair of a cause that was suffering these repeated tremendous losses. Losses, did we say? Where and to whom was there loss? Not to the martyr, who received an eternal life in place of the mortal one which he had laid down; nor to the cause, which waxed stronger with each new martyr, and received another and another pledge of final victory with every stake that was planted and every drop of blood that was spilt. That such was the effect of these martyrdoms, we quote the testimony of one who was no friend to Protestantism. "The fires were lighted everywhere," says Florimond de Ræmond, "and as, on the one hand, the just severity of the law restrained the people within their duty, on the other, the obstinate resolution of those who were dragged to the gibbet astonished many. For they saw weak and delicate women seeking for torments in order to prove their faith, and on their way to death exclaiming, 'Only Christ, the Saviour,' and singing some psalm; young maidens walking more gaily to execution than to the bridal-chamber; men rejoicing to behold the terrible preparations and instruments of death, and, half-burned and roasted, remaining like rocks against the waves of pain. These sad and constant sights excited some perturbation, not only in the souls of the simple but of the great, who were not able to persuade themselves that truth was not on the side of such as maintained it with so much resolution at the cost of their life."[1]

The same Calvin who was by the side of the martyr on the scaffold was also with the statesman in his cabinet, and at times at the foot of the throne giving counsel to princes. Henry VIII. had died in 1547, and with him expired that peculiar scheme of Reform by which he aimed at abolishing the jurisdiction of the Pope, yet preserving the religion of Popery. His son, Edward VI., mounted the throne in his tenth year. The Duke of Somerset, now Lord Protector, had educated the young prince in the principles of the Protestant faith. The fine talents and noble character of the youthful monarch excited the highest hopes in Calvin, and he strove to win him more and more for the Gospel. Nor were the hopes which the Reformer cherished disappointed. It was during the reign of this pious prince, and the regency of Edward Seymour, Lord Protector, that the Reformation was established in England. Hence the correspondence of Calvin with Somerset, to whom he dedicated, June, 1548, his *Commentary on the First Epistle to Timothy,* And hence, too, his remarkable letter to the same statesman in October of the same

[1] Bungener, p. 38.

year, in which he states fully his sentiments touching what was necessary to complete the Reformation in England.

This matter will come before us in its proper place. Meanwhile we note that the Reformer, in his letter to Lord Protector Somerset, insists on three things as necessary to the moral transformation of England: first, the preaching of the pure Word of God; second, the rooting out of abuses; and, third, the correction of vices and scandalous offences. As regarded the first, the preaching of the Gospel, Calvin laid stress upon the *manner* as well as the *doctrine*—upon the life as well as the purity of the pulpit. "The people," says he, "are to be so taught as to be touched to the quick, and feel that the Word of God is a 'two-edged sword.' I speak this, Monseigneur," continues the Reformer, "because it appears to me that there is very little preaching of a lively kind in the kingdom, but that the greater part deliver it by way of reading from a written discourse. This preaching ought not to be lifeless but lively. Now you know, my Lord," Calvin goes on to say, "how St. Paul speaks of the liveliness which ought to be in the mouth of good ministers of God, who ought not to make a parade of rhetoric in order to show themselves off, but the Spirit of God must resound in their voice." In short, Calvin desiderated two things—"a good trumpet" and "a certain sound"—if the Lord Protector would reap fruit of his labours, and the Reformation be permanent in England.[1]

When at last the intrigues of his rivals prevailed against him, and the good Duke of Somerset had to mount the scaffold, Calvin addressed the young king, whose heart was not less set on the Reformation of England than had been that of the Lord Protector. The Reformer dedicated to him two of his works, the *Commentary on Isaiah,* and the *Commentary on the Catholic Epistles.* Edward VI. was at this time only fourteen years of age, but his precocious intellect enabled him to appreciate and even to judge of the works the Reformer had laid at his feet.

The bearer of these two books, the pastor Nicolas des Gallars, was received with marked respect at the court of England. The books were accompanied by a letter to the king, in which Calvin spoke with the plainness and honesty of the Reformer, yet, mindful that he was addressing a king, he adopted the tone not of a master but of a father. Holding up to him the example of Josiah, he exhorted the young monarch to "follow up the good work so happily begun;" he cautioned him against viewing it as achieved, and that it was "not in a day that such an abyss of superstition as the Papacy is to be purged." "True it is, sire," said he, "that there are things indifferent which we may allowably tolerate, but then we must always insist that simplicity and order be observed in the use of ceremonies, so that the clear light of the

[1] Bonnet, vol. ii., pp. 168—184, No. 229. Bungener, *Calvin,* pp. 272, 273.

Gospel be not obscured by them, as if we were still under the shadows of the law, and then that there may be nothing allowed that is not in agreement and conformity to the order established by the Son of God. For God does not allow his name to be trifled with, mixing up silly frivolities with his holy and sacred ordinances." "There is another point, sire, of which you ought to take a special charge, namely, that the poor flocks may not be destitute of pastors." In fine, he exhorted the king to have a care for the efficiency and purity of the schools and universities, for he had been informed that "there are many young people supported on the college bursaries, who, instead of giving good hope of service in the Church, do not conceal that they are opposed to the true religion." The Reformer entreated the king to take order therein, "to the effect that property which ought to be held sacred be not converted to profane uses, and far less to nourish venomous reptiles, who would desire nought better than to infect everything for the future. For in this way the Gospel would always be kept back by these schools, which ought to be the very pillar thereof."[1]

The pious king had for primate the erudite Cranmer. The archbishop had cowered under the capricious tyranny of Henry VIII., but now, moving no longer in the cold and withering shade of that monarch, Cranmer was himself again; and not only was he labouring zealously to complete the work of Reformation in England, he was also holding out the hand to all the Reformers and Reformed Churches on the Continent. He was at that time revolving a grand Protestant union. He desired that the friends of the Gospel in all lands should come together, and deduce from the Word of God a scheme of Christian doctrine which all might confess and hold, and which might be, to the generation then living and to the ages to come, a standard round which the Church might rally.[2] At Trent the Church of Rome was massing and marshalling her troops; the Primate of England thought that the Protestant Church ought also to close her ranks, and, presenting an unbroken front to the foe, be ready to repel his attack, or to advance her own triumphs into regions where her banners had not yet been displayed. Cranmer communicated his idea to the Reformer of Geneva. Calvin, in his reply, intimated his approval of his "just and wise design," and said that for his own part, if he could further thereby the work of union, "he would not grudge to cross even ten seas;" and he went on to indicate the existence of certain principles that lay far down, even at the bottom of society, and which no eye save his own then saw, but which have since come to the surface, and yielded that noxious and bitter crop that he predicted they would if not obviated, "the distemper" even of "a

[1] Bonnet, vol. ii., pp. 284—288, No. 273.

[2] See Cranmer's letters to the leading theologians of Switzerland and Germany, reproduced in the collections of his works, published by the Parker Society, as also the collection of *Zurich Letters*, first series, vol, i,

stupid inquisitiveness alternating with that of fearless extravagance." The Reformer saw that the future of Christendom was menaced by "terrible disorders," not more by difference in religious sentiments than by that speculative philosophic spirit which contravenes the laws of true science not less than it contemns the authority of the Scriptures. In short, Calvin foresaw, even at that early period, should Protestantism fail, a pantheistic Europe.

Soon after this interchange of letters, the death of Edward VI. and the accession of Queen Mary changed the whole face of affairs. The disastrous events which now took the place of those bright triumphs that the good archbishop had judged to be so near, belong to a subsequent period of our history.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CALVIN'S MANIFOLD LABOURS.

Dedication of his *Commentaries* and Works—Care of the Churches—Poland, &c.—England and Elizabeth—Scotland—John Knox—Similarity between Calvin and Knox—The Secret of their Power—Immense Labours of Calvin—Calvin and Innocent III. Compared and Contrasted.

THE heart of Calvin must have been unspeakably saddened and weighed down, as day after day refugees arrived in Geneva, telling him that another and another of England's Reformers and scholars had perished at the stake, and that another and yet another of the rites of Rome had been re-introduced into that kingdom where the light of Reformation had begun to shine so clearly. But alike in the foul day as in the fair, the Reformer must go on with his work. He stood at the helm, and if the storm thickened, it was only the more necessary that he should turn his eye to every quarter of the horizon, and counsel, warn, and encourage, as the circumstances of each of the Protestant countries required. "He bore," says Beza, "all these Churches upon his shoulders." Which of them was it that his voice did not reach? We find him in 1545 renewing his intercourse with the distant Austrian provinces. He dedicated his *Catechism* to the Protestant communities there, with the view of establishing a union in doctrine between them and the Church of Geneva. His watchful eye did not overlook Poland. In 1549 he dedicated to the monarch of that country, Sigismund Augustus, his *Commentary on the Hebrews,* He exhorted him to give himself to the service of Christ, which places us "in the rank of angels," and to follow the footsteps of his father Sigismund, who, while persecution raged in many other countries, kept his hands unstained with blood. Denmark and Sweden also shared Calvin's solicitude. In the year 1552 he dedicated the first half of his *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* to the excellent Christian I.; and the second half he dedicated in 1554 to the son of that monarch, Frederick.

Amid the crowned heads whom he thus acknowledges, the friends of his youth and the refugees of the Gospel were not forgotten. The first part of his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians* was dedicated, in 1546, to the Sieur de Bourgoyne; and, ten years later, another part to an illustrious Neapolitan, the Marquis Caraccioli, a refugee in Geneva. These dedications are finely conceived. The writer is forgetful neither of their rank nor of his own greatness. The *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* was dedicated to Melchior Wolmar, and he accompanied it with an allusion, at once graceful and grateful, to the days he had spent with him in his youth at Bourges. The *Commentaries on the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians* were dedicated to the young Duke Christopher

of Wurtemberg, to encourage him to persevere in the Reformed path, reminding him, as he had said to the youthful Edward of England, that "it was a great matter to be a Christian king, but a yet greater to be a Christian." The *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians* was dedicated, in 1551, to the aged Mathurin Cordier, his early revered teacher, now principal of the Gymnasium at Lausanne. This was his public acknowledgment of what he owed to the man who had first opened to him the gate of knowledge, and guided him in the path with so much skill and pains. What a deeply affectionate and truthful nature do we discover in all this![1]

Letters and evangelists was Calvin daily sending to the Church of France. The "Shepherd of Christendom," he was specially the apostle of the French Church. Born in that land, but driven out of it, he was here on its border, in his Alp-environed city, to direct and watch over its Reformation. The Protestants of that great country would have been far happier had they lent a profounder ear to his counsels. Their scaffolds would have had more victims, it may be, but the slain of their battle-fields would have been fewer. His messengers also crossed the Alps, with letters to Renee, Duchess of Ferrara. Encompassed by the spies of Rome, watched by a bigoted husband, with few near her to succour her efforts, or share her longings for the emancipation of her fair Italy, the words of Calvin must have been to the grief-stricken queen as "cold waters" to one athirst. The Pyrenees no more than the Alps could confine his sympathies. He corresponded with the Queen of Navarre, Margaret of Valois, and with her illustrious daughter, Jeanne d'Albret. We do not wonder that the eye of the Reformer should rest with special delight on the little kingdom governed by these wise and virtuous princesses, for there the Protestant vine, so sorely buffeted by tempests in many other lands, flourished in peace, and yielded abundance of happy fruits in the order, the industry, and the morality of the region. And now, again, his attention was attracted to England. Mary was dead, and Elizabeth was on the throne. To the foot of that throne came the Reformer, to instruct, with a now fully-matured wisdom and prescience, the great English sovereign and her ministers, how that faith, planted in their country by Wicliffe, might be revived, and that goodly Church order set up by Cranmer, but overthrown by the furious tempests that had since swept over the kingdom, might be restored and completed.

It is on a country more to the north, then distinct from England, now happily one with it, that the eye of the great chief of Protestantism rests with the greatest delight of all. He had, perhaps, a presentiment that it was that country, rather than France, in which his grand idea was to be realised. A son of that land had already found his way to Geneva. The keen eye of Calvin

[1] Henry, *Life and Times of John Calvin*, vol. ii, p. 32; Lond., 1849.

quickly discerned what sort of man the stranger was. The leonine lineaments of his soul, the robust powers of his intellect stood out to his view; he was the likest to himself of all the men around him, and the two cleaved to each other, and became knit together in the bonds of a holy friendship. Henceforward it was to be Calvin and Knox. Alone, unapproached, towering above even the loftiest of the men around him, stood the Reformer of Geneva; nevertheless the same two qualities that constitute the basis of the character of Calvin constitute also that of Knox. The first is absolute faith in God, the second is absolute submission to his Word. In these two- men, these twin principles existed to a degree of strength and intensity which we find in no other of the Reformers, Luther excepted. These two master-principles were the root that nourished all their virtues—their wisdom, their fearless courage, their inflexible adherence to truth, and that unconquered and unconquerable energy with which they pursued their great task till it was fully achieved.

