

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE



HISTORY OF PROTESTANTISM

VOL. 2

JAMES A. WYLIE

History of Protestantism

Volume 2

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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Book 10: Rise and Establishment of Protestantism in Sweden and Denmark

Chapter 1: Causes that Influenced the Reception or Rejection of Protestantism in the Various Countries

Germany—Causes disposing it toward the New Movement—Central Position—Free Towns—Sobriety and Morality of the People—Switzerland—The Swiss—Hardy-Lovers of Liberty—The New Liberty—Some Accept, some Refuse—France- Its Greatness—Protestantism in France Glorified by its Martyrs—Retribution—Bohemia and Hungary- Protestantism Flourishes there—Extinction by Austrian Tyranny—Holland—Littleness of the Country-Heroism—Holland raised to Greatness by the Struggle—Belgium—Begins Well—Faints—Sinks down under the Two-fold Yoke of Religious and Secular Despotism

Picture: View in Prague: The Bridge Tower

[2] What we have already narrated is only the opening of the great drama in some of the countries of Christendom. Protestantism was destined to present itself at the gates of all the kingdoms of Europe. Thither must we follow it, and chronicle the triumphs it obtained in some of them, the defeat it sustained in others. But first let us take a panoramic view of the various countries, as respects the state of their peoples and their preparedness for the great, spiritual movement which was about to enter their territories. This will enable us to understand much that is to follow. In these opening Chapters we shall summarize the moral revolutions, with the national splendors in some cases, the national woes in others, that attended them, the historical record of which will occupy the pages that are to follow.

In some countries Protestantism made steady and irresistible advance, and at last established itself amid the triumphs of art and the higher blessings of free and stable government. In others, alas! it failed to find any effectual entrance. Though thousands of martyrs died to open its way, it was obliged to retire before an overwhelming array of stakes and scaffolds, leaving the barriers of these unhappy

Causes that Influenced the Reception or Rejection of Protestantism in the Various Countries xi
countries, as France and Spain, for instance, to be forced open by ruder instrumentality's at a later day. To the gates at which the Reformation had knocked in vain in the sixteenth century, came Revolution in the eighteenth in a tempest of war and bloody insurrections.

During the profound night that shrouded Europe for so many centuries, a few lights appeared at intervals on the horizon. They were sent to minister a little solace to those who waited for the dawn, and to give assurance to men that the "eternal night," to use the pagan phrase, had not descended upon the earth. In the middle of the fourteenth century, Wicliffe appeared in England; and nearly half a century later, Huss and Jerome arose in Bohemia. These blessed lights, welcome harbinger of morn - nay, that morn itself - cheered men for a little space; but still the day tarried. A century rolls away, and now the German sky begins to brighten, and the German plains to glow with a new radiance. Is it day that looks forth, or is it but a deceitful gleam, fated to be succeeded by another century of gloom? No! the times of the darkness are fulfilled, and the command has gone forth for the gates to open and day to shine in all its effulgence.

Both the place and the hour were opportune for the appearance of the Reformer. Germany was a tolerably central spot. The great lines of communication lay through it. Emperors visited it at times; imperial Diets were often held in it, which brought thither, in crowds princes, philosophers, and scribes., and attracted the gaze of many more who did not come in person. It had numerous free towns in which mechanical arts and burghal rights flourished together.

Other countries were at that moment less favorably situated. France was devoted to arms, Spain was wrapped up in its dignity, and yet more in its bigotry, which had just been intensified by the presence on its soil of a rival superstition - Islam namely - which had seized the fairest of its provinces, and displayed its symbols from the walls of the proudest of its cities. Italy, guarded by the Alps, lay drowned in pleasure. England was parted from the rest of Europe by the sea. Germany was the country which most largely fulfilled the conditions required in the spot where the second cradle of the movement should be placed. In its sympathies, sentiments, and manners Germany was more ecumenical than any other country; it belonged more to Christendom, and was, moreover, the connect-

ing link between Asia and Europe, for the commerce of the two hemispheres was carried across it, though not wholly so now, for the invention of the mariner's compass had opened new channels for trade, and new routes for the navigator.

If we consider the qualities of the people, there was no nation on the Continent so likely to welcome this movement and to yield themselves to it. The Germans had escaped, in some degree, the aestheticism which had emasculated the intellect, and the vice which had embruted the manners of the southern nations. They retained to a large extent the simplicity of life which had so favorably distinguished their ancestors; they were frugal, industrious, and sober-minded. A variety of causes had scattered among them the seeds of a coming liberty, and its first sproutings were seen in the interrogatories they were beginning to put to themselves, why it should be necessary to import all their opinions from beyond the Alps, where the people were neither better, braver, nor wiser than themselves. They could not understand why nothing orthodox should grow save in Italian soil. Here, then, marked by many signs, was the spot where a movement whose forces were stirring below the surface in many countries, was most likely to show itself. The dissensions and civil broils, the din of which had distracted the German people for a century previous, were now silenced, as if to permit the voice that was about to address them to be the more distinctly heard, and the more reverentially listened to.

From the German plains we turn to the mountains of Switzerland. The Swiss knew how to bear toil, to brave peril, and to die for liberty. These qualities they owed in a great degree to the nature of their soil, the grandeur of their mountains, and the powerful and ambitious States in their neighborhood, which made it necessary for them to study less peaceful occupations than that of tending their herds, and gave them frequent opportunities of displaying their courage in sterner contests than those they waged with the avalanches and tempests of their hills. Now it was France and now it was Austria, which attempted to become master of their country, and its valorous sons had to vindicate their right to independence on many a bloody field. A higher liberty than that for which Tell had contended, or the patriots of St. Jacob and Morat had poured out their blood, now offered itself to the Swiss. Will they accept it? It only needed that

the yoke of Rome should be broken, as that of Austria had already been, to perfect their freedom. And it seemed as if this happy lot was in store for this land. Before Luther's name was known in Switzerland, the Protestant movement had already broken out; and, under Zwingle, whose views on some points were even clearer than those of Luther, Protestantism for awhile rapidly progressed. But the stage in this case was less conspicuous, and the champion less powerful, and the movement in Switzerland failed to acquire the breadth of the German one. The Swiss mind, like the Swiss land, is partitioned and divided, and does not always grasp a whole subject, or combine in one unbroken current the entire sentiment and action of the people. Factions sprang up; the warlike Forest Cantons took the side of Rome; arms met arms, and the first phase of the movement ended with the life of its leader on the fatal field of Cappel. A mightier champion was to resume the battle which had been lost under Zwingle; but that champion had not yet arrived. The disaster which had overtaken the movement in Switzerland had arrested it, but had not extinguished it. The light of the new day continued to brighten on the shores of its lakes, and in the cities of its plains; but the darkness lingered in those deep and secluded valleys over which the mighty forms of the Oberland Alps hang in their glaciers and snows. The five Forest Cantons had led gloriously in the campaign against Austria; but they were not to have the honour of leading in this second and greater battle. They had fought valorously for political freedom; but that liberty which is the palladium of all others they knew not to value.

To France came Protestantism in the sixteenth century, with its demand, "Open that I may enter." But France was too magnificent a country to become a convert to Protestantism. Had that great kingdom embraced the Reformation, the same century which witnessed the birth would have witnessed also the triumph of Protestantism; but at what a cost would that triumph have been won! The victory would have been ascribed to the power, the learning, and the genius of France; and the moral majesty of the movement would have been obscured if not wholly eclipsed. The Author of Protestantism did not intend that it should borrow the carnal weapons of princes, or owe thanks to the wisdom of the schools, or be a debtor to men. A career more truly sublime was before it. It was to foil armies, to stain

the glory of philosophy, to trample on the pride of power; but itself was to bleed and suffer, and to go onwards, its streaming wounds its badges of rank, and its “sprinkled raiment” its robe of honour. Accordingly in France, though the movement early displayed itself, and once and again enlisted in its support the greater part of the intelligence and genius and virtue of the French people, France it never Protestantized. The state remained Roman Catholic all along (for the short period of equivocal policy on the part of Henry IV. is no exception); but the penalty exacted, and to this day not fully discharged, was a tremendous one. The bloody wars of a century, the destruction of order, of industry, and of patriotism, the sudden and terrible fall of the monarchy amid the tempests of revolution, formed the price which France had to pay for the fatal choice she made at that grand crisis of her fate.

Let us turn eastward to Bohemia and Hungary. They were once powerful Protestant centers, their proud position in this respect being due to the heroism of Huss and Jerome of Prague. Sanctuaries of the Reformed faith, in which pastors holy in life and learned in doctrine ministered to flourishing congregations, rose in all the cities and rural districts. But these countries lay too near the Austrian Empire to be left unmolested. As when the simoom passes over the plain, brushing from its surface with its hot breath the flowers and verdure that cover it, and leaving only an expanse of withered herbs, so passed the tempest of Austrian bigotry over Bohemia and Hungary. The Protestantism of these lands was utterly exterminated. Their sons died on the battle-field or perished on the scaffold. Silent cities, fields untilled, the ruins of churches and houses, so lately the abodes of a thriving, industrious, and orderly population, testified to the thorough and unsparing character of that zeal which, rather than that these regions should be the seat of Protestantism, converted them into a blackened and silent waste. The records of these persecutions were long locked up in the imperial archives; but the sepulcher has been opened; the wrongs which were inflicted by the court of Austria on its Protestant subjects, and the perfidies with which it was attempted to cover these wrongs, may now be read by all; and the details of these events will form part of the sad and harrowing pages that are to follow.

~~The next theater of Protestantism must detain us a little.~~ ^{xv} The territory to which we now turn is a small one, and was as obscure as small till the Reformation came and shed a halo around it, as if to show that there is no country so diminutive which a great principle cannot glorify. At the mouth of the Rhine is the little Batavia. France and Spain thought and spoke of this country, when they thought and spoke of it at all, with contempt. A marshy flat, torn from the ocean by the patient labor of the Dutch, and defended by mud dykes, could in no respect compare with their own magnificent realms. Its quaking soil and moist climate were in meet accordance with the unpoetic race of which it was the dwelling-place. No historic ray lighted up its past, and no generous art or chivalrous feat illustrated its present. Yet this despised country suddenly got the start of both France and Spain. As when some obscure peak touched by the sun flashes into the light, and is seen over kingdoms, so Holland, in this great morning, illumined by the torch of Protestantism, kindled into a glory which attracted the gaze of all Europe. It seemed as if a more than Roman energy had been suddenly grafted upon the phlegmatic Batavian nature. On that new soil feats of arms were performed in the cause of religion and liberty, which nothing in the annals of ancient Italy surpasses, and few things equal. Christendom owed much at that crisis of its history to the devotion and heroism of this little country. Wanting Holland, the great battle of the sixteenth century might not have reached the issue to which it was brought; nor might the advancing tide of Romish and Spanish tyranny have been stemmed and turned back.

[4]

Holland had its reward. Disciplined by its terrible struggle, it became a land of warriors, of statesmen, and of scholars. It founded universities, which were the lights of Christendom during the age that succeeded; it created a commerce which extended to both hemispheres; and its political influence was acknowledged in all the Cabinets of Europe. As the greatness of Holland had grown with its Protestantism, so it declined when its Protestantism relapsed. Decay speedily followed its day of power; but long afterwards its Protestantism again began to return, and with it began to return the wealth, the prosperity, and the influence of its better age.

We cross the frontier and pass into Belgium. The Belgians began well. They saw the legions of Spain, which conquered sometimes

by their reputed invincibility even before they had struck a blow, advancing to offer them the alternative of surrendering their consciences or surrendering their lives. They girded on the sword to fight for their ancient privileges and their newly-adopted faith; for the fields which their skillful labor had made fruitful as a garden, and the cities which their taste had adorned and their industry enriched with so many marvels. But the Netherlanders fainted in the day of battle. The struggle, it is true, was a sore one; yet not more so to the Belgians than to the Hollanders: but while the latter held out, waxing ever the more resolute as the tempest grew ever the more fierce, till through an ocean of blood they had waded to liberty, the former became dismayed, their strength failed them in the way, and they ingloriously sank down under the double yoke of Philip and of Rome.

Chapter 2: Fortunes of Protestantism in Italy, Spain, and Britain

Italy—Shall Italy be a Disciple of the Goth?—Pride in the Past her
Stumbling-block—Spain—The Moslem Dominancy—It Intensifies
Spanish Bigotry—Protestantism to be Glorified in Spain by
Martyrdom—Preparations for ultimate
Triumph—England—Wicliffe—Beginsthe New Times—Rapid
View of Progress from Wicliffe to Henry VIII—Character of the
King—His Quarrel with the Pope—Protestantism
Triumphs—Scotland

Picture: Philip II. of Spain

Picture: Interior of Seville Cathedral.

Protestantism crossed the Alps and essayed to gather round its standard the historic nations of Italy and Spain. To the difficulties that met it everywhere, other and peculiar ones were added in this new field. Unstrung by indolence, and enervated by sensuality, the Italians had no ear but for soft cadences, no eye but for aesthetic ceremonies, and no heart but for a sensual and sentimental devotion. Justly had its great poet Tasso, speaking of his native Italy, called it - “this Egyptian land of woe, Teeming with idols, and their monstrous train.” ¹

And another of her poets, Guidiccioni, called upon her to shake [5]
off her corrupting and shameful languor, but called in vain - “Buried
in sleep of indolence profound So many years, at length awake and
rise, My native land, enslaved because unwise.” ²

The new faith which demanded the homage of the Italians was but little in harmony with their now strongly formed tastes and dearly cherished predilections. Severe in its morals, abstract in its doctrines, and simple and spiritual in its worship, it appeared cold as the land from which it had come - a root out of a dry ground, without form

¹Tasso, Sonnets.

²Guidiccioni, Sonnets.

or comeliness. Her pride took offense. Was Italy to be a disciple of the Goth? Was she to renounce the faith which had been handed down to her from early times, stamped with the approval of so many apostolic names and sealed with the sanction of so many Councils, and in the room of this venerated worship to embrace a religion born but yesterday in the forests of Germany? She must forget all her past before she could become Protestant. That a new day should dawn in the North appeared to her just as unnatural as that the sun, reversing his course, should rise in that quarter of the sky in which it is wont to set.

Nowhere had Christianity a harder battle to fight in primitive times than at Jerusalem and among the Jews, the descendants of the patriarchs. They had the chair of Moses, and they refused to listen to One greater than Moses; they had the throne of David, to which, though fallen, they continued to cling, and they rejected the scepter of Him who was David's Son and Lord. In like manner the Italians had two possessions, in which their eyes were of more value than a hundred Reformations. They had the capital of the world, and the chair of St. Peter. These were the precious legacy which the past had bequeathed to them, attesting the apostolicity of their descent, and forming, as they accounted them, the indubitable proofs that Providence had placed amongst them the fountain of the Faith, and the seat of universal spiritual dominion. To become Protestant was to renounce their birth-right. So clinging to these empty signs they missed the great substance. Italy preferred her Pope to the Gospel.

When we cross the Pyrenees and enter Spain, we find a people who are more likely, so one would judge, to give Protestantism a sympathetic welcome. Grave, earnest, self-respectful, and naturally devotional, the Spaniard possesses many of the best elements of character. The characteristic of the Italy of that day was pleasure, of Spain we should say it was passion and adventure. Love and song filled the one, feats of knight-errantry were the cherished delights of the other. But, unhappily, political events of recent occurrence had indisposed the Spanish mind to listen to the teachings of Protestantism, and had made the maintenance of their old orthodoxy a point of honour with that people. The infidel Saracen had invaded their country, had reft from them Andalusia, the garden of Spain, and in some of their fairest cities the mosque had replaced the cathe-

dral, and the adoration of Mohammed had been substituted for the worship of Christ. These national humiliations had only tended to inflame the religious enthusiasm of the Spaniards. The detestation in which they held the crescent was extended to all alien creeds. All forms of worship, their own excepted, they had come to associate with the occupancy of a foreign race, and the dominancy of a foreign yoke. They had now driven the Saracen out of their country, and torn the standard of the Prophet from the walls of Granada; but they felt that they would be traitors to the sign in which they had conquered, should they renounce the faith for the vindication of which they had expelled the hosts of the infidel, and cleansed their land from the pollution of Islam.

Another circumstance unfavorable to Spain's reception of Protestantism was its geographical situation. The Spaniards were more remote from the Papal seat than the Italians, and their veneration for the Roman See was in proportion to their distance from it. They viewed the acts of the Pope through a halo which lent enchantment to them. The irregularities of the Papal lives and the scandals of the Roman court were not by any means so well known to them as to the Romans, and even though they had been so, they did not touch them so immediately as they did the natives of Italy. Besides, the Spaniards of that age were much engrossed in other matters. If Italy doted on her past, Spain was no less carried away with the splendid future that seemed to be opening to her. The discovery of America by Columbus, the scarce less magnificent territories which the enterprise of other navigators and discoverers had subjected to her scepter in the East, the varied riches which flowed in upon her from all these dependencies, the terror of her arms, the luster of her name, all contributed to blind Spain, and to place her in antagonism to the new movement. Why not give her whole strength to the development of those many sources of political power and material prosperity which had just been opened to her? Why distract herself by engaging in theological controversies and barren speculations! Why abandon a faith under which she had become great, and was likely to become greater still. Protestantism might be true, but Spain had no time, and less inclination, to investigate its truth. Appearances were against it; for was it likely that German monks should know better than her

own learned priests, or that brilliant thoughts should emanate from the seclusion of Northern cells and the gloom of Northern forests?

Still the Spanish mind, in the sixteenth century, discovered no small aptitude for the teachings of Protestantism. Despite the adverse circumstances to which we have referred, the Reformation was not without disciples in Spain. If a small, nowhere was there a more brilliant band of converts to Protestantism. The names of men illustrious for their rank, for their scholarship, and for their talents, illustrate the list of Spanish Protestants. Many wealthy burgesses also became converts; and had not the throne and the priesthood - both powerful - combined to keep Spain Roman Catholic, Protestantism would have triumphed. A single decade had almost enabled it to do so. But the Reformation had crossed the Pyrenees to win no triumph of this kind. Spain, like France, was too powerful and wealthy a country to become Protestant with safety to Protestantism. Its conversion at that stage would have led to the corruption of the principle: the triumph of the movement would have been its undoing, for there is no maxim more certain than this, that if a spiritual cause triumphs through material and political means, it triumphs at the cost of its own life. Protestantism had entered Spain to glorify itself by martyrdom.

[7] It was destined to display its power not at the courts of the
 [8] Alhambra and Escorial, but on the burning grounds of Madrid and Seville. Thus in Spain, as in many other countries, the great business of Protestantism in the sixteenth century was the origination of moral forces, which, being deathless, would spread and grow from age to age till at length, with silent but irresistible might, the Protestant cause would be borne to sovereignty.

It remains that we speak of one other country.
 - "Hedged in with the main, That water-walled bulwark, still secure
 And confident from foreign purposes,"³ England had it very much in her option, on almost all occasions, to mingle in the movements and strifes that agitated the nations around her, or to separate herself from them and stand aloof. The reception she might give to Protestantism would, it might have been foreseen, be determined to a large extent by considerations and influences of a home kind,

³Shakspeare, King John, act 2, scene 1.

more so than in the case of the nations which we have already passed in review. Providence had reserved a great place for Britain in the drama of Protestantism. Long before the sixteenth century it had given significant pledges of the part it would play in the coming movement. In truth the first of all the nations to enter on the path of Reform was England.

When the time drew nigh for the Master, who was gone fourteen hundred years before into a far country, to return, and call His servants to account previously to receiving the kingdom, He sent a messenger before Him to prepare men for the coming of that "great and terrible day." That messenger was John Wicliffe. In many points Wicliffe bore a striking resemblance to the Elijah of the Old Dispensation, and John the Baptist of the New; and notably in this, that he was the prophet of a new age, which was to be ushered in with terrible shakings and revolutions. In minor points even we trace a resemblance between Wicliffe and the men who filled in early ages a not dissimilar office to that which he was called to discharge when the modern times were about to begin. All three are alike in the startling suddenness of their appearance. Descending from the mountains of Gilead, Elijah presents himself all at once in the midst of Israel, now apostate from Jehovah, and addresses to them the call to "Return." From the deserts of Judah, where he had made his abode till the day of his "showing unto Israel," John came to the Jews, now sunk in traditionalism and Pharasaic observances, and said, "Repent." From the darkness of the Middle Ages, without note of warning, Wicliffe burst upon the men of the fourteenth century, occupied in scholastic subtleties and sunk in ceremonialism, and addressed to them the call to "Reform." "Repent," said he, "for the great era of reckoning is come. There cometh one after me, mightier than I. His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather the wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

Even in his personal appearance Wicliffe recalls the picture which the Bible has left us of his great predecessors. The Tishbite and the Baptist seem again to stand before us. The erect and meager form, with piercing eye and severe brow, clad in a long black mantle, with a girdle round the middle, how like the men whose raiment was

of camel's hair, and who had a leathern girdle upon their loins, and whose meat was locusts and wild honey!

In the great lineaments of their character how like are all the three! Wicliffe has a marked individuality. No one of the Fathers of the early Church exactly resembles him. We must travel back to the days of the Baptist and of the Tishbite to find his like - austere, incorruptible, inflexible, fearless. His age is inconceivably corrupt, but he is without stain. He appears among men, but he is not seen to mingle with them. Solitary, without companion or yoke-fellow, he does his work alone. In his hand is the axe: sentence has gone forth against every corrupt tree, and he has come to cut it down.

Beyond all doubt Wicliffe was the beginning of modern times. His appearance marked the close of an age of darkness, and the commencement of one of Reformation. It is not more true that John stood on the dividing line between the Old and New Dispensations, than that the appearance of Wicliffe marked a similar boundary. Behind him were the times of ignorance mid superstition, before him the day of knowledge and truth. Previous to Wicliffe, century succeeded century in unbroken and unvaried stagnancy. The yearn revolved, but the world stood still. The systems that had climbed to power prolonged their reign, and the nations slept in their chains. But since the age of Wicliffe the world has gone onward in the path of progress without stop or pause. His ministry was the fountain-head of a series of grand events, which have followed in rapid succession, and each of which has achieved a great and lasting advance for society. No sooner had Wicliffe uttered the first sentence of living truth than it seemed as if a seed of life, a spark of fire had been thrown [9] into the world, for instantly motion sets in, in every department and the movement of regeneration, to which a the first touch, incessantly works its lofty platform of the sixteenth century. War and letters, the ambition of princes and the blood of martyrs, pioneer its way to its grand development under Luther and Calvin.

When Wicliffe was born the Papacy had just passed its noon. Its meridian glory had lasted all through the two centuries which divided the accession of Gregory VII. (1073) from the death of Boniface VIII. (1303). This period, which includes the halcyon days of Innocent III., marks the epoch of supremest dominancy, the age of uneclipsed splendor, which was meted out to the Popes. But no

sooner had Wicliffe begun to preach than a wane set in of the Papal glory, which neither Council nor curia has ever since been able to arrest. And no sooner did the English Reformer stand out in bold relief before the world as the opponent of Rome, than disaster after disaster came hurrying towards the Papacy, as if in haste to weaken and destroy a power which stood between the world entrance of the new age.

Let us bestow a moment on the consideration of this series of calamities to Rome, but of emancipation to the nations. At the distance of three centuries we see continuous and systematic progress, where the observer in the midst of the events may have failed to discover aught save confusion and turmoil. First came the schism of the Popes. What tremendous loss of both political influence and moral prestige the schism inflicted on the Papacy we need not say. Next came the deposition of several Popes by the Council of Pisa and Constance, on the ground of their being notorious malefactors, leaving the world to wonder at the rashness of men who could thus cast down their own idol, and publicly vilify a sanctity which they professed to regard as not less immaculate than that of God.

