

# ZWINGLI;

OR,

THE RISE OF THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND.

A LIFE OF THE REFORMER,

WITH SOME NOTICES OF HIS TIME AND CONTEMPORARIES,

BY

R. CHRISTOFFEL,

PASTOR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH, WINTERSINGEN, SWITZERLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY

JOHN COCHRAN, Esq.

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EDINBURGH:

T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO. DUBLIN: JOHN ROBERTSON. PHILADELPHIA: SMITH, ENGLISH, & CO.

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MDCCCLVIII.

## FIFTH SECTION.

ZWINGLI'S LABOURS FOR THE EXTENSION AND SUPPORT OF THE REFORMATION WHICH EMANATED FROM HIM, IN THE OTHER CANTONS OF SWITZERLAND, AS WELL AS IN GERMANY, FRANCE, AND ITALY.

“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.— 1 COR. ix. 16.

### 1. ZWINGLI'S RELATION TO THE NEW EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT, AS THIS MANIFESTED ITSELF IN SOME OF THE SWISS CLOISTERS.

THE Reformation is an act of God, and not a work of man, however great and glorious the men appear in the annals of history whom God called to execute this His great counsel. The Reformers themselves, illuminated by God's Spirit, which leadeth into the knowledge of all truth, recognised that they themselves were nothing, that in the Word of God alone there is to be found infallible truth, in Christ alone everlasting salvation. “But,” says Zwingli, “he who feels in his own soul the value of this salvation, and the rest and peace it affords, cannot bear that his neighbour should be ignorant of its joy.” Hence a holy apostolic zeal animated them to publish to the whole of Christendom the truth they had themselves acquired, to revolutionise and renew public worship and private life, according to the demands of God's Word. Yet all their labours and conflicts, as they themselves, in all humility, acknowledge, would have been in vain if God had not powerfully drawn the hearts of men to himself by His Spirit, and awakened them to faith. But just because God sent forth this spirit, like the animating breath of spring, over Christendom, the hearts of men opened willingly to the preaching of the Word of His grace, and the Reformers were joyfully hailed as ambassadors of God for the redemption of His people out of the fetters of error, as giants to deliver them out of the pit of destruction. At sight of this glorious awakening, which manifested itself everywhere, Zwingli was unable to restrain his emotion, and cried out in a transport of joy: “The world hangs on the gospel, ay, even although ye Papists were to go mad for it. Nay, even where ye suppose there is not a thought of Him, there the very children find the living God. From fear of your rage they hide that before your eyes which in their hearts grows fresh and green, and is already sending forth buds.”

The consciousness of his call to be a fellow-worker with God (1 Cor. iii. 9.) in the great work of the renovation of Christendom filled the heart of our Reformer, in the midst of his labours, with a joyous feeling of triumph, which at times he gave utterance to in some such words as, “That which is begun

with God, no man can frustrate, but that which is built up without Him must fall." This conviction inspired him with courage to combat every obstacle which placed itself in the way of the work of Reformation, and to respond with cheerfulness to the numerous claims that were made upon his industry and zeal. As the newly preached gospel gained one victory after another in Zurich, and more and more took shape both in the public services of the sanctuary and in the lives of its professors, the friends of evangelical truth in Switzerland, Germany, France, and Italy turned ever and anon their regards full of hope, upon the indefatigable champion of the gospel there. They applied to him for light upon difficult passages of Scripture, for consolation and advice in inward doubts and trials, for direction and encouragement in the carrying on the same work and conflict in their own sphere of labour. With the heart of an apostle, Zwingli lent ever a willing ear to the solicitations of individuals and the Church. He answered all the prayers and questions sent to him in reference to the extension of the gospel, although he had nearly sunk under the burden of labours imposed upon him. "The pressure of business," he wrote once to Haller, "and the care of the Church, impose such a load upon me that Dr. Engelhard lately said he wondered very much I did not lose my understanding. The Suabians write to me, and desire of me more than I can do, although I exert myself to the utmost to content them. There write to me from Switzerland almost all who are exposed to persecution for Christ's sake. And to give you an example of how much my time is taken up by business, I shall just mention that I have been more than ten times interrupted during the writing of this letter."

Let us now contemplate, in a few examples, the fulness of confidence with which the hearts of the friends of evangelical truth opened to Zwingli. On the other hand, let us observe the carefulness and watchfulness with which he laboured for the extension of the gospel, and for the culture and support of that divine plant which had sprung up at his feet. The newly arisen evangelic light had darted its rays even into the cloisters, so that here a glorious movement manifested itself. Margaretha von Wattenwyl, in Koenigsfeld, (Canton Aargau,) wrote to the Reformer: "Grace and peace in Christ Jesus be ever granted you from God the Father. My prayer to your reverence is, not to be displeased with my simple epistle; for Christian love has moved me to write it, hearing as I did how, through your preaching of the Word, evangelical truth and doctrine daily increase. Therefore I give thanks to the Almighty and Eternal God that He hath again enlightened us, and by His Spirit sent so many true teachers and ambassadors of His Holy Word. I pray and beseech Him that He may grant strength and might to you, and all who proclaim His divine Word, that His divine Word may more and more increase in all men." Albrecht von Sandenberg, Comthur of the German order of Koenitz, near Berne, was likewise illuminated by a ray from the gospel.

Having scruples, however, whether he would be justified in abandoning his position, and breaking his vow, he expressed his doubts to Zwingli in a letter, begging him to instruct and counsel him as to what he ought to do. Zwingli answered him: "Almost all the abuses in the Church come from the neglect of the doctrine of Christ; for it is indeed no wonder that men should fall into gross errors when they abandon the light, and love the darkness. God is bound to no town, neither to Jerusalem nor Rome, but He is everywhere. All those who represent Him as being present only in certain circumscribed localities are false Christians, nay, anti-Christians. Therefore it appears to me a bad design to conquer Jerusalem again by force of arms. Jerusalem, as it now is, is to my mind a weighty proof for the truth of the gospel; for so Christ prophesied beforehand, 'Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' (Luke xxi. 24.) Behold! the Gentiles are now there. Why shall we levy war to drive them out, seeing that God has otherwise determined? Your order sets before it the reconquering and holding of Jerusalem. I know not a shadow of foundation in reason or Scripture for such a design. Yet here something must be allowed to the times, it being at one time held, in the vain conceit of human wisdom, as a great service done to God to protect or to retake such holy places. It is, however, but a vain conceit, as above said. Man fancies that God is especially honoured by orders, companies, sects; but Christ says, 'In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' (Matt xv. 9.) What are orders? Human inventions. Here the objection does not hold good: If one man promises to another anything, he is bound to perform it undoubtedly; but you must keep your word to God as well as to man, and you ought to do only that which is well-pleasing to God, else when you vow to God that which He does not desire, it may be said to you, 'Who hath required this at your hand?' (Isaiah i 12.) There is nothing more contrary to the will of God than sects, companies, orders, distinctions; it therefore becomes every man at all seasons to break loose from what is displeasing to God, and lay hold on the free grace of God. I leave it here with you. Do as God commands, only do nothing which can give just ground of offence or disturbance to any one. We must not only leave a small temporal estate for God, but even the whole world. Farewell, and may God guide you."

The gospel penetrated into the Carthusian monastery of Ittingen (Canton Thurgau), and the desire awoke in several monks for farther light and instruction. Three Carthusian friars of this cloister, unknown to each other, applied to Zwingli, and opened to him their hearts, with the request he would instruct and advise them. The brother Valentin de Saxonia addressed him in the following strain: "Often I speak with you and you with me, dear Huldreich, my glory and my hope, and yet we are personally unknown to each other. Does not that look like an idle tale? And yet it is no idle tale, but a fact

that repeats itself daily. Whose heart is not filled to its innermost recesses with Zwingli? whom does he not instruct? whom does he not influence? I speak of those who love the truth. For I rejoice, that to the other gifts of Christ this also must be counted to you, that you displease many, by which test alone I am wont to distinguish proofs of God's goodness from those of His anger. I wish you God-speed, because while you give the highest satisfaction to the good, you displease all those who would raise themselves upon the necks of others, and who require from them undivided homage and submission." Disturbed in his conscience as to whether monkery was in accordance with Scripture, and whether its riches were honestly come by, and uncertain whether he should go or remain, he prays Zwingli, for the love's sake which moved the Father to send His Son from heaven to earth, to give him enlightenment and instruction on monkery, vows, tithes, the Mass, &c, &c. "Shall I leave the order, lay aside the monk's dress, and earn my support by the labour of my hands, or what shall I do? Is one rather to expose himself to death and temporal punishment than in this way to be a monk, namely, to live according to the mere doctrines of men, to get food and clothing from an unrighteous calling, and to go idle every day? You will much oblige me if you will instruct me by letter in this matter. The Lord Jesus, my dear Huldreich, keep thee ever." Jodocus Hesch, of the same monastery, was not so far advanced in evangelical doctrine, yet he too found himself moved to open his heart to Zwingli. "God," says he, "my conscience, and the whole community to whom I have hitherto preached, are my witnesses how truly and faithfully I preach the gospel; what heed I take to say nothing injurious either to true piety, or that may cause disturbance, and create a factious spirit, or that may injure the name of a good man; how anxious I am not to draw the doctrines of Scripture from the nearest standing-pool but from the source itself." He expresses his judgment of Zwingli with great candour: "You have gifts from which Helvetia must expect everything: an ardent, lively, sensible and manly understanding, a retentive quick memory, a versatile intellect, skilled in lore, human and divine, a pleasing fluent delivery, eloquent language. For these accomplishments, I should rate you not alone as the sole remaining glory of Zurich, but of the whole of Switzerland, if there were united to these purity of doctrine and agreement with the opinions of the orthodox Fathers of the Church, and with the customs of antiquity." He then relates the story of his life, and how after the loss of his excellent spouse in his 28th year, he became a Carthusian, and that he had not once repented of this step, and he closes this self-confession with the prayer: "Lord see this my resolve, which Thou thyself hast inspired; let my pilgrimage be well pleasing in Thy sight, and guide my erring steps in the way of salvation. Grant, O Lord, to me, unworthy, that Thou mayest stand by me on the day of my departure and the hour of death. Ah, Lord God, remember not my transgressions and my sins, but