A strong, capacious, and versatile intellect did both these men possess. This helped them in their work; it was like a sharp sword in the hand of a mighty man. But we must never forget that the influence by which Knox regenerated Scotland, and Calvin regenerated Christendom, was not an intellectual force, but a moral, a Divine power. Their submission to the Scriptures gave them access to the deep fountains of that celestial force, and enabled them to bring it into play in all its freshness, fulness and purity. To propel this quickening energy through a dead world was the work of Calvin. It was his work from day to day. Sitting in his: closet, he sent abroad the arrows of light all over Christendom. It was by the clearness, the tranquillity, and the beauty of his *Commentaries* that he acted upon the intellect and conscience of the world. Thus he maintained the battle. With these shafts he smote his foes, and overturned the kingdom of darkness.

When we think of his letters, written on affairs- of the greatest weight, addressed to the first men of position and intellect in Europe—some of them in the graceful and concise Latin of a Cicero or a Seneca, others of them in French that formed the precursor and model of the age of Montaigne— so numerous are they, that it might have been- supposed he wrote letters and did nothing besides. When we turn to his *Commentaries*, so voluminous, so solid, and so impregnated with the spirituality, and fire, and fragrance of the Divine Word;—again it would seem as if we had before us the labours of a life-time. "The *Commentaries* of Calvin," says Bungener, "mark a revolution in the study of the Bible, and on that account occupy a distinguished place, not only in the history of theology, but in that of the human mind."[1] These immortal productions are above all else that he wrote or did. Calvin—the

[1] Bungener, p. 282. "Doubtless, in many passages, better elucidations have since been found, but it is precisely because his method has been followed."

Calvin that lived and acted on the world of the sixteenth century—lives and acts on that of the nineteenth through these *Commentaries.*

When, again, we think of him in the pulpit, where he appeared, we may say, every day; when we think of him in the Consistory, where he was present every week; in the academy, whither he often went to address the youth; in the council-chamber, to which he was frequently summoned to give advice on affairs of the State; when we think of his combats with the Libertines, whose faction he overthrew; of his hospitalities and attentions to the refugees of all nations; of the foreign Churches which devolved upon him the task of their organisation; of the, hours spent in meditation and prayer —and all accomplished in a feeble and sickly body—we find once more that we have enough of work to fill a life-time, although it had stood alone; and we stand amazed when we reflect that it was all done in a life which, when closed, did not number fifty-five years complete.[1]

Modern Church history presents us with two examples of the very loftiest style of governing. Both soar immensely above the ordinary and vulgar methods of rule. The one presents itself at the meridian of the Papacy, the other is seen in the morning of Protestantism. The two stand over against each other, a beacon and lesson to mam kind. We refer to Innocent III. of Rome, and John Calvin of Geneva.

Innocent professed to govern the world by methods purely spiritual, and on sanctions altogether Divine. A man of comprehensive genius, and untiring in his application to business, he wrote letters, promulgated edicts, convoked Councils, perfected the doctrine of his Church by enacting transubstantiation, and completed its government by the establishment of the Inquisition. In virtue of this machinery, more especially by the terrible sentence of interdict, he made himself the master of all the thrones of Europe; his will was obeyed to the remotest extremities of Christendom.

John Calvin held with Innocent that the will of God, as made known in the Scriptures, ought to be the supreme law on earth. But the results that attended this principle as enthroned at Rome were just the opposite of those that flowed from it as established at Geneva, and worked by Calvin. Innocent cast down thrones, Calvin imparted stability and dignity to them. Innocent's rule sunk the nations into serfdom, Calvin's raised them to liberty. Innocent

[1] "In sooth/' says Gaberel, "the work killed the workman." When we think of only one item of that labour —viz., ninety-six works—written too in the midst of sufferings, it is enough, as Gaberel says, "to give one a dizziness of head." "His health," remarks the same writer, "when he first arrived in his future country, was such as would have reduced to inaction any ordinary man. But Calvin knew to subdue his sufferings by the strength of his will. He exhibited in himself the phenomenon which is sometimes seen in the case of great commanders whose dangerous maladies have given place to health on the eve of battle; only what was abnormal in their case was Calvin's normal condition." (Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Genève*, vol. i., p. 398.)

scattered the seeds of barbarism, Calvin sowed those of virtue and intelligence. Why this markedly different result from what professed to be the same government, in its foundation, in its maxims, and in its aims? It all lies in this: Innocent shut the Word of God to the nations, by arrogating to himself the office of its sole infallible interpreter; Calvin threw open the sacred volume, by asserting the right of all to read and interpret it for themselves. He showed them, too, the road by which they would arrive at a knowledge of its true meaning, and thus while Innocent closed, Calvin opened the sluices of Divine influence on the world. Or, to express the difference more briefly, Calvin governed *by* God; Innocent governed *as* God.

CHAPTER XXV.

FINAL VICTORY AND GLORY OF GENEVA.

The Libertines Renew the Attack—Social Disorders—The Spiritual Supremacy of the Consistory the Key of Calvin's Position—Cannot be Abandoned—Council finally Concedes it—Flank Attack—The Libertines Complain of the Sermons—of the Publications of Calvin—of the Refugees—Fifty Refugees Enrolled as Citizens—Perrin Excites a Tumult—Projected Massacre of the Refugees—Miscarriage of the Attempt—Executions—Perrin Flees—Victory—Glory of Geneva.

WHILE Calvin was counselling monarchs, drafting plans of Reform for statesmen, organising Churches, corresponding with theologians in all countries, and labouring to harmonise their views of Divine truth—in short, acting as the moral legislator of Christendom—he was the object of unceasing and bitter attack on the part of a faction of the Genevese. They detested his presence in their town, openly insulted him on their streets, and ceaselessly intrigued to drive him from Geneva, the city which he had made famous throughout Europe, and which, the moment that he quitted it, would sink into its original obscurity.

We have seen the victory which Calvin, at the peril of his life, won over the Libertines in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, on Sunday, the 3rd of September, 1553. The storm lulled for a little while, but in a few months it was renewed. Those who were guilty of scandals, and of course were visited with the censures of the Church, repaired to the Council, and complained of the rigour of the Consistory. The ministers were summoned to justify their proceedings—a hard task before magistrates, some of whom were hostile, and almost all of whom were lukewarm in the cause of the spiritual discipline. Might not Calvin, it may be said, have obviated these complaints by separating the Church from the State, in the way of distinguishing between citizens and Church-members, and holding only the latter amenable to the ecclesiastical discipline? This practically was what the Reformer was aiming at doing. By excluding the profane from the Lord's Supper, he was separating the Church from the world; but he was hampered by two circumstances—first, by the theocratic government existing in Geneva, and which he found there in its rudimental state when he entered it; and secondly, by the Libertines, who resented their exclusion from Church privileges as an affront and wrong.

The Libertine faction, scotched but not killed, became bold in proportion as they saw the Council was timid. "See," said they, "how we are governed by French edicts and by Calvin." One of its opponents said of the Consistory that "it was more savage than Satan himself,"[1] but he hoped soon to tame it.

[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 114.

Beza tells us that the revolutionary party made obscene songs on the Word of God. Sometimes mock processions passed along the street, singing profane parodies of the hymns of the Church.[1] "The Libertines," says Roset, "commenced the year 1555 with new manifestations of their old wickedness. Having supped together, to the number of ten, on the night of the 9th January, they took each a candle, and paraded the streets, singing, at the full stretch of their voices, the psalms, interlaced with jeers."[2] One day as Calvin was returning from preaching in the suburb of St. Gervais, he was hustled on the bridge of the Rhone by a knot of miscreants who had gathered there. He very quietly rebuked their insolence by the remark that "the bridge was wide enough for them all." We find him about this time writing to Bullinger that "his position was become almost unbearable." We hear him pouring out his deep sighs, and uttering, like Melanchthon, his wish to die. This was much from the strong man. The days had come, foreseen by him, and foretold in his own expressive language to Farel, when he should have to "offer his bleeding heart as a sacrifice to God." But, though his heart bled, his spirit, ever undaunted, maintained the conflict with a patience and fortitude not to be overcome.

The Reformer returned to Geneva from his banishment on the express promise of the Council that the Consistory should be supreme in all ecclesiastical causes. Without this provision Calvin would never again have entered the gates of that city. Not that he wished power for himself. "I would rather die a hundred times," said he, "than appropriate that authority which is the common property of the Church."[3] But unless the sentences of the spiritual court were final, how could order and moral rule be upheld? and without the supremacy of moral law, of what use would his presence in Geneva be to Protestantism? But this essential point was all the more the object of attack by the Libertines.

Amy Perrin, the personal foe of the Reformer, once more led in this second battle.[4] "It is to us," said Perrin and his troop, "an astonishing thing that a sovereignty should exist within a sovereignty. Good sense seems to us to require that the sovereign authority should be entire, and that all questions and parties should be under the rule of the Seigneury. Not otherwise can we preserve that liberty which we have so dearly bought. You are reviving the tyranny of the Pope and the prelates," continued Perrin, "under this new name of spiritual jurisdiction."[5] "No," replied the pastors, who had assembled in the council-chamber, and were speaking through the mouth of Calvin,

[1] *City Registers,* January 9th, 1555.

[2] Roset, tom. iii, livr. v., ch. 58—John M^{c}Crie's extracts.

[3] *Calv. Epp.*, 385. Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 115.

[4] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 134.

[5] *Ibid.*

"No we only claim obedience to the rule of the Bible, the law of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. He has given to us the power to bind and loose—in other words, to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments. The magistrates have no more right to forbid us the exercise of this power, than we have to invade the government and civil jurisdiction. To us holy things have been committed, and we shall take care that the Table of the Lord is not dishonoured by the presence at it of the profane."[1]

The pastors fortified their position by appealing to the separation between things sacred and things civil, that existed under the Old Testament. To the family of Aaron had all things appertaining to worship been assigned; to the house of David had the civil government been committed. It appertained not to the most powerful of the Jewish monarchs to perform the humblest service at the altar; and those kings who, forgetting this distinction, presumed to bring their authority into the temple, were smitten with judgment. "So far," said Calvin in conclusion, "is the power of the pastors from being a menace to the liberty of the republic, that it is its best protection. Liberty without the Gospel is but a miserable slavery."[2] These reasonings were not without their effect on the magistrates. By a majority of suffrages, the Council resolved that its former edict should remain in force—in other words, that the arrangement made with Calvin when he returned to Geneva—namely, that the final decision in all Church offences be with the Consistory—should be maintained.[3] Geneva was still secured to the Reformer. The basis on which he rested his great work, both in Geneva itself and throughout Christendom, the Libertines had not yet been able to overturn.

They did not, however, accept their defeat and desist from the war. Baffled in this front attack, they next assailed the Reformer on the flank. "We have too many ministers," said they, raising their voices to a loud pitch. "We have too many ministers and too many sermons." There were then only four pastors in Geneva; but the Libertines thought that they were four too many, and although they did not demand their entire suppression as yet, they modestly proposed that they should be reduced to two. As regarded the Churches, they would not lock their doors outright, but they would at once abolish the sermon, in which their vices were branded with a pointedness and lashed with a severity since transferred from the pulpit to the press and the platform. They were willing that a harmless kind of worship should go on. They would permit the people to be taught the "Creed," the "Lord's Prayer," and the "Ten

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 135. " Et qu'au reste touts liberté hors de Christ estoit servitude miserable." (Roset, tom. iii., livr. v., chap. 58—John M^{c}Crie's extracts.)

[3] To the Author it appears a remarkable circumstance that the law giving the spiritual supremacy to the Consistory should have been in abeyance for some time before and some time after the affair of Servetus. This has not had the attention paid to it which it deserves.

Commandments." This amount of instruction, they thought, might be safely tolerated. As to those floods of exposition poured forth upon them week-day and Sunday, they saw no need for such: it was dangerous; and the Council ought to raise legal dykes within which to confine this torrent of pious eloquence.[1]

The Libertines next turned their attention to the correction of another great abuse, as they deemed it. The liberty of the press found no favour in the eyes of these champions of freedom. What is the use, they asked, of so many Commentaries and printed books? We must fetter the pen of this Calvin, for the State of Geneva is not able to bear the many books he is sending forth. We must stop this plethora of writing and publishing.[2] Such was their estimate of that mighty genius, in the light of which kings and statesmen were glad to walk! We may imagine what would have been the fame of Geneva, and what the state of letters and civilisation in Europe in the next century, if the Libertines instead of Calvin had triumphed in this controversy.

There arose yet another cause of complaint and quarrel. The refugees who sought asylum in Geneva were at this time increasing from week to week. Weeded out by the hand of persecution, they were the men of the purest morals, of the richest culture, and the noblest souls which the surrounding countries could boast. Not a few were men of the highest rank, and of very large possessions, although in almost every case they arrived penniless.[3] The little State began to inscribe their names on the registers of its citizens. The proudest kingdom would have done itself an honour by enrolling such men among its subjects. Not so did Perrin and his faction account it. "They are beggars who have come here to eat the bread of the Genevese"—so did they speak of those who had forsaken all for the Gospel—"they are Calvin's allies, who flock hither to support him in tyrannising over the children of the soil; they are usurping the rights of the ancient burgesses and destroying the liberties of the town; they are the enemies of the republic, and what so likely as that they will purchase their way back into their own country by betraying Geneva to the King of France?" These and similar accusations—the ready inventions of coarse and malignant natures—were secretly whispered among the populace, and at last openly preferred before the Council, against the distinguished men of almost every nationality now assembled in Geneva.