Then followed an outbreak of the wars which have raged so often and so furiously between Councils and the Popes for the exclusive possession of the infallibility. The immediate result of this contest, which was to strip the Popes of this superhuman prerogative and lodge it for a time in a Council, was less important than the inquiries it originated, doubtless, in the minds of reflecting men, how far it was wise to entrust themselves to the guidance of an infallibility which was unable to discover its own seat, or tell through Whose mouth it spoke. After this there came the disastrous campaigns in Bohemia. These fruitless wars gave the German nobility their first taste of how bitter was the service of Rome. That experience much cooled their ardour in her cause, and helped to pave the way for the bloodless entrance of the Lutheran Reformation upon the stage a century afterwards.

The Bohemian campaigns came to an end, but the series of events pregnant with disaster to Rome still ran on. Now broke out the wars between England and France. These brought new calamities to the Papacy. The flower of the French nobility perished on the battlefield, the throne rose to power, and as a consequence, the hold the

priesthood had on France through the barons was loosened. Yet more. Out of the guilty attempt of England to subjugate France, to which Henry V. was instigated, as we have shown, by the Popish primate of the day, came the Wars of the Roses. These dealt another heavy blow to the Papal power in Britain. On the many bloody battle-fields to which they gave rise, the English nobility was all but extinguished, and the throne, now occupied by the House of Tudor, became the power in the country. Again, as in France, the Popish priesthood was largely stripped of the power it had wielded through the weakness of the throne and the factions of the nobility.

Thus with rapid and ceaseless march did events proceed from the days of Wicliffe. There was not an event that did not help on the end in view, which was to make room in the world for the work of the Reformer. We see the mountains of human dominion leveled that the chariot of Protestantism may go forward. Whereas at the beginning of the era there was but one power paramount in Christendom, the Pope namely, by the end of it three great thrones had arisen, whose combined authority kept the tiara in check, while their own mutual jealousies and ambitions made them a cover to that movement, with which were bound up the religion and liberties of the nations.

Rome had long exercised her jurisdiction in Britain, but at no time had that jurisdiction been wholly unchallenged. One mean king, it is true, had placed his kingdom in the hands of the Pope, but the transaction did not tend to strengthen the influence of the Papacy in England. It left a ranking sense of shame behind it, which intensified the nation's resistance to the Papal claims on after occasions. From the days of King John, the opposition to the jurisdiction of Rome steadily increased; the haughty claims of her legates were withstood, and her imposts could only at times be levied. These were hopeful symptoms that at a future day, when greater light should break in, the English people would assert their freedom.

[10] But when that day came these hopes appeared fated to be dashed by the character of the man who filled the throne. Henry VIII. possessed qualities which made him an able coadjutor, but a most formidable antagonist. Obstinate, tyrannical, impatient of contradiction, and not unfrequently meeting respectful remonstrance with transports of anger, he was as unscrupulous as he was energetic in the support of the cause he had espoused. He plumed himself

not less on his theological knowledge than on his state-craft, and thought that when a king, and especially one who was a great doctor as well as a great ruler, had spoken, there ought to be an end of the controversy. Unhappily Henry VIII. had spoken in the great controversy now beginning to agitate Christendom. He had taken the side of the Pope against Luther. The decision of the king appeared to be the death-blow of the Protestant cause in England.

Yet the causes which threatened its destruction were, in the hand of God, the means of opening its way. Henry quarreled with the Pope, and in his rage against Clement he forgot Luther. A monarch of passions less strong and temper less fiery would have striven to avoid, at that moment, such a breach: but Henry's pride and headstrongness made him incapable of temporizing. The quarrel came just in time to prevent the union of the throne and the priesthood against the Reformation for the purpose of crushing it. The political arm misgave the Church of Rome, as her hand was about to descend with deadly force on the Protestant converts. While the king and the Pope were quarrelling, the Bible entered, the Gospel that brings "peace on earth" began to be preached, and thus England passed over to the side of the Reformation.

We must bestow a glance on the northern portion of the island. Scotland in that age was less happily situated, socially and politically, than England. Nowhere was the power of the Roman hierarchy greater. Both the temporal and spiritual jurisdictions were in the hands of the clergy. The powerful barons, like so many kings, had divided the country into satrapies; they made war at their pleasure, they compelled obedience, and they exacted dues, without much regard to the authority of the throne which they despised, or the rights of the people whom they oppressed. Only in the towns of the Lowlands did a feeble independence maintain a precarious footing. The feudal system flourished in Scotland long after its foundations had been shaken, or its fabric wholly demolished, in other countries of Europe. The poverty of the nation was great, for the soil was infertile, and the husbandry wretched. The commerce of a former era had been banished by the distractions of the kingdom; and the letters and arts which had shed a transient gleam over the country some centuries earlier, were extinguished amid the growing rudeness

and ignorance of the times. These powerful obstacles threatened effectually to bar the entrance of Protestantism.

But God opened its way. The newly translated Scriptures, secretly introduced, sowed the seeds of a future harvest. Next, the power of the feudal nobility was weakened by the fatal field of Flodden, and the disastrous rout at the Solway. Then the hierarchy was discredited with the people by the martyrdoms of Mill and Wishart. The minority of Mary Stuart left the kingdom without a head, and when Knox entered there was not a baron or priest in all Scotland that dared imprison or burn him. His voice rang through the land like a trumpet. The Lowland towns and shires responded to his summons; the temporal jurisdiction of the Papacy was abolished by the Parliament; its spiritual power fell before the preaching of the "Evangel," and thus Scotland placed itself in the foremost rank of Protestant countries.

Chapter 3: Introduction of Protestantism into Sweden

[11]

Influence of Germany on Sweden and Denmark—Planting of Christianity in Sweden—A Mission Church till the Eleventh Century—Organized by Rome in the Twelfth—Wealth and Power of the Clergy—Misery of the Kingdom—Arcimbold—Indulgences—Christian II. of Denmark—Settlement of Calmar—Christian II. Subdues the Swedes—Cruelties—He is Expelled—Gustavus Vasa—Olaf and Lawrence Patersen—They begin to Teach the Doctrines of Luther—They Translate the Bible—Proposed Translation by the Priests—Suppression of Protestant Version Demanded—King Refuses—A Disputation Agreed on

Picture: Stockholm.

Picture: Gustavus Vasa.

It would have been strange if the three kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, lying on the borders of Germany, had failed to participate in the great movement that was now so deeply agitating their powerful neighbor. Many causes tended to bind together the Scandinavian and the German peoples, and to mould for them substantially the same destiny. They were sprung of the same stock, the Teutonic; they traded with one another. Not a few native Germans were dispersed as settlers throughout Scandinavia, and when the school of Wittemberg rose into fame, the Scandinavian youth repaired thither to taste the new knowledge and sit at the feet of the great doctor of Saxony. These several links of relationship became so many channels by which the Reformed opinions entered Sweden, and its sister countries of Denmark and Norway. The light withdrew itself from the polished nations of Italy and Spain, from lands which were the ancient seats of letters and arts, chivalry, to warm with its cheering beam the inhospitable shores of the frozen North.

We go back for a moment to the first planting of Christianity in Sweden. There, although the dawn broke early, the coming of day tarried. In the year 829, Anschar, the great apostle of the North, stepped upon the shores of Sweden, bringing with him the gospel. He continued till the day of his death to watch over the seed he had been the first to sow, and to promote its growth by his unwearied labours. After him others arose who trod in his steps. But the times were barbarous, the facilities for spreading the light were few, and for 400 years Christianity had to maintain a dubious struggle in Sweden with the pagan darkness. According to Adam, of Bremen, the Swedish Church was still a mission Church in the end of the eleventh century. The people were without fixed pastors, and had only the teaching of men who itinerated over the country, with the consent of the king, making converts, and administering the Sacraments to those who already had embraced the Christian faith. Not till the twelfth century do we find the scattered congregations of Sweden gathered into an organized Church, and brought into connection with the ecclesiastical institutions of the West. But this was only the prelude to a subjugation by the great conqueror. Pushing her conquests beyond what had been the Thule of pagan Rome, Rome Papal claimed to stretch her scepter over the freshly formed community, and in the middle of the twelfth century the consolidation of the Church of Sweden was completed, and linked by the usual bonds to the Pontifical chair.

From this hour the Swedish Church lacked no advantage which organization could give it. The powerful body on the Seven Hills, of which it had now become a humble member, was a perfect mistress in the art of arranging. The ecclesiastical constitution framed for Sweden comprehended an archiepiscopal see, established at Upsala, and six episcopal dioceses, viz., Linkoping, Skara, Strengnas, Westeras, Wexio, and Aabo. The condition of the kingdom became that of all countries under the jurisdiction of Rome. It exhibited a flourishing priesthood with a decaying piety. Its cathedral churches were richly endowed, and fully equipped with deans and canons; its monkish orders flourished in its cold Northern air with a luxuriance which was not outdone in the sunny lands of Italy and Spain; its cloisters were numerous, the most famous of them being Wadstena, which owed its origin to Birgitta, or Bridget, the lady whom we have

already mentioned as having been three times canonized; ¹ its clergy, enjoying enormous revenues, rode out attended by armed escorts, and holding their heads higher than the nobility, they aped the magnificence of princes, and even coped with royalty itself. But when we ask for a corresponding result in the intelligence and morality of the people, in the good order and flourishing condition of the agriculture and arts of the kingdom, we find, alas that there is nothing to show. [12] The people were steeped in poverty and ground down by the oppression of their masters. Left without instruction by their spiritual guides, with no access to the Word of God - for the Scriptures had not as yet been rendered into the Swedish tongue - with no worship save one of mere signs and ceremonies, which could convey no truth into the mind, the Christian light that had shone upon them in the previous centuries was fast fading, and a night thick as that which had enwrapped their forefathers, who worshipped as gods the blood-thirsty heroes of the Eddas and the Sagas, was closing them in. The superstitious beliefs and pagan practices of old times were returning. The country, moreover, was torn with incessant strifes. The great families battled with one another for dominion, their vassals were dragged into the fray, and thus the kingdom was little better than a chaos in which all ranks, from the monarch downwards, struggled together, each helping to consummate the misery of the other. Such was the condition in which the Reformation found the nation of Sweden. ²

Rome, though far from intending it, lent her aid to begin the good work. To these northern lands, as to more southern ones, she sent her vendors of indulgences. In the year 1515, Pope Leo X. dispatched Johannes Angelus Arcimboldus, pronotary to the Papal See, as legate to Denmark and Sweden, commissioning him to open a sale of indulgences, and raise money for the great work the Pope had then on hand, namely, the building of St. Peter's. [13] Father Sarpi pays this ecclesiastic the bitter compliment "that he hid under the prelate's robe the qualifications of a consummate Genoese merchant." The legate discharged his commission with indefatigable

¹See ante, vol. 1, bk. 3, chap. 5.

²See Svenska Kirkoreformationens Historia. I Tre Afdelningar. Af L. A. Anjou. Upsala, 1850 History of the Reformation in Sweden. In Three Divisions. By L. A. Anjou. Upsala, 1850.)

zeal. He collected vast sums of money in both Sweden and Denmark, and this gold, amounting to more than a million of florins, according to Maimbourg,³ he sent to Rome, thus replenishing the coffers but undermining the influence of the Papal See, and giving thereby the first occasion for the introduction of Protestantism in these kingdoms.
4

[14] The progress of the religious movement was mixed up with and influenced by the state of political affairs. The throne of Denmark was at that time filled by Christian II., of the house of Oldenburg. This monarch had spent his youth in the society of low companions and the indulgence of low vices. His character was such as might have been expected from his education; he was brutal and tyrannical, though at times he displayed a sense of justice, and a desire to promote the welfare of his subjects. The clergy were vastly wealthy; so, too, were the nobles - they owned most of the lands; and as thus the ecclesiastical and lay aristocracy possessed an influence that overshadowed the throne, Christian took measures to reduce their power within dimensions more compatible with the rights of royalty. The opinions of Luther had begun to spread in the kingdom ere this time, and the king, quick to perceive the aid he might derive from the Reformation, sought to further it among his people. In 1520 he sent for Martin Reinhard, a disciple of Carlstadt, and appointed him Professor of Theology at Stockholm. He died within the year, and Carlstadt himself succeeded him. After a short residence, Carlstadt quitted Denmark, when Christian, still intent on rescuing the lower classes of his people from the yoke of the priesthood, invited Luther to visit his dominions. The Reformer, however, declined the invitation. In the following year (1521) Christian II. issued an edict forbidding appeals to Rome, and another encouraging priests to marry.⁵ These Reforming measures, however, did not prosper. It was hardly to be expected that they should, seeing they were adopted because they accorded with a policy the main object of which was to wrest the power of oppression from the clergy, that the king might

³Maimbourg, lib. 1, sec. 57.

⁴Gerdesius, tom. 1, p. 78; tom. 3, p. 277.

⁵See extracts by Gerdesius from the Code of Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws, by Christian, King of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway - Hist. Reform., tom. 3, pp. 347, 348.

wield it himself. It was not till the next reign that the Reformation was established in Denmark.

Meanwhile we pursue the history of Christian II., which takes us back to Sweden, and opens to us the rise and progress of the Reformation in that country. And here it becomes necessary to attend first of all to the peculiar political constitution of the three kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. By the settlement of Calmar (1397) the union of the three kingdoms, under a common sovereign, became a fundamental and irrevocable law. To secure the liberties of the States, however, it was provided that each kingdom should be governed according to its peculiar laws and customs. When Christian II. ascended the throne of Denmark (1513), so odious was his character that the Swedes refused to acknowledge him as their king, and appointed an administrator, Steno Sturius, to hold the reins of government.⁶ Christian waited a few years to strengthen himself in Denmark before attempting the reduction of the Swedes. At length he raised an army for the invasion of Sweden; his cause was espoused within the kingdom by Trollius, Archbishop of Upsala, and Arciboldus, the Pope's legate and indulgence-monger, who largely subsidized Christian out of the vast sums he had collected by the sale of pardons, and who moreover had influence enough to procure from the Pope a bull placing the whole of Sweden under interdict, and excommunicating Steno and all the members of his government.⁷ The fact that this conquest was gained mainly by the aid of the priests, shows clearly the estimate formed of King Christian's Protestantism by his contemporaries.

The conqueror treated the Swedes with great barbarity. He caused the body of Steno to be dug out of the grave and burned.⁸ In want of money, and knowing that the Senate would refuse its consent to the sums he wished to levy, he caused them to be apprehended. His design, which was to massacre the senators, was communicated to the Archbishop of Upsala, and is said to have been approved of by him. The offense imputed to these unhappy men was that they had fallen into heresy. Even the forms and delay of a mock trial were too slow for the vindictive impatience of the tyrant. With frightful and

⁶Gerdesius (*Loccen. Hist. Suec.*, lib. 5, p. 169), tom. 3, p. 278. Sleidan, 4, 62.

⁷Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 282, 283.

⁸Sleidan, 4, 62.

summary cruelty the senators and lords, to the number of seventy, were marched out into the open square, surrounded by soldiers, and executed. At the head of these noble victims was Eric Vasa, the father of the illustrious Gustavus Vasa, who became afterwards the avenger of his father's death, the restorer of his country's liberties, and the author of its Reformation.

Gustavus Vasa fled when his sire was beheaded, and remained for some time in hiding. At length, emerging from his place of security, he roused the peasantry of the Swedish provinces to attempt the restoration of their country's independence. He defeated the troops of Christian in several engagements, and after an arduous struggle he overthrew the tyrant, received the crown of Sweden, and erected the country into an independent sovereignty. The loss of the throne of Sweden brought after it to Christian II. the loss of Denmark. His oppressive and tyrannical measures kept up a smoldering insurrection among his Danish subjects; the dissatisfaction broke out at last in open rebellion. Christian II. was deposed; he fled to the Low Countries, where he renounced his Protestantism, which was a decided disqualification in the eyes of Charles V., whose sister Isabella he had married, and at whose court he now sojourned.

[15] Seated on the throne of Sweden (1523), under the title of Vasa I., Gustavus addressed himself to the Reformation of his kingdom and Church. The way was paved, as we have already said, for the Reformation of the latter, by merchants who visited the Swedish ports, by soldiers whom Vasa had brought from Germany to aid him in the war of independence, and who carried Luther's writings in their knapsacks, and by students who had returned from Wittemberg, bringing with them the opinions they had there imbibed. Vasa himself had been initiated into the Reformed doctrine at Lubeck during his banishment from his native country, and was confirmed in it by the conversation and instruction of the Protestant divines whom he gathered round him after he ascended the throne.⁹ He was as wise as he was zealous. He resolved that instruction, not authority, should be the only instrument employed for the conversion of his subjects. He knew that their minds were divided between the ancient superstitions and the Reformed faith, and he resolved to furnish his

⁹Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 287.

people with the means of judging between the two, and making their choice freely and intelligently.

There were in his kingdom two youths who had studied at Wittemberg under Luther and Melancthon, Olaf Patersen and his brother Lawrence. Their father was a smith in Erebro. They were born respectively in 1497 and 1499. They received the elements of their education at a Carmelite cloister school, from which Olaf, at the age of nineteen, removed to Wittemberg. The three years he remained there were very eventful, and communicated to the ardent mind of the young Swede aspirations and impulses which continued to develop themselves during all his after-life. He is said to have been in the crowd around the door of the Castle-church of Wittemberg when Luther nailed his Theses to it. Both brothers were eminent for their piety, for their theological attainments, and the zeal and courage with which they published "the opinions of their master amid the disorders and troubles of the civil wars, a time," says the Abbe Vertot, "favorable for the establishment of new religions."¹⁰

These two divines, whose zeal and prudence had been so well tested, the king employed in the instruction of his subjects in the doctrines of Protestantism. Olaf Patersen he made preacher in the great Cathedral of Stockholm,¹¹ and Lawrence Patersen he appointed to the chair of theology at Upsala. As the movement progressed, enemies arose. Bishop Brask, of Linkoping, in 1523, received information from Upsala of the dangerous spread of Lutheran heresy in the Cathedral-church at Strengnas through the efforts of Olaf Patersen. Brask, an active and fiery man, a politician rather than a priest, was transported with indignation against the Lutheran teachers. He fulminated the ban of the Church against all who should buy, or read, or circulate their writings, and denounced them as men who had impiously trampled under foot ecclesiastical order for the purpose of gaining a liberty which they called Christian, but which he would term "Lutheran," nay, "Luciferian." The opposition of the bishop but helped to fan the flame; and the public disputations to which the Protestant preachers were challenged, and which took place, by royal permission, in some of the chief cities of the kingdom,

¹⁰Ibid. (Vertot, ad ann. 1521, p. 175), tom. 3, 286.

¹¹Ibid., tom. 3, p. 290.

only helped to enkindle it the more and spread it over the kingdom. “All the world wished to be instructed in the new opinions,” says Vertot, “the doctrine of Luther passed insensibly from the school into the private dwelling. Families were divided: each took his side according to his light and his inclination. Some defended the Roman Catholic religion because it was the religion of their fathers; the most part were attached to it on account of its antiquity, and others deplored the abuse which the greed of the clergy had introduced into the administration of the Sacraments.... Even the women took part in these disputes...all the world sustained itself a judge of controversy.”¹²

[16] After these light-bearers came the Light itself - the Word of God. Olaf Patersen, the pastor of Stockholm, began to translate the New Testament into the tongue of Sweden. Taking Luther’s version, which had been recently published in Germany, as his model, he labored diligently at his task, and in a short time “executing his work not unhappily,” says Gerdesius, “he placed, amid the murmurs of the bishops, the New Testament in Swedish in the hands of the people, who now looked with open face on what they had formerly contemplated through a veil.”¹³

After the New Testament had been issued, the two brothers Olaf and Lawrence, at the request of the king, undertook the translation of the whole Bible. The work was completed in due time, and published in Stockholm. “New controversies,” said the king, “arise every day; we have now an infallible judge to which we can appeal them.”¹⁴

The Popish clergy bethought them of a notable device for extinguishing the light which the labours of the two Protestant pastors had kindled. They resolved that they too would translate the New Testament into the vernacular of Sweden. Johannes Magnus, who had lately been inducted into the Archbishopric of Upsala, presided in the execution of this scheme, in which, though Adam Smith had not yet written, the principle of the division of labor was carried out to the full. To each university was assigned a portion of the

¹²Vertot, ad ann. 1521, p. 175.

¹³Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 291.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 291 (foot-note). The whole Bible in the Swedish language was published (folio) at Stockholm in 1541.

sacred Books which it was to translate. The Gospel according to St. Matthew and the Epistle to the Romans were allotted to the College of Upsala. The Gospel according to St. Mark, with the two Epistles to the Corinthians, was assigned to the University of Linkoping; St. Luke's Gospel and the Epistle to the Galatians to Skara; St. John's Gospel and the Epistle to the Ephesians to Stregnen; and so to all the rest of the universities. There still remained some portions of the task unappropriated; these were distributed among the monkish orders. The Dominicans were to translate the Epistle to Titus and that to the Hebrews; to the Franciscans were assigned the Epistles of St. Jude and of St. James; while the Carthusians were to put forth their skill in deciphering the symbolic writing of the Apocalypse.¹⁵ It must be confessed that the leisure hours of the Fathers have often been worse employed.

As one fire is said to extinguish another, it was hoped that one light would eclipse another, or at least so dazzle the eyes of the beholders that they should not know which was the true light. Meanwhile, however, the Bishop of Upsala thought it exceedingly dangerous that men should be left to the guidance, of what he did not doubt was the false beacon, and accordingly he and his associates waited in a body on the king, and requested that the translation of Pastor Olaf should be withdrawn, at least, till a better was prepared and ready to be put into the hands of the people. "Olaf's version, he said, "was simply the New Testament of Martin Luther, which the Pope had placed under interdict and condemned as heretical." The archbishop demanded further that "those royal ordinances which had of late been promulgated, and which encroached upon the immunities and possessions of the clergy, should, inasmuch as they had been passed at the instigation of those who were the enemies of the old religion, be rescinded."¹⁶

To this haughty demand the king replied that "nothing had been taken from the ecclesiastics, save what they had unjustly usurped aforetime; that they had his full consent to publish their own version of the Bible, but that he saw no cause why he either should revoke his

¹⁵Gerdesius (Puffendorf, l.c., p. 284), tom. 3, p. 292.

¹⁶Gerdesius (Vertot, l.c., pp. 60, 61), tom. 3, p. 293.

own ordinances or forbid the circulation of Olaf's New Testament in the mother tongue of his people."

The bishop, not liking this reply, offered to make good in public the charge of heresy which he had preferred against Olaf Patersen and his associates. The king, who wished nothing so much as that the foundations of the two faiths should be sifted out and placed before his people, at once accepted the challenge. It was arranged that the discussion should take place in the University of Upsala; that the king himself should be present, with his senators, nobles, and the learned men of his kingdom. Olaf Patersen undertook at once the Protestant defense. There was some difficulty in finding a champion on the Popish side. The challenge had come from the bishops, but no sooner was it taken up than "they framed excuses and shuffled."¹⁷ At length Peter Gallus, Professor of Theology in the College of Upsala, and undoubtedly their best man, undertook the battle on the side of Rome.

¹⁷"Episcopi moras nectere atque tergiversari." (Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 294.)

Chapter 4: Conference at Upsala

Programme of Debate—Twelve Points—Authority of the Fathers—Power of the Clergy—Can Ecclesiastical Decrees Bind the Conscience?—Power of Excommunication—The Pope’s Primacy—Works or Grace, which saves?—Has Monkenery warrant in Scripture?—Question of the Institution of the Lord’s Supper—Purgatory—Intercession of the Saints—Lessons of the Conference—Conscience Quickened by the Bible produced the Reformation

Picture: Upsala.

Picture: Pastor Olaf at the Conference at Upsala

That the ends of the conference might be gained, the king ordered a list to be made out beforehand of the main points in which the Protestant Confession differed from the Pontifical religion, and that in the discussion point after point should be debated till the whole programme was exhausted. Twelve main points of difference were noted down, and the discussion came off at Upsala in 1526. A full report has been transmitted to us by Johannes Baazius, in the eighth book of his History of the Church of Sweden,¹ which we follow, being, so far as we are aware the only original account extant. We shall give the history of the discussion with some fullness, because it was a discussion on new ground, by new men, and also because it formed the turning-point in the Reformation of Sweden. [17]

The first question was touching the ancient religion and the ecclesiastical rites: was the religion abolished, and did the rites retain their authority, or had they ever any?