receive my spirit in Thy great mercy when it leaves this body. Enter not into judgment with Thine unworthy and sinful servant. Grant, finally, that this soul, the work of Thy hands, may never be taken by pride or vain conceit, or bow under the sceptre of the enemy of mankind, or, becoming a prey to unclean spirits, be made the sport of hungry dogs. Therefore, I beg of thee, O merciful Jesus, by the love with which Thou embracest the whole human race, and which moved Thee to descend from heaven to earth, and to take upon Thyself the frail nature of man, to expose Thyself to hunger, thirst, frost, heat, trials, mockery and scorn, blows and stripes, and, at last, the death of the cross; by this love, I beg Thee, Jesus, my Saviour, turn Thine eye from my sins when I appear before Thy judgment-seat, to which I daily feel myself called. Punish me not for my trespasses and my guilt, but pardon me in the merits of the cross. Thy dearest blood, Jesus, which Thou hast poured out on the altar of our atonement for the redemption of mankind, be the payment and satisfaction for my guilt. You know now, my Zwingli, my life and character, which I have here painted with truthful strokes, from whence you may easily conclude whether I have taken the monk's dress at the inspiration and command of God or of Satan." This upright sincere heart, in which the grace of God had begun to work thus mightily, could not long remain satisfied with half-measures. Hesch, after he had been farther illuminated by the Spirit of God, and instructed by Zwingli, decided afterwards unconditionally for the Reformation. With a like sincerity, the brother Alexius, of the same monastery, applied to Zwingli, begging of him advice and instruction. The Abbot James Russinger of Pfäfers, was also won by Zwingli to the gospel, and advanced to the utmost of his power the preaching of it. In the monastery of Wettnigen, Zwingli had also friends; and the Abbot George Mueller arrayed himself openly, along with a great number of his monks, on the side of the Reformation.

Thus burned the flame of gospel truth, fanned by Zwingli, cleansing and purifying many a heart and conscience, corrupted and debased by monastic observances, and groaning under the yoke of human doctrines and traditions, handed down from centuries, and from which it might almost have appeared impossible to free them. But neither cloisters nor foundations were to be the means of extending and supporting the gospel in the different districts of Switzerland; God had chosen another and far mightier instrument for this purpose, which came infinitely nearer the hearts and consciences of the people. This means was *the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures in the mother-tongue*. Zwingli says: "Every peasant's cottage became a school, in which the highest art of all was practised—the reading of the Old and New Testament; for the right and true schoolmaster of His people is God, without whom all languages and all arts are but nets of deception and treachery. Every cow

and goose-herd became thereby better instructed in the knowledge of salvation than the schoolmen.” The friends of the Reformer, by adopting his hints, and drawing encouragement from his zeal and example, extended this glorious evangelical movement in the towns and valleys of Switzerland.

Let us now, in Zwingli’s circular letters to the different cantons, and to his fellow-labourers in the work of the gospel, take a closer inspection of his great apostolic heart, which beat so strongly for the weal of the Church of his native country, and the implanting and extension of evangelical truth within its borders.

## 2. ZWINGLI’S ZEALOUS LABOURS FOR THE EXTENSION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH AND DOCTRINE IN THE CANTONS OF EAST SWITZERLAND.

In the Canton Glarus, Zwingli’s scholars and friends in the love of the truth, preached the gospel, and carried on with all fidelity the work he himself had begun there,—Valentin Tschudi, in the town of Glarus, Fridolin Brunner in Mollis, and John Schindler in Schwanden. Zwingli dedicated the “Exposition and Proof of his Propositions” to the honourable but cautious and sagacious Amman, and to the Council and community of Glarus. He addresses his old parishioners in the following terms, under date 14th July 1523: “No man in our days can withstand the Word of God: for wherever it is heard, it penetrates with irresistible force, and it is accepted even where it is prohibited. ‘The kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it,’ Luke xvi. 16. For the faith that dwells within the heart is not always to be seen on the surface. Thus it follows, that the preachers are often persecuted externally, while faith in Christ sits securely in the bosoms of the people; it is like the leaven, which penetrates where it exists. It is even so with the true believer: he is conscious of his salvation, of his peace and joy—he bears them about with him continually, and cannot bear that his neighbour be ignorant of this joy and this salvation, as in other affairs it is wont to be the case. He is fired with a holy zeal to publish the good news, and communicate it to others that they may share it with himself. Such is the difference between the Spirit of God, the alone teacher of the faith, and our flesh, which is ever selfish. Thus the believer has no rest as long as he sees his brother in unbelief. Wherefore, it is evident that the Word of God is irresistible. It would be in vain, then, for your worships to take measures against it: for God would put you to shame. It is, indeed, true that the Word of God fights against all men, because we are all sinners; while it, on the contrary, is altogether free from earthly dross, yea, purer than silver and gold, seven times purified. It is thus no wonder that those who would spare their sins reject it, crying, ‘Preach what pleases us,’ Isaiah xxx. 10, ‘prophesy unto us smooth things.’ Yet upon

such conduct cometh unexpectedly the severest punishment: ‘Therefore,’ says the prophet, ‘this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.’ Therefore, suffer, most dear and gracious lords, that the doctrine of Christ be not put away from you, as though it were some new invention. It shoots forward in our days with a light as clear and bright as in the times of the apostles. Let the Word of God be purely preached among you; God will protect you. Take heed that ye be not the last in the Confederacy to receive His Word, that we have recovered and reconquered. Your teachers will, without doubt, show you where the knot lies. See that ye give ear to them, for they can instruct you in the truth. Reflect, there is no people on earth whom Christian freedom better becomes than the Confederacy; none to whom greater peace and richer blessings may be secured. Keep God and his Word before your eyes, and He will in no wise forsake you. He will keep you according to His will in His grace and favour, Amen. I recommend to you your ministers, Valentin Tschudi at Glarus, Fridolin Brunner at Mollis, John Schindler at Schwanden, and Gregory Binzli<sup>1</sup> at Wesen, who faithfully proclaim the gospel.” These words of the Reformer to his former parishioners, decided the cause of the Reformation with the greater part of the Glarians.

The joyful tidings of the newly proclaimed evangelical truth had also pierced to Zwingli’s native vale to Toggenburg, and had met with a warm reception from his fellow-villagers. Zwingli regarded with peculiar joy the progress of gospel truth in this district, to which his heart was knit by the associations of youth, and by many ties of blood and friendship. Animated by these feelings, he sent a letter “To an honourable Council, and to the whole community of his native county of Toggenburg,” just at the moment in which they were to decide whether they should receive the newly proclaimed evangelical truth or remain by the old papistical doctrine.<sup>2</sup> The following passages we extract from this letter, distinguished for their vigour and holy zeal: “I praise and thank God who has called me to the preaching of His gospel, that He has led you, who are so dear to my heart, out of the Egyptian darkness of false human doctrines to the wondrous light of His Word. Now that we are reenlightened by the same, so that we recognise the truth, is it not astonishing we can be so blind as not to perceive the temptations of the devil and the flesh, which manifest themselves so openly before our eyes? All this God hath ordered that we may more clearly recognise His power and grace, and, on the other hand, our own sinfulness, blindness and guilt. Has not that been a great blindness that we, although the Almighty God who hath created

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Binzli is Zwingli’s teacher, formerly mentioned, at the Theodoric School in Basle.

<sup>2</sup> On Monday after Margaretha, 15th July 1524.

us hath so oft and in so many ways revealed himself that he is our Father, and who at length hath given His own Son to die for us, who likewise stands there and calls to us poor sinners: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;' is it not great blindness that we, nevertheless, have gone and turned ourselves to the creature, and thought God to be so hard and cruel that we dare not come unto Him? And though we have called him Father, yet we have not done it in the Spirit of Christ, for we have not recognised the mystery of His grace in giving His Son to die for us, and have ascribed salvation not to the grace of God, but to our own works, polluted, worldly-minded, selfish and foolish though they are. But that has been done, that we might the better know and learn God and ourselves. *Ourselves*, since we see that all our power and wisdom is nought, is of no significance, of no avail, but that at the very moment when we fancy ourselves to be strong and wise, God lets us sink into despair, helplessness, and blindness. For He will that *His Word* alone be obeyed, and that the life be regulated by *it alone*. So now in our days that the light of His Word hath displayed itself to such a degree that we therein can see the treacherous dark lies of Satan, the works of darkness will not come to the light but cry out against it. And when they can effect nothing against the truth openly, they take to their old arts, and lay secret snares for its preachers, endeavouring to ruin them by lies and false witness. Therefore, ye have acted in a wise and Christian manner, that ye have not let the preachers of the Word be imprisoned, tormented and slain, at the complaint and desire of every one, against all justice. I write this, not as if I were concerned for the temporal life of the evangelical preachers, (for their lives are alone in the hand of God,) but that your hands may be clean from such misdeeds. If Christ has been subjected to false accusation from wicked priests, His disciples are taught by Him steadfastly to endure the same. But woe to those who commit such things. Therefore see to it that the Word of God be faithfully preached among you, and without additions. But above all, see to it that it be obeyed. For the name of God is blasphemed by those who give themselves out as Christians, and who live not as Christians. Therefore let all speak before God and his neighbour the truth; let your speech be yea, yea, and nay, nay. For thus will you serve God in spirit and in truth. Abandon all blasphemy, intemperance, gambling, fornication, adultery, and mercenary warfare, help the poor, protect the wronged and the oppressed. Regulate your whole lives according to the divine Word, and set your consolation and trust alone in the Almighty. I should have often written to you, if two causes had not hindered me. Firstly, because my enemies would immediately have cried out, I was seeking human aid and consolation by you, which, God be praised, I can well dispense with, on the one hand, because the pious in Zurich have not suffered any injustice to be done me, and on the other, because I would rather have the might of God to be seen,

and was unwilling to cast pearls before swine. But where a door is opened to the gospel I take not holiday. Secondly, because, willing as I have ever been to preach the gospel in the place of my birth, I have been always hindered from it. Be now intrepid and undismayed. May God, who has chosen you to walk in His light, increase it to you more and more, that ye may grow in His grace, and that His name may be sanctified and glorified by you, and that after the misery of this life ye may have joy at His right hand for evermore. Amen. Let not yourselves be misled by the wicked lies and strange stories that are told of me. The powers of darkness are always busy at this work. But as for me, I will, by God's grace, so teach and preach that nothing else shall be found in me but a doctrine in conformity with His Holy Word. Every talker may call me heretic, but I know the devil cannot make me out one with you."