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[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 135.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 136. Reset, livr. v., chap. 65.

[3] Whilst the number of refugees was increasing at Geneva and the other towns of Switzerland, their wants were provided for by liberal charitable donations. This was the origin of the Bourse Etrangère, founded at Geneva, the revenues of which are applied, even in our own day, to the support of poor students, or the founding of new schools. (Bonnet, *Letters of Calvin,* vl. ii., p. 430, foot-note.)

Early in the year 1555 the matter came to a head, and we note it more particularly because it brought on the final struggle which overturned the faction of the Libertines, and left the victory wholly with Calvin. At one sitting the Council admitted as many as fifty foreigners, all men of known worth, to the rights of citizenship. Perrin and his followers raised a louder cry than ever. "The scum of Europe," "the supporters of Calvin's despotism," are possessing themselves of our heritage. These were the epithets by which they chose to designate the new burgesses. These men had not, indeed, been born on the soil of the republic, but Geneva had no better citizens than they; certainly none more willing to obey her law, or more ready to shed their blood for her liberty if occasion should require. The Gospel, which they had embraced, made the territory of Geneva more their native land than the country they had left. But the Libertines understood nothing of all this. They went to the Council and complained, but the Council would not listen to them. They carried their appeal to the populace, and at this bar that appeal was more successful.[1]

On the 16th May, Perrin returned to the Council with a larger number of followers, chiefly fishermen and boatmen, armed with huge double-handled swords.[2] This motley host was dismissed with the same answer as before. The malcontents paraded the streets all day, calling on the citizens to bestir themselves, and save the town, which was on the eve of being sacked by the foreigners. The better class of citizens paid no attention to this cry of "The wolf!" and remained quiet in their homes; but the ranks of the rioters were swelled by numbers of the lower orders, whose patriotism had been stimulated by the free rations of wine and food which were served out to them.[3]

On Friday, the 18th May, the heads of the party met in a tavern with a certain number, says Bonnivard, of "brawling companions." The more moderate, who may be presumed to have been also the more sober, were for convoking the Council-General; but the more violent[4] would hear of nothing but the massacre of all the refugees of religion, and their supporters. The Sunday following, when the citizens would be all at church,[5] was fixed on for the execution of this horrible plot.

The eagerness of the Libertines to consummate their crime caused the plot to miscarry. The very next night after their meeting, the fumes of the wine, we may charitably believe, not having as yet exhaled, the mob-patriots rushed into the street with arms in their hands to begin their dreadful work.

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[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 136. Henry., *Life of Calvin,* vol. ii., p. 315.

[2] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 137. Reset, tom. iii., livr. v., chap. 64—John M^{c}Crie's extracts.

[3] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 137. Henry, vol. ii., p. 316.

[4] "Estoyent tous grands zélateurs de la liberte publique." (Roset, tom. iii., livr. v., chap. 66—John M^{c}Crie's extracts.)

[5] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 138.

"The French, the French," they shouted, "are taking the town! Slay all, slay all!" But not one of the refugees was to be seen. "The Lord," says Calvin, "had poured a deep sleep upon them." But the other citizens rushed armed into the street. There was a great uproar, shouts, cries, and clashing of arms; but fortunately the affray passed without bloodshed. "God," says Ruchat, "who watches over the affairs of men, and who wished to preserve Geneva, did not permit Perrin to accomplish his design."[1]

The Council assembled in a few days, and then measures were taken to bring the seditious to punishment, and prevent the peace of the city being broken by similar outrages in time to come. Four heads fell beneath the axe. Perrin's also would have fallen, had he not cared for its safety by timely flight. With him fled all those who felt that they were too deeply compromised to presume on pardon. The rest were banished, and found refuge on the territory of Bern. The issue of this affair determined the future fortunes of Geneva.

From being a nest of Libertines, who would have speedily wasted their own and their city's strength by their immoral principles and their disorderly lives, and who would have plunged Geneva into its former vassalage, riveting more hopelessly than ever its old yoke upon its neck, this small but ancient town was, by this turn of affairs, rescued to become the capital of Protestantism—the metropolis of a moral empire.

Here, not in state, like a Roman cardinal, but in the lowliness of a simple pastor, dwelt, not the monarch of that empire—for monarch it has not on earth—but the presiding mind, the directing genius of Protestantism. From this centre were propagated those energies and influences which, mightier than armies, were rending the shackles from the human soul, and calling nations from their tomb. Within its walls the *elite* of Europe was assembling; and as another and yet another illustrious stranger presented himself at its gates, and crossed its threshold, the brilliant intellectual glory of Geneva gathered an additional brightness, and its moral potency waxed stronger day by day. To it all eyes were turned, some in admiration and love, others in hatred and fear. Within it were born those great thoughts which, sent forth in letters, in pamphlets, in great tomes, were as light to roll back the darkness—bolts to discomfit the enemy, and pour confusion upon the champions of error. Protestant troops are continually passing out at its gates, girded only with the sword of the Spirit, to assail the strongholds of darkness, and add new provinces to the kingdom of the Gospel. As realm after realm is won, there goes forth from this same city a rescript for its organisation and government; and that rescript meets an obedience more prompt and hearty than was ever

[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 138.

accorded to the edicts sent forth from the proud mistress of the ancient world for the moulding of those provinces which her arms had subjugated.

What an astonishing phenomenon must the sudden rise of this little town have appeared to the men of those times! How portentous to the friends of the Old religion! It had not been built up by human hands; it was not defended by human weapons; yet here it stood, a great lighthouse in the centre of Christendom, a mother of Churches, a nurse of martyrs, a school of evangelists, an impregnable asylum of the persecuted, a font of civilisation, an abode of letters and arts; a great moral tribunal, where the actions of all men were weighed, and in whose inexorably just and righteous awards men heard the voice of a higher tribunal, and were enabled to read by anticipation the final judgment of posterity, and even that of the great Supreme.

This was what Calvin's victory had brought him. He might well deem that it had not been too dearly bought. Truly it was worth all the anxieties and insults he had borne, all the toil and agony he had endured, all the supplications and tears he had poured out to achieve it. Nine years had he been in gaining it, nine years were to be given him to turn it to account.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GENEVA AND ITS INFLUENCE IN EUROPE.

Peace of Geneva—Geneva and Calvin become One—Testimony of Knox and others to the Church of Geneva—The Sundays of Geneva—The Libertines and Bern—Bolsec and Castalio—Calvin's Care of the Church of France—Preachers sent to it—Labours in Organising Churches—Calvin Counsels the French Protestants to Eschew Arms —Martyrs, not Soldiers, wanted—Forged Letters—Constitution and Organisation of the French Protestant Church—Amazing Growth of Protestantism in France.

CALVIN had made good his foothold at last. He had fought for this little town as conqueror, never fought for mightiest empire, and now it was his own. Geneva had been rescued from the base uses to which the Libertines had destined it, and was now consecrated to the noblest of all ends. It was to be, not the head-quarters of a philosophy that would have demoralised Christendom, but the temple of a faith that was to regenerate and exalt it. It was to be, not the beacon to lure to the whirlpool of revolution, but the light that would guide the nations to the haven of stability and glory.

The Reformer had now peace. But his condition can be justly styled peace only when compared with the tempests of the nine previous years. Of these he had feelingly and compendiously said, "that while everywhere the Church was agitated, at Geneva it was tossed as was the Ark on the billows." It was a true description but the calm had come at last. The Ark had found its Ararat, and now within that city, for the possession of which two interests had so stoutly contended, the fierce winds had gone down, and the waves had subsided into rest.

Calvin now proceeded to make Geneva fit for the grand purposes for which he had destined her. And Geneva willingly surrendered herself to be fashioned as the Reformer wished; her life she permitted to be absorbed in his life, feeling that with him was inseparably bound up her order, her grandeur, nay, her very existence, so far as concerned every good and useful object. Her law, her Council, her citizens, all tacitly consented to be parts of the great Reformer—the ministries through which he operated on Christendom. We have the testimony of a noble eyewitness to the state of Geneva at this period. "In my heart." says Knox, in a letter to his friend Mr. Locke, "I could have wished, yea, and cannot cease to wish, that it might please God to guide and conduct you to this place, where I neither fear nor shame to say is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached; but manners and religion to be so sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place beside."[1] Farel bore similar testimony to the flourishing condition of

[1] MS. Letters, p. 377—*apud* M^{c}Crie, *Life of Knox, vol.* i. p. 105; Edin., 1831.

Geneva after its many perils. I was lately at Geneva," he says, "and so delighted was I that I could scarce tear myself away. I would rather be last in Geneva than first in any other place. Were I not prevented by the Lord, and by my love for my congregation, nothing would hinder me from ending my days there." Drelincourt expressed the same admiration a hundred years after.[1]

If there was peace in the days of Calvin within Geneva, there were ambushes all around. The first trouble was created by the banished Libertines. Bern took the part of these exiles in the quarrel, declaring that they had been guilty of no crime, and demanding of the Council and citizens of Geneva that they should give satisfaction to those they had expelled, and receive them back. It may be conjectured that there was in all this a little jealousy on the part of the powerful Bern of the rising glory of Geneva. The little republic replied to this haughty demand by expelling the families of the Libertines, and forbidding the return of the banished under pain of death. It was now feared that the Libertines, supported by Bern, meditated re-entering Geneva by force of arms. The territory of Bern bordered with that of Geneva, and the Libertines stationed themselves on that part of it which lay nearest the city, and offered daily menaces and petty annoyances. They resorted to the bridge of the Arve, and mocked and jeered at the Genevese who had occasion to pass that way.[2] The citizens, irritated beyond measure, were often on the point of rushing out and punishing these insolences, but the Council restrained them.[3] The matter continued in an uneasy and dangerous condition for some time, but a sudden turn in the politics of Europe, which menaced both cities with a common danger, brought in the issue deliverance to Geneva.

The battle of St. Quentin, in Normandy, was fought about this time. In this fight the arms of Charles of Spain were victorious over those of Henry II. of France. Philibert Emmanuel, Prince of Piedmont, who commanded the Spanish army, was the heir of the titles and rights of his father Charles, Duke of Savoy; but he inherited the titles only; the estates had gone from his house, and were now partly in the hands of the King of France, and partly in possession of Bern, and other Swiss cantons. The French king being now humbled, the Prince of Piedmont deemed this a favourable moment for reclaiming his hereditary dominions. He issued an edict to that effect, and immediately thereafter dispatched a body of eight thousand lanzknechts, or lancers, to establish his authority over his former subjects. The alarm was great throughout Switzerland, and more especially in Geneva and Bern. The Bernese had now other things to think of than the quarrel into which the

[1] Henry, *Life of Calvin,* vol. ii., p. 318.

[2] *Ibid*,, p. 190.

banished Libertines had led them. This last matter gradually went to sleep; and thus Geneva, by this shifting in the great European winds, was delivered without the necessity of striking a single blow.[1]

The affairs of Bolsec and Castalio belong to biography rather than to history. Both of these men opposed Calvin on the doctrine of predestination. Both of them interrupted him publicly when preaching in St. Peter's. The Council had them seized, on the ground of the maintenance of the public peace, rather than on the ground of difference of doctrine. The result was that both were banished from Geneva, never to return. This punishment, which has been laid at the door of the Reformer, has been denounced as harsh. But we ought to keep in mind that Bolsec and Castalio were not Genevese, banished from their native land; they were foreigners who had resided in Geneva, the one a few years, the other only a few months.[2] "As to those who are indignant that Bolsec should even have been banished," says Bungener, "we know not what to say to them, unless that they are completely ignorant how the question stood in regard to the Reformation and to Geneva—especially to Geneva. To wish that she had opened her gates to all the variations and daring flights of religious thought, is to wish that that great lever, the Reformation, had without a fulcrum lifted the world."[3]

Stationed just outside the French territory, the Reformer was able, from this citadel in which God had placed him, to keep constant watch over the Protestant Church of France. During the nine years he had yet to live, that Church was the object of his daily care. He had found her in her cradle, and he nursed her into strength. It was for his counsel she waited when any emergency arose, and it was to his voice and pen that she looked for defence when danger threatened. She revered him as her father.

The first necessity of Christendom, in the opinion of Calvin, was the Gospel. Accordingly, it was one of his chief labours to prepare, in the school of Geneva, qualified preachers who should go forth, and sow everywhere the seed of the kingdom. Many of these missionaries selected France as their field of labour. Thither were they followed by the instructions and prayers of the great chief from whose feet they had gone forth; and the consciousness that his eye was upon them, helped to make them zealous in labour and courageous in death, which so many of them were called to endure in the discharge of their ministry. We have two proofs that great numbers offered themselves to this most inviting but very hazardous field. The first is the letter which the King of France, Charles IX., in January, 1561, sent to

[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., pp. 192, 193.