With reference to the religion, the Popish champion contended that it was to be gathered, not from Scripture but from the interpretations of the Fathers. “Scripture,” he said, “was obscure; and no one would follow an obscure writing without an interpreter; and sure guides had been given us in the holy Fathers.” As regarded

¹Baazius, *Invent. Eccles. Sueo-Goth.*; Lincopiae, 1642.

ceremonies and constitutions, “we know,” he said, “that many had been orally given by the apostles, and that the Fathers, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and others, had the Holy Spirit, and therefore were to be believed in defining dogmas and enacting institutions. Such dogmas and constitutions were, in fact, apostolic.”

Olaf replied that Protestants did not deny that the Fathers had the Spirit, and that their interpretations of Scripture were to be received when in accordance with Holy Writ. They only put the Fathers in their right place, which was below, not above Scripture. He denied that the Word of God was obscure when laying down the fundamental doctrines of the faith. He adduced the Bible’s own testimony to its simplicity and clearness, and instanced the case of the Ethiopian eunuch whose difficulties were removed simply by the reading and hearing of the Scriptures. “A blind man,” he added, “cannot see the splendor of the midday sun, but that is not because the sun is dark, but because himself is blind. Even Christ said, ‘My doctrine is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me,’ and St. Paul declared that should he preach any other gospel than that which he had received, he would be anathema. How then shall others presume to enact dogmas at their pleasure, and impose them as things necessary to salvation?”²

Question Second had reference to the Pope and the bishops: whether Christ had given to them lordship or other dominion save the power of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments? and whether those ought to be called ministers of the Church who neglected to perform these duties?

In maintaining the affirmative Gallus adduced the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel, where it is written, “But if he will not hear thee, tell it to the princes of the Church;” “from which we infer,” he said, “that to the Pope and prelates of the Church has been given power to adjudicate in causes ecclesiastical, to enact necessary canons, and to punish the disobedient, even as St. Paul excommunicated the incestuous member in the Corinthian Church.”

Olaf in reply said “that we do indeed read that Christ has given authority to the apostles and ministers, but not to govern the king-

²Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis habiti, ann. 1526, inter D. Petrum Galle et M. Olaus Petri.

doms of the world, but to convert sinners and to announce pardon to the penitent.”

In proof he quoted Christ’s words, “My kingdom is not of this world.” “Even Christ,” he said, “was subject to the magistrate, and gave tribute; from which it might be surely inferred that he wished his ministers also to be subject to kings, and not to rule over them; that St. Paul had commanded all men to be subject to the powers that be, and that Christ had indicated with sufficient distinctness the work of his ministers when he said to St. Peter, ‘Feed my flock.’” As we call no one a workman who does not fabricate utensils, so no one is to be accounted a minister of the Church who does not preach the Rule of the Church, the Word of God. Christ said not, “Tell it to the princes of the Church,” but, “Tell it to the Church.” The prelates are not the Church. The apostles had no temporal power, he argued, why give greater power to bishops now than the apostles had? The spiritual office could not stand with temporal lordship; nor in the list of Church officers, given in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, is there one that can be called political or magisterial. Everywhere in the Bible spiritual men are seen performing spiritual duties only. ³

The next point raised was whether the decrees of man had power to bind the conscience so that he who shirked ⁴ them was guilty of notorious sin?

The Romish doctor, in supporting the affirmative, argued that the commands of the prelates were holy, having for their object the salvation of men: that they were, in fact, the commands of God, as appeared from the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs, “By me [18] princes decree righteousness.” The prelates were illuminated with a singular grace; they knew how to repair, enlarge, and beautify the Church. They sit in Moses’ seat; “hence I conclude,” said Gallus, “that the decrees of the Fathers were given by the Holy Ghost, and are to be obeyed.”

The Protestant doctor replied that this confounded all distinction between the commands of God and the commands of man; that it put the latter on the same footing in point of authority with the former;

³Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.

⁴“Praevicator sit reus notoris peccati?” (Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.)

that the Church was upheld by the promise of Christ, and not by the power of the Pope; and that she was fed and nourished by the Word and Sacraments, and not by the decrees of the prelates. Otherwise the Church was now more perfect, and. enjoyed clearer institutions, than at her first planting by the apostles; and it also followed that her early doctrine was incomplete, and had been perfected by the greater teachers whom modern times had produced; that Christ and his apostles had, in that case, spoken foolishly ⁵ when they foretold the coming of false prophets and of Antichrist in the latter times. He could not understand how decrees and constitutions in which there reigned so much confusion and contradiction should have emanated from the Holy Ghost. It rather seemed to him as if they had arrived at the times foretold by the apostle in his farewell words to the elders of Ephesus, "After my departure there shall enter in grievous wolves not sparing the flock."

The discussion turned next on whether the Pope and bishops have power to excommunicate whom they please? ⁶ The only ground on which Doctor Gallus rested his affirmative was the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, which speaks of the gift of the power of binding and loosing given to St. Peter, and which the doctor had already adduced in proof of the power of the prelates.

[19] Olaf, in reply, argued that the Church was the body of Christ, and that believers were the members of that body. The question was not touching those outside the Church; the question was, whether the Pope and prelates had the power of casting out of the Church those
 [20] who were its living members, and in whose hearts dwelt the Holy Ghost by faith? This he simply denied. To God alone it belonged to save the believing, and to condemn the unbelieving. The bishops could neither give nor take away the Holy Ghost. They could not change those who were the sons of God into sons of Gehenna. The power conferred in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, he maintained, was simply declaratory; what the minister had power to do, was to announce the solace or loosing of the Gospel to the penitent, and its correction or cutting off to the impenitent. He who persists in his impenitence is excommunicate, not by man,

⁵"*Praedixisse vana de Pseudoprophetis,*" etc. (*Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.*)

⁶"*Liberum excommunicare quemcunque volunt?*" (*Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.*)

but by the Word of God, which shows him to be bound in his sin, till he repent. The power of binding and loosing was, moreover, given to the Church, and not to any individual man, or body of men. Ministers exercise, he argued, their office for the Church, and in the name of the Church; and without the Church's consent and approval, expressed or implied, they have no power of loosing or binding any one. Much less, he maintained, was this power of excommunication secular; it was simply a power of doing, by the Church and for the Church, the necessary work of purging out notorious offenders from the body of the faithful.

The discussion next passed to the power and office of the Pope personally viewed.

The Popish champion interpreted the words of Christ ([Luke 22](#)), "Whosoever will be first among you," as meaning that it was lawful for one to hold the primacy. It was, he said, not primacy but pride that was here forbidden. It was not denied to the apostles, he argued, or their, successors, to hold the principality in the government of the Church, but to govern tyrannically, after the fashion of heathen kings; that history showed that since the times of Pope Sylvester - i.e., for twelve hundred years - the Pope had held, with the consent of emperors and kings, the primacy in the Church, and that he had always lived in the bonds of charity with Christian kings, calling them his dear sons; how then could his state of dominancy be displeasing to Christ?

Doctor Olaf reminded his opponent that he had already proved that the power conferred by Christ on the apostles and ministers of the Church was spiritual, the power even to preach the Gospel and convert sinners. Christ had warned them that they should meet, in the exercise of their office, bitter opposition and cruel persecutions: how could that be if they were princes and had servants to fight for them? Even Christ himself came not to be a ruler, but a servant. St. Paul designated the office of a bishop, "work" and not "dominion;" implying that there would be more onus than honour attending it.⁷ The Roman dominancy, he affirmed, had not flourished for twelve hundred years, as his opponent maintained; it was more recent than

⁷"Plus oneris quam honoris." It is difficult to preserve the play upon the words in a translation.

the age of Gregory, who had stoutly opposed it. But the question was not touching its antiquity, but touching its utility. If we should make antiquity the test or measure of benignity, what strange mistakes should we commit! The power of Satan was most ancient, it would hardly be maintained that it was in an equal degree beneficent. Pious emperors had nourished this Papal power with their gifts; it had grown most rapidly in the times of greatest ignorance; it had taken at last the whole Christian world under its control; when consummated it presented a perfect contrast to the gift of Christ to St. Peter expressed in these words, "Feed my sheep." The many secular affairs of the Pope did not permit him to feed the sheep. He compelled them to give him not only their milk and wool, but even the fat and the blood. May God have mercy upon his own Church. ⁸

They came at length to the great question touching works and grace, "Whether is man saved by his own merits, or solely by the grace of God?"

Doctor Gallus came as near to the Reformed doctrine on this point as it was possible to do without surrendering the corner-stone of Popery. It must be borne in mind that the one most comprehensive distinction between the two Churches is Salvation of God and Salvation of man: the first being the motto on the Protestant banner, the last the watchword of Rome. Whichever of the two Churches surrenders its peculiar tenet, surrenders all. Dr. Gallus made appear as if he had surrendered the Popish dogma, but he took good care all the while, as did the Council of Trent afterwards, that, amid all his admissions and explanations, he should preserve inviolate to man his power of saving himself. "The disposition of the pious man," said the doctor, "in virtue of which he does good works, comes from God, who gives to the renewed man the grace of acting well, so that, his free will co-operating, he earns the reward promised; as the apostle says, 'By grace are we saved,' and, 'Eternal life is the gift of God;' for," continued the doctor, "the quality of doing good, and of possessing eternal life, does not flow to the pious man otherwise than from the grace of God." Human merit is here pretty well concealed

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⁸"Non pavit oves, sed lac et lanam, imo succum et sanguinem illis extraxit. Deus misereatur suae ecclesiae." (Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.)

under an appearance of ascribing a great deal to Divine grace. Still, it is present - man by working earns the promised reward.

Doctor Olaf in reply laid bare the mystification: he showed that his opponent, while granting salvation to be the gift of God, taught that it is a gift to be obtained only by the sinner's working. This doctrine the Protestant disputant assailed by quoting those numerous passages of Scripture in which it is expressly said that we are saved by faith, and not by works; that the reward is not of works, but of grace; that ground of glorying is left to no one; and that human merit is entirely excluded in the matter of salvation; from which, he said, this conclusion inevitably followed, that it was a vain dream to think of obtaining heaven by purchasing indulgences, wearing a monk's cowl, keeping painful vigils, or going wearisome journeys to holy places, or by good works of any sort.

The next, point to be discussed was whether the monastic life had any foundation in the Word of God?

It became, of course, the duty of Doctor Gallus to maintain the affirmative here, though he felt his task a difficult one. He made the best he could of such doubtful arguments as were suggested to him by "the sons of the prophets," mentioned in the history of Samuel; and the flight at times of Elijah and Elisha to Mount Carmel. He thought, too, that he could discover some germs of the monastic life in the New Testament, in the company of converts in the Temple ([Acts 2](#)); in the command given to the young man, "Sell all that thou hast;" and in the "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." But for genuine examples of monks and monasteries he found himself under the necessity of coming down to the Middle Ages, and there he found no lack of what he sought.

It was not difficult to demolish so unsubstantial a structure as this. "Neither in the Old Testament nor in the New," Doctor Olaf affirmed, "is proof or instance of the monastic life to be found. In the times of the apostles there were no monks. Chrysostom, in his homily on the Epistle to the Hebrews, says, 'Plain it is that the Church for the first 200 years knew nothing of the monastic life. It began with Paulus and Antonius, who chose such a life, and had many solitaries as followers, who, however, lived without 'order' or 'vow,' till certain arose who, about A.D. 350, framed regulations for these recluses, as Jerome and Cassian testify.'" After a rapid sketch of their growth

both in numbers and wealth, he concluded with some observations which had in them a touch of satire. The words of Scripture, "Sell all that thou hast," etc., were not, he said, verified in the monks of the present day, unless in the obverse. Instead of forsaking all they clutched all, and carried it to their monastery; instead of bearing the cross in their hearts they embroidered it on their cloaks; instead of fleeing from the temptations and delights of the world, they shirked its labours, eschewed all acquaintanceship with the plough and the loom, and found refuge behind bolted doors amid the silken couches, the groaning boards, and other pleasures of the convent. The Popish champion was doubtless very willing that this head of the discussion should now be departed from.

The next point was whether the institution of the Lord's Supper had been changed, and lawfully so?

The disputant on the Popish side admitted that Christ had instituted all the Sacraments, and imparted to them their virtue and efficacy, which virtue and efficacy were the justifying grace of man.⁹ The essentials of the Sacrament came from Christ, but there were accessories of words and gestures and ceremonies necessary to excite due reverence for the Sacrament, both on the part of him who dispenses and of him who receives it. These, Doctor Gallus affirmed, had their source either from the apostles or from the primitive Church, and were to be observed by all Christians. Thus the mass remains as instituted by the Church, with significant rites and decent dresses.

"The Word of God," replied Olaf, "endures for ever; but," he added, "we are forbidden either to add to it or take away from it. Hence it follows that the Lord's Supper having been, as Doctor Gallus has admitted, instituted by Christ, is to be observed not otherwise than as he has appointed. The whole Sacrament - as well its mode of celebration as its essentials - is of Christ and not to be changed." He quoted the words of institution, "This is my body" - "take eat;" "This cup is the New Testament in my blood" - "drink ye all of it," etc. "Seeing," said he, "Doctor Gallus concedes that the essentials of a Sacrament are not to be changed, and seeing in

⁹"Dat (Christus) solus virtutem et efficacem Sacramentis, haec est gratia justificans hominem." (Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis - ex Baazio.)

these words we have the essentials of the Lord's Supper, why has the Pope changed them? Who gave him power to separate the cup from the bread? If he should say the blood is in the body, I reply, this violates the institution of Christ, who is wiser than all Popes and bishops. Did Christ command the Lord's Supper to be dispensed differently to the clergy and to the laity? Besides, by what authority has the Pope changed the Sacrament into a sacrifice? Christ does not say, 'Take and sacrifice,' but, 'Take and eat.' The offering of Christ's sacrifice once for all made a full propitiation. The Popish priestling,¹⁰ when he professes to offer the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper, pours contempt upon the sacrifice of Christ, offered upon the altar of the cross. He crucifies Christ afresh. He commits the impiety denounced in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He not only changes the essentials of the Lord's Supper, but he does so for the basest end, even that of raking together¹¹ wealth and filling his coffers, for this is the only use of his tribe of priestlings, and his everlasting masses." [22]

From masses the discussion passed naturally to that which makes masses saleable, namely, purgatory.

Doctor Gallus held that to raise a question respecting the existence of purgatory was to stumble upon plain ground, for no religious people had ever doubted it. The Church had affirmed the doctrine of purgatory by a stream of decisions which can be traced up to the primitive Fathers. It is said in the twelfth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, argued Doctor Gallus, that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come;" whence it may be inferred that certain sins will be forgiven in the future world. Not in heaven, for sinners shall not be admitted into it; not in hell, for from it there is no redemption: it follows that this forgiveness is to be obtained in purgatory; and so it is a holy work to pray for the dead. With this single quotation the doctor took leave of the inspired writers, and turned to the Greek and Latin Fathers. There he found more show of support for his doctrine, but it was somewhat suspicious that it was the darkest ages that furnished him with his strongest proofs.

¹⁰"Sacrificulus Papisticus." (*Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis.*)

¹¹"Corradit opes. (*Ibid.*)

Doctor Olaf in reply maintained that in all Scripture there was not so much as one proof to be found of purgatory. He exploded the fiction of venial sins on which the doctrine is founded; and, taking his stand on the all-sufficiency of Christ's expiation, and the full and free pardon which God gives to sinners, he scouted utterly a theory founded on the notion that Christ's perfect expiation needs to be supplemented, and that God's free pardon needs the sufferings of the sinner to make it available. "But," argued Doctor Gallus, "the sinner must be purified by these sufferings and made fit for heaven." "No," replied Doctor Olaf, "it is faith that purifies the heart; it is the blood of Christ that cleanses the soul; not the flames of purgatory."

The last point to be debated was "whether the saints are to be invoked, and whether they are our defenders, patrons, and mediators with God?"

On this head, too, Doctor Gallus could appeal to a very ancient and venerable practice, which only lacked one thing to give it value, the authority of Scripture. His attempt to give it this sanction was certainly not a success. "God," he said, "was pleased to mitigate the punishment of the Jews, at the intercession of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then shut up in limbo, and on the express footing of their merits." The doctor forgot to explain how it happened that the merits which could procure remission of punishment for others, could not procure for themselves deliverance from purgatory. But, passing this, the Protestant respondent easily disposed of the whole case by referring to the profound silence of Scripture touching the intercession of the saints, on the one hand, and its very emphatic teaching, on the other, that there is but one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. ¹²

The conference was now at an end. The stage on which this conference was conducted was an obscure one compared with that of Wittenberg and Augsburg, and the parties engaged in it were but of secondary rank compared with the great chiefs between whom previous contests of a similar kind had been waged; but the obscurity of the stage, and the secondary rank of the combatants, are the very reasons why we have given it so prominent a place in our history of the movement. It shows us the sort of men that formed the rank

¹²Acta Colloquii Upsaliensis - ex Baazio.

and the of the army of the Reformers. They were not illiterate, sectarian, noisy controversialists - far from it; they were men who had studied the Word of God, and knew well how to wield the weapons with which the armory of the Bible supplied them. In respect of erudition they were ahead of their age. When we confine our attention to such brilliant centers as Wittenberg and Zurich, and to such illustrious names as those of Luther and Melancthon, of Zwingli and Ecolampadius, we are apt to be told, these were the leaders of the movement, and we should naturally expect in them prodigious power, and vast acquisitions; but the subordinates were not like these. Well, we turn to the obscure theater of Sweden, and the humble names of Olaf and Lawrence Patersen - from the masters to the disciples - what do we find? Sciolists and tame imitators? No: scholars and theologians; men who have thoroughly mastered the whole system of Gospel truth, and who win an easy victory over the sophists of the schools, and the dignitaries of Rome. [23]

This shows us, more over, the real instrumentality that overthrew the Papacy. Ordinary historians dwell much upon the vices of the clergy, the ambition of princes, and the ignorance and brutishness of the age. All these are true as facts, but they are not true as causes of the great moral revolution which they are often adduced to explain. The vice and brutishness of all ranks of that age were in truth a protective force around the Papacy. It was a state of society which favored the continuance of such a system as the Church of Rome, which provided an easy pardon for sin, furnished opiates for the conscience, and instead of checking, encouraged vice. On the other hand, it deprived the Reformers of a fulcrum of enlightened moral sentiment on which to rest their lever for elevating the world. We freely admit the causes that were operating towards a change, but left to themselves these causes never would have produced such a change as the Reformation. They would but have hastened and perfected the destruction of the putrid and putrifying mass, they never could have evoked from it a new and renovated order of things. What was needed was a force able to restore conscience. The Word of God alone could do this. Protestantism - in other words, evangelical Christianity - came down, and Ithuriel-like put forth its spear, touched the various forces at work in society, quickened them, and drawing them into a

beneficent channel, converted what would most surely have been a process of destruction into a process of Reformation.

Chapter 5: Establishment of Protestantism in Sweden

The Battles of Religion—More Fruitful than those of Kings—Consequences of the Upsala Conference—The King adopts a Reforming Policy—Clergy Refuse the War-levy—Conference respecting Ecclesiastical Possessions and Immunities—Secret Compact of Bishops—A Civil War imminent—Vasa threatens to Abdicate—Diet resolves to Receive the Protestant Religion—13,000 Estates Surrendered by the Romish Church—Reformation in 1527—Coronation of Vasa—Ceremonies and Declaration—Reformation Completed in 1529—Doctrine and Worship of the Reformed Church of Sweden—Old Ceremonies Retained—Death and Character of Gustavus Vasa—Eric XIV—John—The “Red BOOK “—Relapse—A Purifying Fire

Picture: Coronation of Gustavus Vasa.

If “Peace hath her victories no less renowned than War,” we may say that Religion has her battles yet more glorious than those of kings. They spill no blood, unless when the persecutor comes in with the stake, they make no widows and orphans, they leave behind them as their memorials no blackened cities and no devastated fields; on the contrary, the land where they have been waged is marked by a richer moral verdure than that which clothes countries in which no such conflicts have taken place. It is on these soils that the richest blessings spring up. The dead that lie strewn over these battle-fields are refuted errors and exploded falsehoods. Such battles are twice blessed: they bless the victor, and they bless, in measure yet larger, the vanquished.

One of these battles has just been fought in Sweden, and Pastor Olaf was the conqueror. It was followed by great and durable consequences to that country. It decided the king; any doubts that may have lingered in his mind till now were cleared away, and he cast in his lot without reserve with Protestantism. He saw plainly the

course of policy which he ought to pursue for his people's welfare, and he resolved at all hazards to go through with it. He must reduce the overgrown wealth of the Church, he must strip the clergy of their temporal and political power, and set them free for the discharge of their spiritual functions - in short, remodel his kingdom in conformity with the great principles which had triumphed in the late disputation. He did not hide from himself the immense obstacles he would encounter in prosecuting these reforms, but he saw that till they were accomplished he should never reign in peace; and sooner than submit to defeat in a matter he deemed vital, he would abandon the throne.

[24] One thing greatly encouraged Gustavus Vasa. Since the conference at Upsala, the light of the Reformation was spreading wider and wider among his people; the power of the priesthood, from whom he had most to fear, was diminishing in the same proportion. His great task was becoming less difficult every day; time was fighting for him. His coronation had not yet taken place, and he resolved to postpone it till he should be able to be crowned as a Protestant king. This was, in fact, to tell his people that he would reign over them as a Reformed people or not at all. Meanwhile the projects of the enemies of Protestantism conspired with the wishes of Gustavus Vasa toward that result.

Christian II., the abdicated monarch of Denmark, having been sent with a fleet, equipped by his brother-in-law, Charles V., to attempt the recovery of his throne, Gustavus Vasa, knowing that his turn would come next, resolved to fight the battle of Sweden in Denmark by aiding Frederick the sovereign of that country, in his efforts to repel the invader. He summoned a meeting of the Estates at Stockholm, and represented to them the common danger that hung over both countries, and the necessity of providing the means of defending the kingdom. It was agreed to lay a war-tax upon all estates, to melt down the second largest bell in all the churches, and impose a tenth upon all ecclesiastical goods.¹ The possessions of the clergy, consisting of lands, castles, and hoards, were enormous. Abbe Vertot informs us that the clergy of Sweden were alone possessed of more than the king and all the Other Estates of the

¹Baazius, Inventar., lib. 2, cap. 6, p. 203 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 300.

kingdom together. Notwithstanding that they were so immensely wealthy, they refused to bear their share of the national burdens. Some gave an open resistance to the tax; others met it with an evasive opposition, and by way of retaliating on the authority which had imposed it, raised tumults in various parts of the kingdom.² To put an end to these disturbances the king came to Upsala, and summoning the episcopal chapter before him, instituted a second conference after the manner of the first. Doctors Olaf and Gallus were again required to buckle on their armor, and measure swords with one another. The contest this time was respecting revenues and the exemption of the prelates of the Church. Battle being joined, the king inquired, "Whence have the clergy their prebends and ecclesiastical immunities?" "From the donation of pious kings and princes," responded Dr. Gallus, "liberally bestowed, according to the Word of God, for the sustentation of the Church." "Then," replied the king, "may not the same power that gave, take away, especially when the clergy abuse their possessions?" "If they are taken away," replied the Popish champion, "the Church will fall,³ and Christ's Word, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, will fail." "The goods of the Church," said the king, "go into the belly of sluggards,⁴ who know not to write or preach any useful thing, but spend the hours, which they call canonical, in singing canticles, with but small show of devotion. Since therefore," continued the king, "it cannot be proved from Scripture that these goods are the absolute property of the clergy, and since they manifestly do not further the ends of piety, is it not just that they be turned to a better use, and one that will benefit the Church?"