This manly Christian epistle decided the victory of the gospel in the Reformer's native valley. The Council and the community in the same summer, 1524, caused, through delegates, their will to be published to the assembled clergy, "that the Word of God be preached with one accord." The Abbot of St. Gall, indeed, in union with the Bishop of Chur, sought to persecute its preachers. Three evangelical clergymen, Melitus von Wattwyl, Doering ab dem Hemberg, and Farer von Stein, were accused by the abbot before the Chapter of disobedience. They answered quite in the spirit of Zwingli: "Convince us by the Word of God, and we shall submit ourselves, not only to the Chapter, but to the least of our brethren in Christ, but in the contrary case, we shall obey none, not even the mightiest potentate." They appealed, moreover, to the instructions of the Council, to preach from this time forward the Word of God, and this only had they done. The accusers were obliged to return home without effecting anything.

The following occurrence appeared likely to be one of greater moment:— On St. Catherine's day (25th November) of the same year, a county meeting was held at Lichtensteig, before which two deputies from Schwytz appeared in a case of hereditary succession. At dinner one of the deputies called out, "Magister Huldreich Zwingli is a thief and a heretic." Henry Steiger, the town-clerk, indignant at this calumny of his esteemed countryman, immediately demanded a retraction of the insulting language. If not done he would prosecute at law. In the meantime, a near relative of Zwingli's, George Bruggman, who happened to be sitting at another table, got word of the calumnious speech, and rising in great wrath, with some other of Zwingli's friends, was on the point of taking vengeance by some act of violence. It was only with difficulty that the Council, which was now assembled on the open market-place, could prevent matters coming to such an extremity. This they at length effected by adopting Bruggman's declaration, "Magister Huldreich is

a pious, excellent, honest man, and whoever says the contrary, is a liar, villain, and thief.” Upon this decision being come to by the Council, the Schwyzer delegates, boiling with passion, rode off homewards, and set their whole canton in movement against the inhabitants of Toggenburg, for the disgrace to which they had been subjected. But the Toggenburgians, above all the men of Wildhaus, swore to stand by Zwingli to the last. Thus this storm likewise passed away without any farther and more serious consequences resulting from it, and without damage to the gospel. Zwingli could, in June 1525, write again to an honourable Council, and to the community of the county of Toggenburg in general: “I thank God, our heavenly Father, that He hath enlightened you by the light of His Word, and hath introduced you thus into the knowledge of the truth, so that you continue steadfast in your confession of it, which, however, comes all from His grace and mercy, and not from your wisdom. To Him be everlasting praise and glory. May He from henceforth encompass you with the shield of His defence and protection, that you may increase more and more in all that is good. Amen.”

In the neighbouring pleasant hill country of Appenzell, the glad news of salvation and the morning light of the Reformation were likewise hailed by many with joy. A zealous pioneer of the faith in this quarter was James Schurtanner, minister in Teufen. Zwingli wrote to him (March 1524): “Be manly and firm, dear James, and let not yourself be overcome, that you may be called Israel. We must contend with the foe till the day dawn, and till the morning-star arise in our hearts, (2 Pet. i. 19,) and the powers of darkness hide themselves in their own black night. I say this to you, not as though I doubted you would give up the contest, but to encourage you, in that you hear how your zealous diligence is a balsam of life to believers. For God is my witness, that my heart leapt for joy when we heard that the pious people of Appenzell had received the Word of God. I should have been anxious, too, to have heard of their confirmation and establishment therein, did I not know the faith, truth, and love which you have towards God. With these I doubt not you will finish the good work which God has begun in them. It is to be hoped that although their canton is the last in the order of the Confederacy,<sup>3</sup> it will not be the last in the faith. For these people dwell not in the centre of a fertile country, where the dangers of selfishness and pleasure are greatest, but in a mountain district, where a pious simplicity can be better preserved; which guileless simplicity, joined to an intelligent piety, affords the best and surest abiding-place for faith. Christian doctrine and Christian practice can be nowhere more easily planted than among a people unschooled in the deceitful arts of the world. Not as though I meant that intellect and wisdom

<sup>3</sup> Appenzell joined the Swiss league in 1513, and was the last in order of the so-called old cantons.

were a wanting in the pious Appenzellers, but their simple faithful lives show us somewhat of the old Confederate, so that the Word of God will, without doubt, train among them a pious and God-fearing race, who will extirpate that selfish spirit among us, which, as brother Klaus of Unterwalden<sup>4</sup> predicts, is waxing deadly. For where it spreads its rank weeds, no good regiment can exist. Wherefore, take care, as heretofore, of your children, whom you have begotten in the faith, and train them so that neither flattery nor threats may have the power to turn them from sound doctrine. Defend yourself well against the teeth of voracious wolves, and let them not tear your sheep from you. Bear yourself like a man of God, and may your heart be strong in God, of whose support you may be sure. Salute your faithful fellow-workers in the gospel of Christ, the Bishop of Gais, Bernhardin, and all who hold truly to God, as, God be praised, we hear the most of your bishops do. I commend you to God, with all the people of Appenzell; and pray for me to God with all your people.”

The Reformation spread and strengthened its roots more and more, especially in the outward-lying communities of Appenzell, in the direction of St. Gall. The majority, however, of the inhabitants of the inner parishes, in the quarter of Scutis, continuing obstinately by the old church, which produced great bitterness of feeling between both parties, it was resolved, at the end of the sixteenth century, to divide the canton into two parts, or rhodes, according to the confessions of faith. Whoever was papistical was to dwell in the inner rhodes; whoever was evangelical in the outer. At the separation the Reformed numbered 6322, the Papists 2782. In St. Gall, which was in the outer district, Zwingli's learned friend, already well known to us, Dr. Vadian, the burgomaster, was a principal prop of evangelical truth. This burgomaster lectured to his fellow-citizens on the Acts of the Apostles, in order to set before them the image of the first apostolic church. A contemporary hence said: “Here in St. Gall it is not only allowed to hear the Word of God, but the magistrates themselves teach and preach it.” With Zwingli Dr. Vadian kept up an uninterrupted intercourse of the most friendly description, and the word of this friend of his youth had always great weight with Vadian. Other evangelical men, both lay and clerical, formed close connections with Vadian, and forwarded the victory of the gospel in this town, despite the counteracting influences of a hostilely disposed abbacy.

But a storm that arose out of the very centre of the new church in this

<sup>4</sup> Or Nicolas von der Fluehe, the well known hermit of Unterwalden, was held in much respect by Zwingli too, especially as he, like the Reformer himself, warned the Confederates against interfering in foreign affairs, and exhorted them to preserve their ancient pious simplicity.

district took a more ominous character, and threatened to exert highly injurious effects on the tender evangelical seed in its first growth; I mean the fanatical errors of the Anabaptists. As soon as Zwingli saw the danger, he raised his warning voice with true apostolic fidelity, and despatched a circular-letter to the Honourable the Burgomaster, the Council, and whole community of St. Gall, from which we extract the following passage: “Most honourable and dear brethren in God, I deeply lament that such a storm has come over the first growth of the gospel lately planted and just springing up among you; yet I am not surprised at it, it is the stratagem of the enemy; wherever God reveals His Word, there, too, Satan sows his tares. We find also in the Epistles of St. Paul, that some, who made indeed a profession of the faith, but who had it not in their hearts, caused much offence by reason of outward things. We see the same in our day also, in some who, shortly before the commencement of Anabaptism, loudly preached before the whole world, “outward things are nothing, they are of no avail to salvation; let no man rest upon them.” Here they spoke the truth, so far as it was done in love, and with measure. The same men we see now, however, for the sake of a mere external sign, destroying peace among Christians, and calling those who contradict them heretics and anti-Christ, although their whole design is nothing but to set up a heresy of the worst description,—I mean faction and schism.” After describing at some length the proceedings and aims of the Anabaptists, he closes with the exhortation: “Wherefore, pious and honourable sirs and brethren, who have already made yourselves famous by your worldly wisdom and industrial pursuits, look well to it that in this time, in which the devil himself sets on us, seeking, since the sword of persecution has failed in dividing us, to divide us upon questions of outward things, look well to it, I say, that no man sow dissension among you through the gospel. For there are many so-called Christians who are just as much concerned for their worldly goods as your merchants are for their wares. Nor am I here speaking of those vagabonds who run about the country making a gain of the simple. Such men do not desire the Word of God at all, but only employ it for their own base purposes. The Word of God, however, is not vain words to be so turned; it is spirit, and it is life. Be undismayed, perverse Anabaptists will accomplish nothing, for their cause is not of God. Let us pray God for one another. May He graciously preserve you all, Amen.” As Zwingli predicted, this storm likewise passed away without inflicting any damage on the infant church, and to this favourable result his own letter greatly contributed.