[2] Bolsec, to avenge himself on the Reformer, and reconcile himself with Rome, to which communion he returned, wrote a bitter and calumnious book, which he entitled a *Life of Calvin.*

[3] Bungener, *Calvin: his Life,* &c., p. 237.

Geneva, complaining of the preachers who had come from thence, and calling upon the Council to recall them. The second is the letter of Calvin to Bullinger, in the May following, which reveals incidentally what a powerful propaganda Geneva had become, and shows us the soldiers of the Cross daily setting out from her gates to spread the triumphs of the Gospel. "It is incredible," writes Calvin, "with what ardour our friends devote themselves to the spread of the Gospel. As greedily as men before the Pope solicit him for benefices, do they ask for employment in the Churches beneath the Cross. They besiege my door to obtain a portion of the field to cultivate. Never had monarch courtiers more eager than mine. They dispute about the stations as if the kingdom of Jesus Christ was peaceably established in France. Sometimes I seek to restrain them. I show to them the atrocious edict which orders the destruction of every house in which Divine service shall have been celebrated. I remind them that in more than twenty towns the faithful have been massacred by the populace."[1] In those happy days—happy although stakes were blazing—it seemed as if the ancient saying was reversed, and that no longer were *the labourers few*. No wonder that Calvin for once breaks into enthusiasm, and gives vent to his joy. But we do the Reformer only justice when we say that he rejoiced not because he was leader, but because his soldiers were devoted. They were men worthy of their captain.

The success of these Evangelists entailed new labours and responsibilities on the Reformer. The Churches which they planted had to be organised. These new communities came to Geneva for the principles of their constitution, and the model of their government. If Geneva bore the likeness of Calvin, France now began to bear the likeness of Geneva. Thus the cares of the Reformer were multiplied and his labours increased as he grew older. He lived two lives in one. The life passed in communion with God, and in the study of His Word, in his closet, fed and sustained that other life of intense and practical activity which he led before the world. From the contemplation of the laws of the kingdom of Christ as laid down in the Bible, he rose up to apply these, as he believed, in the arrangement of living Churches, and in the scheme of policy which he enjoined on the now powerful Protestant body of France.

His counsels on this head expressed a lofty wisdom, which was not appreciated at the time, but the three centuries that have since elapsed have set their seal upon it. All his authority and eloquence were put forth to make the Protestants eschew politics, shun the battle-field, and continue to fight their great war with spiritual weapons only. The Reformer foresaw for the Church of France a glorious future, if only she should persevere in this path. He had no faith in blood shed in battle: no, not in victorious battle; but he had

[1] Bungener, pp, 300, 301.

unbounded faith in blood shed at the stake of martyrdom. Give him martyrs—not men in arms—and France was won. Not one letter of Calvin is extant in which he recommends a contrary course. His advice to the Protestants of France was to wait, to have patience, to submit to wrong, to abstain from revenging themselves, and not to be sparing of their blood, for every drop spilt would, he assured them, bring them nearer the goal they wished to reach. Nor were these counsels given to a small and weak party, which by resisting might bring destruction upon itself: they were addressed to a body now approximating in numbers half the population of France. They were given to a body which had in its ranks men of wealth, nobles, and even princes of the blood: a body that could raise soldiers, lead armies, fight battles, and win victories. Well, but, says Calvin, the victories of the battle-field are barren: those of the martyr are always fruitful. One of the latter is worth a score of the former.

Two letters have been forged with intent to convict the Reformer of having prompted to this violent courses which some fiery spirits among the French Protestants were now beginning to pursue. The pretended original manuscripts are in the archives of the family of D'Alisac, but their spuriousness has been abundantly proved.[1] They are neither in the handwriting of Calvin nor in that of any of his known secretaries; and they are, moreover, disfigured by gross literary errors, by coarse and violent epithets, and by glaring anachronisms. "In the first, M. du Poet is called general of the religion in Dauphiné, and this letter is dated 1547, a period in which the Reformed religion had in Dauphiné neither a soldier nor an organised Church, and in which M. du Poet was still a Romanist! In the second letter, dated 1561, the same person is called *Governor of Montelimart,* and High Chamberlain of Navarre, dignities with which he was not invested till long after the death of Calvin."[2]

Attempts have also been made to connect the Reformer with the raid of the notorious Baron des Ardrets. This man signalised his short career as a Protestant by invading the district of Lyons, slaughtering Romanists, sacking churches, making booty of the priestly vestments and the sacred vessels, and appropriating some of the cathedrals for the Protestant worship. Did Calvin account these acquisitions a gain to Protestantism? Better, he said, worship in the open air, in dens of the earth, anywhere, than in edifices so acquired. He wrote to Ardrets, sharply reproving him, and condemning the outrages by which he had disgraced the holy cause, for the sake of which he professed to have wrought them. A similar judgment did the Reformer pronounce on the conspiracy of Amboise, that ill-omened commencement of political Pro-

[1] Bungener, p. 302.

[2] Bungener, p. 302.

testantism in France. “Better,” he said, writing to the head of that conspiracy, La Renaudie, “Better we should all perish a hundred times than be the cause of exposing the Gospel to such a disgrace.”[1]

But day and night he was intent on marshalling the spiritual host, and leading it to the combat. Evangelists, martyrs, Churches: these were the three arms—to use a military phrase—with which he carried on the war. Of the skill and pains which he devoted to the preparation of the latter weapon—the organisation of Churches—we give but one example.

For forty years the evangelisation of France had been going on. There were now small congregations in several of its towns. In May, 1559, eleven ministers assembled in Paris, and constituted themselves into a National Synod. This affair will come before us more fully afterwards; we notice it here as necessary to the complete view of the work of Calvin. His plastic hand it was that communicated to the French Protestants that organisation which we see assumed at first by a mere handful of pastors, but which was found to be equally adapted to that mighty Church of thousands of congregations which, ten years thereafter, was seen covering the soil of France.

First came a Confession of Faith. This was the basis on which the Church was to stand, the root which was to sustain her life and growth.

Next came a scheme of discipline. This was meant to develop and conserve that new life which ought to spring from the doctrines confessed. Morality—in other words, holiness—was in Calvin’s opinion the one thing essential in Churches.

Lastly came a graduated machinery of courts, for applying that discipline or government, in order to the conservation and development of that morality which the Reformer judged to be the only result of any value. This machinery was as follows:—

There was first the single congregation, or Church of the locality, with its pastor and small staff of associated rulers. This was the foundation. Over the Church of a locality were placed the Churches of the district. Each congregation sent its pastor and an elder to form this court, which was termed the Colloquy. Over the Colloquy were the Churches of the province, termed the Conference; and over the Conference were the Churches of all France, or National Synod.

This constitution was essentially democratic. The whole body of the people—that is, the members of the Church—were the primary depositaries of this power; but its exercise was narrowed at each gradation upwards. It began with the local congregation, which, through their pastor and elders, decided on all matters appertaining to themselves. Thence it passed to the Colloquy, which adjudicated on general questions, and on cases of appeal. It proceeded

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 305.

upwards through the Provincial Conference to the National Synod, which was the most select body of all, being constituted of two pastors and two elders from each province. The National Synod passed sentence in the last resort, and from its decision there was of course no appeal.

If the basis of this government was broad, being composed of the whole body of the people, it had for its apex the very é*lite* of the clergy and laity. Liberty was secured, but so too were order, vigour, and justice. For the decision of the most important questions it reserved the highest talents and the maturest wisdom. It combined the advantages of a democracy with those of a monarchy. Its foundations were as wide and popular as the constitution of England, but counterpoised by the weight and influence of the National Synod, even as the government of England is by the dignity and power of the Crown.

Calvin did not carry his narrowing process the length of a single overseer or bishop. Not that he held it unlawful to place over the Church a chief pastor, or that he believed that the Bible condemned the office of bishop in itself. He recommended an episcopate to the Church of Poland:[1] he allowed the office of bishop in the Church of England;[2] and he has so expressed himself in his *Institutes,* as to leave the Church at liberty on this head. But he thought he could more clearly trace in the New Testament such a distribution of power as that which he had now made, and, at all events, this equality of office he deemed much safer at present for the Church of France, for which he foresaw a long period of struggles and martyrdoms. He would not expose that Church to seduction by opening to her ministers the path of official or personal aggrandisement. The fewer the dignities and grandeurs with which they were encompassed, the more easy would they find it to mount the scaffold; and it was martyrs, not mitred chiefs, that were destined, he believed, to lead the Church to victory.

The organisation of the Church of France brought with it a new era to Protestantism in that kingdom. From this time forward its progress was amazingly rapid. Nobles and burgesses, cities, and whole provinces pressed forward to join its ranks. Congregations sprang up in hundreds, and adherents flocked to them in tens of thousands. The entire nation bade fair soon to terminate its divisions and strifes in a common profession of the Protestant faith. Such was the spectacle that cheered the last years of Calvin. What a profound thankfulness— we do not say pride, for pride he banished as sinful in connection with such a cause—must have filled the bosom of the Reformer, when he reflected that not only was the little city of Geneva, which he had won for the Gospel in order that through it he might win mightier

[1] Henry, *Life of Calvin,* vol. i., p. 401.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 402.

realms, preserved from overthrow in the midst of hostile powers, but that it had become the centre of a spiritual empire whose limits would far exceed, and whose duration would long out-last, the empire of Charles!

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ACADEMY OF GENEVA.

Foundation of the Academy—Subscriptions—Its Opening—Its Literary Equipment—Its Subsequent Renown—Its Library—What it Suggests—Calvin's Simplicity of Life—Sadoleto Visits him—The Cardinal's Surprise—Calvin's Poverty—His Charity—He Declines the Aid of the Council.

IN the wake of the Gospel, learning and the arts, Calvin held, should ever be found. Geneva had become, in the first place, a fountain of Divine knowledge to the surrounding countries; he would make it, in the second place, a fountain of science and civilisation. In Italy, letters came first; but in England, in Bohemia, in Germany, and now in Geneva, the Divine science opened the way, and letters and philosophy followed. It was drawing towards the evening of his life, when Calvin laid the foundations of the Academy of Geneva. Next to the Reformation, this school was the greatest boon that he conferred on the republic which had only lately enrolled his name among its citizens. It continued long after he was dead to send forth distinguished scholars, in every department of science, and to shed a glory on the little State in which it was planted,[1] and where previous to the Reformation scarcely one distinguished man was known.

The idea of such an institution had long been before the mind of Calvin, and he wished not to die till he had realised it. Having communicated his design to the Council, it was approved of by their Excellencies, and in 1552 a piece of ground was purchased on which to erect the necessary buildings. But money was lacking. Geneva was then a State of but from 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. Its burdens were numerous. It had to exercise hospitality to from one to two thousand refugees. It had to endure the expenses of war in a time of peace, owing to the continual rumours set on foot that the city was about to be assaulted. After satisfying these indispensable demands, the citizens had not much money to spare. For six years the ground on which the future college was to stand lay untouched; not a sod was turned, not a stone was laid.

Impatient at this delay, and thinking that he had waited long enough on the Council, Calvin now set on foot a public subscription, and soon he found himself in possession of 10,000 florins. This was little for the object, but much for the times. He immediately laid the foundations of the edifice. He marked with joy the rising walls; tearing himself from his studies, he would descend from the Hue des Chanoines to the scene of operations, and though enfeebled by quartan-ague he might be seen dragging himself over the

[1] Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 307.

works, speaking kindly words now and again to the workmen, and stimulating them by expressing his satisfaction at their progress.