On this, Doctor Gallus held his peace. Thereupon, the king ordered the archbishop to reply, but neither would he make answer. At length the provost of the cathedral, George Turson, came forward, and began to defend with great warmth the privileges of the clergy. "If any one," he said, "dare take anything from the Church, it is at the peril of excommunication and eternal damnation." The king bore the onset with great good-nature. He calmly requested Turson, as a theologian, to handle the matter in a theological manner, and to prove

²Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 300 (Verdot, l.c., pp. 68, 69; et Puffendorf, p. 288).

³"Si removerentur bona eccl. collabascit ipsa ecclesia." (Baazius, Inventar.)

⁴"Insumuntur in ventres pigros." (Ibid.)

what he had maintained from Holy Scripture. The worthy provost appears to have declined this challenge; for we find the king, in conclusion, giving his decision to the following effect, namely, that he would give all honour and all necessary and honest support to the pious ministers of the Church, but to the sluggards of the sanctuary and the monastery he would give nothing. To this the chapter made no reply, and the king took his departure for Stockholm. ⁵

[25] The bishops, however, were far from submitting quietly to the
[26] burdens which had been imposed upon them. They met and sub-
scribed a secret compact or oath, to defend their privileges and
possessions against all the attempts of the king. The deed, with
the names appended, was deposited in a sepulcher, where it was
discovered fifteen years afterwards. ⁶ An agitation of the kingdom
was organized, and vigorously carried out. The passions of the pop-
ulace, uninstructed for the most part, and attached to the old religion,
were inflamed by the calumnies and accusations directed against
the king, and scattered broadcast over the kingdom. Disorders and
tumults broke out; more especially in Delecarlia the most northern
part of Sweden, where the ignorance of the people made them an
easy prey to the arts of the clerical agitators. ⁷ The country, at last,
was on the brink of civil war. Gustavus Vasa resolved that an end
should be put to this agitation. His chancellor, Lawrence Andersen,
an able man and a Protestant, gave him very efficient support in
the vigorous measures he now adopted. He summoned a meeting
of the Estates of Sweden, at Vesteraas, June, 1527. Gustavus ad-
dressed the assembled nobles and bishops, appealing to facts that
were within the knowledge of all of them, that the kingdom had
been brought to the brink of civil war, mainly through the factious
opposition of the clergy to their just share in the burdens of the State,
that the classes from whom this opposition came were by much the
wealthiest in Sweden, that this wealth had been largely acquired
by unlawful exactions, and was devoted to noxious uses; that the
avarice of the bishops had reduced the nobles to poverty, and their
oppression had ground the people into slavery; that for this wealth no
adequate return was received by the State; it served but to maintain

⁵Baazius, *Inventar.*, lib. 2, cap. [8, p. 206 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, pp. 301, 302.

⁶Puffendorf, *l.c.*, p. 294; et Baazius, *l.c.*, p. 222 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 306.

⁷Seckendorf, *l.c.*, p. 267 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 303.

its possessors in idleness and luxury; and that, unless the necessities of the government were met, and the power of the throne upheld, he would resign the crown and retire from the kingdom. ⁸

This bold resolve brought matters to a crisis. The Swedes could not afford to lose their magnanimous and patriotic king. The debates in the Diet were long and warm. The clergy fought stoutly for their privileges, but the king and his chancellor were firm. If the people would not support him in his battle with the clergy, Gustavus must lay down the scepter. The question, in fact, came to be between the two faiths - shall they adopt the Lutheran or retain the Popish? The monarch did not conceal his preference for the Reformed religion, which he himself had espoused. He would leave his subjects free to make their choice, but if they chose to obey a clergy who had annihilated the privileges of the citizens, who had devoured the wealth of the nobles, who were glutted with riches and swollen with pride, rather than be ruled by the laws of Sweden, he had no more to say; he would withdraw from the government of the realm. ⁹

At length the Diet came to a resolution, virtually to receive the Protestant religion. The day on which this decision was come to is the most glorious in the annals of Sweden. The Estates decreed that henceforward the bishops should not sit in the supreme council of the nation; that the castles and the 13,000 estates which had been given to the Church since the times of Charles Canut (1453) should be restored; that of the castles and lands, part should be returned to the nation, and part to those nobles from whose ancestors they had been wrested; and if, in the interval, any of these donations had been sold, restitution must be made in money. It is computed that from 13,000 to 20,000 estates, farms, and dwellings passed into the hands of lay possessors. The bishops intimated their submission to this decree, which so effectually broke their power, by subscribing their names to it. ¹⁰

⁸Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 307 et seq.

⁹Vertot, l.c., pp. 89, 90; Puffendorf, p. 296 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 309.

¹⁰Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 311. As in some other countries, so in Sweden, the nobles showed fully as much zeal to possess the lands of the Romish Church, as to propagate the doctrines of the Reformed faith. We find the patriotic king rebuking them for their greed. In a letter written to the knights and nobles of Oestergotland, February, 1539, we find Gustavus addressing them in a mingled vein of indignation and satire, thus: "To take lands and dwellings from churches, chapters, and cloisters, that they were all prepared,

Other articles were added bearing more directly upon the Reformation of religion. Those districts that adopted the Reformation were permitted to retain their ecclesiastical property; districts remaining Popish were provided by the king with Protestant ministers, who were paid out of the goods still left in possession of the Popish Church. No one was to be ordained who was unwilling, or who knew not how, to preach the pure Gospel. In all schools the Bible must be read, and the lessons of the Gospel taught. The monks were allowed to reside in their monasteries, but forbidden to beg; and safeguards were enacted against the accumulation of property in a dead hand - a fruitful source of evil in the past.¹¹ So far the Reformation of Sweden had advanced in 1527. Its progress had been helped by the flight of the Archbishop of Upsala and Bishop Brask from their native land. Deserted by their generals, the soldiers of the ancient creed lost heart.

[27] The coronation of Gustavus Vasa had been delayed till the kingdom should be quieted. This having been now happily effected, the monarch was crowned with great solemnity on the 12th of January, 1528, at Upsala, in presence of the whole Senate. It cost Vasa no little thought beforehand how to conduct the ceremony, so as that on the one hand it might not be mixed up with the rites of the ancient superstition, nor, on the other, lack validity in the eyes of such of his subjects as were still Popish. He refrained from sending to Rome for investiture; he made three newly ordained bishops - Skara, Aabo, and Strengnas¹² - perform the religious rites; the Divine name was invoked; that part of the coronation oath was omitted which bound the sovereign to protect "holy Church;" a public declaration, which was understood to express the sentiments both of the king and of the Estates, was read, and afterwards published, setting forth at some length the reciprocal duties and obligations of each.

with the greatest zeal, to do; and in that fashion, doubtless, they were all Christian and Reformed." But he complains that beyond this they had rendered the Reformed faith no assistance.

¹¹Baazius, lib. 2, cap. 13, pp. 223, 224 - ex Gerdasio.

¹²They were ordained by Bishop Petrus Magni, of Vesteraas. This helped to give them, and of course the king also, prestige in the eyes of the Romanists, inasmuch as it preserved their succession unbroken.

The declaration was framed on the model of those exhortations which the prophets and high priests delivered to the Kings of Judah when they were anointed. It set forth the institution of magistracy by God; its ends, to be “a terror to evil-doers,” etc.; the spirit in which it was to be exercised, “in the fear of the Most High;” the faults the monarch was to eschew - riches, luxury, oppression; and the virtues he was to practice - he was to cultivate piety by the study of Holy Scripture, to administer justice, defend his country, and nourish the true religion. The declaration concludes by expressing the gratitude of the nation to the “Omnipotent and most benignant Father, who, after so great a persecution and so many calamities inflicted upon their beloved country, by a king of foreign origin, had given them this day a king of the Swedish stock, whose powerful arm, by the blessing of God, had liberated their nation from the yoke of a tyrant” “We acknowledge,” continued the declaration, “the Divine goodness, in raising up for us this king, adorned with so many gifts, preeminently qualified for his great office; pious, wise, a lover of his country; whose reign has already been so glorious; who has gained the friendship of so many kings and neighboring princes; who has strengthened our castles and cities; who has raised armaments to resist the enemy should he invade us; who has taken the revenues of the State not to enrich himself but to defend the country, and who, above all, has sedulously cherished the true religion, making it his highest object to defend Reformed truth, so that the whole land, being delivered from Popish darkness, may be irradiated with the light of the Gospel.”¹³

In the year following (1529), the Reformation of Sweden was formally completed. The king, however zealous, saw it wise to proceed by degrees. In the year after his coronation he summoned the Estates to Orebrogia (Oerebro), in Nericia, to take steps for giving to the constitution and worship of the Church of Sweden a more exact conformity to the rule of the Word of God. To this Diet came the leading ministers as well as the nobles. The chancellor Lawrence Andersen, as the king’s representative, presided, and with him was joined Olaf Patersen, the Pastor of Stockholm. The Diet

¹³Admonitio Publica ab Ordinibus Regni Suecici evulgata, et in Festo Coronationis Regiae Gustavi I, promulgata, A. 1528 - ex Baazio, pp. 228-236.

agreed on certain ecclesiastical constitutions and rules, which they subscribed, and published in the tongue of Sweden. The bishops and pastors avowed it to be the great end of their office to preach the pure Word of God; they resolved accordingly to institute the preaching of the Gospel in all the churches of the kingdom, alike in country and in city. The bishops were to exercise a vigilant inspection over all the clergy, they were to see that the Scriptures were read daily and purely expounded in the cathedrals; that in all schools there were pure editions of the Bible; that proper care was taken to train efficient preachers of the Word of God, and that learned men were provided for the cities. Rules were also framed touching the celebration of marriage, the visitation of the sick and the burial of the dead.

Thus the “preaching of the Word” was restored to the place it undoubtedly held in the primitive Church. We possess its pulpit literature in the homilies which have come down to us from the days of the early Fathers. But the want of a sufficient number of qualified preachers was much felt at this stage in the Reformed Church of Sweden. Olaf Patersen tried to remedy the defect by preparing a “Postil” or collection of sermons for the guidance of the clergy. To this “Postil” he added a translation of Luther’s larger Catechism for the instruction of the people. In 1531 he published a “Missal,” or liturgy, which exhibited the most important deviations from that of Rome. Not only were many unscriptural practices in use among Papists, such as kneelings, crossings, incensings, excluded from the liturgy of Olaf, but everything was left out that could by any possibility be held to imply that the Eucharist was a sacrifice - the bloodless offering of Christ - or that a sacrificial character belonged to the clergy.

[28] The Confession of the Swedish Church was simple but thoroughly Protestant. The Abbe Vertot is mistaken in saying that this assembly took the Augsburg Confession as the rule of their faith. The Augustana Confessio was not then in existence, though it saw the light a year after (1530). The Swedish Reformers had no guide but the Bible. They taught; the birth of all men in a state of sin and condemnation; the inability of the sinner to make satisfaction by his own works; the substitution and perfect expiation of Christ; the free justification of the sinner on the ground of His righteousness,

received by faith; and the good works which flow from the faith of the justified man.

Those who had recovered the lights of truth, who had rekindled in their churches, after a long extinction, the lamp of the Gospel, had no need, one should think, of the tapers and other substitutes which superstition had invented to replace the eternal verities of revelation. Those temples which were illuminated with the splendor of the Gospel did not need images and pictures. It would seem, however, as if the Swedes felt that they could not yet walk alone. They borrowed the treacherous help of the Popish ritual. Several of the old ceremonies were retained, but with new explanations, to divorce them if possible from the old uses. The basin of holy water still kept its place at the portal of the church; but the people were cautioned not to think that it could wash away their sins: the blood of Christ only could do that. It stood there to remind them of their baptism. The images of the saints still adorned the walls of the churches - not to be worshipped, but to remind the people of Christ and the saints, and to incite them to imitate their piety. On the day of the purification of the Virgin, consecrated candles were used, not because there was any holiness in them, but because they typified the true Light, even Christ, who was on that day presented in the Temple of Jerusalem. In like manner, extreme unction was practiced to adumbrate the anointing of the Holy Spirit; bells were tolled, not in the old belief that they frightened the demons, but as a convenient method of convoking the people.¹⁴ It would have been better, we are disposed to think, to have abolished some of these symbols, and then the explanation, exceedingly apt to be forgotten or disregarded, would have been unnecessary. It is hard to understand how material light can help us the better to perceive a spiritual object, or how a candle can reveal to us Christ. Those who tolerated remains of the old superstition in the Reformed worship of Sweden, acted, no doubt, with sincere intentions, but it may be doubted whether they were not placing hindrances rather than helps in the way of the nation, and whether in acting as they did they may not be compared to the man who first places a rock or some huge obstruction in the

¹⁴Forma Reformationis Ecclesiae Suecicae in Concilio Orebrogensi definita atque publicis Clericorum Suecicae subscriptionibus confirmata, et lingua patria publicata, A. 1529 - ex Baazio, pp. 240244.

path that leads to his mansion, and then kindles a beacon upon it to prevent his visitors from tumbling over it.

Gustavus I. had now the happiness of seeing the Reformed faith planted in his dominions. His reign was prolonged after this thirty years, and during all that time he never ceased to watch over the interests of the Protestant Church, taking care that his kingdom should be well supplied with learned bishops and diligent pastors. Lawrence Patersen (1531) was promoted to the Archbishopric of Upsala, the first see in Sweden, which he filled till his death (1570). The country soon became flourishing, and yielded plenteously the best of all fruit - great men. The valor of the nobles was displayed on many a hard-fought field. The pious and patriotic king took part in the great events of his age, in some of which we shall yet meet him. He went to his grave in 1560.¹⁵ But the spirit he had kindled in Sweden lived after him, and the attempts of some of his immediate successors to undo what their great ancestor had done, and lead back the nation into Popish darkness, were firmly resisted by the nobles.

The scepter of Gustavus Vasa passed to his son, Eric XIV., whose short reign of eight years was marked with some variety of fortune. In 1568, he transmitted the kingdom to his brother John, who, married to a Roman Catholic princess, conceived the idea of introducing a semi-Popish liturgy into the Swedish Church. The new liturgy, which was intended to replace that of Olaf Patersen, was published in the spring of 1576, and was called familiarly the "Red Book," from the color of its binding. It was based upon the *Missale Romanum*, the object being to assimilate the Eucharistic service to the ritual of the Church of Rome. It contained the following passage: - "Thy same Son, the same Sacrifice, which is a pure unspotted and holy Sacrifice, exhibited for our reconciliation, for our shield, shelter, and protection against thy wrath and against the terrors of sin and death,

¹⁵His tomb is to be seen in the Cathedral of Upsala. An inscription upon it informs us that he was born in 1490, and died in the seventieth year of his age, and in the fortieth of a glorious reign. He was equally great as a warrior, a legislator, a politician, and a Reformer. His great qualities were set off by a graceful person, and still further heightened by a commanding eloquence. "Two genealogical tables are engraved upon the tomb," says a traveler, "which trace his lineage from the ancient princes of the North, as if his great virtues did not reflect, rather than borrow, lustre upon the most conspicuous ancestry." (Coxe's *Travels in Sweden and Denmark*, vol. 4, pp. 132-134; Lond., 1787.)

we do with faith receive, and with our humble prayers offer before thy glorious majesty.” The doctrine of this passage is unmistakably that of transubstantiation, but, over and above this, the whole of the new Missal was pervaded by a Romanizing spirit. The bishops and many of the clergy were gained over to the king’s measures, but a minority of the pastors remained faithful, and the resolute opposition which they offered to the introduction of the new liturgy, saved the Swedish Church from a complete relapse into Romanism. Bishop Anjou, the modern historian of the Swedish Reformation, says - “The severity with which King John endeavored to compel the introduction of his prayer-book, was the testing fire which purified the Swedish Church to a clear conviction of the Protestant principles which formed its basis.” It was a time of great trial, but the conflict yielded precious fruits to the Church of Sweden. The nation saw that it had stopped too soon in the path of Reform, that it must resume its progress, and place a greater distance between itself and the principles and rites of the Romish Church; and a movement was now begun which continued steadily at go on, till at last the topstone was put upon the work. The Protestant party rallied every day. Nevertheless, the contest between King John and the Protestant portion of his subjects lasted till the day of his death. John was succeeded by his son, Sigismund, in 1592. On arriving from Poland to take possession of the Swedish crown, Sigismund found a declaration of the Estates awaiting his signature, to the effect that the liturgy of John was abolished, and that the Protestant faith was the religion of Sweden.

Chapter 6: Protestantism in Sweden, from Vasa (1530) to Charles IX. (1604)

Ebb in Swedish Protestantism—Sigismund a Candidate for the Throne—His Equivocal Promise—Synod of Upsala, 1593—Renew their Adherence to the Augsburg Confession—Abjure the “Red Book”—Their Measure of Toleration—The Nation joyfully—Adheres to the Declaration of the Upsala Convocation—Sigismund Refuses to Subscribe—The Diet Withholds the Crown—He Signs and is Crowned—His Short Reign—Charles IX—His Death—A Prophecy

Picture: View in Stockholm showing the Cathedral.

Picture: Death of Charles IX. of Denmark.

Since the middle of the reign of Gustavus Vasa, the liberties of the Reformed Church of Sweden had been on the ebb. Vasa, adopting the policy known as the Erastian, had assumed the supreme power in all matters ecclesiastical. His son John went a step beyond this. At his own arbitrary will and pleasure he imposed a semi-Popish liturgy upon the Swedish clergy, and strove, by sentences of imprisonment and outlawry, to compel them to make use of it in their public services. But now still greater dangers impended: in fact, a crisis had arisen. Sigismund, who made no secret of his devotion to Rome, was about to mount the throne. Before placing the crown on his head, the Swedes felt that it was incumbent on them to provide effectual guarantees that the new monarch should govern in accordance with the Protestant religion. Before arriving in person, Sigismund had sent from Poland his promise to his new subjects that he would preserve religious freedom and “neither hate nor love” any one on account of his creed. The popular interpretation put upon this assurance expresses the measure of confidence felt in it. Our future sovereign, said the Swedes, tells us that he will “hate no Papist and love no Lutheran.” The nation was wise in time. The synod was summoned by Duke Charles, the administrator of the kingdom in

the absence of Sigismund, to meet at Upsala on the 25th February, 1593, and settle ecclesiastical affairs.

There were present four bishops, four professors of theology, three hundred and six clergymen, exclusive of those who had not been formally summoned. Duke Charles, and the nine members of council, many of the nobles, and several representatives of cities and districts were also present at this synod, although, with the exception of the members of council, they took no part in its deliberations. The business was formally opened on the 1st March by a speech from the High Marshal, in which, in the name of the duke and the council, he welcomed the clergy, and congratulated them on having now at length obtained what they had often so earnestly sought, and King John had as often promised-but only promised-"a free ecclesiastical synod." He invited them freely to discuss the matters they had been convoked to consider, but as for himself and his colleagues, he added, they would abide by the Augsburg Confession of 1530, and the ecclesiastical constitution of 1529, framed for them by Lawrence Patersen, the late Archbishop of Upsala.

[30]

Professor Nicolas Olai was chosen president, and the synod immediately proceeded to the all-important question of a Confession. The Augsburg Confession was read over article by article. It was the subject day after day of anxious deliberation; at last it became evident that there existed among the members of synod a wonderful harmony of view on all the points embraced in the Augustan Symbol, and that there was really no need to frame a new formula of belief. Whereupon Bishop Petrus Jonmae, of Strengnas, stood up and put to the synod and council the interrogatory, "Do you adopt this Confession as the Confession of your faith, and are you resolved to abide firmly by it, notwithstanding all suffering and loss to which a faithful adherence to it may expose you?"

Upon this the whole synod arose and shouted out, "We do; nor shall we ever flinch from it, but at all times shall be ready to maintain it with our goods and our lives." "Then," responded the president in loud and glad tones, "now is Sweden become as one man, and we all of us have one Lord and God."

The synod having thus joyfully completed its first great work, King John's liturgy, or the "Red Book," next came up for approval or non-approval. All were invited to speak who had anything to

[31] say in defense of the liturgy. But not a voice was lifted up; not one liturgical champion stepped down into the arena. Nay, the three prelates who had been most conspicuous during the lifetime of the former king for their support of the Missal, now came forward and confessed that they had been mistaken in their views of it, and craved forgiveness from God and the Assembly. So fell the notorious "Red Book," which, during sixteen years, had caused strifes and divisions in the Church, had made not a few to depart from "the form of sound words," and embittered the last years of the reign of the man from whom it proceeded.

We deem it incumbent to take into consideration three of the resolutions adopted by this synod, because one shows the historic ground which the Reformed Church of Sweden took up, and the other two form the measure of the enlightenment and toleration which the Swedes had attained to.

The second general resolution ran thus: "We further declare the unity and agreement of the Swedish Church with the Christian Church of the primitive ages, through our adoption of the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds; with the Reformed Evangelical Church, through our adoption of the Augsburg Confession of 1530; and with the preceding Reformation of the Swedish Church itself, through the adoption of the ecclesiastical constitution established and held valid during the episcopate of Laurentius Petri, and the concluding years of the reign of King Gustavus I."

In the fourth resolution, over and above the condemnation of the liturgy of King John, because it was "a stone of stumbling" and "similar to the Popish mass," the synod adds its rejection of the "errors of Papists, Sacramentarians, Zwinglians, Calvinists, Anabaptists, and all other heretics."

In the sixth resolution, the synod declares it to be "strictly right that persons holding other forms of faith than the Lutheran should not be permitted to settle in the kingdom;" nevertheless, having respect to the requirements of trade and commerce, they grant this indulgence, but under restriction that such shall hold no public religious meetings in their houses, nor elsewhere, nor speak disrespectfully of the national creed.

It is easy to pity, nay, it is easy to condemn this narrowness; but it is not so easy to apportion due praise to the synod for the measure

of catholicity to which it had attained. Its members had repudiated the use of the stake for conscience-sake; that was a great advance at this early period; if, notwithstanding, they framed an edict that has the aspect of persecution, its object was not to coerce the opinion of others, but to defend their own belief. Plotters and foes abounded on every side; it behooved them to take measures to guard against surprise, and as regards other points, fuller information would have qualified their judgment on some of the opinions enumerated in their list of ostracized sects. But despite these defects, we find in their creed and resolutions the pure and renovating breath of our common Protestantism. The faces of these men are turned toward liberty. The molding principles of their creed are those which generate noble characters and heroic actions. It scattered among the Swedish people the germs of a new life, and from that hour dates their resurrection to a nobler destiny. The spirit of the Upsala convocation embodied itself in Duke Charles's illustrious son, it bore him in triumph into the very heart of Papal Germany, it crowned his arms with victory in his Protestant campaigns, and the echoes of the solemn declaration of the Estates in 1539 come back upon us in battle-thunder from many a stricken field, and grandest and saddest of all from the field of Lutzen.

[32]

The synod had done its work, and now it made its appeal to the nation. Will the Swedish people ratify what their pastors had done at Upsala? Copies of the declaration and resolutions were circulated through the kingdom. The sanction of the nation was universally and promptly given. All ranks of persons testified their adherence to the Protestant faith, by subscribing the Upsala Declaration. The roll of signatures contained the names of Duke Charles, Gustavus, Duke of Saxony and Westphalia, the grandson of Gustavus I., 14 councilors of State, 7 bishops, 218 knights and nobles, 137 civil officials, 1,556 clergymen, the burgomasters of the thirty-six cities and town's of the realm, and the representatives of 197 districts and provinces. This extensive subscription is proof of an enthusiasm and unanimity on the part of the Swedish people not less marked than that of the synod.