To the mountains and valleys of High Rhaetia or Graubund the report also penetrated *of Zwingli's doctrine*, as it is called in a History of the Reformation<sup>5</sup> in this country, the doctrine, that in matters of religion nothing is to

<sup>5</sup> Ahorn's Holy Regeneration of the Evangelical Churches of the three Unions, composed

be believed except that which can be satisfactorily and plainly proved by Scripture, while, as to that which has no foundation in the Word of God, one man has the same liberty to reject it as others have had, and still exercise, to proclaim and establish it. Many pious souls, continues this historian, in the three common unions, welcomed this principle with lively joy, and received it as clearly proven and established that hitherto their belief had been shackled by many things which had no foundation in the Word of God. At the instance of the communities themselves, the Diet, the highest authority in the land, met November 1523, at Chur, to take into consideration measures for doing away with the grievances and abuses that prevailed in the Church. Eighteen articles were drawn up to this effect, and confirmed in the year following, of which we here give the first as the most important: "Each clergyman shall, for himself, purely and fully preach the Word of God and the doctrine of Christ to his people, and shall not mislead them by the doctrines of human invention. Whoever will not or cannot fulfil this official duty shall be deprived of his living, and draw no part of the same." In virtue of this decision, the Dean of St. Martin's, after a disgraceful confession of his inability to preach, was obliged to give way to Zwingli's friend, John Dorfmann or Comander, who now became the chief instrument of the Graubund Reformation. In Chur, he found the soil already prepared for the seed of the gospel through the labours of Salandrinus, the teacher, whom we have mentioned above as Zwingli's friend. But in proportion as he arose in the esteem of the friends of the gospel, and as the truth, through his labours, struck deeper, its roots spreading fast over the hills and dales of this mountain-land, in the same proportion waxed the animosity of the Bishop of Chur and his party against the preachers of the gospel, and, above all, against Comander. A band of armed men must accompany the herald of truth into the church, and defend him even in the sanctuary from insult and outrage. The same things happened in the country districts, where more than forty ecclesiastics had been gained over to evangelical truth. The Bishop of Chur now took steps to induce the Diet to interfere against the preachers of the gospel as heretics, insurrectionists, sacrilegists, abusers of the Holy Sacraments, and despisers of the mass-sacrifice. Zwingli, on hearing of the threatening storm, despatched on the instant, with an apostolic vigour, a circular letter, of date the 14th January 1525, from which we extract the following: "Grace and peace from God the Father! Dear sirs and brethren in the Lord, the holy Paul cared not alone for those whom he had converted to the faith, but for all the churches, that is, for all the faithful, that no infidelity, error, or scandal, might arise among them. I therefore trust that my present writing to you will not be misinterpreted, on

of the freemen of High Rhaetie.

the one hand, because I have heard how you have accepted that true and irresistible Word of God, and have permitted, in the most places, the free preaching of the same, and in the second place, because I am a native of the bishopric of Chur. Now I address you in this present concerning no other affair but that of the Evangel of the Son of God, in which God daily uses me with great labour, care, anxiety, contradiction, and opposition; yet He overcomes always who is Lord over all lords. To Him be praise and glory. I beg your worships well to consider how the Papal authority has taken captive the Word of God, and hid it in darkness, whereby the truth has been withheld from us, and an empty semblance presented to us in the place of it, whereby we have been not only cozened out of our worldly goods, but, as there is ground to fear, have had our souls' salvation put in jeopardy. This is the more especially now to be feared, since the truth has been set in the light of day, and yet many, blinded by papistical doctrine, will not yield obedience to it. You see now how it stands with the Popedom, and on the other hand, how glorious and vigorous the truth everywhere displays itself, so that the whole Papal power can effect nothing against it, but has recourse to violence, maltreatment, lies, and bribery, against it, although, God be praised, it has not been able to overcome even the least of those who now, for a considerable time, preach the gospel. Wherefore, it is to be feared that if the civil power do not protect those who proclaim the Word, and who are able to give an account of their doctrine out of that Word, that God will again withdraw His favour from us, and allow us to sink again into our old errors. But let every one weigh well what danger and what loss would arise to the whole of Christendom, in body and soul, from such a result. As it is now well known to me that there are some among you who truly and faithfully preach the holy and unadulterated Word of God,—in particular, that honourable, learned, and faithful man, John Comander,—may the Lord confirm them in all good,—I beseech your worships to see to it that no violence or injury be done to these, and against the Word of God. Lay the Divine Word yourselves to heart, as it is contained in the Old and New Testaments, and let yourselves in no manner be swayed therefrom. Reflect on the healing and peace of the conscience, which can alone find rest in the Word of God. O let not this divine medicine be again snatched from you, and let not the deceiving treacherous word of any Papal emissary again take captive your conscience; for, as the prophet Amos saith, 'the lion hath roared, who will not fear?' so I ask, when God equips in its armour and reveals His Word, who will not give ear to and obey it? God does not reveal His Word but to the very sensible pain and punishment of those who will not hear it, and not without great profit in body and soul to those who follow it. The terrible destruction of Jerusalem is an example of the first, which rejected the Word, that is, the Son of God; while the sparing of Nineveh, because it turned to God, is an example of the second.

Wherefore, pious, steadfast, wise, and beloved brethren in God, let not yourselves be seduced by those who seek to stir you up by secret lies and calumnies against the Word of God and its preachers, and those who obey it, thus hatching anarchy and revolt among you. This is the devil's work; he is powerless against the truth; but seizes such weapons as lying, confusion, and distraction. May the God who hath begun to break Popery in your hearts, and to introduce you into the knowledge of His truth, guide and strengthen you, that we may all appear before Him with joy at the last day. Amen."

This earnest Christian appeal did not fail to produce a powerful effect in the Councils and communities of the Graubund. Accordingly, when the Bishop of Chur caused, through the Abbot of St. Luzi, his calumnious accusation to be brought before the Diet, assembled at Chur on the Christmas of 1525, against the preachers of the gospel, with the view of getting them condemned without a hearing, this high Assembly answered with dignity: "The law which demands that no one be condemned unheard shall also be observed in the present instance." John Comander was permitted to appear and defend himself, and at his desire, a religious disputation was appointed to be held between the parties at Ilanz, on the 13th January 1526. The result of this Disputation, at which Hofmeister of Schaffhausen appeared, at Zwingli's instigation, although he was not allowed to take a part in it, was, that seven mass-priests publicly went over to and embraced the gospel, and that the Diet issued an ordinance declaring both religions in the three Unions to be free, and requiring that the clergy of both parties should abstain from reciprocal invectives and abuse, and preach nothing except what could be proven on good grounds from the Word of God. Thus evangelical truth gained a victory in this canton likewise. "Christ waxed strong everywhere in these mountains," writes Salondrinus to Zwingli, "like the tender grass in spring," and the evangelical pastors, like fountains of living water, refreshed mountain and vale.

Thus, on the gospel's gaining, after a protracted contest, the victory over the papacy in Schaffhausen, through the labours of Zwingli's friends, Sebastian Wagner, called Hofmeister, Sebastian Hofmann, and Erasmus Bitter, and on the Reformation being fairly set up after the model of Zurich, in 1529, it might be said that the inhabitants of the whole of Eastern Switzerland in their great majority rejoiced in the light of gospel truth, and drank of the rich consolations which it affords.

### 3. ZWINGLI'S INFLUENCE ON THE VICTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN THE CANTON OF BERNE, AND IN THE OTHER CANTONS OF WESTERN SWITZERLAND; HIS RELATIONS TO FAREL.

The question whether the gospel or popery should hold sway over the

heart and conscience in Western Switzerland, depended for its solution on the course which the government and people of Berne might adopt. We have seen above with what earnestness Zwingli exhorted his friend Berchtold Haller to carry on the work of the gospel, that the crown of life might not fail him. Between Zwingli and his evangelical friends in Berne, Haller, Kolb, Meier, and others, there existed an uninterrupted spiritual intercourse. Every anxiety which distressed the latter, every doubt and uncertainty which disturbed them, every hope which cheered and gladdened them, the Bernese communicated without reserve to their esteemed friend and guide in Zurich. Willingly as Zwingli responded to their requests for the solution of difficult scriptural passages or doctrines, he felt himself called upon in humility to warn them not to place too great reliance on his opinions, but to try their own strength, as he was convinced they would accomplish more through it. Provost Nicolas von Wattenwyl, who stood at the head of the Bernese church, and who enjoyed an influence in it almost episcopal, read and admired his letters to Haller. Full of joy and hope for the future, Haller writes to Zwingli: "Our bishop Wattenwyl cannot sufficiently praise and recommend your dear letters to us. Rejoice him with one of your epistles. Our Bernese hunger for the Word of God, and we feed them according to the grace given us of the Lord; the Lord Jesus increases with us the number of the faithful daily, so that if God abandon us not, it will be hard to suppress His doctrine, much as a part of the nobility work against it." The Lord having here opened a door, Zwingli could no longer hesitate. "I feel daily more," he wrote to Haller, "what force the words of Paul have, 'necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel,' 1 Cor. ix. 16, for I too, small though I be, cannot possibly rest and take holiday, because the Lord who moves my heart will not allow it, though now and then a sense of weariness and a fear of danger will steal across my soul, and fain lead me to give up the contest. Far removed from not watching and fighting with and for you, I cannot desist from it." To the Provost von Wattenwyl he wrote: "Grace and peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ. While it is a source of joy, O dearest brother in Christ Jesus, to all Christians, that the faith daily increases and waxes strong in the good town of Berne, your native city, yet your own conversion from darkness to light gladdens me especially. For many things might have hindered you; your illustrious pedigree, (your father was often invested with the dignity of Schultheiss, and held other offices of honour,) your wealth, your own merits, your affability and courtesy towards all men, and, finally, the high esteem you enjoyed on the part of popes and bishops. But God has led you in a wonderful manner with your whole people. O how true is the saying of Christ, 'No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.' He worketh all in all; to Him we shall render eternal praise and thanks for your faith. May God, who hath led us to the wondrous light

of the knowledge of His Being and His Word, confirm in us all that He has begun.”