Two edifices were rising at the same moment under the eye of the Reformer. The organisation of the French Protestant Church and the building of the Academy went on together. On the 5th of June, 1559, just eleven days after the meeting of the National Synod in Paris, the college was ready to receive both masters and pupils. The inauguration was celebrated by a solemn service in St. Peter's, at which the senators, the ministers, and the burgesses attended. After prayer by Calvin, and a Latin address by Beza, the laws and statutes of the college, the confession to be subscribed by the students, and the oath to be taken by the rector and masters were read aloud. Theodore Beza was appointed rector; five masterships—Calvin had asked seven—one of Hebrew, one of Greek, one of philosophy, and two of theology, were instituted. In 1565, a year after the death of the Reformer, there was added a lectureship in law. With her Academy—which, however, was but the top-stone of a subsidiary system of instruction which was to prepare for the higher—Geneva was fitter than ever for the great spiritual and moral sovereignty which Calvin intended that she should exercise in Europe.[1]

Bungener's description of this memorial is as touching as his reflections are just. "After their venerable cathedral," says he, "no building is clearer to the Genevese; if you go up-stairs to the class-rooms, you are in the rooms of the library—full of memorials yet more living and particular. There you will be shown the books of Calvin's library, the mute witnesses of his vigils, his sufferings, and his death; there you will turn over the leaves of his manuscripts, deciphering, not without difficulty, a few lines of his feverish writing, rapid as his thoughts; and, if your imagination will but lend itself to the breathing appeals of solitude and silence, there he himself is; you will behold him gliding among those ancient walls, pale, but with a sparkling eye—feeble and sickly, but strong in that inner energy, the source of which was in his faith. There also will appear to you, around him, all those of whom he was to be the father—divines, jurists, philosophers, scholars, statesmen, and men of war, all filled with that mighty life which he was to bequeath to the Reformation, after having received it from her. And if you ask the secret of his power, one of the stones of the college will tell it you in a few Hebrew words, which the Reformer had engraved upon it. Come into the court. Enter beneath that old portico which supports the great staircase, and you will read—*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* And it is neither on the wall nor

[1] Roset, chap. 42—John M^{c}Crie's extracts. Ruchat, tom. vi., p. 307. Bungener, pp. 332–335.

on one of the pillars that these words are engraved. Mark well: it is on the key-stone. What an emblem! and what a lesson!"[1]

The position which Calvin now filled was one of greater influence than perhaps any one man had exercised in the Church of Christ since the days of the apostles. He was the counsellor of kings; he was the adviser of princes and statesmen; he corresponded with warriors, scholars, and Reformers; he consoled martyrs, and organised Churches; his admonitions were submitted to, and his letters treasured, as marks of no ordinary distinction. All the while the man who wielded this unexampled influence, was in life and manners in nowise different from an ordinary citizen of Geneva. He was as humbly lodged, he was as simply clothed, and he was served by as few attendants as any burgess of them all. He had been poor all his days, and he continued so to the end. One day a cardinal of the Roman Church, Sadoleto, who happened to be passing through Geneva, would pay him the honour of a visit. He was conducted to No. 122, Rue des Chanoines, and told to his surprise that this was the house of the Reformer. A yet greater surprise awaited the cardinal. He knocked for entrance: there was no porter at the gate; no servant in livery gave him admission: it was Calvin himself that opened the door.

His enemies, more just to him then than they have been since, acknowledged and admired his indifference to money. "That which made the strength of that heretic," said Pius IV., when told of his death, "was that money was nothing to him." The Pontiff was correct in his fact, but at fault in his philosophy. Calvin's strength was rooted in a far higher principle, and his indifference to riches was but one of the fruits of that principle; but how natural the reflection on the part of one who lived in a city where all men were venal, and all things vendible!

The Reformer's wants were few. During the last seven years of his life he took only one meal a day, sometimes one in the thirty-six hours.[2] His charities were great; the Protestant exiles were ever welcome to his table; kings, sometimes, were borrowers from him, and his small stipend left him often in pecuniary difficulties. But he never asked the Council for an increase of his emoluments; nay, he positively refused such when offered. "Satisfied with my humble condition," was the witness which he bore to himself, in the place where he lived, and before the eyes of all, a little while before his death, "I have ever delighted in a life of poverty, and am a burden to no one. I remain contented with the office which the Lord has given me."[3] The Registers of the Council of Geneva bear to this day the proofs of his disinterestedness and forgetfulness of self. In January, 1546, the Council is informed of

[1] Bungener, pp. 335, 336.

[2] Hottinger, p. 890. Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 41.

[3] Henry, *Life*, vol. ii., p. 416.

the sickness of M. Calvin, "*who hath no resources.*" The Council votes him ten crowns, but M. Calvin sends them back. The councillors buy with the ten crowns a cask of good wine, and convey it to Calvin's house. Not to give offence, the Reformer accepts their Lordships' gift, but lays out ten crowns of his salary "for the relief of the poorest ministers." In the winter of 1556 the Council sent him some firewood. Calvin appeared with the price, but could not induce the Council to accept of it.[1] The Registers of 1560 inform us of another cask of wine sent to M. Calvin, "seeing that he has none good."[2] The Reformer this time accepts; and yet, because he received these few presents in the course of a ministry of twenty-six years, there have not been wanting men who accused him of coveting such gifts, and of parading his ailments, of which indeed he seldom or never spoke, in order to evoke these benefactions. "If there are any," said he, in his Preface to the Psalms, "whom, in my lifetime, I cannot persuade that I am not rich and moneyed, my death will show it at last." In his last illness he refused his quarter's salary, saying that he had not earned it.[3] After his death it was found that his whole possessions did not exceed in value 225 dollars,[4] and if his illness had been prolonged, he would have had to sell his books, or receive the money of the republic. On the 25th of April, about a month before his death, the Reformer made his will. Luther's will was highly characteristic, Calvin's is not less so. It exhibits the methodical and business habits that marked his whole life, mingled with the humble, holy hope that filled his heart. Having disposed of the 225 crowns, and of some other small matters pertaining to the world he was leaving, he thus breaks out:—

" I thank God that he has not only had mercy on his poor creature, having delivered me from the abyss of idolatry, but that he has brought me into the clear light of his Gospel, and made me a partaker of the doctrine of salvation, of which I was altogether unworthy; yea, that his mercy and goodness have borne so tenderly with my numerous sins and offences, for which I deserved to be cast from him and destroyed."

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 270.

[2] Bungener, pp. 339, 340.

[3] Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 44.

[4] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SOCIAL AND FAMILY LIFE OF GENEVA.

The Daily Sermon—Its Attractiveness—Daily Life of the Citizen—His Dress—His Table—Development of Wealth— The Refugees—The Benefits they conferred on their Adopted Country—English Names on the Genevan Registers—The Sabbath in Geneva.

Now that Calvin has realised his programme, let us look at the social and family life of the Genevese. The "Christian Idea," as Gaberel calls it, had created their State, and religion was the all-pervading and dominant element in it. Calvin, the people, the State—all three were one, the fusion was complete, and the policy of the Senate, and the action of the citizens, were but the results of that great principle which had called into existence this marvellous community. The "Sermon" held a first place among their institutions. Day by day it reinvigorated that spirit which was the "breath" of Geneva. But, besides the need the Genevans felt of the instructions and consolations of religion, there were other influences that acted in drawing them to the temples. Preaching was then a novelty. Like break of day in an Eastern clime, the Gospel, in mid-day effulgence, had all at once burst on these men after the darkness of the Middle Ages. Scarce had the first faint silvery streaks shown themselves, when lo! the full flood of the sun's light was poured upon them. The same generation which had listened to the monks, had now the privilege of listening to the Reformers. From tales, legends, and miracles, which were associated in their minds with the yoke of foreign masters, they passed to the pure and elevating doctrines of the Word of God, which, apart from their own beauty and majesty, were, they knew, the source whence had come their political and civil independence. We at this day can but faintly realise the charm that must then have hung round the pulpit, and which assembled, day after day, the Genevese in crowds, to the preaching of the Gospel.

At Geneva, the magistrate as well as the artisan invariably began the day with an act of worship. At six in the morning the churches were opened, and crowds might be seen in every quarter of the city on their way to spend an hour in listening to the "Exposition." After this the youth assembled in school or college, and the father and the elder sons repaired to the workshops. The mid-day repast, which was taken in common with the domestics, again reunited the family. After dinner the head of the household paid a short visit to his club[1] to hear the news. And what were the events on which the Genevan kept his eyes intently fixed, and for which he waited from day to day with no ordinary anxiety to receive tidings? The great drama in progress around him

[1] "A son abbaye (cercle)."—Gaberel.

completely occupied his thoughts. How goes the battle, he would ask, between Protestantism and Rome in France, in Italy, in Spain? Has any fresh edict of persecution issued these days past from the Vatican? Has any one been called to yield up his life on the scaffold, and what were his last words? What number of refugees have arrived in our city since yesterday, and through what perils and sufferings have they managed to reach our gates? Such were the topics that furnished matter of daily talk to the Genevese. The narrow limits of their little State were far from forming their horizon. Their thoughts and sympathies were as extensive as Christendom. There was not a prisoner, not a martyr for the Gospel in any of its countries for whom they did not feel and pray; he was their brother. Not a reverse befell the cause of the Reform in any part of the field which they did not mourn, nor a success in which they did not rejoice. They were watching a battle which would bring triumph or overthrow, not to Geneva only, but to the Gospel; hence the gravity and greatness of their characters. "The Genevan of that day," says Gaberel, "took the same interest in the news of the kingdom of God, which he takes today in the discussion of material affairs."[1]

The family life of the Genevans at that period was characterised by severe simplicity. Their dress was wholly without ornament. The magistrates wore cloth; the ordinary burgess contented himself with serge. This difference in their attire was not held as marking any distinction of class among the citizens, for the members of the Councils were chosen entirely with reference to their merit, and in nowise from any consideration of birth or wealth. Nor did this avoidance of superfluities lead to any falling off in the industrial activity or the inventive skill of the citizens. On the contrary, the arts and industries flourished, and both the citizens of Geneva, and the refugees who found asylum within it, became famous for their manufacture of objects of utility and luxury, which they exported to other countries.

If their dress was marked by plainness, not less were their tables by frugality. The rich and poor alike were obliged to obey the sumptuary laws. "The heads of families," says Gaberel, "seeing the ease, the health, the good order, the morality that now reigned in their dwellings, blessed those rigorous laws, which only gourmands found tyrannical, who remembered with regret the full tables of other days."[2] We dare say some of these men would have wished rather that their dinners had been ampler, though their liberty had been less. They are not the first who have thought the blessing of freedom too dearly purchased if bought with the sacrifice of dainties.

When periods of distress came round, occasioned by war or famine, the citizens were especially sensible of the benefit of this simple and frugal

[1] Gaberel, tom. i., p. 389.
[2] Gaberel, tom. i., p. 390.

manner of life. They felt less the privations they had then to bear, and were able to support with dignity the misfortunes of the State. Moreover, as the result of this economy, the wealth of the citizens was rapidly developed, and the State reached a prosperity it had never known in former days. Each citizen laid by religiously a certain portion of his earnings, and the years of greatest calamity were precisely those that were signalised by the greatest beneficence. Instead of receiving support from other States, Geneva sent its charities to the countries around, becoming a storehouse of earthly as of heavenly bread to the nations. These citizens, who wore plain *blouses*, and sat down to a meal correspondingly plain, entertained during many years, with liberal Christian hospitality, the refugees of religion—nobles, scholars, statesmen, and men of birth. The Genevan citizen, independent in means, and adding thereto that mental independence which the Gospel gives, could not but be a being of conscious dignity, and of character inherently grand, whom no call of devotion or heroism would find unprepared.

Geneva profited immensely in another way by the movement, of which it had become the headquarters. The men who crowded to it, and to whom it so hospitably opened its gates, conferred on it greater advantages than any they received from it. They were of every rank, profession, and trade, and they brought to the city of their adoption, not refinement of birth and elegance of letters only, but also new arts and improved industries. There immediately ensued a great quickening of the energies of labour and skill in Geneva, and these brought in their turn that wealth and conscious dignity which labour and skill never fail to impart. It is a new nation that we behold forming on the soil of the republic, with germs and elements in its bosom, higher and more various than infant State had ever before enjoyed. The fathers of the great Roman people were but a band of outlaws and adventurers! How different the men we now see assembling on the shores of the Leman to lay the foundations of the Rome of Protestantism, from those who had gathered at the foot of the Capitoline to lay the first stone in the Eternal City! From the strand of Naples to the distant shores of Scotland, we behold Protestantism weeding out of the surrounding countries, and assembling at this great focus, all who were skilful in art, as well as illustrious in virtue, and they communicated to Geneva a refinement of manners and an artistic skill which it continues to retain after the lapse of three centuries.

The most important question raised by the arrival of these exiles was not, Where shall bread be found for them? The hospitality of the Genevese solved this difficulty, for scarce was there citizen who had not one or more of these strangers living under his roof, and sitting at his table. The question which the Genevese had most at heart was, How shall we utilise this great access of intellectual, moral, and industrial power? How shall we draw forth the varied capabilities of these men in the way of strengthening, enriching, and

glorifying the State? Let us begin, said they, by enrolling them as citizens. "But," said the Libertines, when the proposal was first mooted, "is it fair that new-comers should lay down the law to the children of the land? These men were not born on the soil of the republic."

True, it was answered, but then the republic is not an affair of acres, it is an affair of faith. The true Geneva is Protestantism, and these men were born into the State in the same hour in which they became Protestants. This broad view of the question prevailed. Nevertheless, the honour was sparingly distributed. Up till 1555, only eighty had received the freedom of the city; in the early part of that year, other sixty were added[1]—a small number truly when we think how numerous the Protestant exiles were. The greatest of all the sons of Geneva, he who was more than a citizen, who was the founder of the State, was not legally enrolled till five years before his death. The name of John Knox was earlier inscribed on the Registers than that of John Calvin. Hardly was there a country in Europe which did not help to swell this truly Catholic roll. The list contributed by Italy alone was a long and brilliant one. Lucca sent, among other distinguished names, the Calendrini, the Burlamachi, the Turretini, and the Micheli.[2] Of these families many took root in Geneva, and by the services which they rendered the State, and the splendour their genius shed upon it in after-days, they repaid a hundred-fold as citizens the welcome they had received as refugees. Others returned to their native land when persecution had abated. "When the English returned," says Misson, "they left in the Register, which is still preserved, a list of their names and qualities—Stanley, Spencer, Musgrave, Pelham, are among the first in it, as they ought to be. The title of citizen, which several had obtained, was continued to them by an order and compliment of the Seigniory, so that several earls and peers of England may as well boast of being citizens of Geneva as Paul did of being a citizen of Rome."