One other name was wanted to make this signature-roll complete, and to proclaim that the adoption of Protestantism by the Swedish people was truly and officially a national act. It was that of King

Sigismund. "Will he subscribe the Upsala Declaration?" every one asked; for his attachment to the Romish faith was well known. Sigismund still tarried in Poland, and was obviously in no haste to present himself among his new subjects. The council dispatched a messenger to solicit his subscription. The reply was an evasion. This naturally created alarm, and the Protestants, forewarned, bound themselves still more closely together to maintain their religious liberty. After protracted delays the new sovereign arrived in Sweden on the 30th of September the same year. The duke, the council, and the clergy met him at Stockholm, and craved his subscription to the Upsala resolutions. Sigismund refused compliance. The autumn and winter were passed in fruitless negotiations. With the spring came the period which had been fixed upon for the coronation of the monarch. The royal signature had not yet been given, and events were approaching a crisis. The Swedish Estates were assembled in the beginning of February, 1594. The archbishop, having read the Upsala Declaration, asked the Diet if it was prepared to stand by it. A unanimous response was given in the affirmative, and further, the Diet decreed that whoever might refuse to sign the declaration should be held disqualified to fill any office, civil or ecclesiastical, within the realm. Sigismund now saw that he had no alternative save to ratify the declaration or renounce the crown. He chose the former. After some vain attempts to qualify his subscription by appending certain conditions, he put his name to the hated document. A *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral the day following, and on the 19th of February, King Sigismund was crowned. The struggle of Sweden for its Reformation, which had lasted over twenty years, came thus at last to a victorious close. Arcimbold, by the preaching of indulgences, and the political conflicts to which this led, had ploughed up the soil; Olaf and Lawrence Patersen came next, scattering the seed; then arose the patriotic Gustavus Vasa to shield the movement. After a too early pause, during which new dangers gathered, the movement was again resumed. The synod of the clergy met and adopted the Augustan Confession as the creed of Sweden; their deed was accepted by the Estates and the nation, and finally ratified by the signature of the sovereign. Thus was the Protestant faith of the Swedish people surrounded with all legal formalities and

securities; to this day these are the formal foundations on which rests the Reformed Church of Sweden. ¹

Only a few years did Sigismund occupy the throne of Sweden. [33] His government, in accordance with the Upsala Declaration, partook too much of the compulsory to be either hearty or honest; he was replaced in 1604 by Charles IX., the third son of Gustavus Vasa. When dying, Charles is reported to have exclaimed, laying his hand upon the golden locks of his boy, and looking forward to the coming days of conflict, "Ille faciet." ² This boy, over whom his dying sire uttered these prophetic words, was the future Gustavus Adolphus, in whom his renowned grandfather, Gustavus Vasa, lived over again, with still greater renown.

¹The two modern historians of the Church of Sweden, more especially during the period of the Reformation, are Dr. H. Reuterdahl, Archbishop of Upsala, and L. A. Anjou, Bishop of Wisby. To these writers we are indebted for the facts we have given, touching the establishment of Protestantism in Sweden under Duke Charles and King Sigismund. The titles of their works are as follow: - Svenska Kyrkans Historia, af Dr. H. Reuterdahl; Lund, 1866 (History of the Swedish Church, by Dr. H. Reuterdahl; Lund, 1866). Svenska Kirkoreformationens Historia, af L. A. Anjou; Upsala, 1850 (History of the Reformation in Sweden, by L. A. Anjou; Upsala, 1850).

²Encyclop. Metrop., vol. 12, pp. 614-616; Lond., 1845.

Chapter 7: Introduction of Protestantism into Denmark

Paul Elia—Inclines to Protestantism—Returns to Rome—Petrus Parvus—Code of Christian II—The New Testament in Danish—Georgius Johannis—Johannis Taussanus—Studies at Cologne—Finds Access to Luther’s Writings—Repairs to Wittemberg—Returns to Denmark—Re-enters the Monastery of Antvorskoborg—Explains the Bible to the Monks—Transferred to the Convent of Viborg—Expelled from the Convent—Preaches in the City—Great Excitement in Viborg, and Alarm of the Bishops—Resolve to invite Doctors Eck and Cochlaeus to Oppose Taussan—Their Letter to Eck—Their Picture of Lutheranism—Their Flattery of Eck—He Declines the Invitation

Picture: View of Copenhagen.

Picture: View of Viborg.

In tracing the progress of the Reformation in Sweden, our attention was momentarily turned toward Denmark. Two figures attracted our notice - Arcimboldus, the legate-a-latere of Leo X., and Christian II., the sovereign of the country. The former was busy gathering money for the Pope’s use, and sending off vast sums of gold to Rome; the latter, impatient of the yoke of the priests, and envious of the wealth of the Church, was trying to introduce the doctrines of Luther into Denmark, less for their truth than for the help they would give him in making himself master in his own dominions. Soon, however, both personages disappeared from the scene. Arcimbold in due time followed his gold-bags to Italy, and Christian II., deposed by his subjects, retired to the court of his brother-in-law, Charles V. His uncle Frederick, Duke of Holstein and Schleswig, succeeded him on the throne. ¹ This was in 1523, and here properly begins the story of the Reformation in Denmark.

¹Sleidan, bk. 4, p. 62.

Paul Elia, a Carmelite monk, was the first herald of the coming day. As early as 1520 the fame of Luther and his movement reached the monastery of Helsingfor, in which Elia held the rank of provincial. Smitten with an intense desire to know something of the new doctrine, he procured the writings of Luther, studied them, and appeared heartily to welcome the light that now broke upon him. The abuses of the Church of Rome disclosed themselves to his eye; he saw that a Reformation was needed, and was not slow to proclaim his conviction to his countrymen. He displayed for a time no small courage and zeal in his efforts to diffuse a knowledge of the truth in his native land. But, like Erasmus of Holland, and More of England, he turned back to the superstitions which he appeared to have left. He announced the advent of the heavenly kingdom, but did not himself enter in. ²

Among the early restorers of the Gospel to Denmark, no mean place is due to Petrus Parvus. Sprung of an illustrious stock, he was not less distinguished for his virtues. Attracted to Wittemberg, like many of the Danish youth, by the fame of Luther and Melancthon, he there heard of a faith that brings forgiveness of sin and holiness of nature, and on his return home he labored to introduce the same gracious doctrine into Denmark. ³ Nor must we pass over in silence the name of Martin, a learned man and an eloquent preacher, who almost daily in 1520 proclaimed the Gospel from the cathedral pulpit of Hafnia (Copenhagen) in the Danish tongue to crowded assemblies. ⁴ In 1522 came the ecclesiastical and civil code of Christian II., of which we have already spoken, correcting some of the more flagrant practices of the priests, forbidding especially appeals to Rome, and requiring that all causes should be determined the courts of the country. In the year following (1523) the king fled, leaving behind him a soil which had just begun to be broken up, and on which a few handfuls of seed had been cast very much at random.

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In his banishment, Christian still sought opportunities of promoting the best interests of the land which had driven him out. One is almost led to think that amid all his vices as a man, and errors as a ruler, he had a love for Lutheranism, for its own sake, and not

²Olivar., *Vita Pauli Elice* - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, pp. 339, 340.

³Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 342.

⁴Pantopidan, *Hist. Reform. Daniel 124* - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 342.

simply because it lent support to his policy. He now sent to Denmark the best of all Reformers, the Word of God. In Flanders, where in 1524 we find him residing, he caused the New Testament to be translated into the Danish tongue. It was printed at Leipsic, and issued in two parts - the first containing the four Gospels, and the second the Epistles. It bore to be translated from the Vulgate, although the internal evidence made it undoubted that the translator had freely followed the German version by Luther, and possibly by doing so had the better secured both accuracy and beauty. ⁵ The book was accompanied with a preface by the translator, Johannis Michaelis, dated Antwerp, in which he salutes his "dear brethren and sisters of Denmark, wishing grace and peace to them in God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." He bids them not be scared, by the bulls and other fulmination's of the Vatican, from reading what God has written; that the object of Rome is to keep them blindfolded, that they may believe implicitly all the fables and dreams she chooses to tell them. God, he says, has sent them, in great mercy, the Light by which they may detect the frauds of the impostor. "Grace and remission of sins," says he, "are nowhere save where the Gospel of God is preached. Whoever hears and obeys it, hears and knows that he is forgiven, and has the assurance of eternal life; whereas, they who go to Rome for pardon bring back nothing but griefs, a seared conscience, and a bit of parchment sealed with wax." ⁶ The priests stormed, but the Bible did its work, and the good fruits appeared in the following reign.

Frederick, the uncle of Christian, and Duke of Holstein and Schleswig, was now upon the throne. A powerful priesthood, and an equally powerful nobility attached to the Romish Church, had exacted of the new monarch a pledge that he would not give admission to the Lutheran faith into Denmark; but the Danish Bible was every day rendering the fulfillment of the pledge more difficult. In vain had the king promised "not to attack the dignity and privileges of

⁵The title of the book was: Thette ere the Noye Testamenth paa Danskeret efter Latinen udsatthe, 1524, id est, Hoc est Novum Testamentum Danice ex Latine accurate expositum, 1524 (This is the New Testament in Danish, accurately translated from the Latin, 1524). - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 350.

⁶Olivar., Vita Pauli Elice, pp. 75, 76 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 352.

the Ecclesiastical Estate,”⁷ when the Scriptures were, hour by hour, silently but powerfully undermining them.

A beginning was made by Georgius Johannis. He had drunk at the well of Wittemberg, and returning to his native town of Viborg, he began (1525) to spread the Reformed opinions. When the Bishop of Viborg opposed him, the king gave him letters of protection, which enabled him to set up a Protestant school in that city,⁸ the first of all the Protestant institutions of Denmark, and which soon became famous for the success with which, under its founder, it diffused the light of truth and piety over the kingdom. After Johannis came a yet more illustrious man, who has earned for himself the title of the “Reformer of Denmark,” Johannis Taussanus. He was born in 1494, in the country of Fionia; his parents were peasants. From his earliest years the young Taussan discovered a quick genius and an intense thirst for knowledge, but the poverty of his parents did not permit them to give him a liberal education. Following the custom of his time he entered the Order of John the Baptist, or Jerusalem Monks, and took up his abode in the monastery of Antvorskoborg in Zealand.

He had not been long in the monastery when the assiduity and punctuality with which he performed his duties, and the singular blamelessness of his manners, drew upon him the eyes of the superior of the order, Eskildus.⁹ His parts, he found, were equal to his virtues, and in the hope that he would become in time the ornament of the monastery, the superior adjudged to the young Taussan one of those bursaries which were in the gift of the order for young men of capacity who wished to prosecute their studies abroad. Taussan was told that, he might select what school or university he pleased, one only excepted, Wittemberg. That seminary was fatally poisoned; all who drank of its waters died, and thither he must on no account bend his course. But there were others whose waters no heresy had polluted: there were Louvain, and Cologne, and others, all unexceptionable in their orthodoxy. At any or all of these he might drink, but of the fountain in Saxony he must not approach it, nor

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⁷Pantoppidan, p. 148 - ex Gerdesio, tom. 3, p. 354.

⁸Pantoppidan, l.c., p. 81. Johannis became Bishop of Ottonburg (1537) under Christian III., and died in 1559. (Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 355.)

⁹Bib. Dan., l.c., p. 2 - ex Gerdesioo tom. 3, p. 356.

taste it, lest he become anathema his choice fell upon Cologne. He had been only a short while at that seat of learning when he became weary of the futility's and fables with which he was there entertained. He thirsted to engage in studies more solid, and to taste a doctrine more pure. It happened at that time that the writings of Luther were put into his hands. ¹⁰ In these he found what met the cravings of his soul. He longed to place himself at the feet of the Reformer. Many weary leagues separated Wittemberg from the banks of the Rhine, but that was not the only, nor indeed the main, difficulty he had to encounter. He would forfeit his pension, and incur the wrath of his superiors, should it be known that he had gone to drink at the interdicted spring. These risks, however, did not deter him; every day he loathed more and more the husks given him for food, and wished to exchange them for that bread by which alone he felt he could live. He set out for Wittemberg; he beheld the face of the man through whom God had spoken to his heart when wandering in the wilderness of Scholasticism, and if the page of Luther had touched him, how much more his living voice!

Whether the young student's sojourn here was known in his native country we have no means of discovering; but in the summer of 1521, and about the time that Luther would be setting out for the Diet of Worms, we find Taussan returning to Denmark. His profiting at Wittemberg was very sufficiently attested by a most flattering mark of distinction which was bestowed on him on his way home. The University of Rostock conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Theology, an honour which doubtless he valued chiefly because it admitted him to the privilege of teaching to others what himself had learned with joy of heart at the feet of the Reformers. ¹¹

The monastery at whose expense he had studied abroad had the first claim upon him; and some time elapsed before he could teach publicly in the university. He brought back to the monastery, which he again entered, the same beautiful genius and the same pure manners which had distinguished him before his departure; but the charm of these qualities was now heightened by the nameless grace which true piety gives to the character, "As a lamp in a sepulcher,"

¹⁰Bib. Dan., l.c., p. 3.

¹¹Resenius, ann. 1521 - ex Gerdasio, tom. 3, p. 356.

says one, “so did his light shine in the midst of the darkness of that place.”¹² It was not yet suspected by his brethren that they had a Lutheran among them under the cloak of their order, and Taussan took care not to put them upon the scent of the secret, nevertheless, he began betimes to correct the disorders and enlighten the ignorance of his fellow-monks - evils which he now saw had their origin not so much in the vices of the men as in the perversity of the institution. He would draw them to the Word of God, and opening to them in plain language its true meaning, he would show them how far and fatally Rome had strayed from this Holy Rule. At the Easter of 1524 he preached a sermon setting forth the insufficiency of good works, and the need of an imputed righteousness in order to the sinner’s justification. “All the blind supporters of the Pontifical superstition,” says the historian, “were in arms against him.”¹³ The disguise was now dropped.

There was one man whose wrath the sermon of the young monk had specially roused, the prior of the convent, Eskildus, a bigoted upholder of the ancient religion, and the person who had sent Taussan abroad, whence he had brought back the doctrine, the preaching of which had converted his former friend into his bitter enemy.

That he might not corrupt the monks, or bring on the monastery of Antvorskoborg, which had preserved till this hour its good name untarnished, the terrible suspicion of heresy, the prior formed the resolution of transferring Taussan to the convent of Viborg, where a strict watch would be kept upon him, and he would have fewer opportunities of proselytizing under the rigorous surveillance which Prior Petri Jani was known to exercise over those committed to his care. The event, however, turned out quite otherwise. Shut up in his cell, Taussan communicated with the inmates of the convent through the bars of his window. In these conversations he dropped the seeds of truth into their minds, and the result was that two of the monks, named Erasmus and Theocarius, were converted to the truth.¹⁴

The horror-struck prior, foreseeing the perversion of his whole brotherhood should he retain this corrupter a day longer in the monastery, again drove Taussan forth. If the prior saved his convent

¹²Olivar., l.c., Bib. Dan., tom. 1, p. 5.

¹³Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 357.

¹⁴Pantopidan, Hist. Reform. [Daniel 154](#). Bib. Dan., l.c., pp. 6, 7.)

[36] by this step, he lost the city of Viborg, for it so happened that about that time a rescript (1526) of King Frederick was issued, commanding that no one should offer molestation to any teacher of the new doctrine, and Taussan thus, though expelled, found himself protected from insult and persecution, whether from the prior or from the magistrates of Viborg. By a marvelous providence, he had been suddenly transferred from the monastery to the city, from the cell to the vineyard of the Lord; from a little auditory, gathered by stealth at his grated window, to the open assemblies of the citizens. He began to preach. The citizens of Viborg heard with joy the Gospel from his mouth. The churches of the city were opened to Taussan, and the crowds that flocked to bear him soon filled them to overflowing. ¹⁵

It was now the bishop's turn to be alarmed. The prior in extinguishing the fire in his convent had but carried the conflagration into the city; gladly would he have seen Taussan again shut up in the monastery, but that was impossible. The captive had escaped, or rather had been driven out, and was not to be lured back; the conflagration had been kindled, and could not now be extinguished. What was to be done? The bishop, Georgius Friis, had no preachers at his command, but he had soldiers, and he resolved to put down these assemblies of worshippers by arms. The zeal of the citizens for the Gospel, however, and their resolution to maintain its preacher, rendered the bishop's efforts abortive. They bade defiance to his troops. They posted guards around the churches, they defended the open squares by drawing chains across them, and they went to sermon with arms in their hands. At length there came another intimation of the royal will, commanding the disaffected party to desist from these violent proceedings, and giving the citizens of Viborg full liberty to attend on the preaching of the Gospel. ¹⁶

[37] Foiled in his own city and diocese, the Bishop of Viborg now took measures for extending the war over the kingdom. The expulsion of Taussan from the convent had set the city in flames; but the bishop had failed to learn the lesson taught by the incident, and so, without intending it, he laid the train for setting the whole country on fire. He convoked the three other bishops of Fionia (Jutland),

¹⁵Bib. [Daniel](#) 1.c., pp. 9, 10.

¹⁶Olivar., *Vita Pauli Eliae*, pp. 110, 111; et Pantoppidan, *Ann. Daniel* 183 - ex Gerdesio. tom. 3, p. 359.)

the most ancient and largest province of Denmark, and, having addressed them on the emergency that had arisen, the bishops unanimously agreed to leave no stone unturned to expel Lutheranism from Denmark. Mistrusting their own skill and strength, however, for the accomplishment of this task, they cast their eyes around, and fixed on two champions who, they thought, would be able to combat the hydra which had invaded their land. These were Doctors Eck and Cochlaeus. The four bishops, Ivarus Munck, Stiggo Krumpen, Avo Bilde, and Georgius Friis, addressed a joint letter, which they sent by an honorable messenger, Henry Geerkens, to Dr. Eck, entreating him to come and take up his abode for one or more years in Jutland, in order that by preaching, by public disputations, or by writing, he might silence the propagators of heresy, and rescue the ancient faith from the destruction that impended over it. Should this application be declined by Eck, Geerkens was empowered next to present it to Cochlaeus.¹⁷ Neither flatteries nor promises were lacking which might induce these mighty men of war to renew, on Danish soil, the battles which they boasted having so often and so gloriously fought for Rome in other countries.

The letter of the four bishops, dated 14th of June, 1527, has been preserved; but the terms in which they give vent to their immense detestation of Lutheranism, and their equally immense admiration of the qualities of the man whom Providence had raised up to oppose it, are hardly translatable. Many of their phrases would have been quite new to Cicero. The epistle savored of Gothic rigor rather than Italian elegance. The eccentricities of their pen will be easily pardoned, however, if we reflect how much the portentous apparition of Lutheranism had disturbed their imaginations. They make allusion to it as that “Phlegethonian plague,” that “cruel and virulent pestilence,”¹⁸ the “black contagion” of which, “shed into the air,” was “darkening great part of Christendom,” and had made “their era a most unhappy one.” Beginning by describing Lutheranism as a plague, they end by comparing it to a serpent; for they go on to denounce those “skulking and impious Lutheran dogmatizers,” who, “fearing neither the authority of royal diets nor the terrors

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¹⁷Gerdesius, tom. 3. p. 359.

¹⁸“Phlegetonteam illam et credelem Lutheranae virulentiea pestem.” (Epistola ad Jo. Eccium, 1527.)

of a prison,” now “creeping stealthily,” now “darting suddenly out of their holes like serpents,” are diffusing among “the simple and unlearned flock,” their “desperate insanity,” bred of “controversial studies.”¹⁹

From Lutheranism the four bishops turn to Dr. Eck. Their pen loses none of its cunning when they come to recount his great qualities. If Lutheranism was the plague that was darkening the earth, Eck was the sun destined to enlighten it. If Lutheranism was the serpent whose deadly virus was infecting mankind, Eck was the Hercules born to slay the monster. “To thee,” said the bishops, casting themselves at his feet, “thou most eloquent of men in Divine Scripture, and who excellest in all kinds of learning, we bring the wishes of our Estates. They seek to draw to their own country the man who, by his gravity, his faith, his constancy, his prudence, his firm mind, is able to bring back those who have been misled by perverse and heretical teachers.” Not that they thought they could add to the fame of one already possessed of “imperishable renown, and a glory that will last throughout the ages;” “a man to whom nothing in Divine literature is obscure, nothing unknown;” but they urged the greatness of their need and the glory of the service, greater than any ever undertaken by the philosophers and conquerors of old, the deliverance even of Christianity, menaced with extinction in the rich and populous kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. They go on to cite the great deeds of Curtius and Scipio Africanus, and other heroes of ancient story, and trust that the man they address will show not less devotion for the Christian commonwealth than these did for the Roman republic. Their hope lay in him alone - “in his unrivalled eloquence, in his profound penetration, in his Divine understanding.” In saving three kingdoms from the pestilence of Luther, he would win a higher glory and taste a sweeter pleasure than did those men who had saved the republic.²⁰

This, and a great deal more to the same effect, was enough, one would have thought, to have tempted Dr. Eck to leave his quiet retreat, and once more measure swords with the champions of the new faith. But the doctor had grown wary. Recent encounters had

¹⁹See the documents in extenso in Gerdesius - *Instrumentum Henr. Geerkens Datum a Cimbriae Episcopis, and Epistola ad Jo. Eccium.* (Tom. 3, pp. 204-214.)

²⁰*Epistola ad Jo. Eccium* - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 206.)

thinned his laurels, and what remained he was not disposed to throw away in impossible enterprises, he was flattered by the embassy, doubtless, but not gained by it. He left the Cimbrian bishops to fight the battle as best they could.

Chapter 8: Church-Song in Denmark

Paul Elia Opposes—Harangues the Soldiery in the Citadel—Tumults—The King summons a Meeting of the Estates at Odensee—His Address to the Bishops—Edict of Toleration—Church-Song—Ballad-Poetry of Denmark—Out-burst of Sacred Psalmody—Nicolaus Martin—Preaches outside the Walls of Malmoe—Translates the German Hymns into Danish—The Psalms Translated—Sung Universally in Denmark—Nicolaus Martin Preaches inside Malmoe—Theological College Established there—Preachers sent through Denmark—Taussan Removed to Copenhagen—New Translation of the New Testament

Meanwhile the truth was making rapid progress in Viborg, and throughout the whole of Jutland. The Gospel was proclaimed not only by Taussan, “the Luther of Denmark” as he has been called, but also by George Jani, or Johannis, of whom we have already made mention, as the founder of the first Reformed school in Viborg, and indeed in Denmark. The king was known to be a Lutheran; so too was the master of his horse, Magnus Goyus, who received the Communion in both kinds, and had meat on his table on Fridays. The army was largely leavened with the same doctrine, and in the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig the Lutheran faith was protected by law. Everything helped onward the movement; if it stopped for a moment its enemies were sure again to set it in motion. It was at this time not a little helped by Paul Elia, the first to sow the seeds of Lutheranism in Denmark, but who now was more eager to extirpate than ever he had been to plant them. The unhappy man craved permission to deliver his sentiments on Lutheranism in public. The permission was at once granted, with an assurance that no one should be permitted to molest or injure him. The master of the horse took him to the citadel, where at great length, and with considerable freedom, he told what he thought of the faith which he had once preached. His address fell upon attentive but not assenting ears.

When he descended from his rostrum he was met with a tempest of scoffs and threats. He would have fallen a sacrifice to the incensed soldiery, had not a lieutenant, unsheathing his sword, led him safely through the crowd, and dismissed him at the gates of the fortress. The soldiers followed him with their cries, so long as he was in sight, saying that “the monks were wolves and destroyers of souls.”

This and similar scenes compelled Frederick I. to take a step forward. A regard for the tranquillity of his kingdom would suffer him no longer to be neutral. Summoning (1527) the Estates of Denmark to Odensee, he addressed them in Latin. Turning first of all to the bishops, he reminded them that their office bound them to nourish the Church with the pure Word of God; that throughout a large part of Germany religion had been purged from the old idolatry; that even here in Denmark many voices were raised for the purgation of the faith from the fables and traditions with which it was so largely mixed up, and for permission to be able again to drink at the pure fountains of the Word. He had taken an oath to protect the Roman and Catholic religion in his kingdom, but he did not look on that promise as binding him to defend all “the errors and old wives’ fables” which had found admission into the Church. “And who of you,” he asked, “is ignorant how many abuses and errors have crept in by time which no man of sane and can defend?” “And since,” he continued, “in this kingdom, to say nothing of others, the Christian doctrine, according to the Reformation of Luther, has struck its roots so deep that they could not now be eradicated without bloodshed, and the infliction of many great calamities upon the kingdom and its people, it is my royal pleasure that in this kingdom both religions, the Lutheran as well as the Papal, shall be freely tolerated till a General Council shall have met.”¹

Of the clergy, many testified, with both hands and feet, their decided disapproval of this speech;² but its moderation and equity recommended it to the great majority of the Estates. A short edict, in four heads, expressed the resolution of the Assembly, which was in brief that it was permitted to every subject of the realm to profess which religion he pleased, the Lutheran or the Pontifical; that no

¹Pantoppidan, l.c., p. 172 et seq.