The gospel struck its roots deeper and deeper into the hearts of the Bernese; the enemies of the Reformation in both Councils were forced to succumb to its friends. On Zwingli’s learning of this happy revolution in the public mind, and change in the posture of public affairs, he wrote to Haller in the beginning of the year 1527: “My dearest Berchtold, everything knows its ordination, and even lifeless nature follows it. After the raw north wind come milder airs, and after the hot days of summer autumn displays its golden treasures. Ought we, then, now that the Creator of all things, in whose service we stand, levels the way to us by which we may penetrate into the centre of the enemy’s camp, ought we, I say, to enter on the contest with less courage? No; unless we might be like the changeable winds. God has opened to you and to us all, in Berne, a door, at which we can take in the dove, for a time scared away but ever longing to return. But without a parable, Christian doctrine, once banished from our country, may now be freely preached. You are here the pilot and the saving Noah. Ply all diligence, seize hold of every opportunity, guard yourself against the reproach that fine hopes have been blighted by your neglect, or by the work not being entered upon with sufficient zeal. Stand firm; hold on. Throw the hooks and the rod of faith so into the hearts of your people, that it will be impossible to again tear them out. The Lord send you light and strength.” Brilliant success crowned the labours of Haller and his friends. On the Sunday succeeding Martinmas 1527, it was unanimously resolved by the Council and citizens to institute, in the first days of the coming year, a Religious Conference, after the model of Zurich, “without digressions, invectives, offensive or abusive language, that the truth might not be concealed, but that the ground of divine truth, of Christian intelligence, and of saving health, might be discovered, and that a worship in conformity with the Holy Scriptures might be planted and observed.” To this Disputation there were invited, the four bishops of Constance, Wallis, Basle, and Lausanne, (under whose jurisdiction the Bernese lands hitherto stood,) “as the superior pastors and shepherds, not ordained to shear the sheep, but to feed them, at the penalty of loss of rights and incomes in the territory of Berne.” Farther, all the members of the Confederacy and Union, of whatsoever party they might be, to the end, that a common Confederacy might also be brought to a common faith without compulsion to any; and, finally, the whole Bernese clergy, and each and all, be he stranger or native, priest or layman, willing to dispute. All the friends of the gospel turned their eyes on Zwingli, on whose presence at the Disputation they believed the hopes of victory for evangelic truth in Berne to rest; in pressing terms Haller prays this “best beloved brother and champion in the cause of Christ,” that he would be pleased to attend. “Would to God that you knew the ardent wishes

of all of us that this affair might have a Christian issue. You know how much is here at stake, what shame, mockery, and disgrace would fall upon the Evangel and us, if we were found not to be competent to the task. I know, however, out of manifold experience, how much you have at heart the glory of God and His Word, the salvation of Berne, and of the whole of Switzerland, and that you will do all to aid us in this emergency and crisis of our history. My brother, fail not, the whole town sets its confidence upon you.” Zwingli himself was equally resolved to indulge at once the impulse of his feelings, and the entreaties of his friends at Berne, and immediately applied to the Council of Zurich for permission to attend this Disputation, that he might manifest to every one “that his doctrine was not heretical but truly Christian, not God-blaspheming, but Godfearing, not the offspring of selfishness and ambition, but of love to the glory of God, and the advancement of the general weal, not having for its object dissension in the Confederacy, but union.” Far and near friends and enemies of evangelical truth felt the importance of the decision which was to take place at Berne. The four bishops and the Emperor himself, but most pressingly of all the papistical cantons, exhorted the Bernese to give up their design. They returned the dignified answer: “We change nothing in the twelve articles of the Christian faith; we separate not from the Church whose head is Christ; what is founded on the Word of God will abide for ever; we only shall not depart from the Word of God.”

From Zurich, an invitation was issued to the Imperial towns of South Germany to send their learned men and clergy to this conference, and was joyfully accepted. On New-Year’s Eve 1528, there were assembled in Zurich more than a hundred of the clergy and learned men from Suabia and East Switzerland. On the following morning they set out for Berne, accompanied by a delegation of the Zurich Council, and attended by a respectable body of armed men; the five Roman Catholic cantons through which their way led them, having refused a safe conduct. Onwards they moved to Berne, to take captive to Christ this proud city, which no enemy had neared with impunity, to establish His gospel there, and bring its heroic citizens under His gentle yoke. Zwingli, full of zeal for the glory of God, and ready to surrender his life at any moment in the service of his Master, rode at the head of the cavalcade, by the side of Burgomaster Boist, and one of the counsellors. On the 4th of January he entered Berne, whither in the meanwhile Ecolampadius of Basle, and Bucer and Capito of Strasburg were already come. The Disputation began on the 6th, according to the regulations and directions of Zwingli, who also had drawn up the Propositions, and taken the charge of their printing. A combat, resulting in victory, was waged for eighteen days by the

friends of the gospel, in behalf of evangelical truth. In this contest, Zwingli,<sup>6</sup> even in the judgment of his antagonists, distinguished himself above all others.

A more lasting effect, however, than that arising from the superiority maintained in the Disputation, was probably produced by the testimonies of their Christian faith, delivered by some of the eminent learned strangers, in sermons which they preached in the Minster.<sup>7</sup> Zwingli delivered two sermons. In the first, he gave a justification of his faith and doctrine, explaining the Christian creed, and proving that in all points he concurred with the articles of faith in it. Upon his touching, in the course of his discourse, on the Romish doctrine of the mass, disproving it, and, on the other hand, developing the significance of the Supper, according to the institution of Christ, a priest, who was just preparing to read mass from one of the altars, was seen to throw aside his mass-weed, in which he had already arrayed himself, with the words, "If the mass rest on no better bottom, I shall neither read thee now, nor read thee more." Zwingli's last sermon he delivered immediately before his departure from Berne, when the victory of the Reformation had been decided. He accordingly embraced the occasion to exhort his hearers, among whom there were many steeled warriors, to Christian steadfastness, closing with the following heart-stirring appeal: "Wherefore recognise the freedom which Christ has purchased for you, and continue therein, according to the exhortation of Paul, Gal. v. 1, and be not any more bowed under the yoke of servitude or thralldom. Ye know the oppression we suffered in our consciences, led astray as we have been from one false means of comfort to another, which, however, only overloaded our consciences, which never made them free nor consoled them. But, behold, now what freedom ye have, and what comfort in the knowledge of God, and in the confidence which ye have in Him through Jesus Christ. From this freedom and redemption of the Spirit, let not yourselves be ever moved. There is here a bravery demanded as in no other matter. But as our ancestors, God be praised, stood courageous and immovable in the defence of their civil freedom, so ought ye, and yet more steadfastly for that liberty which sets free the conscience here below, and which will crown you with everlasting joy above. At the same time, trust that

<sup>6</sup> "This beast," so writes a papistical hearer, "is in truth more learned than I had believed. The malapert Ecolampadius may understand the prophets and Hebrew better, and in Greek he may equal him, but in fertility of intellect, in force and perspicuity of statement, he is very far behind him. I could make nothing of Capito. Bucer spoke more than he did. Had Bucer the learning and linguistical acquirements of Ecolampadius and Zwingli, he would be more dangerous than either: so quick is he in his movements, and so pleasantly can he talk."

<sup>7</sup> Testimonials of Evangelical Truth in modern German, edited by H. Christoffel. Berne, Dalp 1853.

the same God who has enlightened and led you, will also in His own time guide our dear neighbours, the other members of the Confederacy, so that we may live together more unitedly than ever in such a true friendship as consists with the will of God. May God, who has created and redeemed us, grant this both to us and them. Amen.”

Before their departure from Berne, the strangers were witnesses of a fine act of noble-mindedness. The Bernese pardoned two individuals, who had forfeited their lives by a breach of the “urfehde,” or solemn oath, not to take vengeance. “When a king or prince at friendship with us, visits us,” said they, “we have the custom, in honour of our royal guests, to set criminals at liberty, with a recommendation to amendment of life. Now, however, that the King of kings and the Prince of Peace, the Son of God, our Elder brother, has condescended to visit us, why should not we honour Him, who brings to us redemption from eternal perdition, by pardoning those who have sinned against us?”

With the victory of the Reformation in Berne, a door was opened for the extension of the gospel to French-speaking Switzerland, particularly to Neuenburg, Waad and Geneva. Already there laboured here, with the zeal of an Elias, William Farel, a French nobleman of Dauphiny. He, too, felt himself irresistibly attracted by the heroic character of Zwingli, and he called the Reformer’s attention to this part of Switzerland and France. Forced to flee to Strasburg on account of his evangelical labours, he calls from thence to Zwingli, in the language of admiration: “I wish you all joy that your faith manifests itself so gloriously, and that Christ, through whom you labour and contend, has so strong foundation in you, as is evident from this, that you recognise His great grace in you, and attribute your strength to Him and His grace, to whom they belong, and not to yourself, ascribing only that to yourself which is seemly, so that God remains God, and man man.” After recommending to him a countryman, who had been driven from his home for the gospel, requesting Zwingli, if possible, to procure him a situation as preacher or teacher in the Neuenburg district, or elsewhere, he entreats him to do all in his power “that in this way, too, some light may be thrown on poor France.” Farel himself came afterwards into the very region where he desired to see his expatriated countryman provided for, and then he felt still more urgently than ever the necessity of combining his labours with those of Zwingli, and drawing strength from his strength. “Continue,” he writes, “in the path you have entered upon, O bold Christian warrior, to shed your light before us, by piety, faith, and purity of doctrine, and pray the Lord for us, that He may grant us these gifts likewise more and more. A desire for the preaching of the Word showed itself in Geneva; but the inhabitants of Freiburg will not have it. Ah! if the Bernese were equally zealous for the glory of Christ as the Freiburgers are for papistical opinions and doctrines. Weigh

well the great grace that God has bestowed on you, in that you can do much here for the glorifying of His name. I desire to have you as my fellow-labourer, as well in the work as the ripening fruit. Lend us, in your great foresight and wisdom, help.”

In this manner wrought Zwingli, by the proclamation and triumphant advocacy of the gospel; by his bright example of Christian courage and evangelical steadfastness, yet more, however, by his counsels and his great influence over the magistracy of the different cantons, with the most distinguished success for the extension of the Reformation in his native country. If we consider, too, as is more fully to be seen in the Life of Œcolampadius, that he stood with this servant of the Lord, chosen to extend and carry forward to victory the cause of the gospel in Basle, in the closest relations of Christian friendship, strengthening and inspiring him with his own heroic courage and the fire of his spirit, while Zwingli, on the other hand, drank deeply of the John-like love and profound learning of his friend, we have, with the blessed influence he exerted on the church of his native country, an image before us of a true apostle, of a man truly great. It is with justice that Haller writes to him, “Thou art the eye and the bishop of the whole fatherland, nay, of the whole Christian Church.” For Zwingli’s glances extended beyond the limits of his native country, and his heart, on which the image of his Saviour was deeply engraved, beat high for the weal of the whole Christian Church.