One of the most striking characteristics of the Geneva of that day, and for a century after, especially to one coming from a Popish country, was its Sabbath. The day brought a complete cessation of labour to all classes : the field was unwatered by the sweat of the husbandman, the air was unvexed by the hammer of the artisan, and the lake was unploughed by the keel of the fisherman. The great bell of St. Peter's has sounded out its summons, the citizens have assembled in the churches, the city gates have been closed, and no one is allowed to enter or depart while the citizens are occupied in offering their worship.

[1] Bungener, p. 226.

[2] Misson, vol. ii., part 1, p. 275. Besides the names mentioned in the text, Misson gives a list of other Italian families which settled at Geneva—De la Rue, Diodati, Boneti, Franconi, Martini, Rubbati, and many others. (Vol. ii., part 2, pp. 436, 437.)

Everywhere the stillness of the sacred day is sublime, but here that sublimity was enhanced by the grandeur of the region. The Sabbath seemed to shed its own pure and peaceful splendour upon the sublimities of nature, and these sublimities, in their turn, seemed to impart an additional sanctity and majesty to the Sabbath. There was peace on the blue waveless Leman; there was peace on those plains that enclosed it in their vast sweep, and on whose bosom the chalet lay hid amid festooned vines and tall pine-trees. There was peace on the green rampart of the Jura, and peace on the distant Alps, which in the opposite quarter of the horizon lift their snowy piles into the sky, and stand silent and solemn as worshippers. A superb temple, indeed, seems the region, walled in by natural grandeurs, and pervaded throughout with a Sabbatic peace. In the midst of it is the little city of Geneva. No stirs or tumults are heard within it; its bells and its psalms only salute the ear. Beaming faces, the sign of happy hearts, tell what a day of gladness it is—the most gladsome of all the seven. In every dwelling is heard "the melody of health." But we must go to St. Peter's, would we see in its highest manifestation the power of the Sabbath to raise the souls and mould the characters of a people. A crowd of magnanimous, earnest, intelligent faces look up around the pulpit. There are gathered the finest intellects and holiest spirits of all Christendom, for whatever was noble and pure in other countries had been chased thither. The worship of men like these could be no common affair, no mere show or pantomime, like that performed in bespangled vestments amid lighted tapers. The worshippers in St. Peter's were men whose souls had been attempered in the fire, and who, having forsaken all worldly goods for the sake of the Gospel, stood prepared every hour to sacrifice life itself. Their worship was the worship of the heart, and their prayer the prayer of faith that pierces the heavens.

And as the devotion of the hearers was entire, so the instructions of the pulpit were lofty. The preacher might not be always eloquent, but he was never tame. He forgot himself and remembered only his great theme. Did he discourse on some point of doctrine, his exposition was clear, his words weighty; did he plead the cause of the confessors of other lands, "led as sheep to the slaughter," it was with a truthfulness and pathos that made his hearers mingle their tears with his, and prepared them to open their doors to such of the persecuted as might escape the prisons and stakes which their enemies had prepared for them. Such were the scenes that might be witnessed every Sabbath in those days within the walls of St. Peter's, Geneva. If Geneva was the "inner Bureau" of the European Reformation, as Gaberel says, the pulpit was the inner spring of power in that "Bureau." While the pulpit of Geneva stood, Geneva would stand; if the pulpit should fall, Geneva too would fall. It was the bulwark of its liberties, the "horses and chariots" that guarded the independence of the State. It was at the fire, which burned continually on this

altar, that the men of Geneva kindled the torch of liberty, and their love of liberty daily recruited that indomitable firmness which so perplexed and mortified Philip II. in the Escurial, and the Pope in the Vatican, and many others besides, who never warred against the little State save to be broken upon it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CALVIN'S LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

Calvin's Painful Maladies—Redoubles his Labours—Last Appearance in the Pulpit—Europe Watches his Death-bed —The Plague breaks out—Its Frightful Ravages—Calvin's Last Participation in the Lord's Supper—Goes for the Last Time to the Senate—He Receives the Senators—Receives the Pastors—Farel Visits him—Sits down at Table for the Last Time with his Brethren—His Last Week—One continued Prayer—His Death—His Burial—His Grave.

To the Reformer the close was now near. His body, never robust, had become latterly the seat of numerous maladies, that made life a prolonged torture. The quartan-ague of 1559 he had never recovered from. He was afflicted with pains in his head, and pains in his limbs. Food was often nauseous to him. He suffered from asthma, and spitting of blood. He had to sustain the attacks of the gout, and the yet more excruciating agony of the stone. Amid the ruins of his body, his spirit was fresh, and clear, and vigorous as ever; but as the traveller quickens his steps when the evening begins to fall, and the shadows to lengthen, Calvin redoubled his efforts, if so, before breathing his last, he might make that legacy of wisdom and truth he was to leave to the Church still more complete and perfect. His friends in many lands wrote imploring him to take a little rest. Calvin saw rest—everlasting rest—coming with the deepening shadows, and continued to work on. Beza tells us that during his last malady he translated from Latin into French his *Harmony on Moses,* revised the translation of Genesis, wrote upon the Book of Joshua, and finally revised and corrected the greater part of his annotations on the New Testament. He was all the while receiving and answering letters from the Churches. He had but a little before given the last touches to his immortal work, the *Institutes.*

The last time he appeared in the pulpit was on the 6th of February, 1564.[1] On that occasion he was seized with so violent a fit of coughing that it brought the blood into his mouth, and stopped his utterance. As he descended the stairs, amid the breathless stillness of his flock, all understood but too well that his last words in the pulpit of St. Peter's had been spoken. There followed weeks of intense suffering. To the martyr when mounting the scaffold the Reformer had said, "Be strong, and play the man: "during four months of suffering, not less severe than that of the scaffold, was Calvin to display the heroism which he had preached to others. The more violent attacks of his malady were indicated only by the greater pallor of his face, the quivering of his lips, the tremulous motion of his clasped hands, and the half-

[1] Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 41.

suppressed ejaculation, “O Lord! how long?” It was during these months of suffering that he prosecuted the labours of which Beza, who was daily by his bedside, tells us in the passage referred to above. A little cold water was often his only nourishment for days, and having refreshed himself therewith, he would again resume work.

On this death-bed were riveted the eyes of all Christendom. Rome waited the issue of his sickness with intense excitement, in the hope that it would rid her of her great foe. The Churches of the Reformation asked with sorrowful and most affectionate anxiety if their father was to be taken from their head. Meanwhile, as though to impress the minds of men, and make a great mourning around this mighty bier, the plague broke in, and inflicted unprecedented ravages on almost all the countries of Europe. It traversed Germany, France, and Switzerland, “and men fell before it,” says Ruchat, “as fall the leaves in autumn when the tempest sweeps through the forest.” This pestilence was equally fatal on the mountain-top and in the low valley. In the Tockenburg and other parts of Switzerland it entered hamlets and villages, where it left behind it not one living man. In Basle it struck down seven thousand persons, among whom were thirteen councillors, eight ministers, and five professors; among the latter was the learned Cellarius. At Bern, from one to two thousand died. It visited Zurich, and numbered among its victims Theodore Bibliander, the successor of Zwingli. Bullinger was attacked, but recovered, though he had to mourn the loss of his wife and two daughters. At Herisau, in the canton of Appenzell, there were upwards of three thousand deaths. The Protestant congregations, in some cases, assembled in the open air, and when they celebrated the Lord’s Supper, the communicants, in order to avoid infection, brought each his own cup, and made use of it at the table. It was in the midst of the universal gloom created by these terrible events that men waited from day to day for tidings from the sick-bed at Geneva. Calvin longed to appear yet once again in that church where he had so often preached the Gospel. “On the 2nd of April,” says Beza, “it being Easter-day, he was carried to church in a chair. He remained during the whole sermon, and received the Sacrament from my hand. He even joined, though with a trembling voice, the congregation in the last hymn, ‘Lord, let thy servant depart in peace.’” He was carried out, Beza adds, his face lighted up with a Christian joy.

Six days before (27th March) he had caused himself to be borne to the door of the council-chamber. Ascending the stairs, supported by two attendants, he entered the hall, and proposed to the Senate a new rector for the school; then, taking off his skullcap, he thanked their Excellencies for the kindness which he had experienced at their hands, especially the friendship they had shown him during his last illness: “For I feel,” he said, “that this is the last time that I shall stand here.” The tones of that voice, now scarcely

audible, must have recalled, to those who listened to it for the last time, the many occasions on which it had been lifted up in this same place, sometimes to approve, sometimes to condemn, but always to attest that he who spoke was the fearless champion of what he believed to be truth, and the unbending and incorruptible patriot. His adieu moved the Council to tears.[1]

A month after, he sent another message to the Council, intimating his desire to meet its members yet once more before he should die. Having regard to his great weakness, the Council resolved to visit him at his own house. Accordingly, on the 30th April, the twenty-five Lords of Geneva, in all the pomp of a public ceremony, proceeded to his humble dwelling in the Rue des Chanoines. Raising himself on his bed, he exhorted them, amongst other things, to maintain ever inviolate the independence of a city which God had destined to high ends. But he reminded them that it was the Gospel which alone made Geneva worth preserving, and that therefore it behoved them to guard its purity if they would preserve for their city the protection of a stronger arm than their own. Commending them and Geneva to God, and begging them one and all, says Beza, to pardon him his faults, he held out his hand to them, which they grasped for the last time, and retired as from the death-bed of a father.[2]

On the morrow he received the pastors. Most affectionate and touching was his address. He exhorted them to diligence in their office as preachers, to show fidelity to the flock, to cultivate affection for one another, and, above all, maintain the Reformation and discipline which he had established in the Church. He reminded them of the conflict he had had to wage in this matter, and the afflictions that had befallen him, and how at length God had been pleased to crown his labours with success. His many maladies and sicknesses, he said, had at times made him morose and hard to please, and even irascible. For these failings he asked pardon, first of God, and then of his brethren; and, "finally," Beza adds, "he gave his hand to each, one after the other, which was with such anguish and bitterness of heart in every one, that I cannot even recall it to mind without extreme sadness."

The Council he had bidden farewell, his brethren he had bidden farewell, but there was one friend, the oldest of all save Cordier, who had not yet stood at his death-bed and received his last adieu. On the 2nd May, Calvin received a letter from Farel, in which the writer intimated that he was just setting out to visit him. Farel was now nearly eighty. Could he not wait the little while till he had put off "this tabernacle," and then, with less difficulty to either, the two friends would meet? So it would seem did Calvin think, and hence the letter he immediately dictated:—"Farewell, my best and most

[1] Ruchat, tom. Vii., p. 41.

[2] Spon, *Not.*, pp. 309–311. Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 42.

faithful brother, since it is God's will that you should survive me; live in the constant recollection of our union, which, in so far as it was useful to the Church of God, will still bear for us abiding fruit in heaven. I wish you not to fatigue yourself on my account. My breath is weak, and I continually expect it to leave me. It is enough for me that I live and die in Christ, who is gain to his people both in life and death. Once more farewell to thee, and to all the brethren thy colleagues."

A few days afterwards the Reformer saw the old man, covered all over with dust, having walked from Neuchatel on foot, enter his sick-chamber.[1] History has not recorded the words that passed between the two. "He had a long interview with him," says Ruchat, "and on the morrow took his departure for Neuchâtel." It was a long way for one of eighty years, and yet surely it was meet that the man who had met Calvin at the gate of Geneva, when he first entered it nearly thirty years before, should stand beside him when about to depart. This time Farel may not stop him.[2]

Yet a few days more was the Reformer to pass on earth. The 19th of May, or the Friday before Whit-Sunday, brought round the *Censures,* as they were called. The pastors, on that day, met, and admonished each other fraternally, and afterwards partook together of a modest meal. Calvin requested that the dinner should be prepared at his house; and when the hour came he had himself carried into the room where the repast was to be eaten. Seated amongst his colleagues, he said, "'I am come to see you, my brethren, for the last time; for, save this once, I shall never sit again at table.' Then he offered prayer, but not without difficulty, and ate a little, "endeavouring," says Beza, "to enliven us." "But," he continues, "before the end of the meal, he requested to be carried back to his chamber, which was close by, saying these words with as cheerful a face as he could—'A partition between us will not prevent me, though absent in body, being present with you in spirit.'" He had spoken truly. From the bed to which he had been carried he was to rise no more.

There remained yet eight days to the Reformer on earth. These were almost one uninterrupted prayer. The fervency of his supplications was indicated not so much by his voice, now scarcely audible, as by his eye, which, says Beza, "retained its brightness to the last," and testified to the faith and hope with which he was animated. He had not yet left earth, and yet he had left it: for of earthly bread he ate not; with men he had ceased to converse; he halted here, at the portal of the invisible world, to calm, to elevate, and to strengthen his spirit, by converse with the Eternal, before passing its awful

[1] Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 43.