²Gerdessus, tom. 3, p. 364.

one should suffer oppression of conscience or injury of person on that account; and that monks and nuns were at liberty to leave their convents or to continue to reside in them, to marry or to remain single. ³

This edict the king and Estates supplemented by several regulations which still further extended the reforms. Priests were granted leave to marry; bishops were forbidden to send money to Rome for palls; the election was to be in the power of the chapter, and its ratification in that of the king; and, finally, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was restricted to ecclesiastical affairs. ⁴

Another influence which tended powerfully to promote the Reformation in Denmark was the revival of church-song. The part which Rome assigns to her people in her public worship is silence: their voices raised in praise are never heard. If hymns are ever sung under the gorgeous roofs of her temples, it is by her clerical choirs alone; and even these hymns are uttered in a dead language, which fails, of course, to reach the understandings or to awaken the hearts of the people. The Reformation broke the long and deep silence which had reigned in Christendom. Wherever it advanced it was amid the sounds of melody and praise. Nowhere was it more so than in Denmark. The early ballad-poetry of that country is among the noblest in Europe. But the poetic muse had long slumbered there: the Reformation awoke it to a new life. The assemblies of the Protestants were far too deeply moved to be content as mere spectators, like men at a pantomime, of the worship celebrated in their sanctuaries; they demanded a vehicle for those deep emotions of soul which the Gospel had awakened within them. This was no mere revival of the poetic taste, it was no mere refinement of the musical ear; it was the natural outburst of those fresh, warm, and holy feelings to which the grand truths of the Gospel had given birth, and which, like all deep and strong emotions, struggled to utter themselves in song.

[40] The first to move in this matter was Nicolaus Martin. This Reformer had the honour to be the first to carry the light of the Gospel to many places in Schonen. He had studied the writings of Luther, and “drunk his fill of the Word,” ⁵ and yearned to lead others

³Pantoppidan, p. 175.

⁴Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 365.

⁵Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 366.

to the same living fountain. The inhabitants of Malmoe, in 1527, invited him to preach the Gospel to them. He obeyed the summons, and held his first meeting on the 1st of June in a meadow outside the walls of the city. The people, after listening to the Gospel of God's glorious grace, wished to vent their feelings in praise; but there existed nothing in the Danish tongue fit to be used on such an occasion. They proposed that the Latin canticles which the priests sang in the temples should be translated into Danish. Martin, with the help of John Spandemager, who afterwards became Pastor of Lund, in Schonen, and who "labored assiduously for more than thirty years in the vineyard of the Lord,"⁶ translated several of the sacred hymns of Germany into the tongue of the people, which, being printed and published, at Malmoe, formed the first hymn-book of the Reformed Church of Denmark.

By-and-by there came a still nobler hymn-book. Francis Wormord, of Amsterdam, the first Protestant Bishop of Lund, was originally a Carmelite monk. During his residence in the monastery of Copenhagen or of Helsingborg, for it is uncertain which, led by love of the truth, he translated the Psalms of David into the Danish tongue. The task was executed jointly by himself and Paul Elia, for, being a native of Holland, Wormord was but imperfectly master of the Danish idiom, and gladly availed himself of the help of another. The book was published in 1528, "with the favor and privilege of the king."⁷ The publication was accompanied with notes, explaining the Psalms in a Protestant sense, and, like a hand-post, directing the readers eye to a Greater than David, whose sufferings and resurrection and ascension to heaven are gloriously celebrated in these Divine odes. The Psalms soon displaced the ballads which had been sung till then. They were heard in the castles of the nobles; they were used in the assemblies of the Protestants. While singing them the worshippers saw typified and depicted the new scenes which were opening to the Church and the world, the triumph even of Messiah's

⁶Hemming, Epist. Dedicat. in Comment. in Ep. ad Ephes., p. 382, ann. 1564. Biblioth. Dan., tom. 9, p. 695 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 367.

⁷Biblioth. Dan., tom. 9, p. 696. The title of the book was - Psalmi Davidici, in Danicum translati et explicati a Francisco Wormordo, et impressi in monasterio S. Michaelis Rostochii, 1528. (Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 367.)

kingdom, and the certain and utter overthrow of that of his rival.⁸ Long had the Church's harp hung upon the willows; but her captivity was now drawing to an end; the fetters were falling from her limbs; the doors of her prison were beginning to expand. She felt the time had come to put away her sackcloth, to take down her harp so long unstrung, and to begin those triumphal melodies written a foretime for the very purpose of celebrating, in strains worthy of the great occasion, her march out of the house of bondage. The ancient oracle was now fulfilled: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs."

In particular the Psalms of David may be said to have opened the gates of Malmoe, which was the first of all the cities of Denmark fully to receive the Gospel. The first Protestant sermon, we have said, was preached outside the walls in 1527. The announcement of "a free forgiveness" was followed by the voices of the multitude lifted up in Psalms in token of their joy. Louder songs re-echoed day by day round the walls of Malmoe, as the numbers of the worshippers daily increased. Soon the gates were opened, and the congregation marched in, to the dismay of the Romanists, not in serge or sackcloth, not with gloomy looks and downcast heads, as if they had been leading in a religion of penance and gloom, but with beaming faces, and voices thrilling with joy, as well they might, for they were bringing to their townsmen the same Gospel which was brought to the shepherds by the angels who filled the sky with celestial melodies as they announced their message. The churches were opened to the preachers; the praises uttered outside the walls were now heard within the city. It seemed as if Malmoe rejoiced because "salvation was come to it." Mass was abolished; and in 1529 the Protestant religion was almost universally professed by the inhabitants. By the king's direction a theological college was erected in Malmoe; Frederick I. contributed liberally to its endowment, and moreover enacted by edict that the manors and other possessions given aforetime to the Romish superstition should, after the poor had been provided for, be made over for the maintenance of the Protestant Gymnasium.⁹

⁸Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 368-370.

⁹Ibid., tom. 3, p. 371.

This seminary powerfully contributed to diffuse the light; it supplied the Danish Church with many able teachers. Its chairs were filled by men of accomplishment and eminence. Among its professors, then styled readers, were Nicolaus Martin, the first to carry the “good tidings” of a free salvation to Malmoe; Andreas, who had been a monk; Wornlord, who had also worn the cowl, but who had exchanged the doleful canticles of the monastery for the odes of the Hebrew king, which he was the first by his translation to teach his adopted countrymen to sing. Besides those just named, there were two men, both famous, who taught in the College of Malmoe - Peter Lawrence, and Olaus Chrysostom, Doctor of Theology. The latter’s stay in Malmoe was short, being called to be first preacher in the Church of Mary in Copenhagen. ¹⁰

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The king’s interest in the work continued to grow. The Danish Reformers saw and seized their opportunity. Seconded by the zeal and assistance of Frederick, they sent preachers through the kingdom, who explained in clear and simple terms the heads of the Christian doctrine, and thus it came to pass that in this year (1529) the truth was extended to all the provinces of Denmark. The eloquent Taussan, at the king’s desire, removed from Viborg to Copenhagen, where he exercised his rare pulpit gifts in the Temple of St. Nicholas.

Taussan’s removal to this wider sphere gave a powerful impulse to the movement. His fame had preceded him, and the citizens flocked in crowds to hear him. The Gospel, so clearly and eloquently proclaimed by him, found acceptance with the inhabitants. The Popish rites were forsaken - no one went to mass or to confession. The entrance of the truth into this city, says the historian, was signalled by “a mighty outburst of singing.” The people, filled with joy at the mysteries made known to them, and the clear light that shone upon them after the long darkness, poured forth their gratitude in thundering voices in the Psalms of David, the hymns of Luther, and in other sacred canticles. Nor did Taussan confine himself to his own pulpit and flock; he cared for all the young Churches of the Reformation in Denmark, and did his utmost to nourish them

¹⁰Pantoppidan, l.c., p. 191. Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 371.

into strength by seeking out and sending to them able and zealous preachers of the truth. ¹¹

This year (1529), a truly memorable one in the Danish Reformation, saw another and still more powerful agency enter the field. A new translation of the New Testament in the Danish tongue was now published in Antwerp, under the care of Christian Petri. Petri had formerly been a canon, and Chancellor of the Chapter in Lurid; but attaching himself to the fortunes of Christian II., he had been obliged to become an exile. He was, however, a learned and pious man, sincerely attached to the Reformed faith, which he did his utmost, both by preaching and writing, to propagate. He had seen the version of the New Testament, of which we have made mention above, translated by Michaelis in 1524, and which, though corrected by the pen of Paul Elia, was deformed with blemishes and obscurities; and feeling a strong desire to put into the hands of his countrymen a purer and more idiomatic version, Petri undertook a new translation. The task he executed with success. This purer rendering of the lively oracles of God was of great use in the propagation of the light through Denmark and the surrounding regions. ¹²

¹¹Biblioth. Dan., tom. 1, p. 13 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 371, 372.

¹²Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 374.

Chapter 9: Establishment of Protestantism in Denmark

The King summons a Conference—Forty-three Articles of the Protestants—Agreement with the Augsburg Confession—Romanist Indictment against Protestants—Its Heads—In what Language shall the Debate take place?—Who shall be Judge?—The Combat Declined at the Eleventh Hour—Declaration of Protestant Pastors—Proclamation of the King—Dissolution of the Monasteries, etc—Establishment of Protestantism—Transformation undergone by Denmark

Picture: Paul Elia Threatened by the Soldiers at Viborg.

Picture: The Protestant Worshippers entering Malmoe.

But the wider the light spread, and the more numerous its converts became, the more vehemently did the priests oppose it. Their plots threatened to convulse the kingdom; and Frederick I., judging an aggressive policy to be the safest, resolved on another step towards the full establishment of the Reformation in his dominions. In 1530 he summoned all the bishops and prelates of his kingdom,¹ and the heads of the Lutheran movement, to Copenhagen, in order that they might discuss in his own presence, and in that of the Estates of the Realm, the distinctive articles of the two faiths. The Protestants, in anticipation of the conference, drew up a statement of doctrine or creed, in forty-three articles, “drawn from the pure fountain of the Scriptures,” and presented it to the king as the propositions which they were prepared to maintain.² The Romanists, in like manner, drew up a paper, which they presented to the king. But it was rather an indictment against the Protestants than a summary of their own creed. It was a long list of errors and crimes against the ancient faith of which they held their opponents guilty! This was to pass judgment before the case had gone to trial: it was to pass

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¹Olivar., Vita Pauli Elliae, p. 113 - Gerdes., tom. 3, p 375.

²Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 376.

judgment in their own cause, and ask the king to inflict the merited punishment. It was not for so summary a proceeding as this that Frederick had summoned the conference.

Let us examine the heads of the Protestant paper, mainly drawn up by Taussan, and accepted as the Confession of the Danish Church. It declared Holy Scripture to be the only rule of faith, and the satisfaction of Christ in our room the only foundation of eternal life. It defined the Church to be the communion of the faithful, and it denied the power of any man to cast any one out of that Church, unless such shall have first cut himself off from the communion of the faithful by impenitence and sin. It affirmed that the worship of God did not consist in canticles, masses, vigils, edifices, shaven crowns, cowls, and anointings, but in the adoring of God in spirit and in truth: that “the true mass of Christ is the commemoration of his sufferings and death, in which his body is eaten and his blood is drunk in certain pledge that through his name we obtain forgiveness of sins.”³ It goes on to condemn masses for the living and the dead, indulgences, auricular confession, and all similar practices. It declares all believers to be priests in Christ, who had offered himself to the Father a living and acceptable sacrifice. It declares the Head of the Church to be Christ, than whom there is no other, whether on earth or in heaven, and of this Head all believers are members.⁴

This document, bearing the signatures of all the leading Protestant pastors in the kingdom, was presented to the king and the Estates of the Realm. It was already the faith of thousands in Denmark. It struck a chord of profoundest harmony with the Confession presented by the Protestants that same year at Augsburg.

The Romanists next came forward. They had no summary of doctrine to present. The paper they gave in was drawn up on the assumption that the faith of Rome was the one true faith, which, having been held through all the ages and submitted to by the whole world, needed no proof or argument at their hands. All who departed from that faith were in deadly error, and ought to be reclaimed by

³“Veram Christi Missam esse Jesu Christi paenarum ac mortis commemorationem, in qua ejus corpus editur ac sanguis potatur in certum pignus,” etc. (Confessio Hafniensis, 1530. art. 26. - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 377; et Mon. Antiq., p. 217.)

⁴Confessio Hafniensis - Pontani, Hist. Dan., tom. 2, ab Huitfeldio, Chron. Danico, tom. 2, p. 1322.

authority. What they gave in, in short, was not a list of Romish doctrines, but of “Protestant errors,” which were to be recanted, and, if not, to be punished.

Let us give a few examples. The Romanists charged the Protestants with holding, among other things, that “holy Church had been in error these thirteen or fourteen centuries;” that “the ceremonies, fasts, vestments, orders, etc., of the Church were antiquated and ought to be changed;” that “all righteousness consisted in faith alone;” that “man had not the power of free will;” and that “works did not avail for his salvation;” that “it was impious to pray to the saints, and not less impious to venerate their bones and relics;” that “there is no external priesthood;” that “he who celebrates mass after the manner of the Roman Church commits an abominable act, and crucifies the Son of God afresh;” and that “all masses, vigils, prayers, alms, and fastings for the dead are sheer delusions and frauds.” The charges numbered twenty-seven in all. ⁵

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The king, on receiving the paper containing these accusations, handed it to John Taussan, with a request that he and his colleagues would prepare a reply to it. The article touching the “freedom of the will,” which the Romanists had put in a perverted light, Taussan and his co-pastors explained; but as regarded the other accusations they could only plead guilty; they held, on the points in question, all that the Romanists imputed to them; and instead of withdrawing their opinions they would stand to them, would affirm over again “that vigils, prayers, and masses for the dead are vanities and things that profit nought.”

This fixed the “state of the question” or point to be debated. Next arose a keen contest on two preliminaries - “In what language shall we debate and who shall be judge?” The priests argued stoutly for the Latin, the Protestants as strenuously contended that the Danish should be the tongue in which the disputation should be carried on. The matter to be debated concerned all present not less than it did the personal disputants, but how could they determine on which side the truth lay if the discussion should take place in a language they did not understand? ⁶

⁵Articuli Pontificii in Comitibus Hafniensibus 1530 exhibiti - Gerdesius, tom. 3; Mon. Antiq., p. 231.

⁶Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 380, 381.

The second point was one equally hard to be settled: who shall be judge? The Protestants in matters of faith would recognize no authority save that of God only speaking in his own Word, although they left it to the king and the nobles and with the audience generally to say whether what they maintained agreed with or contradicted the inspired oracles. The Romanists, on the other hand, would accept the Holy Scriptures only in the sense in which Councils and the Fathers had interpreted them, reserving an appeal to the Pope as the ultimate and highest judge.

Neither party would yield, and now came the amusing part of the business. Some of the Romanists suddenly discovered that the Lutherans were heretics, schismatics, and low persons, with whom it would be a disgrace for their bishops to engage in argument; while others of them, taking occasion from the presence of the royal guards, cried out that they were overawed by the military, and denied the free expression of their sentiments,⁷ and that the king favored the heretics. The conference was thus suddenly broken off; the king, the Estates of the Realm, and the spectators who had gathered from all parts of the kingdom to witness the debates, feeling not a little befooled by this unlooked-for termination of the affair.⁸

Although the Romanists had fought and been beaten, they could not have brought upon themselves greater disgrace than this issue entailed upon them. The people saw that they had not the courage even to attempt a defense of their cause, and they did not judge more favorably of it when they saw that its supporters were ashamed of it. Taussan and the other Protestant pastors felt that the hour had come for speaking boldly out. Setting to work, they prepared a paper exhibiting in twelve articles the neglect, corruption, and oppression of the hierarchy. This document they published all over the kingdom. It was followed by a proclamation from the king, saying that, the “Divine Word of the Gospel” should be freely and publicly preached, and that Lutherans and Romanists should enjoy equal protection until such time as a General Council of Christendom should meet and decide the question between them.

⁷Pantoppidan, *l.c.*, p. 235.

⁸Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 382.

From that time the Protestant confessors in Denmark rapidly increased in number. The temples were left in great degree without worshippers, the monasteries without inmates, and the funds appropriated to their support were withdrawn and devoted to the erection of schools and relief of the poor. Of the monasteries, some were pulled down by the mob; for it was found impossible to restrain the popular indignation which had been awakened by the scandals and crimes of which report made these places the scene. The monks marched out of their abodes, leaving their cloaks at the door. Their hoards found vent by other and more useful channels than the monastery; and the fathers found more profitable employments than those in which they had been wont to pass the drowsy hours of the cell. Not a few became preachers of the Gospel; and some devoted to handicraft those thews and sinews which had run waste in the frock and cowl.

The tide was manifestly going against the bishops; nevertheless they fought on, having nailed their colors to the mast. They fed their hopes by the prospect of succour from abroad; and in order to be ready to co-operate with it when it should arrive, they continued to intrigue in secret, and took every means to maintain a brooding irritation within the kingdom. Frederick, to whom their policy was well known, deemed it wise to provide against the possible results of their intrigues and machinations, by drawing closer to the Protestant party in Germany. In 1532 he joined the league which the Lutheran princes had formed for their mutual defense at Schmalkald. ⁹

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It is not easy adequately to describe the change that now passed upon Denmark. A serene and blessed light arose upon the whole kingdom. Not only were the Danes enabled to read the Scriptures of the New Testament; in their own tongue, and the Psalms of David, which were also often sung both in their churches and in their fields and on their highways, but they had likewise numerous expounders of the Divine Word, and preachers of the Gospel, who opened to them the fountains of salvation. The land enjoyed a gentle spring. Eschewing the snares which the darkness had concealed, and walking in the new paths which the light had discovered to them,

⁹Seckendorf, lib. 3, sec. 31, p. 89. Pantoppidan, l.c., p. 241. Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 385, 386.

the inhabitants showed forth in abundance in their lives the fruits of the Gospel, which are purity and peace. ¹⁰

¹⁰Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 386.

Chapter 10: Protestantism under Christian III., and its Extension to Norway and Iceland

Scheme for Restoring the Old Faith Abortive—Unsuccessful Invasion of the Country by Christian II—Death of the King—Interregnum of Two Years—Priestly Plottings and Successes—Taussan Condemned to Silence and Exile—The Senators Besieged by an Armed Mob in the Senate House—Taussan given up—Bishops begin to Persecute—Inundations, etc—Christian III. Ascends the Throne—Subdues a Revolt—Assembles the Estates at Copenhagen—The Bishops Abolished—New Ecclesiastical Constitution framed, 1547—Bugenhagen—The Seven Superintendents—Bugenhagen Crowns the King—Denmark Flourishes—Establishment of Protestantism in Norway and Iceland

Picture: Defeat of the Fleet of Christian II.

Picture: A Danish Chateau.

An attempt was made at this time (1532) to turn the flank of the Reformation. Jacob Ronnovius, the Archbishop of Roeschildien, a man of astute but dangerous counsel, framed a measure, professedly in the interest of the Gospel, but fitted to bring back step by step the ancient superstition in all its power. His scheme was, in brief, that the Cathedral-church of Copenhagen, dedicated to Mary, should be given to the Franciscans or to the Friars of the Holy Ghost; that the mass and other rites should not be abolished, but retained in their primitive form; that the offices and chantings should be performed, not in the popular, but in the Latin tongue; that the altars and other ornaments of the sacred edifices should not be removed; in short, that the whole ritualistic machinery of the old worship should be maintained, while “learned men” were, at the same time, to preach the Gospel in the several parishes. This was a cunning device! It was sought to preserve the former framework entire, in the firm hope that the old spirit would creep back into it, and so the last state of the Danish people would be worse than the first. This scheme was

presented to the king. Frederick was not to be hoodwinked. His reply put an effectual stop to the project of Ronnovius. It was the royal will that the Edict of Copenhagen should remain in force. The archbishop had to bow; and the hopes that the retrogrades had built upon his scheme came to nothing. ¹

Scarcely had this cloud passed, when danger showed itself in another quarter. The ex-King Christian II., supported by his Popish allies in the Netherlands, and encouraged by the clerical malcontents in Denmark, made a descent by sea upon the country in the hope of recovering his throne. Discomfiture awaited the enterprise. As he approached the Danish shore a storm burst out which crippled his fleet; and before he could repair the damage it had sustained, he was attacked by the ships of Frederick, and the engagement which ensued, and which lasted a whole day, resulted in his complete rout. Christian was seized, carried to Soldenberg, in the Isle of Alsen, shut up in a gloomy prison, and kept there till the death of Frederick in 1533. ²

[46] So far the young Reformation of Denmark had been wonderfully shielded. It had kept its path despite many powerful enemies within the kingdom, and not a few active plotters without. But now came a short arrest. On the 10th of April, 1533, Frederick I., now in his sixty-second year, died. The Protestants bewailed the death of "the Good King." He was in the midst of his reforming career, and there was danger that his work would be interred with him. There followed a troubled interregnum of two years. Of the two sons of Frederick, Christian, the elder, was a Protestant; the younger, John, was attached to the Romish faith. The Popish party, who hoped that, with the descent of Frederick to the tomb, a new day had dawned for their Church, began to plot with the view of raising John to the throne. The Protestants were united in favor of Christian. A third party, who thought to come in at the breach the other two had made for them, turned their eyes to the deposed King Christian II., and even made attempts to effect his restoration. The distracted country was still more embroiled by a revival of the priestly pretensions. Frederick was in his grave, and a bold policy was all that was needed,

¹Pantoppidan, p. 253 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 388-390.

²Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 390.

so the bishops thought, to hoist themselves and their Church into the old place. They took a high tone in the Diet. They brow-beat the nobles, they compelled restoration of the tithes, and they put matters in train for recovering the cathedrals, monasteries, manors, and goods of which they had been stripped. These successes emboldened them to venture on other and harsher measures. They stretched forth their hand to persecute, and made no secret of their design to extirpate the Protestant faith in Denmark.