#### 4. ZWINGLI’S APOSTOLIC CARES AND LABOURS FOR THE EXTENSION AND CONFIRMATION OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH IN GERMANY.

After his country, the extension and the victory of the gospel in Germany lay nearest Zwingli’s heart. His influence, through means of his numerous friends, bore most on the free imperial towns of South Germany and on the Rhine, where everywhere evangelical men laboured in the spirit of their great exemplar at Zurich, from whom they sought instruction and counsel, and from whom they received many a word of encouragement, explanation, and advice. With the zeal of a great military captain fighting at the head of his host, and encouraging his men to deeds of valour, Zwingli stirred up the preachers of the gospel in the towns of Suabia to combat the anti-Christian papacy. Let us see the force and effect of his words to his fellow combatants in the echo which they found in their breasts.

Urbanus Regius of Augsburg writes to his colleague, John Frosch, likewise of Augsburg, after reading one of Zwingli’s hortatory letters to the latter: “I have read Zwingli’s letter, and have re-read it, for I felt my soul inspired by it, and kindled to admiration. For the words of this man of God are fire itself, and kindle fire in you. And however little the pen is able to reach

the force of the living word, yet there shines out of this letter, in a most wonderful manner, the genuine single-mindedness and fidelity of a truly pious heart, and an unspeakably lofty spirit, that leaves all our words far behind it. But I will not speak of the accomplishments and eloquence of this man. But mark with what carefulness his love takes in all, and thinks on all, how it overlooks nothing in its comprehensiveness that can minister to the glory of God, and the salvation of the brethren. Who is there that suffers, and Zwingli suffers not? Think you that his soul is not daily moved by the care of all the churches, seeing that he so ardently desires that our Augsburg church may be well provided for? Our Zwingli knows well the devices of Satan, the deceit of this world, and the temptations of the flesh, which threaten and counteract the servants of the Word on every hand; for already, for some time back, he has, with great distinction, waged this contest against trial and temptation. I am deeply ashamed of my indifference and lukewarmness, when I consider this burning zeal, so much wanted in our times, and then when I reflect, with a bitter feeling of regret, how strong within me the flesh is, how cold I am in comparison of this glowing love of Zwingli's. Like a brave military chief, he calls on to the combat, while he himself advances, armed with the shield of faith, and skilled in war, and casting himself into the thick of the fight, drives back the onset of the enemy, and piercing to the very wedge-point of the enemy's host, he forgets not, in the sweat and dangers of the battle, his fellow-combatants either, but encourages them, and holds them sharply to the fight, that none may turn his foot to flight, or cowardly flinch from his post, nor, terrified by the greatness of the threatening danger, abandon the glorious banner of the Cross, and fall away from Christ, his Captain, to Antichrist. Paul, Christ's unwearied combatant, has often stirred up the lukewarm, and encouraged the wearied and the war-worn, by Christ's and his own example, to the joyful struggle against the woes of this life. With like love our friend, equally dear to you and me, encourages you, not doubting but that in so great a town there will be much to obstruct the Word. Go forward as you have hitherto done, persevere, and take to heart the encouraging words of Zwingli, which spring from the purest love."

It was not, however, with Urbanus Regius alone, it was with the greater part of the preachers of the gospel in all the towns of South Germany, that the admonitions of the Reformer told with such a spirit-stirring effect, that it may be truly said the Reformation formed itself here entirely under the plastic hand of Zwingli, and shaped itself after the model of Zurich. At a later period, when Memminger stood in danger of being deprived of the preaching of the Word through imperial tyranny, Zwingli raised his voice to burgomaster, council, and citizens, encouraging them to united perseverance. "Consider, dear sirs and brethren," he writes, "if the moral and spiritual condition of mankind in the whole of Christendom be not so un-Christian, sinful, and

miserable that the conscience of every man must pronounce this judgment: We must either better ourselves entirely, or God will punish us. Well, then, now that the mind not only admits, but sees very clearly, that all this iniquity has arisen, and grown to its monstrous size, under the false doctrine of the Pope, and that therefore it is impossible that *he* can point us to the right course, it is indubitable that we ought to direct ourselves by no other doctrine, if we really wish to better ourselves, and to be reconciled to God, except by *God's own Word*. Since, then, the Almighty God has opened up to you His Holy Gospel, in which the certainty of salvation is promised, and the example of a blameless life in Christ Jesus is shown forth, ye ought, without doubt, to magnify God, that in the midst of danger, and the threatenings of His wrath, He has showed you the way by which you can be reconciled to Him. And although the world for this reason hate, although they threaten to persecute and kill you, you ought to value little such threats. If, however, the time should come (as present appearances seem to indicate that it will ere long come) when you are called upon to confess your faith, so reflect, dear sirs and brethren, that Christ, our Captain, threatens also: Whoever denies Him, He will deny before His Father; and again, whosoever shall confess Him before men, He will also confess before His Father. Wherefore, confess ye the truth freely, and leave Christ, your Captain, to present your case at the court of the great King, in confident hope that He who hath granted you His light and His Spirit, will also accomplish that which He hath begun. Look not on your own strength, nor on the strength of your enemies, but see how strong He is whose affair it is you have taken up, and whom ye believe and serve. When has He abandoned those that trust in Him? Above all, strive to be unanimous and combined, for with union the smallest township has saved its honour, while with disunion the mightiest power has gone to ruin. Be wise, and concern yourselves also for the brethren, which is well-pleasing to God, that all having one spirit, may do one work and battle of God, everything in the Lord, in all union and fidelity. For I promise you, by God whom I preach, that if ye be of one mind, and let not yourselves be seduced by the hire of falsehood and unfaithfulness, that God will certainly sustain you. I commend you to God, who is strong, and leaves none that put their trust in Him. Follow that sincere, faithful servant of the Lord, Simpert Schenk, and ye have nothing to fear.”

We have already alluded to the fact that evangelical doctrine and the Reformation effected by Zwingli were welcomed and hailed also in the free imperial towns on the Rhine. In the spirit of Zwingli, and in close friendly relations with him, there laboured in Muelhausen Nicolas Prugner; in Mayence, for a time, Capito and Hedio; in Strasburg, Bucer, and Capito and Hedio, after they had left Mayence; in Frankfort, Dionysius Melander and John Hauer, who, filled with admiration at Zwingli's steadfastness and true

piety of soul, pressingly solicited his friendship; in Hessen, Franciscus Lambert, who introduced Zwingli's original ideas on ecclesiastical discipline; in East Friesland, John Aportanus of Zwoll. Here there followed John of Lasky, who, upon a journey which he made from Poland, his native country, in 1523, for his farther instruction in the faith, was introduced to the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures by the Reformer in Zurich. The ray of divine truth had so fired his soul, that he exchanged the most brilliant prospects in his native country for the poverty of a servant of Christ. From Westphalia<sup>8</sup> also, and the Netherlands,<sup>9</sup> many turned their eyes, full of hope, on Zwingli. He himself felt a thrill of joy pervading his soul as his bookseller and friend, Christoffel Frosehauer, on his return from the Frankfort fair, reported that the gospel had struck vigorous roots, and offered the fairest prospects in all the Rhenish towns. Occasionally, indeed, his heart was afflicted by the persecutions excited in many quarters against the infant evangelical congregations. Into the hearts of these persecuted members of the body of Christ he infused consolation and courage with the steadfast faith and unwearied love of a true disciple of Christ, and exhorted them to perseverance. When the town of Muelhausen was sorely pressed, by threats and temptations, to depart from the accepted evangelical doctrine, and to return to the papal Church, Zwingli sounded the note of warning and exhortation in the following circular, which he despatched to them. "None can be ignorant that opposition and trials must be encountered by those who will cling to the Word of God, as Paul also shows. (2 Tim. iii. 12.) It is therefore well to be conceived that ye must bear mockery, reviling, and menaces, since ye have come to the knowledge of the truth, and have adopted it. Yet such opposition ought by no means to distress you, for it is in adversity we first learn rightly to believe, to pray, to act, to counsel. When believers are tried with *force*, then first of all is faith proved; for then the believer knows whether he be firm and unchangeable, or whether he would fain draw back. But when faith is rightly fashioned it says, I had sooner lose the whole world than draw back. Now, for the first time, the believer recognises his faith, and becomes conscious of what it demands, namely this, that he set his hope upon God alone, and despise all other means of comfort. Those who experience no adversity may indeed speak of fortitude, but when the hour of trial comes, they often make a miserable exhibition of their faith. Therefore, all trials for God's sake ought to be welcome to us. For God hath thereto appointed them, that through them we may give proof of our faith, nay, they are designed to prove *ourselves to ourselves*. Before trial every one prayed according to his own fashion, and knew not what to pray for. (Rom. viii. 26.) But when it concerns the main thing,

<sup>8</sup> The Westphalian poet, Hermann of the Beech-tree, corresponded with Zwingli.

<sup>9</sup> The visit of the two learned men, Rhodius and Sagan, shows how high was the esteem in which Zwingli stood.

namely, our faith, in which our consciences are at clear agreement with God, and men will rob us of this, then our spirit screams, plains [laments], and cries to God, in choking sighs, 'O Lord! ah! Lord God! help, O God! forsake not thy child.' But here Satan slips slyly and cunningly to our sides, and we say to ourselves, 'If I conquer, then it will be an honour to me too that I adhered to the Word of God,' and he tries to substitute falsehood and guile in the place of our integrity. Such attempts of Satan do indeed much disturb the spirit, so that such whisperings destroy all the fruit and joy of our faith, and now the spirit cries to God more earnestly than ever. But *danger* teaches us not only to believe and pray, but to act well; for then it is we are zealous to do alone those things which please Him who is our only refuge and resource, and through whom alone we can overcome our enemies. Therefore, stout-hearted servants of God, stand firm. He who beholds our conflict is not blind; He spies not out of a narrow window; He oversees with His omniscient eyes all camps, lands, and creatures. Nor will He overlook you who are struggling for His name's sake; He will see you; He will also see, when the time comes, your enemies, and will carry them away, like withered leaves before the autumn wind. May God increase your faith. Then the world shall know that God exalts the lowly. God be with you. I pray God that Nicolas Prugner teach sound doctrine as hitherto. Amen."