[2] Farel made yet one more journey. In the spring of the following year, 1565, he went to Metz, the scene of his earliest labours, where he preached. The effort appears to have been too much for him, for soon after his return to Neuchâtel he died of exhaustion.

but blessed threshold. It was now Saturday, the 27th of May. He seemed to suffer less, and to speak with greater ease. But at eight o'clock of the evening the sure signs of death became apparent. As he was repeating the words of the apostle, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be . . . . "—without being able to finish, he breathed his last.[1] Beza, who had been summoned to his bedside, was just in time to see him expire. "And thus," says he, "on this day, with the setting sun, the brightest light in the Church of God on earth was taken back to heaven." The event was briefly chronicled in the Consistorial Register thus—"*Went to God, Saturday, the* 27*th.*"

Early on the day following, which was Sunday, the remains of the Reformer were wrapped in a shroud and enclosed in a wooden coffin preparatory to interment. At two o'clock the funeral took place. It differed in no respect from that of an ordinary citizen, save in the much greater concourse of mourners. The body was followed to the grave in Plain-palais—about 500 paces outside the city—by the members of the Senate, the body of the clergy, the professors in the college, and by the citizens, and many distinguished strangers; "not," says Beza, "without many tears." Over the grave to which they had consigned so much—the Pastor, the Patriot, and the Reformer—they raised no monument. Not a line did they write on marble or brass to tell the ages to come who reposed in this grave, and what he had been to Christendom. They arranged in reverent silence the dust above him, and departed. In this they but fulfilled Calvin's own wishes. He had enjoined that he should be buried "after the customary fashion" and that "customary fashion," says Bungener, "which was observed down almost to the present day, was that no monument should be raised upon any grave, however illustrious the deceased might be."[2] "He was buried," says Ruchat, "with all simplicity, in the common cemetery, as he himself had desired: so simply that no one at this day knows where his grave is." "For more than two centuries," says Bungener, "that grave has been dug over and over again, like the rest, by the sexton's spade; and for less than twenty years a black stone has marked the spot where Calvin perhaps reposed, for it is only a tradition."[3]

But it is well, perhaps, that neither tomb nor monument was raised to Calvin. Forgetting his dust we stand face to face with the living, thinking. deathless spirit, and rise to a truer and sublimer ideal of the man. Death has not caused Calvin to retire; he is still with us: he speaks to us in his works, he lives in the Churches which he organised, and he prosecutes from century

[1] Gaberel, tom. i., p. 405.

[2] Bungener, p. 348.

[3] When, a few years ago, the Author visited the Plain-palais at Geneva, he found a pine-tree, and a stone of about a foot square, with the letters "J. C." inscribed on it, marking the supposed spot of Calvin's interment.

to century his vast plans in the continued progress of that moral and spiritual empire which his genius and faith founded, or, to speak more truly, restored. While that empire lives, Calvin will live.

[The following is the translation from a facsimile of Calvin's handwriting included in the original of this chapter.]

"Crato, one of our engravers, lately returned from Wittemberg, brought letters from Luther to Bucer, in which he thus writes: —'Salute for me most respectfully Sturm and Calvin, whose books I have read with singular pleasure.' Now recall what I have there said concerning the Eucharist; think of Luther's noble-heartedness. It will be easy for you to see how little cause those have who so pertinaciously dissent from him. Philip, however, wrote thus:—'Luther and Pomeranus have desired Calvin and Sturm to be greeted. Calvin has acquired great favour with them.' Philip, moreover, desired the messenger to tell me that certain persons, in order to exasperate Martin, have shown him a passage in which he and his friends were censured by me. Thereupon he examined the passage, and felt that without doubt he was aimed at. At length he expressed himself thus—'I hope Calvin will one day think better of us; but it is well meanwhile that he should have a proof of our good disposition towards him.' If such moderation do not affect us, we are Stones. For myself, I am melted, and have given myself the satisfaction of saying so in the preface to the Epistle to the Romans. If you have not yet read Philip on the authority of the Church, I desire you may read it. You will see how much more moderate he is than he appears in his other writings. Capito, Bucer, Sturm, Hedio, Bedrot, and others, salute thee most lovingly. Greet for me most warmly all the brethren. Most choice brother, farewell.—Strasburg, 12th Dec. (1539)." [Hedio, Bedrottus et alii. Tu etiam velim salutes non vulgariter omnes fratres. Vale, frater optatissime.—Argentorati, 12 Calend Dec. (1539).

CHAPTER XXX.

CALVIN'S WORK.

Impression made by the News of Calvin's Death—Exultation of Rome—Despondency of the Reformed—Both Miscalculate—The Reformation is Calvin—Geneva grows still Greater—Luther and Calvin Compared—The Two Reformations One—The Culmination of the German Reformation, the Starting-point of the Genevan—Calvin's Special Service to the Reformation—Theories of Church Government—Luther's Views—Melanchthon's—Brentius'—Lambert's—Zwingli's—Calvin Builds on the Foundations of his Predecessors—The Key of his Position—The Two Lessons.

WHEN the tidings sped through Europe that Calvin was dead, the two great parties into which Christendom was divided were very differently affected. The one gave way to unbounded joy, the other was seized with nearly as unbounded sorrow. Rome, hearing in the news the knell of Protestantism, confidently anticipated the immediate return of the revolted countries to their obedience. "The man of Geneva," as she termed the Reformer, was no more. The arm which had so often smitten her legions, and chased them from the field in disastrous rout, would never again be lifted up in battle; and she had nothing more to do, in order to restore her Church to its former glory and dominion, than simply to go forth and summon the Reforming ranks, now left without a leader, to surrender. The Pope went so far as to nominate seven commissioners, who were to proceed to Geneva on this business.[1] This step was taken with the advice, amongst others, of Cardinal Boromeo and the Bishop of Anneci, who seem to have persuaded the Pope that the Council and citizens of Geneva only waited for some such embassage to abandon Protestantism, and bow as penitents and suppliants at the footstool of the Papal throne. In truth they would have done so during Calvin's life-time, they insinuated, but for the extraordinary influence which that heretic exercised over them. The issue of this affair was very far from answering the expectations of the Pope and his advisers.

If Rome thought, on the one hand, that the death of Calvin was her triumph, there were Protestants, on the other, who viewed it as the almost certain overthrow of the Reformation. There was just as little foundation for this conclusion as for the other. It is principles, not men, that keep the world moving. The Reformer, in his short life of not quite fifty-five years, had embodied all the principles of the movement in his writings; he had enshrined them as in a living model in Geneva; through Geneva he had initiated the great work of impressing them on Christendom. This, not the handful of dust in the Plain-palais, was Calvin. The eye truly enlightened could see him still

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini.* Ruchat, tom. vii., p. 46.

occupying his chair at Geneva, and legislating and ruling Christendom from it as from a throne. While the Reformation was there, Calvin was there; and if at Geneva, it was in France, and in all Christendom. Both those who triumphed and those who trembled, thinking the last hour was about to strike to Geneva and the Reformation, were alike mistaken. The city rose higher than before, though the man who made it famous was in his grave. The movement spread wider than ever, and if the city was a centre and impelling power to the movement, the movement was a bulwark around the city. "The Genevese of the sixteenth century," says an eloquent modern writer, "committed one of those deeds of saintly daring which seem folly in the eyes of men, but which are in reality the safeguard of nations heroic enough to attempt them. Geneva had been the representative of a great right, liberty of conscience; she offered an asylum to all the martyrs of the faith; she had put her hand to the work, and pursued her career without casting a look behind. Politicians and calculators may, if they please, see a sort of madness in a republic, without strength or riches, proclaiming religious and moral liberty in the face of Italy, Spain, and France, united for the triumph of Romish despotism. But the God of the faithful ones who hold fast the truth confounded human prevision, he surrounded our town with that celestial protection, against which the plots and the rage of the mighty broke in vain. Thus Geneva, without arms and without territory, accomplished her perilous mission; and remaining faithful to the principle of her nationality, the city of Calvin saw herself the object of the Divine favour, and enjoyed a prosperity, a respect, and an outward security which the most powerful States in the world do not often obtain."[1]

Now that we have come to the close of Calvin's career, it is necessary that we should pause, and ask wherein lay his distinctive characteristic as a Reformer, and what was it that constituted the specific difference between his Reformation and that of Luther. The answer to this inquiry will help us to understand the unity that belongs to the great drama whose successive developments we are attempting to trace. The work of Luther was needed to prepare for that of Calvin, and Calvin's was necessary to complete and crown that of Luther. The parts which each acted were essential to constitute a whole. Wittenberg and Geneva make between them one Reformation. This can be better seen in our day than when Luther and Calvin were alive, and toiling each at his allotted part of the great task.

Let us first sketch in outline the difference between these two men and their work, and then return and explain it a little more in detail.

By the year 1535, the Reformation in Germany had culminated, and was beginning to decline. The Augsburg Confession (1530) marked the era of

[1] Gaberel, tom. i., p. 466; 1858–1862.

greatest prosperity in German Protestantism; the formation of the Schmalkald League notified the moment of its incipient decline.

That League, in itself, was quite defensible—nay, even dutiful, considering the power of the princes, and the attempts the emperor was making to destroy the political system of Germany. But it exercised, especially after the death of Luther, a depressing and withering effect upon the spiritual energies of the Protestants, which did more to throw back the movement than would any amount of violence that could have been inflicted upon it. With Luther, in his grave, with Melanchthon and his compromises, with Landgrave Philip and his soldiers, the Reformation in Germany had closed its period of well-doing. Another centre had to be found where the movement might have a fresh start. Geneva was selected. There the Reformation was extricated from the political entanglements with which it had become mixed up in Germany. It was rescued from the hands of political and military men: it was withdrawn from reliance on armies, and committed to those who could further it only with their prayers and their martyrdoms. True, its second cradle was placed on a spot which, of all others, seemed open to attack on every side, and where it was not sure of a day's life; yet around that spot were invisible ramparts; the poise constantly maintained in the ambitions of its neighbouring sovereigns—Charles, Francis, and the Pope—was to it for walls.

As a new foothold had to be found for the movement, so too had a new chief. And, accordingly, before Luther had been laid in his tomb at Wittenberg, Calvin was fairly installed at Geneva. He was prosecuting his work in quietness by the shores of the Leman, while the princes of the Schmalkald League were fighting on the plains of Germany. Under Calvin the Reformation entered upon a new and more spiritual dispensation. All the incidents in Luther's life are sudden, startling, and dramatic: this form was given them to draw attention and fix the minds of men. But the movement, once launched, needed this array of outward drapery no longer. Under Calvin it appeals less to the senses and more to the intellect: less to the imagination and more to the soul. The evolutions in Calvin's career are quiet, gradual, without the stage effect, if we may be permitted the phrase, which marked Luther's more notable appearances, but they are more truly sublime. Henceforward the Reformation proceeds more silently, but with a deeper power, and a higher moral glory.

The leading stages of Luther's history repeat themselves in that of Calvin, but after a different fashion. In the career of each there is a marked point of commencement, and a marked point of culmination. The nailing of the ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg has its analogue, or corresponding act, in the publication of the *Institutes* at Basle. The one manifesto struck and stirred Christendom even as did the other. Each notified the entrance of its author upon a high career. They were two mighty voices

telling the world that great instructors had been sent to it, and bidding it hear them. Again, the appearance of Luther before the Diet at Worms has its corresponding act in the victory of Calvin over the Libertines of Geneva, when at the risk of life he barred their way to the Communion-table. The first was the more dramatic, the second was the more evangelically grand. Both were needed fully to define the office and place of the Reformation. The first demonstrated the Gospel's power to withstand kings and armies, and triumph over all the power of the sword: the second showed that its energy equally fitted if to cope with Libertine mobs, and to resist their devastating theories. It would not lay its freedom at the feet of the tyrant, and neither would it surrender its purity at the call of the populace.

In fact, we see only the one half of the work which Calvin accomplished, when we confine our attention to the blow he dealt that great system which had so long kept the intellect of the world in darkness and its conscience in bondage. The evil he prevented rising up was as great as that he helped to pull down. It is altogether a mistake to suppose that if the Reformation had not come, the Church of Rome would have continued to exercise the sway she had wielded in the past. The hour of her supremacy had gone by. The scandals and dogmas of the priesthood had destroyed belief: the speculations of the schoolmen had sown the seeds of pantheism, and a great tempest lowered over Europe. Loosened from its old foundations, an upheaval of society was inevitable. But for Protestantism, Servetus would have been the Voltaire of the sixteenth century: the Libertine club, on the shores of the Leman, would have anticipated the Encyclopaedists who at a later period flourished on the banks of the Seine; Geneva would have filled the post which Paris did two centuries after, by becoming the head-quarters of revolutionary propagandism; and the year 1593 would have been as fatal to the thrones and altars of the Papal world as was the year 1793. Providence postponed the tempest through the agency of Calvin, who grappled with the young giant of pantheistic revolution, and made Geneva the head-quarters of a Protestant propagandism, which , by restoring knowledge and faith imparted a new life to the European nations, and laid over again the foundations of a world that was dissolving and about to vanish away. And not only was the storm deferred thereby, its violence was mitigated when at last it came, and its devastations restricted to the one half of Europe. The Roman Church may not see the debt it owes to Calvin; that, however, does not make it less the fact that there is no man who ever lived, to whom its priests owe half what they owe to him. The inviolability of person which they continued to enjoy for two centuries after his day was due to the Reformer.