Their first blows were aimed at Taussan. The removal of that bold Reformer and eloquent preacher was the first step, they saw, to success. He had long been a thorn in their side. The manifesto which had been placarded over the whole kingdom, proclaiming to all the negligence and corruption of the hierarchy, and which was mainly his work, was an offense that never could be pardoned him. The bishops had sufficient influence to get a decree passed in the Diet, condemning the great preacher to silence and sending him into exile. He was expelled from the Cathedral-church of Copenhagen, where he usually conducted his ministry; every other church was closed against him; nay, not the pulpit only, the pen too was interdicted. He was forbidden to write or publish any book, and ordered to withdraw within a month from the diocese of Zealand. In whatever part of Denmark he might take up his abode, he was prohibited from publishing any writing, or addressing any assembly; nor could he discharge any ecclesiastical function; he must submit himself in all things to the bishops. ³

When rumors of what was being enacted in the Diet got abroad, the citizens of Copenhagen rushed to arms, and crowding into the forum filled it with tumult and loud and continued outcries. They demanded that Taussan should be restored to them, and that the Diet should refrain from passing any decree hostile to the Protestant faith, adding that if harm should befall either the religion or its preacher, the bishops would not be held guiltless. The Diet saw that the people were not in a mood to be trifled with, and some of the senators made an effort to pacify them. Addressing the crowd from the windows of the senate-house, they assured them that they would take care that no evil should happen to Taussan, that no hostile edict should pass

³Pantoppidan, pp. 269, 270 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 397.

the Diet, and that their Protestant customs and privileges should in nowise be interfered with; and they exhorted them to go quietly to their homes and attend to their own affairs. These words did not allay the fears of the populace; the uproar still continued. The senators now got angry, and shouting out with stentorian voice they threatened the rioters with punishment. They were speaking to the winds. Their words were not heard; the noise that raged below drowned them. Their gestures, however, were seen, and these sufficiently indicated the irritation of the speakers. The fumes of the “conscript Fathers” did but the more enrage the armed crowd. Raising their voices to a yet louder pitch, the rioters exclaimed, “Show us Taussan, else we will force the doors of the hall.” The senators, seized with instant fear, restored the preacher to the people, who, forming a guard round him, conducted him safely from the senate-house to his own home. Ronnovius, Archbishop of Roeschildien, the prime instigator of the persecution now commenced against the adherents of the Lutheran doctrine, had like to have fared worse. He was specially obnoxious to the populace, and would certainly have fallen a sacrifice to their wrath, but for the magnanimity of Taussan, who restrained the furious zeal of the multitude, and rescued the archbishop from their hands. The prelate was not ungrateful for this generous act; he warmly thanked Taussan, and even showed him henceforward a measure of friendship. By-and-by, at the urgent intercession of the leading citizens of Copenhagen, the church of their favorite preacher was restored to him, and matters, as regarded religion, resumed very much their old course. ⁴

[47] The other bishops were not so tolerant. On returning to their homes they commenced a sharp persecution against the Protestants in their several dioceses. In Malmoe and Veiis, the metropolitan Tobernus Billeus proscribed the preachers, who had labored there with great success. These cities and some others were threatened with excommunication. At Viborg the Romish bishop, George Fri-sius, left no stone unturned to expel the Reformers from the city, and extinguish the Protestantism which had there taken root and begun greatly to flourish. But the Protestants were numerous, and the bold

⁴Pantoppidan, p. 277 - Biblioth. Dan., tom 1, p. 23 et seq. - Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 397, 398.

front which they showed the bishop told him that he had reckoned without his host.⁵ Not in the towns only, but in many of the country parts the Protestant assemblies were put down, and their teachers driven away. Beyond these severities, however, the persecution did not advance. The ulterior and sterner measures to which these beginnings would most assuredly have led, had time been given, were never reached. Denmark had not to buy its Reformation with the block and the stake, as some other countries were required to do. This, doubtless, was a blessing for the men of that generation; that it was so for the men of the following ones we are not prepared to maintain. Men must buy with a great price that; on which they are to put a lasting value. The martyrs of one's kindred and country always move one more than those of other lands, even though it is the same cause for which their blood has been poured out.⁶

The calamities of the two unhappy years that divided the decease of Frederick I. from the election of his successor, or rather his quiet occupation of the throne, were augmented by the rage of the elements. The waters of the sky and the floods of ocean seemed as if they had conspired against a land already sufficiently afflicted by the bitterness of political parties and the bigotry of superstitious zealots. Great Inundations took place. In some instances whole towns were overflowed, and many thousands of their inhabitants were drowned. "Ah!" said the adherents of the old worship to the Protestants, "now at last you are overtaken by the Divine vengeance. You have cast down the altars, defaced the images, and desecrated the temples of the true religion, and now the hand of God is stretched out to chastise you for your impiety."⁷ It was unfortunate, however, for this interpretation that these Inundations swallowed up the house and field of Romanist and of Protestant alike. And, further, it seemed to militate against this theory that the occurrence of these calamities had been simultaneous with the apparent return of the country to the old faith. There were not wanting those who regarded these events with a superstitious fear; but to the majority they brought a discipline to faith, and a stimulus to effort. In two years the sky

⁵Pantoppidan, p. 272.

⁶Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 399.

⁷Helvader, ann. 1532, pp. 92, 93. Paulus Orosius, Hist., lib. 7, cap. 37, p. 568 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 390.

again cleared over the Protestant cause, and also over the country of Denmark. The eldest son of Frederick, whose hearty attachment to Protestantism had already been sufficiently proved by his reforming measures in Holstein and Schleswig, was elected to the throne (July, 1534), and began to reign under the title of Christian III.

The newly-elected sovereign found that he had first to conquer his kingdom. It was in the hands of enemies, the bishops namely, who retired to their dioceses, fortified themselves in their castles, and made light of the authority of the newly-elected sovereign. Christopher, Count of Oldenburg, also raised the standard of revolt in behalf of Christian II. The wealth of the religious houses, the gold and silver ornaments of the cathedrals, and even the bells of the churches, coined into money, were freely expended in carrying on the war against the king. Much labor and treasure, and not a little blood, did it cost to reduce the warlike count and the rebellious prelates.

⁸ But at last the task was accomplished, though it was not till a whole year after his election that Christian was able to enter on the peaceable possession of his kingdom. His first step, the country being quieted, was to summon (1536) a meeting of the Estates at Copenhagen. The king addressed the assembly in a speech in which he set forth the calamities which the bishops had brought upon the nation, by their opposition to the laws, their hatred of the Reformed doctrine, and their ceaseless plottings against the peace and order of the commonwealth, and he laid before the Diet the heads of a decree which he submitted for its adoption. The proposed decree was, in brief, that the order of the episcopate should be for ever abolished; that the wealth of the bishops should revert to the State; that the government of the kingdom should be exclusively in the hands of laymen; that the rule of the Church should be administered by a general synod; that religion should be Reformed; that the rites of the Roman Church should cease; and that, although no one should be compelled to renounce the Roman faith, all should be instructed out of the Word of God; that the ecclesiastical revenues and possessions, or what of them had not been consumed in the war just ended, should be devoted to the support of “superintendents” and learned men, and

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⁸Olivar., *Vita Pauli Eliae* pp. 142, 174 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 402, 406.

the founding of academies and universities for the instruction of youth.

The proposal of the king was received by the Diet with much favor. Being put into regular form, it was passed; all present solemnly subscribed it, thus giving it the form of a national and perpetual deed. By this "Recess of Copenhagen," as it was styled, the Reformed faith was publicly established in Denmark. ⁹

So far the work had advanced in 1536. The insurrection of the bishops had been suppressed, and their persons put under restraint, though the king magnanimously spared their lives. The Romish episcopacy was abolished as an order recognized and sanctioned by the State. The prelates could no longer wield any temporal jurisdiction, nor could they claim the aid of the State in enforcing acts of spiritual authority exercised over those who still continued voluntarily subject to them. The monasteries, with some exceptions, and the ecclesiastical revenues had been taken possession of in the name of the nation, and were devoted to the founding of schools, the relief of the poor, and the support of the Protestant pastors, to whom the cathedrals and churches were now opened. The work still awaited completion; and now, in 1547, the crown was put upon it.

In this year, also a memorable one in the annals of Denmark, the king called together all the professors and pastors of his kingdom and of the two duchies, for the purpose of framing a constitution for the Protestant Church. A draft, the joint labor, it would appear, of the king and the theologians, of what scented the Scriptural order, was drawn up. ¹⁰ A German copy was sent to Luther for revision. [49] It was approved by the Reformer and the other theologians at Wittenberg, and when it was returned there came along with it, at the request of the king, Bugenhagen (Pomeranus), to aid by his wisdom

⁹Cragius, *Hist. Christ. III.*, lib. 4, p. 153; ed. Copenhagen, 1737 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 406-408.

¹⁰Mosheim speaks of this plan as the sole work of Bugenhagen. This is a mistake. In the preface to the constitution, as given by Grammius in his edition of Cragius' *History of Christian III.*, are these words: "Convocatis doctoribus et praedicatoribus ecclesiarum et Daniae Regno et Ducatibus suis, illud in mandatis dedit rex, ut ordinationem aliquam sacram conscriberent, de qua consultarent" (Having called together the doctors and preachers of the Church in the kingdom of Denmark and its duchies, the king gave it in command that they should subscribe a certain ecclesiastical order, respecting which they were to deliberate). - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 408.

and experience in the final settlement of this matter. The doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Danish Protestant Church were arranged substantially in accordance with the scheme of the king and his theologians, for the emendations of Wittenberg origin were not numerous; and the constitution now enacted was subscribed not only by the king, but also by two professors from each college, and by all the leading pastors. ¹¹

[50] The Popish bishops having been removed from their sees, it was the care of the king, this same year, to appoint seven Protestant bishops in their room. These were inducted into their office by Bugenhagen, on the 7th of August, in the Cathedral-church of Copenhagen, with the apostolic rite of the laying on of hands. Their work, as defined by Bugenhagen, was the “oversight” of the Church, and their title “superintendent” rather than “bishop.” ¹² When installed, each of them promised that he would show fidelity to the king, and that he would use all diligence in his diocese to have the Word of God faithfully preached, the Sacraments purely administered, and the ignorant instructed in the principles of religion. They further engaged to see that the youth gave attendance at school, and that the alms of the poor were rightly distributed. The names and dioceses of these seven superintendents were as follow: - Peter Palladius was appointed to Zealand; Francis Wormord to Schonen; George Viborg to Funen; John Vandal to Ripen; Matthew Lang to Arthusien; Jacob Scaning to Viborg; and Peter Thom to Alborg. These were all men of piety and learning; and they continued for many years hugely to benefit the Church and Kingdom of Denmark by their labours. ¹³

In the above list, as the reader will mark, the name of the man who was styled the Luther of Denmark does not occur. John Taussan was appointed to the chair of theology in the University of Roeschieldien. It was judged, doubtless, that to train the future ministry of the Church was meanwhile the most important work of all. He discharged this duty four years. In 1542, on the death of John Vandal,

¹¹Cragius, in his *History of Christian III.* (pp. 170, 171), has preserved a list of the original subscribers. The list may be seen in Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 459.

¹²“Superintendentes dicti potius quam Episcopi.” (Cragius, *Hist.*, l.c., p. 169 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 411.)

¹³Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 411, 412.

he was made superintendent of Ripen. ¹⁴ Of the three Mendicant orders which had flourished in Denmark, some left the kingdom, others joined the ranks of the people as handicraftsmen; but the majority, qualified by their talents and knowledge, became preachers of the Gospel, and in a very few years scarce a friar was there who had not renounced the habit, and with it the Romish religion, and embraced the Protestant faith. ¹⁵

This year (1547), which had already witnessed so many events destined to mould the future of the Danish people, was to be illustrated by another before it closed. In the month of August, King Christian was solemnly crowned. The numerous rites without which, it was believed in Popish times, no king could validly reign, and which were devised mainly with a view to display the splendor of the Church, and to insinuate the superiority of her Pontiff to kings, were on this occasion dispensed with. Only the simple ceremony of anointing was retained. Bugenhagen presided on the occasion. He placed on the king's head the golden crown, adorned with a row of jewels. He put into his hands the sword, the scepter, and the apple, and, having committed to him these insignia, he briefly but solemnly admonished him in governing to seek the honour of the Eternal King, by whose providence he reigned, and the good of the commonwealth over which he had been set. ¹⁶

The magnanimous, prudent, and God-fearing king had now the satisfaction of seeing the work on which his heart had been so greatly set completed. The powerful opposition which threatened to bar his way to the throne had been overcome. The nobles had rallied to him, and gone heartily along with him in all his measures for emancipating his country from the yoke of the hierarchy, the exactions of the monks, and the demoralizing influence of the beliefs and rites of the old superstition. Teachers of the truth, as contained in the fountains of inspiration, were forming congregations in every

¹⁴Vita Taussani, in Biblioth. Dan., tom. 1, p. 25 - Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 412.

¹⁵Cragius, l.c., p. 172.

¹⁶Gerdesius, tom. 3, p. 410. Cragius says that Christian III. was the first king who inaugurated his reign with the rites of the Reformed religion. He is mistaken in this. The reader will recollect that Gustavas Vasa of Sweden (1528) was crowned in the same way. Varillas, in his History of Revolutions, complains that Pomeranus invented a new ceremony for the coronation of kings. (Pantoppidan, l.c., p. 312.)

part of the kingdom. Schools were springing up; letters and the study of the sacred sciences - which had fallen into neglect during the years of civil war began to revive. The University of Copenhagen rose from its ruins; new statutes were framed for it; it was amply endowed; and learned men from other countries were invited to fill its chairs; ¹⁷ and, as the consequence of these enlightened measures, it soon became one of the lights of Christendom. The scars that civil strife had inflicted on the land were effaced, and the sorrows of former years forgotten, in the prosperous and smiling aspect the country now began to wear. In June, 1539, the last touch was put to the work of Reformation in Denmark. At the Diet at Odensee, the king and nobles subscribed a solemn bond, engaging to persevere in the Reformed doctrine in which they had been instructed, and to maintain the constitution of the Protestant Church which had been enacted two years before. ¹⁸

Still further towards the north did the light penetrate. The day that had opened over Denmark shed its rays upon Norway, and even upon the remote and dreary Iceland. Norway had at first refused to accept of Christian III. for its king. The bishops there, as in Denmark, headed the opposition; but the triumph of Christian in the latter country paved the way for the establishment of his authority in the former. In 1537, the Archbishop of Drontheim fled to the Netherlands, carrying with him the treasures of his cathedral.

[51] This broke the hostile phalanx: the country submitted to Christian, and the consequence was the introduction into Norway of the same doctrine and Church constitution which had already been established among the Danes.

Iceland was the farthest possession of the Danish crown towards the north. That little island, it might have been thought, was too insignificant to be struggled for; but, in truth, the powers of superstition fought as stout a battle to preserve it as they have waged for many an ampler and fairer domain. The first attempts at Reformation were made by Augmund, Bishop of Skalholt. Dismayed, however,

¹⁷ Among the learned foreigners who taught in the University of Copenhagen, Gerdesius specially mentions John Macabaeus or M' Alpine, of the Scottish clan M' Alpine, who had been a student at Wittenberg, and "a man of great learning and piety." (Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 416, 417. *Vinding, Descript. Acad Hafniae*, pp. 71-73.)

¹⁸ Seckendorf, lib. 3, sec. 75, pp. 242, 243. Gerdesius, tom. 3, pp. 414, 415.

by the determined front which the priests presented, Augmund abdicated his office, to escape their wrath, and retired into private life.¹⁹ In the following year (1540) Huetsfeld was sent thither by the king to induct Gisser Enerson, who had been a student at Wittemberg, into the See of Skalholt.²⁰ Under Enerson the work began in earnest. It advanced slowly, however, for the opposition was strong. The priests plotted and the mobs repeatedly broke into tumult. Day by day, however, the truth struck its roots deeper among the people, and at last the same doctrine and ecclesiastical constitution which had been embraced in Denmark were received by the Icelanders;²¹ and thus this island of the sea was added to the domains over which the sun of the Reformation already shed his beams, as if to afford early augury that not a shore is there which this light will not visit, nor an islet in all the main which it will not clothe with the fruits of righteousness, and make vocal with the songs of salvation.

¹⁹Cragius, *Annal. Christ.*, tom. 3, p. 203.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 218. Seckendorf, *lib. 3, sec. 75*, p. 242.

²¹Cragius, *ad ann. 1548. Pantoppidan, ad ann. 1547 - ex Gerdesio*, tom. 3, p. 416.

**Book 11: Protestantism in Switzerland
from its Establishment in Zurich (1525) to
the Death of Zwingli (1531)**

Chapter 1: Zwingli - His Doctrine of the Lord's Supper

Turn Southward—Switzerland—Reformation from Above—Ulric Zwingli—His Preparation—Resume of his Career—The Foreign Service—The Gospel the Cure of his Nation's Evils—Zwingli at Zurich—His varied Qualities—Transformation of Switzerland—A Catastrophe near—The Lord's Supper—Transubstantiation—Luther's Views—Calvin's Views, Import of the Lord's Supper on the Human Side, Its Import on the Divine Side—Zwingli's Avoidance of the two Extremes as regards the Lord's Supper

Picture: Return of the Swiss from the Battle of Pavia.

Picture: View in Bern.

Following in the track of the light, we have reached our farthest limit toward the north. We now turn southward to those lands where the Reformation had its first rise, and where it fought its greatest battles. There every step it took was amidst stakes and scaffolds, but if there its course was the more tragic, its influence was the more powerful, and the changes it effected the more lasting. In France thousands of confessors and martyrs are about to step upon the stage, and act their part in the great drama; but first we must turn aside to Switzerland, and resuming our narrative at the point where we dropped it, we shall carry it forward to the death of Zwingli.

We have traced in former pages the dawn of Protestantism among the hills of Helvetia. Not from Germany, for the name of Luther had not yet been heard in Switzerland; not from France, nor any neighboring country, but from the skies, it may be truly said, the light first shone upon the Swiss. From a herdsman's cottage in the valley of the Tockenurg came their Reformer, Ulric Zwingli. When a child he was wont to sit by the evening's hearth and listen with rapt attention to the histories of the Bible recited by his pious grandmother. As years passed on and his powers expanded he found

access to the book itself, and made it his daily study. The light broke upon his soul. Continuing to read, it shone clearer every day. At last, but not till years after, his eyes were fully opened, he saw the glory of the Gospel, and bade a final adieu to Rome.

[52]

Personal contact with evil can alone give that sense of its malignity, and that burning detestation of it, which will prompt one to a life-long struggle for its overthrow. We can trace this principle in the orderings of Zwingle's lot. He was destined to spend his days in constant battle with two terrible evils that were tarnishing his country's fame, and extinguishing his country's virtue. But reared in the Tockenburg, artless and simple as its shepherds, he was not yet fit for his destined work, and had to be sent to school. We refer to other schools than those of Basle and Vienna, where he was initiated into the language and philosophy of the ancients. First stationed at Glarus, he there was brought into contact with the horrors of the foreign service. He had daily before his eyes the widows and orphans of the men who had been drawn by French and Italian gold across the Alps and slaughtered; and there, too, he saw a not less affecting sight, the maimed and emaciated forms of those who, escaping the sword, had brought back to their country worse evils than wounds, even the vices of corrupt and luxurious nations. At Einsiedeln, to which by-and-by he removed, he received his second lesson. There he had occasion to mark the ravages which pilgrimages and image-worship inflict upon the conscience and the morals. He had time to meditate on these two great evils. He resolved to spare no effort to uproot them. But his trust for success in this work was solely in the Gospel. This alone could dispel the darkness in which pilgrimages with all their attendant abominations had their rise, and this alone could extinguish that love of gold which was draining at once the blood and the virtue of his countrymen. Other and subsidiary aids would come in their time to assist in this great battle; but the Gospel must come first. He would teach the individual Swiss to bow before a holy altar, and to sit at a pure hearth; and this in due time would pour a current of fresh blood into the veins of the State. Then the virtue of old days would revive, and their glorious valleys would again be trodden by men capable of renewing the heroic deeds of their sires. But the seed of Divine truth must be scattered over the worn-out soil before fruits like these could flourish in it. These were

the views that led to the striking union of the pastor and the patriot which Zwingle presents to us. The aim of his Reform, wider in its direct scope than that of Germany, embraced both Church and State, the latter through the former. It was not because he trusted the Gospel less, but because he trusted it more, and saw it to be the one fruitful source of all terrestrial virtues and blessings, and because he more freely interpreted his mission as a Reformer, and as a member of a republic felt himself more thoroughly identified with his country, and more responsible for its failings, than it is possible for a subject of an empire to do, that he chalked out for himself this course and pursued it so steadfastly. He sought to restore to the individual piety, to the nation virtue, and both he would derive from the same fountain - the Gospel.

Having seen and pondered over the two lessons put before him, Zwingle was now prepared for his work. A vacancy occurred in the Cathedralchurch of Zurich. The revival of letters had reached that city, and the magistrates cast their eyes around them for some one of greater accomplishments than the chapter could supply to fill the post. Their choice fell on the Chaplain of Einsiedeln. Zwingle brought to Zurich a soul enlightened by Divine truth, a genius which solitude had nursed into ardour and sublimity, and a heart burning with indignation at the authors of his nation's ruin. He firmly resolved to use his eloquence, which was great, in rousing his countrymen to a sense of their degradation. He now stood at the center of the Republic, and his voice sounded in thrilling tones through all Switzerland. He proceeded step by step, taking care that his actual reforms did not outrun the stage of enlightenment his countrymen had reached. He shone equally as a pastor as a writer and as a disputant. He was alike at home in the council-chamber, in the public assembly, and in the hall of business. His activity was untiring. His clear penetrating intellect and capacious mind made toil light, and enabled him to accomplish the work of many men. The light spread around him, other Reformers arose. It was now as when morning opens in that same Swiss land: it is not Mont Blanc that stands up in solitary radiance; a dozen and a dozen peaks around him begin to burn, and soon not a summit far or near but is touched with glory, and not a valley, however profound, into which day does not pour the tide of its effulgence. So did the sky of Switzerland begin to

kindle all round with the Protestant dawn. Towns and hamlets came out of the darkness - the long and deep darkness of monkery - and stood forth in the light. The great centers, Bern (1528), Basle (1529), Schaffhausen (1529), St. Gall (1528), abandoned Rome and embraced the Gospel. Along the foot of the Jura, around the shores of the lakes, east and west of Northern Switzerland, from the gates of Geneva to the shores of Constance did the light spread. The altars on which mass had been offered were overturned; the idols burned like other wood; cowls, frocks, beads, and pardons were cast away as so much rubbish; the lighted candles were blown out and men turned to the living lamp of the Word. Its light led them to the cross whereon was offered, once for all, the sacrifice of the Eternal Priest.

[53]

We halted in our narrative at what might be termed the noon of the Zwinglian Reformation. We saw Protestantism fully established in Zurich, and partially in the cantons named above; but the man who had had the honour to begin the work was not to have the honour of completing it; his brilliant career was soon to close; already there were signs of tempest upon the summit of the Helvetian mountains; by-and-by the storm will burst and obscure for a time - not destroy the great work which the Reformer of Zurich had originated. The catastrophe which is but a little way before us must be our second stage in the Swiss Reformation.

The last time Zwingle came before us was at Marburg in 1529, where we find him maintaining against Luther the spirituality of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Before resuming our narrative of events it becomes necessary to explain the position of Zwingle, with reference to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and this requires us to consider the views on this head held by Luther and Calvin. It is possible clearly to perceive the precise doctrine of the Sacrament taught by any one of these great men only when we have compared the views of all three.

The Lord's Supper began early to be corrupted in the primitive Church. The simple memorial was changed into a mystery. That mystery became, century by century, more awful and inexplicable. It was made to stand apart from other ordinances and services of the Church, not only in respect of the greater reverence with which it was regarded, but as an institution in its own nature wholly distinct, and altogether peculiar in its mode of working. A secret virtue or

potency was attributed to it, by which, apart from the faith of the recipient, it operated mysteriously upon the soul. It was no longer an ordinance, it was now a spell, a charm. The spirit of ancient paganism had crept back into it, and ejecting the Holy Spirit, which acts through it in the case of all who believe, it had filled it with a magical influence. The Lord's Supper was the institution nearest the cross, and the spirit of reviving error in seizing upon it was actuated doubtless by the consideration that the perversion of this institution was the readiest and most effectual way to shut up or poison the fountain of the world's salvation. The corruption went on till it issued, in 1215, in the dogma of transubstantiation. The bread and wine which were set upon the Communion tables of the first century became, by the fiat of Innocent III., flesh and blood on the altars of the thirteenth.

Despite that the dogma of transubstantiation is opposed to Scripture, contradicts reason, and outrages all our senses, there is about it, we are compelled to conclude, some extraordinary power to hold captive the mind. Luther, who razed to the ground every other part of the Romish system, left this one standing. He had not courage to cast it down; he continued to his life's end to believe in consubstantiation - that is, in the presence of the flesh and blood of Christ with, in, or under the bread and wine. He strove, no doubt, to purify his belief from the gross materialism of the Romish mass. He denied that the Lord's Supper was a sacrifice, or that the body of Christ in the elements was to be worshipped; but he maintained that the body was there, and was received by the communicant. The union of the Divinity with the humanity in Christ's person gave to His glorified body, he held, new and wholly unearthly qualities. It made it independent of space, it endowed it with ubiquity; and when Zwingle, at Marburg, argued in reply that this was opposed to all the laws of matter, which necessitated a body to be in only one place at one time, Luther scouted the objection as being merely mathematical. The Reformer of Wittemberg did not seem to perceive that fatal consequences would result in other directions, from asserting such a change upon the body of Christ as he maintained to be wrought upon it in virtue of its union with the Divinity, for undoubtedly such a theory imperils the reality of the two great facts which are the

foundations of the Christian system, the death and the resurrection of our Lord.