Clearly as Zwingli took in view the individual combatants as they appeared for the cause of Christ, and the situation and necessities of the single towns and communities in Germany, shaping his instructions, admonitions, and consolations in accordance with their several necessities, equally comprehensive was the glance he threw on the great struggle raging here between the friends of the gospel and the Romanists at Luther's war-cry. Thus, at the close of January 1522, when the Diet, so important in the history of the Reformation in Germany, was held at Nurnberg, and the newly elected Pope, Adrian VI., endeavoured, through his Deputy, Chieregati, to induce the assembly to suppress the preaching of the gospel, he felt himself moved, in free and manly language, to warn the Imperial towns against the designing schemes of the Romanists.

"The lately consecrated Pope of Rome," he wrote to them, "has made to the States of the Empire the following foolish and insane overtures: He resolves, 1st, To reconcile the Emperor and the King of France; 2d, To reform the Church; 3d, To raise an army to march against the Turks; 4th, To suppress Luther and his party. I would lay my views before your wisdom in regard to these proposals, insignificant though I be; yet was the prophet Amos called from his flock, and filled with the Spirit of God to teach Israel. If, in the first place, the Pope really intends to reconcile the Emperor and the French King, how comes it that he applies to the German princes, on whom the matter is not in the least dependent? Secondly, if he intends to reform the Church, why

does he not, first of all, begin with his bishops and cardinals, the more especially as it is clear to every man that all the arrogance and abuses of the clergy have taken their rise in Rome, and have from thence spread themselves over the whole world? If, thirdly, he will, as he says, levy an army against the Turks, then I must confess my wonder at this bold resolve of a man turned seventy, and my astonishment that he, a priest and vicar of the meek and lowly Jesus, (I will grant him the title for once,) should have the audacity to give such a promise, as if all rested on him, and that, too, at a time when the war (between Spain and France) has not yet been ended, nor these two mighty princes brought to act in unison. I leave out of view here the circumstance entirely, that it were scarcely wise and politic for the greatest and most experienced military captains, not to speak of an unwarlike infirm old priest, to involve the whole Christian commonwealth in a dangerous war with an enemy at once so cunning and brave, so mighty and terrible, as the Turk. These promises which, after the experience we have had, no reasonable man can hold to be sincere, are made by the Romanists, usually, it appears, at the entrance into office of each Pope, with the sole view of drawing the eyes of the world upon them, by exciting delusive hopes, and to serve as a cloak for the accomplishment of their principal object, which is, to destroy Luther. How rapidly the doctrine of the gospel has obtained the ascendant, you, illustrious princes, are well aware. This is hateful to all who have no love to the gospel, and yet they dare not openly attack it. They therefore employ cunning, fraud, and guile, and they endeavour to make evangelical doctrine odious by representing it as Luther's doctrine. What consequences will this opposition have if ye do not boldly meet it? Without doubt this, that many whose spirit is willing but whose flesh is weak, will, as Peter did, deny Christ; that those who are ready to suffer all for Christ will be everywhere under the pretext that they are Lutherans murdered, burned, or cast into chains. And what, O princes, grieves me most of all, you will stain your hands with innocent blood, and not once dream that ye have done it."

"Another consequence is," he continues, "that to please the Romanists you will plunge the whole of Germany into the wildest commotion. You see that 'the kingdom of God suffereth violence, and that the violent take it by force.' All these who take the kingdom of God by violence will be involved in war with the enemies of the gospel, if the gospel, under Luther's name, is to be made war upon or suppressed. In this manner, the Ultramontane catapult will hurl over upon Germany the elements of confusion, disunion, and anarchy, and what advantage this, princes, will bring to your land every one may readily perceive. But this is the very thing Romanists strive after. I have seen letters to certain people of their party in Germany in which they mention that the Pope will attempt everything to extirpate the Lutheran sect. Nay, the Pope's party are boasting loudly they have found a man who will put things

on their old footing. When therefore ye hear that a truce has been concluded between the Emperor and the King of France, know that this truce has not been made either to send an army against the Turks, or for the purpose simply of a short repose for drawing breath, but solely that they may turn their whole strength upon prohibiting the preaching of the gospel under Luther's name. If this succeed with them, then is Rome master not only of the whole of Germany but of the whole of Christendom. Nor should it blind your eyes, princes, that the late popes have begun to name your sons to bishoprics and cardinalships. They did this solely urged by necessity, that they might bind you by your sons, delivered up to them as hostages, and thus hold you in their power; for despise you they certainly will if you do it. Let me just allude farther to the report that the newly elected pope hates the cardinals, and is resolved to create no more than eight of them. Thanks be to God that it has come to this. But why did he light on just this number? If the order of cardinals be so beneficial to the Christian community, and so accordant to the institutions of Christ and the apostles, why is not the number rather increased than diminished? Or, why do they dare to abolish that which God has ordained? But if these office-bearers be not appointed by God, why do the popes squeeze even eight of them out of the poor people? Why do they not rather tear up the roots altogether, that there may be no aftergrowth of these rank weeds? If Adrian, who, forsooth, would pass himself off for a wise and learned man, has really at heart the lately revived doctrine and truth of Christ, then will he forthwith give orders that it be preached without adulteration truly and faithfully, and he will engage to the Christian people to restore all, according to his ability, as Christ ordained it; then will every one who is worthy of the name of Christian support the good work. But is Luther, this pious and learned man, maltreated, who can be safe? It is even said that Erasmus too has been declared a heretic. If he can be reproached for anything, it is for this, that he has too much spared them, and that he has rather warned them in a gentle and fatherly tone like Eli, than chid them sharply like Elias. If he, which God forbid, has really been declared a heretic, then, without doubt, this stigma awaits the most pious and the most innocent of men.

“In conclusion,” says Zwingli in this letter to the Germans, “I desire that no man be so foolish as, for the sake of pleasing the Romanists, who have for so many centuries made Germany their sport and jest, to excite to anarchy and revolt, and that no man be so mean and slavish as to reject the freedom which comes spontaneously offering itself, and thus sink ingloriously into the chains of a deadly thralldom.”

The German princes and estates summoned up resolution to present a list of one hundred grievances to the Papal see, and to hand it to the Legate as an answer to his overtures. The Romanists, however, succeeded very soon in rendering this step for the preservation of the dignity and weal of Germany

nugatory, and in inducing several princes to interfere by force against the preaching of the gospel. Zwingli, with the indignation natural to his straightforward noble character at this unprincipled and servile conduct, addresses them: "You have published at Nurnburg, in open Diet, a great number of articles presented to the Pope, in which you complain of grievances. Now, tell me, I pray, is it true that you have so many grievances, or is it not? If you have no grievances, why have you made out a list of them? Why, but to lend a helping hand to the Pope, giving by this list of grievances the appearance to the Christian people in general, as though you were willing that grievances should be removed, that they, in the meanwhile, may be appeased and made to bear the compulsory measures of the Pope until affairs were placed on their former basis. If such was your object, it is plain you are very sagacious people. If, however, you were really aggrieved in these particulars you have specified, how comes it that you continue to protect and countenance an opposite line of conduct, seeing you might so easily get rid of these grievances? For you have the remedy against them in the Word of God, and it is preached boldly, and the good hear it. And the great majority stands on the side of the Word of God, therefore, you have no cause to fear. What stress are you under to help the pope, who has, from time immemorial, pressed so heavily on all Germans? Had they had, in former times, the light of the Divine Word, as it now shines manifestly and clearly, they had rejoiced in nothing so much as in getting quit of the burden of Rome. Perceive you not that all priests, let them wear cowls or not, from the highest to the lowest, have sworn fealty to the pope? Who, except in this case, has ever suffered his subjects to take the oath of allegiance to a foreign and distant potentate, to the hurt and damage of his own kingdom? In consequence of this very oath, gold has gone in cartloads to Rome from the estates of ecclesiastics. All that the pope has bidden or forbidden to be done, has been with the view of getting money."

Thus Zwingli laboured for the extension and cultivation of evangelical truth in Germany, penetrating with a clear glance the designs of the enemy, embracing with his large heart all the friends of God's Word, and contributing to them, according to the measure of those powers with which God had so richly endowed him, instruction, encouragement, and consolation. Whoever was forced to abandon the field, and flee from Germany, found in Zwingli a friend and protector, and in evangelical Switzerland an asylum and a home. Amid many examples, we shall only mention one of these. Ulrich von Hutten, the gallant knight, who, with chivalric courage, had dared to throw down the gauntlet to the Romanists, and had electrified Germany with the boldness and vigour of his writings, came to find a resting-place in his last days, and a grave for his bones, in Switzerland, after his friend Franz von Sickingen had closed a hero's eye in death under the ruins of his castle of

Sandstuhl. Repulsed and persecuted with great bitterness of spirit by his former friend Erasmus, without money, and tormented by a painful and soul crushing disease, he directed his steps to Zwingli at Zurich. Zwingli gave no ear to the detractions and warnings of Erasmus, but procured to his unfortunate brother in the faith the protection of the Zurich magistracy, and the means to enable him to visit the mineral baths of Pfæffer, to alleviate his bodily pains. But the healing power of these waters could no longer master an inveterate disease; yet his soul, animated and strengthened by Zwingli's friendship, raised itself once more to the joyful hope "that God would again muster the scattered friends of truth, and humble their adversaries." Through Zwingli's mediation, the bold knight who excused his fiery combative zeal against the Romanists, which had brought him so many sorrows, with the words, "I cannot help God's having burdened me with such a spirit as I have, so that common pain affects me more deeply, and pierces me more to the heart than other men," found at once a peaceful asylum and medical aid with a friend of the Reformer's. This was pastor Schnegg, who resided on the island Ufenau, in the lake of Zurich, and who had devoted his attention to medicine. Under his roof the life-weary warrior expired, at the end of August 1523, and with him German knighthood was borne to the grave. The fiery and impetuous warrior left no wealth behind him, no furniture, no books—nothing but *a pen*.