Such were the two men who figured so largely in the sixteenth century, and such is the part accomplished by each in the one work assigned to them. But let us explain a little more fully what we have now briefly stated. The

special service that Calvin rendered to Protestantism was to codify its laws, and organise its adherents so as to conserve their morality and holiness—in other words, the Reformation itself. His first step in the direction of this great end—in his view the standing or falling of Protestantism—was to exclude the profane from the Communion-table. This power he lodged in the Consistory, or body of pastors and elders. He would allow no other authority on earth to exercise it: and in claiming this power—and we have seen at what risks he exercised it—he separated between the Church and the world, and laid the first stone in that system of polity which he afterwards elaborated. and which was ultimately extended to the Protestant Churches of France, of Holland, of Scotland, and of yet remoter countries.

In what he did in this matter, the Reformer of Geneva built upon the foundations of his great predecessors. The more eminent of the Reformers who had been before him, had felt the necessity of drawing a distinction between the Church and the world, and of excluding the ungodly and vicious from the Sacraments, and so conserving the Church's purity; but their theories of Church discipline were elementary and crude, and their practical attempts were to a great extent failures. Still it is beyond doubt that these early and immature experiments helped to eliminate the principles and shape the projects which resulted at last in the establishment of the Genevan polity.

Luther saw, and often mournfully felt, that the Church needed a discipline, but he failed to give it such. When Luther enunciated his idea of a Church as "a congregation of saints, a spiritual assembly of souls in one faith,"[1] he laid the foundation of a fabric on which Calvin afterwards placed the top-stone. But the German Reformer proceeded no farther on this fundamental idea than to constitute an office of men to preach the Word and dispense the Sacraments. Scattered through his writings are the germs of a more complete and efficient polity; he could distinguish between the temporal and the spiritual jurisdiction,[2] but how to give these principles effect in the gathering and organising of the Church he knew not. He sorrowfully confesses, in his *German Mass and Order of Divine Worship,* his inability to furnish what was so much needed—a working plan for the government of the Church. One main obstruction in his path was the low state of practical religion among the mass of the German people. "I have not the people," said he, "whom it requires. For we Germans are a wild, rude, riotous race, among whom it is not easy to set anything on foot unless necessity compel."[3]

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[1] *Geschichte der Presbyterial-und Synodalverfassung seit der Reformation.* Von. G. V. Lechler, Knittilingen. Pages 6, 7. Leyden, 1854.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 8.

[3] For a statement in full of Luther's views on the constitution of the Church, see *ante,* bk. ix., chap. 12.

Melancthon enunciated his views on this head a little more clearly than Luther. He declared his opinion "that a pastor ought not to excommunicate any man without the concurrence of a body of judges, and the co-operation of some worthy members of the Church."[1] So also taught the four Saxon Reformers—Pomeranus, Jonas, Luther, and Melanchthon. In a joint epistle to the ministers of Nuremberg, in 1540, exhorting them to resume the practice of excommunication, they annex the condition that, in this business, elders be associated with the pastor.[2] These projects embrace the elements of the Genevan polity. They fell to the ground, it is true, about 1542, when the system under which the Churches of the Lutheran Communion still are, was adopted—namely, a Consistory, chosen by, and responsible to, the civil powers; but they exhibit a notable approximation on the part of the German Reformers to the plan of ecclesiastical rule afterwards elaborated and set working by Calvin.

Next in order is the scheme of John Brentius. Brentius was the Reformer first of the free imperial city of Hall, in Swabia, and afterwards of the Duchy of Wurtemberg. He had the merit of proposing to the Council of Hall, in 1526, a better working plan for the regulation of the Church than either Luther's or Melanchthon's, although still his plan was defective. Founding on what, according to his view, was the order followed in the Apostolic Church, he says: "The saints of the primitive Church thought it good to observe the following order in conducting evangelical discipline:—Certain ancient, honourable, and discreet men were elected from the assembly by the Christian people of each locality, to whom charge was given to take the oversight of the congregation; and in particular to admonish such as gave offence by unchristian behaviour, and to inflict excommunication, if admonition proved unavailing. Of these chosen men the one who was appointed to preach the Word, and who was authorised to convene the others for business, was styled Bishop—that is, overseer or shepherd; the rest were styled, in allusion to their age, Presbyters—that is, Councillors. The meeting of the Presbyters and Bishop was designated a Synod—that is, *an assembly.*" Such was the scheme of Brentius; it is a well-defined and independent plan of Church rule, lodging the correction of manners solely in the hands of the Church herself —that is, of her office-bearers.

Brentius appeared on the point of anticipating Calvin as regards his Church polity; and yet he missed it. The existence of a Christian magistracy, in his view, modified the whole question. A pagan magistrate could not be expected to correct Church scandals, and therefore it behoved the primitive Church, unaided by the State, to administer her whole discipline; but now,

[1] *Corp. Reform.*, ed. Bretschneider, vol. iv., p. 542.

[2] *Corp. Reform.*, vol. iii., p. 965. Lechler, *Geschichte der Presbyt., &c.*, pp. 8, 9.

the magistrate being Christian he was fitted, according to Brentius, to share with the Church the task of correcting and punishing evils; although still there were vices and sins which the civil ruler could not or would not correct, and these the Church herself must see to. Thus he inextricably mixed up the Church's discipline with the State's authority, and he added to the confusion by giving to the magistrate the nomination of the lay-assessors who were to take part with the pastor in the exercise of discipline.

Another scheme claims a moment's attention from us. It is that of Francis Lambert, ex-monk of Avignon, and Philip, Landgrave of Hesse. It was laid before the Committee of Homburg in the same year (1526) that saw the scheme of John Brentius submitted to the Council of Hall. It is the most advanced of all. It lodged the administration of discipline immediately and directly in the members of the Church. First of all, so far as human judgment could effect it, a Church of saints only was to be constituted; these were to convene from time to time, "for the public punishment and exclusion of scandalous persons . . . for passing judgment on the doctrine of their pastor, for electing and, in case of need, deposing bishops and deacons (*i.e.*, ministers and helpers) and guardians of the poor, and for whatsoever other functions pertain to the congregation; for these reasons, we ordain that in every parish, after God's Word shall have been preached for a season, there shall take place a convention of the faithful, wherein all males, who favour the cause of Christ and are reputed saints, shall come together to decide, along with the bishop, on all Church affairs, according to the Word of God. . . . The bishop or minister may by no means excommunicate or absolve by himself, but only in conjunction with the congregation."[1]

This is not so much the Presbyterian as the Congregational polity. It is, in fact, a scheme that blends the two, for it was made to approximate the first, by the institution of provincial Synods, consisting of the pastors and a deputy from every congregation. It is remarkable, when its age and place are considered. A draft of it was sent to Luther for his approval. He advised that for the present the project should not be attempted, but that every effort be made to fill the pulpits and schools with efficient men. Thereafter the plan might be introduced piece-meal, and if it met with general approval might become law; "for to draw a fine plan and to reduce it to practice are two very different things. Men are not constituted as those people imagine who sit at home and sketch fine plans of how things are to go." This constitution was hardly set a-working when it was abandoned. The Church of Hesse, surrounded on all sides by laxer schemes of polity, in a year or two forsook that of Lambert, and adopted that under which Luther had placed the Churches of Saxony.

[1] Lechler, *Geschichte der Presbyt., &c.*, pp. 14–16.

The plan of Zwingli was intermediate between that of Luther and that of Calvin. The Reformer of Zurich framed a code of laws and ordinances covering the entire field of social life, and committed their administration to a series of judges or courts, supreme over which was the State.

Marriage, the Sunday, and the Sacrament were the three centres of his moral scheme, the three points on which his ecclesiastical code hinged. With Luther, he regarded the power of discipline as vested in the whole body of the faithful; and the provisions he made for the exercise of that power were, first, the Kirk-session, or Still-stand, so called for this reason, that at the close of public worship the members remained in church, *still standing*, with the pastor, and in that attitude made their communications to the minister, and to one another, and reproved those cited before them for discipline.[1] Secondly, the half-yearly Synod, which chiefly occupied itself with the doctrines and morals of the clergy; and thirdly, the Board of Moral Control, to which was added, when the discipline of the Church extended, the magistrates of the district. Excommunication—that is, exclusion from the membership of the Church, with all implied in that sentence in Switzerland—was often pronounced by the Still-stand as a temporary measure; but as a final measure it could be pronounced only by the Council. The supreme ecclesiastical authority was thus in the hands of the State, but it was handed over to it by Zwingli on the express condition that the magistrates were Christian men, and were to take the Word of God as their sole directory in all their proceedings.[2] The zeal and promptitude with which the Council of Zurich aided Zwingli in his reforming measures, was not without its influence in moulding his scheme of polity, and indeed the Swiss magistrates of those days were amongst the more enlightened and pious of the population. But seeing Constitutions are permanent while men change, in order to be wisely framed they ought to be based, not on exceptional cases, but on great and general laws.

Next to the doctrine of the Church, there is nothing that appertains more to her well-being than her discipline. Without this, her life would ebb away, and she would fall back into the world from which she had come out; whereas, with a suitable organisation, not only would her life be preserved, but her vigour and efficiency would be increased tenfold. We have therefore sought to trace the successive stages of the growth of the polity of the Protestant Churches. We see the Church's government, like her doctrine, gradually developing and taking shape. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers we find lying at the foundation of all these schemes. On this idea Luther constitutes the office of preacher of the Word. He feels that this is not enough, but does not see how, in the then immature state of the Church, more

[1] Christoffel, *Life of Zwingle,* p. 160.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 160–170.

can be done. Brentius joined lay-assessors with the pastor, who were to exclude the unworthy from the privileges of the Church; but the better half of this power he gave to the magistrate, who might in the end—this was of course the questionable part of the scheme—usurp the whole of it. Francis Lambert went to the other extreme. He made all the members of the Church judges—a plan that will work with difficulty in any age, and which certainly was unsuited to the age that saw its birth. The polity constructed by Zwingli was more elaborate, and did much to nourish morality and piety in Switzerland, but its framer seriously endangered it when he surrendered to the magistrate the power, in the last resort, of excluding from the Church and her ordinances.

Calvin, doubtless, had studied all these attempts, and profited by them. There is no reason to think that he reached his scheme of Church polity at a bound; it was rather a reproduction of earlier schemes, avoiding, as far as he could, the rock on which his predecessors had split. His genius detected the one thing which he thought essential in Church discipline; and less concerned about other matters, he tenaciously grasped this, the power namely of admitting to or excluding from the privileges of the Church. It was his strong opinion that he who had this power had the guardianship of the Church's purity, and the control of her government, and that this right must be exercised by the Church herself—that is, by her chosen representatives—to the exclusion of all other authority and power. No one, he considered, can share with the Church, and no one dare interfere with her in the exercise of this right. At great peril and suffering he vindicated this right, against both the Council of Geneva and the Libertine democracy. In this battle he stemmed the rising tide of infidel sentiment and immoral manners which would have been more fatal to Reformation than the arms of the Empire, and he laid the corner-stone of that spiritual dominion which Protestantism was to exercise over the nations.

The Presbyterian of the present day will not admit that Calvin's scheme was faultless. The Reformer's views touching the theocratic character of States prevented him doing full justice to his own idea of the individuality of the Church, and forbade his placing his ecclesiastical polity alongside the State's government, as an independent and distinct autonomy. In the administration of practical discipline at Geneva the Council was greater than the Consistory. But the essential principle, as Calvin deemed it—namely, the sole power to *admit* or *exclude,* which was in his mind the key of the position—he combated for, and vindicated with all the force of his mighty intellect. And when he came to apply his theory of Church power to the French Churches, the completeness and consistency of his ideas on ecclesiastical polity were better seen. In France the government was hostile, and there, even if Calvin had wished, he could not have effected the complication that

existed at Geneva. But all the more was the fitness of his scheme demonstrated. It gave a perfect autonomy to the French Protestant Church, which enabled her to maintain her place alongside the throne, and to survive a lengthened succession of terrific tempests, which began from this time to assail her.

It is not difficult to see, now that we look back on the epoch, that God was then teaching a great lesson to the world—that a scripturally constituted and scripturally governed Church would, in days to come, be the only bulwark against the tremendous evils which were beginning to assail Christendom from opposite sides. This lesson, we must repeat, was taught twice over, first in the case of Luther, and secondly in the case of Calvin.

In Luther we see the Reformation, undazzled by the blaze of worldly glory, and unterrified by the threats of worldly power, maintaining its ground despite the insolence of authority. In the case of Calvin, in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, we see the Reformation standing before a licentious and furious infidel mob, who hate it not less than the emperor does, and are just as eager to extinguish it in blood, and we behold that mob recoiling abashed and awe-struck before its moral power. Happy had it been for Italy and Spain had they laid to heart the first lesson! and happy had it been for France had she pondered the second!