##### 5. ZWINGLI'S CIRCULAR LETTER TO PETER SEBILLA; HIS ZEAL FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE GOSPEL IN FRANCE.

If the knight Ulrich von Hutten came to Zurich like a messenger of death, bringing the intelligence to Zwingli of the decease of German chivalry, the heart of the Reformer was rejoiced in the same year by the visit of a French knight, bearing the welcome tidings that the light of the gospel had begun to dawn on France. Anemund Coctus, a warm friend of the Reformation in France, who laboured for its advancement, undertook a journey to Switzerland and Germany, for the purpose of making the personal acquaintance of Zwingli and Luther. The parson of Grenoble, Peter Sebilla, had expressed to Coctus his resolution to preach the gospel clearly and purely. Coctus accordingly begged of Zwingli at his visit that he would confirm this new evangelist in his purpose, and encourage him to perseverance. Willingly the Reformer undertook the task, and sent him a letter, from which we extract the following: "Who knows not how the pure true doctrine of Christ has, by cunning and lies, been defaced, darkened, and disfigured, so that there failed little of its total extinction. But the Lord of Sabaoth has still a little, a very little seed left behind, from which, as we hope, a rich harvest will spring up; for the strength of the heavenly seed is like that of mustard-seed, which is the least

of all seeds; but when it grows up, it becomes the greatest of the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and nestle in its branches. The seed, however, is, to speak with Christ, the Word of God, which, when it falls on good land brings forth a most abundant crop. In this Word, the poor human soul, not only tossed to and fro by the storms of life, but distracted also by the snares of the spirits of darkness, finds repose and life. Therefore, you have done well in undertaking to preach this Word purely and with all fidelity, as appears from your letter to Anemundus. Truly, flesh and blood have not moved you to this, but your Father in heaven has so drawn you to himself that you believing His Word, desire to bring others also to enjoy the like precious faith. Far be it from you. Do not, however, undertake to put up a building without having first sat down and counted the cost.” Zwingli, after having described in strong colours the dangers to which the preacher of the gospel is exposed, continues: “If my words have attained their purpose, then provided you be carnally-minded, I have disposed you rather to seek some hole or corner where you may hide yourself, than to appear before your congregation proclaiming the gospel. But the Spirit of Christ that has moved you to begin, will not allow you to do this, for this Spirit rather urges onward in the prospect of suffering than holds back or terrifies. On, then, noble soldier of the cross, advance into thy France armed with the weapons of Christ, proclaim with the sound of a trumpet the gospel of Christ, however much the Papistical crew may fight against it. Christ has already sounded the war-note of attack against the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites of our day. Who will not gladly arm himself to battle? ‘The lion roars,’ says the prophet, ‘who is not afraid?’ Who, in the host of the enemy, will stand when Christ thunders upon them through His servants? Fear and trembling fill their camp. They turn and twist themselves, in doubt and uncertainty what to do. And although, through the princes they have gained over to their side, they should slaughter the flock of Christ, yet they themselves are cowering with fear lest an awful storm break loose upon their heads; or when they attempt to combat with the Scripture, the words are congealed in their mouth, in the consciousness that they do violence to, and wrest the Holy Word of God. Why do we not break forth in a storming attack against the cowards, in confidence upon the protection of the Divine Word? God will destroy anti-Christ by the breath of His mouth. Christ is for us, who then can be against us? Although we be but weak vessels, yet none can break us as long as the Lord is on our side; according to His promise, ‘I am with you always, even to the end of the world.’ Why linger, then? Ours is the victory. Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than that the Word of God shall deceive us. Above all, however, it is needful, if you will rejoice in the victory, to deny yourself and die daily. But such you cannot do of your own strength, therefore you must take your refuge to the alone mercy of God, and pray with your whole heart that He would be

pleased to direct your steps, to illuminate your soul, and to strengthen your heart. Then the grace of God will give you sagacity to choose the best ways and the best means, and strength to overcome all. You see, my Christian brother, what advances the gospel has made in Germany in a short time, which will be the case with you too, if you call upon God to grant success. And He rejoices when we call upon Him, for He is our friend, and delights himself in our souls. Farewell, set your confidence upon the Lord, and upon the might of His strength, which will preserve you unscathed in every trial.”

This soul-stirring address of Zwingli’s was not without its due effect, and the more so, as Anemundus Coctus caused it to be printed. The gospel-message winged its way to the heart of France with the force and the rapidity of lightning. But the Lord had appointed His servants in this land, above all others, to attest the reality of their faith by the baptism of suffering; from the very first the confessors of the gospel were persecuted by the enemies of it with fire and sword. “I could name a great people,” Zwingli wrote in reference to the French, “from which more than any other the gospel has been forcibly excluded, that it reach them neither by word of mouth nor in writing. But God has so wrought that this same land is well-informed in respect of His Word, and stands in a good relation towards God, although they dare not make any outward confession.” A regard to this condition of the people, and the prayers of his evangelical friends in France, induced Zwingli to dedicate his principal work, “Commentary upon the True and False Religions,” to Francis I., King of France, and to impress on his heart with all freedom of spirit the duty of allowing the gospel to be preached in his dominions. There seemed reason to hope that this step might not be fruitless, the sister of the king, Margaretha, afterwards Queen of Navarre, being a decided friend of the gospel, and the mother of the king for a time making a profession of favouring it. But the heart of the king remained closed against its divine influences, and both before and after his arm was heavy upon the faithful in this land, so that there remained for them no other choice but either to conceal the jewel of faith from the eyes of the world, or to abandon their home, that is, if they would escape bonds, the dungeon, or a martyr’s death.

#### 6. ZWINGLI’S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE AUGUSTINE MONK OF COMO; HIS MEASURES FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE GOSPEL IN ITALY.

The state of the friends of the gospel in Italy was not a more cheering one, although here, too, an ardent longing for evangelical freedom manifested itself. We shall only refer here to a single case in the spiritual movement which at this time took place in Italy. It will, on the one hand, serve to show in what esteem Zwingli there stood, and, on the other hand, it will afford us a view of the progress and issue of the Reformation in this benighted

country. In Como, an Augustine monk, Egidius a Porta, had been enlightened by the reading of Zwingli's writings in regard to the unprofitableness of monkery and outward works, so that, like Saul on the way to Damascus, he recognised himself suddenly with horror as a persecutor of Christ. "If I cannot be a Paul in all things," he writes to Zwingli, "be thou, at least, an Ananias, to guide my erring footsteps upon the path of peace. Fourteen years ago, I let myself be led by what I, in my ignorance at that time, considered to be pious zeal, to withdraw from the guardianship of my parents and turn Augustine monk, thinking, with the Pelagians, to attain salvation through works. Thus I have taken much trouble not *to be* pious and learned, but *to be esteemed* pious and learned; and entangled in this error, I held, O shame, for seven years, the office of a preacher of the gospel. All Christian knowledge has failed me, inasmuch as I attributed nothing to faith and all to good works. With boldness and confidence I taught my people to trust to these, and who can reckon up the amount of poisonous error that I have spread over the field of the Lord? In truth, I can say, I have persecuted the Church of Christ. But the Lord, according to his goodness, would not that his servant should perish for ever; he has shaken me thoroughly, and cast me to the ground. The light of my own eyes which I trusted is quenched, my lips are dumb till I have begun to cry hoarsely: Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? At length the consoling message came to my heart; go to Huldreich Zwingli, he will teach thee what thou oughtest to do. O glorious message, that filled my soul with unspeakable peace. Thou, or much more, God, through thee, will deliver my soul out of the snare of the hunters."

Zwingli put his evangelical friends in Como in mind that, besides working out their own salvation, it was their duty to labour for the extension of gospel truth throughout their native land, and he called upon Egidius a Porta, especially, to translate the New Testament into Italian, which he would get printed for him in Zurich. A Porta followed with Christian submission the advice of his revered friend. "I trust in God," says he, "that this tree," speaking of himself, "planted so far from the refreshing streams, will in time bear fruit." He laments bitterly the interruption his work experienced by the thousand petty duties he had to perform in obedience to his monkish vows. At length he begs and conjures Zwingli, in the name of his fellow-brethren, to write to the superintendent of their order, and establish, by passages from Holy Writ, how it was the will of God that His Word should be purely and fully preached, and that He is in the highest degree indignant when it is adulterated, and human conceits passed current as the will of God. Thus brightly burned in this faithful bosom an ardent desire for Christian knowledge and evangelical freedom, which he wished to obtain also for his unhappy countrymen, who groaned under a severe oppression, temporal and spiritual. But suddenly the letters stopped. The monk disappeared, and with him the begun

translation of the New Testament. We can scarcely go wrong in supposing that the arm of avenging Rome reached him as it did many others, and threw him into some dark dungeon, there to atone for his pure and ardent love to the faith; for thus Rome was wont to extinguish the flame of the Reformation when it burst forth brightly for a moment in different quarters in Italy.

We have thus seen that Zwingli, at the same time that he carried the great work of the Reformation into practical accomplishment at Zurich, advanced it in the whole of Switzerland, France, and Italy, according to the measure of the grace given him by God. As the mountains of his native country, illuminated by God's sun, and bathed by the dew of heaven, stand great and majestic under the azure canopy, thus stood this Christian hero in the full blaze of Divine truth, and while he himself drew out of the fulness of God, and grace for grace, he sent, by his instructions, his consolations, his admonitions, the refreshing streams of God's salvation to all the neighbouring lands. Yet will the merit of his labours be seen in a stronger light, when we consider the obstacles and the opposition which the Reformer had to encounter in his great and glorious work.