Nor was it Luther only who did homage to this dogma. A yet more powerful intellect, Calvin namely, was not able wholly to disenthral himself from its influence, he believed, it is true, neither in transubstantiation nor in consubstantiation, but he hesitated to admit the thorough, pure spirituality of the Lord's Supper. He teaches that the communicant receives Christ, who is spiritually present, only by his faith; but he talks vaguely, withal, as if he conceived of an emanation or influence radiated from the glorified humanity now at the Right hand, entering into the soul of the believer, and implanting there the germ of a glorified humanity like to that of his risen Lord. In this scarcely intelligible idea there may be more than the lingering influence of the mysticism of bygone ages. We can trace in it a desire on the part of Calvin to approximate as nearly as possible the standpoint of the Lutherans, if so he might close the breach which divided and weakened the two great bodies of Protestants, and rally into one host all the forces of the Reformation in the face of a yet powerful Papacy. [54]

Zwingle has more successfully extricated the spiritual from the mystical in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper than either Luther or Calvin. His sentiments were a recoil from the mysticism and absurdity which, from an early age, had been gathering round this Sacrament, and which had reached their height in the Popish doctrine of the mass.

Some have maintained that the recoil went too far, that Zwingle fell into the error of excessive simplicity, and that he reduced the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to a mere memorial or commemoration service. His earliest statements (1525) on the doctrine of the Sacraments, and especially the Eucharist, may be open to this objection; but not so his latter teachings (1530), we are disposed to think. He returned to the golden mean, avoiding both extremes - neither attributing to the Sacrament a mystical or magical efficacy, on the one hand, nor making it a bare and naked sign of a past event on the other.

In order to understand his views, and see their accordance with Scripture, we must attend a moment to the nature and design of the Lord's Supper as seen in its institution. The primary end and

significance of the Lord's Supper is a commemoration: "Do this in remembrance of me." But the event commemorated is of such a kind, and our relation to it is of such a nature, that the commemoration of it necessarily implies more than mere remembrance. We are commemorating a "death" which was endured in our room, and is all expiation of our sin; we, therefore, cannot commemorate it to the end in view but in faith. We rest upon it as the ground of our eternal life; we thus receive his "flesh and blood" - that is, the spiritual blessings his death procured. Nay, more, by a public act we place ourselves in the ranks of his followers. We promise or vow allegiance to him. This much, and no more, is done on the human side.

[55] We turn to the Divine side. What is signified and done here must also be modified and determined by the nature of the transaction. The bread and wine in the Eucharist, being the representatives of the body and blood of Christ, are the symbols of an eternal redemption. In placing these symbols before us, and inviting us to partake of them, God puts before us and offers unto us that redemption. We receive it by faith, and he applies it to us and works it in us by his Spirit. Thus the Supper becomes at once a sign and a seal. Like the "blood" on the door-post of the Israelite, it is a "token" between God and us, for from the Passover the Lord's Supper is historically descended, and the intent and efficacy of the former, infinitely heightened, live in the latter. This, in our view, exhausts, both on the Divine and on the human side, all which the principles of the Word of God warrant us to hold in reference to the Eucharist; and if we attempt to put more into it, that more, should we closely examine it, will be found to be not spiritual but magical.

Zwingle's grand maxim as a Reformer eminently was the authority of Holy Scripture. Luther rejected nothing in the worship of God unless it was condemned in the Bible: Zwingle admitted nothing unless it was enjoined. Following his maxim, Zwingle, forgetting all human glosses,

Papal edicts, and the mysticism of the schools, came straight to the New Testament, directed his gaze steadfastly and exclusively upon its pages, and gathered from thence what the Lord's Supper really meant. He found that on the human side it was a "commemoration" and a "pledge," and on the Divine side a "sign" and "seal."

Further, the instrumentality on the part of man by which he receives the blessing represented is faith; and the agency on the part of God, by which that blessing is conveyed and applied, is the Holy Spirit.

Such was the Lord's Supper as Ulric Zwingle found it in the original institution. He purged it from every vestige of mysticism and materialism; but he left its spiritual efficacy unimpaired and perfect.

Chapter 2: Disputation at Baden and its Results

Alarm of the Romanists—Resolve to Strike a great Blow—They propose a Public Disputation—Eck chosen as Romanist Champion—Zwingle Refused Leave to go to Baden—Martyrs—Arrival of the Deputies—Magnificent Dresses of the Romish Disputants—The Protestant Deputies—Personal Appearance of Eck and Ecolampadius—Points Debated—Eck Claims the Victory—The Protestants Gather the Fruits—Zwingle kept Informed of the Process of the Debate—Clever Device—A Comedy—Counsels Frustrated—Eck and Charles V. Helping the Reformation

The victories that we narrated in a foregoing Book of this History (Book 8.) caused the utmost alarm among the partisans of the Papacy. The movement, first despised by them, and next half welcomed as holding out the hope of a little pleasurable excitement, had now grown to such a head that it threatened to lay in the dust the whole stately fabric of their riches and power. They must go wisely to work, and strike such a blow as would sweep Zwingle and his movement from the soil of Helvetia. This, said they, making sure of their victory before winning it, will react favorably on Germany. The torrent once stemmed, the waters of heresy will retreat to the abyss whence they issued, and the “everlasting hills” of the old faith, which the deluge threatened to overtop, will once more lift up their heads stable and majestic as ever.

An event that happened in the political world helped yet further to impress upon the Romanists the necessity of some instant and vigorous step. The terrible battle of Pavia projected a dark shadow upon Switzerland, but shed a gleam of popularity on Zwingle, and indirectly on the Reformation. A numerous body of Swiss mercenaries had fought on that bloody field. From five to six thousand of their corpses swelled its slain, and five thousand were taken alive and made prisoners. These were afterwards released and sent home,

but in what a plight! Their arms lopped off, their faces seamed and scarred; many, through hunger and faintness, dying by the way, and the rest arriving in rags! Not only was it that these spectacles of horror wandered over the land, but from every city and hamlet arose the wail of widow and the cry of orphan. What the poet said of Albion might now be applied to Helvetia:

“Our isle be made a nourish of salt tears, And none but women left to wail the dead.”¹

In that day of their sore calamity the people remembered how often Zwingli had thundered against the foreign service from the pulpit. He had been, they now saw, their best friend, their truest patriot; and the Popish cantons envied Zurich, which mainly through Zwingli's influence had wholly escaped, or suffered but slightly, from a stroke which had fallen with such stunning force upon themselves.

The Romanists saw the favorable impression that was being made upon the popular sentiment, and bethought them by what means they might counteract it. The wiser among them reflected, on the one hand, how little progress they were making in the suppression of Lutheranism by beheading and burning its disciples; and, on the other, how much advantage Zwingli had gained from the religious disputation at Zurich. “They deliberated,” says Bullinger, “day and night,” and at last came to the conclusion that the right course was to hold a public disputation, and conquer the Reformation by its own weapons - leaving its truth out of their calculations. They would so arrange beforehand as to make sure of the victory, by selecting the fitting place at which to hold the disputation, and the right men to decide between the controversialists. The scheme promised to be attended with yet another advantage, although they took care to say nothing about it, unless to those they could absolutely trust. Zwingli, of course, would come to the conference. He would be in their power. They could condemn and burn him, and the death of its champion would be the death of the movement.²

Accordingly at a Diet held at Lucerne, the 15th January, 1526, the Five Cantons - Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, Appenzell, and Friburg

¹Shakespeare, 1 Henry VI., act 1, scene 1.

²Christoffel, p. 224.

- resolved on a disputation, and agreed that it should take place at Bern. The Bernese, however, declined the honour. Basle was then selected as the next most suitable, being a university seat, and boasting the residence within it of many learned men. But Basle was as little covetous of the honour as Bern.

[57] After a good deal of negotiating, it was concluded to hold the disputation at Baden on the 16th May, 1526. ³

This being settled, the cantons looked around them for powerful champions to do battle for the old faith. One illustrious champion, who had figured not without glory on the early fields of the Reformation, still survived Dr. Eck, Vice-Chancellor of Ingolstadt. Our readers have not forgotten the day of Leipsic, where Eck encountered Luther, and foiled him, as he boasted; but finding Luther perversely blind to his defeat, he went to Rome, and returned with the bull of Leo X. to burn the man who had no right to live after having been confuted by Eck. Dr. Eck was a man of undoubted learning, of unrivalled volubility - in short, the best swordsman Rome had then at her service. The choice of the Popish cantons unanimously fell on this veteran.

Eck was to reap from this passage-at-arms more solid laurels than mere fame. On the side of Rome the battle had begun to be maintained largely by money. The higher clergy in Suabia and Switzerland piously taxed themselves for this laudable object. The Suabian League and the Archduke of Austria raised money to hire the services of men willing and able to fight in these campaigns. There was no reason why the doctor of Ingolstadt should give his time, and endanger, if not life, yet those hard-won honors that made life sweet, without a reasonable recompense. Eck was to be handsomely paid; ⁴ for, says Bullinger, quoting a very old precedent, "he loved the wages of unrighteousness." The doctor of Ingolstadt accepted the combat, and with it victory, its inseparable consequence as he deemed it. Writing to the Confederate deputies at Baden, Dr. Eck says, "I am full of confidence that I shall, with little trouble, maintain against Zwingle our old true Christian faith and customs to be accordant with Holy Scripture," and then with a scorn justifiable,

³Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 275.

⁴Christoffel, p. 225.

it may be, in so great a personage as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ingolstadt, when descending into the arena to meet the son of the shepherd of the Tockenburg, he says, "Zwingle no doubt has milked more cows than he has read books."⁵

But Dr. Eck was not to encounter Zwingle at Baden. The Council of Zurich refused leave to their pastor to go to the conference. Whispers had come to the ears of their Excellencies that the Romanists intended to employ other weapons besides argument. The place where the conference was to be held was of evil omen; for at Baden the blood of the Wirths⁶ was yet scarcely dry; and there the Popish cantons were all-powerful. Even Eck, with whom Zwingle was to dispute, had proclaimed the futility of fighting against such heretics as the preacher of Zurich with any other weapons than "fire and sword."⁷ So far as the "fire" could reach him it had already been employed against Zwingle; for they had burned his books at Friburg and his effigy at Lucerne. He was ready to meet at Zurich their entire controversial phalanx from its Goliath downwards, and the magistrates would have welcomed such meeting; but send him to Baden the council would not, for that was to send him not to dispute, but to die.

In coming to this conclusion the lords of Zurich transgressed no law of charity, and their conclusion, hard though it was, did the Romanists of Switzerland no wrong. Wherever at this hour they looked in the surrounding cantons and provinces, what did they see? Stakes and victims. The men who were so eager to argue at Baden showed no relish for so tedious a process where they could employ the more summary one of the sack and rope. At Lucerne, Henry Messberg was thrown into the lake for speaking against the nuns; and John Nagel was burned alive for sowing "Zwinglian tenets." At Schwitz, Eberhard Polt of Lachen, and a priest of the same place, suffered death by burning for speaking against the ceremonies. At the same time Peter Spongier, a Protestant minister, was drowned at Friburg by order of the Bishop of Constance. Nor did the man who had won so many laurels in debate, disdain adding thereto the honors of the executioner. But a short week before the conference at Baden,

⁵Zwing. *Opp.*, tom. 2, p. 405.

⁶See ante, bk. 8, chap. 15.

⁷Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 276.

Eck presided over a consistory which met in the market-place of Mersburg, and condemned to the flames as a heretic John Hugel, the Pastor of Lindau. The martyr went to the stake singing the *Te Deum*, and was heard amid the fires offering the prayer, "Father, forgive them."⁸

[58] When the appointed day came the deputies began to arrive. Twelve cantons of the Confederacy sent each a representative. Zurich had received no invitation and sent no deputy. The Bishops of Constance, of Coire, of Lausanne, and of Basle were also represented at the conference. Eck came attended by Faber, the college companion of Zwingle,⁹ and Thomas Murner, a monk of the order of the Carmelites. The list of Protestant controversialists was a modest one, embracing only the names of Ecolampadius from Basle, and Haller from Bern. In neither of these two cities was the Reformation as yet (1526) established, but the conference just opening was destined to give a powerful impulse to Protestantism in both of them. In Bern and Basle it halted meanwhile; but from this day the Reformation was to resume its march in these cities, and pause only when it had reached the goal. Could the Romanists have foreseen this result, they would have been a little less zealous in the affair of the conference. If the arguments of the Popish deputies should prove as strong as their dresses were magnificent, there could be no question with whom would remain the victory. Eck and his following of prelates, magistrates, and doctors came robed in garments of damask and silk. They wore gold chains round their necks; crosses reposed softly and piously on their breasts; their fingers glittered and burned with precious jewels;¹⁰ and their measured step and uplifted countenances were such as beseeemed the bravery of their apparel. If the plays of our great dramatist had been then in existence, and if the men now assembling at Baden had been a troupe of tragedians, who had been hired to act them, nothing could have been in better taste; but fine robes were slender qualifications for a discussion which had for its object the selection and adoption of those principles on which the Churches and kingdoms of the future were to be constructed. In the eyes of the populace, the Reformers, in comparison with the

⁸Ibid., p. 278. Christoffel, p. 229.

⁹See ante, bk. 8, chap. 5.

¹⁰Bullinger, Chron., tom. 1, p. 351.

men in damask, were but as a company of mendicants. The two were not more different in dress than in their way of living. Eck and his friends lodged at the Baden parsonage, where the wine, provided by the Abbot of Wettingen, was excellent. It was supplied without stint, and used not less so. ¹¹ Ecolampadius put up at the Pike Inn. His meals were quickly dispatched, and the landlord, wondering how he occupied his time in his room, peered in, and found him reading or praying. "A heretic, doubtless," said he, "but a pious one withal."

Eck was still the same man we saw him at Leipsic - his shoulders as broad, his voice as Stentorian, and his manner as violent. If the logic of his argument halted, he helped it with a vigorous stamp of his foot, and, as a contemporary poet of Bern relates, an occasional oath. In striking contrast to his porter-like figure, was the tall, thin, dignified form of his opponent Ecolampadius. Some of the Roman Catholics, says Bullinger, could not help wishing that the "sallow man," so calm, yet so firm and so majestic, were on "their side."

It is unnecessary to give any outline of the disputation. The ground traversed was the same which had been repeatedly gone over. The points debated were those of the real presence, the sacrifice of the mass, the adoration of Mary and the saints, worshipping by images, and purgatory, with a few minor questions. ¹² The contest lasted eighteen days. "Every day the clergy of Baden," says Ruchat, "walked in solemn procession, and chanted litanies, to have good success in the disputation." ¹³ Eck revelled in the combat, and when it had ended he claimed the victory, and took care to have the great news published through the Confederacy, exciting in the Popish cantons the lively hope of the instant restoration of the old faith to its former glory. But the question is, who gathered the spoils? We can have no difficulty in answering that question when we think of the fresh life imparted to Bern and Basle, and the rapid strides with which, from this time forward, they and other cities advanced to the establishment of their Reformation.

Eck felt the weight of Zwingle's arm, although the Reformer was not present in person. The Popish party, having appointed four secretaries to make a faithful record of the conference, prohibited

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 281.

¹³ Ibid., p. 282.

all others from taking notes of the debate, under no less a penalty than death. Yet, despite this stern law, evening by evening Zwingle was told how the fight had gone, and was able, morning by morning, to send his advice to his friends how to set the battle in order for the day. It was cleverly done. A student from the Vallais, Jerome Walsch, who professed to be using the baths of Baden, attended the conference, and every evening wrote down from memory the course the argument had taken that day. Two students did the office of messenger by turns. Arriving at Zurich overnight, they handed Walsch's notes, together with the letters of Ecolampadius, to Zwingle, and were back at Baden next morning with the Reformer's answer. To lull the suspicions of the armed sentries at the gates, who had been ordered to keep a strict watch, they carried on their heads baskets of poultry. Even theologians, they hinted, must eat. If Dr. Eck, and the worthy divines with him, should go without their dinner, they would not be answerable for what might happen to the good cause of Romanism, or to those who should take it upon them to stop the supplies. Thus they came and went without its being suspected on what errand they journeyed.

[59] After the serious business of the conference, there came a little comedy. In the train of the doctor of Ingolstadt, as we have already said, came Thomas Murner, monk and lecturer at Lucerne. The deputies of the cantons had just given judgment for Eck, to the effect that he had triumphed in the debate, and crushed the Zwinglian heresy. But Murner, aspiring to the honour of slaying the slain, rose, in presence of the whole assembly, and read forty charges, which, putting body and goods in pledge, he offered to make good against Zwingle. No one thought it worth while to reply. Whereupon the Cordelier continued, "I thought the coward would crone, but he has not shown face. I declare forty times, by every law human and divine, that the tyrant of Zurich and all his followers are knaves, liars, perjurers, adulterers, infidels, thieves, sacrileges, gaol-birds, and such that no honest man without blushing can keep company with them."¹⁴ Having so spoken he sat down, and the Diet was at an end.

¹⁴Ruchat. tom. 1, p. 287. Christoffel p. 231.

Thus we behold, at nearly the same moment, on two stages widely apart, measures taken to suppress Protestantism, which, in their results, help above all things to establish it. In the little town of Baden we see the deputies of the cantons and the representatives of the bishops assembling to confute the Zwinglians, and vote the extinction of the Reform movement in Switzerland. Far away beyond the Pyrenees we see (March, 1526) the Emperor Charles sitting down in the Moorish Alcazar at Seville, and indicting a letter to his brother Archduke Ferdinand, commanding him to summon a Diet at Siftres, to execute the Edict of Worms. The disputation at Baden led very directly, as we shall immediately see, to the establishment of Protestantism in the two important cantons of Bern and Basic. And the Diet of Spires (1526), instead of an edict of proscription, produced, as we have already seen an edict of toleration in favor of the Reformation. The Chancellor of the University of Ingolstadt and the head of the Holy Roman Empire, acting without concert, and certainly not designing what they accomplish, unite their powerful aids in helping onward the cause of the world's emancipation. There is One who overrules their counsels, and makes use of them to overthrow that which they wish to uphold, and protect that which they seek to destroy.

Chapter 3: Outbreak and Suppression of Anabaptism in Switzerland

Rise of Anabaptism in Switzerland—Thomas Munzer—His First Disciples, Grebel and Manx—Summary of their Opinions—Their Manners and Morals—Zwingle Commanded to Dispute with them—Coercive Measures—Anabaptism extends to other Cantons—John Schuker and his Family—Horrible Tragedy—Manx—His Seditious Acts—Sentenced to be Drowned in the Lake of Zurich—Execution of Sentence—These Severities Disapproved of by Zwingle—The Fanaticism Extinguished by the Gospel, A Purification of the Swiss Church, Zwingle’s Views on Baptism Matured thereby

Picture: The Student Messengers arriving at Baden with Letters from Zwingle.

Picture: The Protestant Cavalcade on the way to Bern.

The river of Reform was rolling its bounteous floods onward and diffusing verdure over the barren lands, when suddenly a foul and poisoned rivulet sought to discharge itself into it. Had this latter corrupted the great stream with which it seemed on the point of mingling, death and not life would have been imparted to the nations of Christendom. Zwingle foresaw the evil, and his next labor was to prevent so terrible a disaster befalling the world; and his efforts in this important matter claim our attention before proceeding to trace the influence of the Baden disputation on the two powerful cantons of Bern and Basle.

Zwingle was busy, as we have seen, combating the Papal foe in front, when the Anabaptist enemy suddenly started up and attacked him in the rear. We have already detailed the deplorable tragedies to which this fanatical sect gave birth in Germany.¹ They were about to vent the same impieties and enact the same abominable excesses on the soil of Switzerland which had created so much misery elsewhere.

¹See ante, bk. 9.

This sect was rather an importation than a native growth of Helvetia. The notorious Thomas Munzer, thrown upon the Swiss frontier by the storms of the peasant-war in Germany, brought with him his peculiar doctrines to sow them among the followers of Zwingle. He found a few unstable minds prepared to receive them, in particular Conrad Grebel, of an ancient Swiss family, and Felix Manx, the son of a prebend. These two were Munzer's first disciples, and afterwards leaders of the sect. They had been excellently educated, but were men of loose principles and licentious lives. To these persons others by-and-by joined themselves.²

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These men came to Zwingle and said to him, "Let us found a Church in which there shall be no sin." Grebel and Manx had a way peculiar to themselves of forming an immaculate society. Their method, less rare than it looks, was simply to change all the vices into virtues, and thus indulgence in them would imply no guilt and leave no stain. This was a method of attaining sinlessness in which Zwingle could not concur, being unable to reconcile it with the Gospel precept which says that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present evil world." "In whatever crime or vice they are taken," said Zwingle, "their defense is ever the same: I have not sinned; I am no more in the flesh, but in the spirit; I am dead to the flesh, and the flesh is dead to me." The wisdom of Zwingle's reply to Grebel's proposal was as great as its words were few. "We cannot," said he, "make a heaven upon earth."³

Re baptism was rather the badge than the creed of this sect. Under the spiritual pretext of emancipation from the flesh, they denied the office and declined the authority of the pastors of the Church and of the magistrates of the State.⁴ Under the same pretext of spirituality they claimed a release from every personal virtue and all social obligations. They dealt in the same way with the Bible. They had a light within which sufficed for their guidance, and made them independent of the Word without. Some of them threw the book into the fire saying, "The letter killeth." "Infant baptism," said

²Ruchat. tom. 1, pp. 231,232. Christoffel, pp. 249, 250.

³Zwing. Opp., tom. 2, p. 231, and tom. 3, p. 362.

⁴Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 234.

they, “is a horrible abomination, a flagrant impiety, invented by the evil spirit and Pope Nicholas of Rome.”⁵

[62] The freaks and excesses in which they began to indulge were very extraordinary, and resembled those of men whose wits are disordered. They would form themselves in a ring on the street, dance, sing songs, and tumble each other about in the dust. At other times, putting on sackcloth, and strewing ashes on their heads, they would rush through the streets, bearing lighted torches, and uttering dismal cries, “Woe! woe! yet forty days and Zurich shall be destroyed.”⁶ Others professed to have received revelations from the Holy Spirit. Others interrupted the public worship by standing up in the midst of the congregation and proclaiming aloud, “I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” They held from time to time nocturnal revels, at which psalms and jovial ballads were sung alternately, and this they called “setting up the Lord’s table.” Fourteen of their number were apprehended by the magistrates, contrary to Zwingle’s advice, shut up in the Heretics’ Tower, and fed on bread and water. On the fourteenth day “an angel opened their prison door and led them forth.”⁷ Contrary to what happened in Peter’s case, with which they compared their deliverance, the angel found it necessary to remove certain planks before he could effect their liberation.

The magistrates, alarmed for the public peace, ordered Zwingle to hold a disputation with them. The conference took place on the 17th January, 1525. Zwingle’s victory was complete, and the magistrates followed it up by an edict, ordering all infants to be baptized within eight days.⁸ The fanatics no more gave obedience to the command of the magistrates than submission to the arguments of Zwingle. They neither brought their children to be baptized nor abjured their opinions. A second disputation, was enjoined by the council. It was held in the March of the same year, but with the same results. Victory or defeat came alike to men who had resolved to adhere to their beliefs whatever arguments might be brought in refutation of them.

⁵Hottinger, tom. 3, p. 219. Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 232.

⁶Ruchat, 1, pp. 232, 233.

⁷Ibid., p. 234.

⁸Ibid., p. 233.

Severer measures were now adopted against them. Some were imprisoned; others were banished from the canton. Zwingli disapproved of these coercive remedies, and the event justified his wisdom. Persecution but inflamed their zeal, and their dispersion carried the fire to other cantons. In St. Gall their numbers were reckoned at 800; in the canton of Appenzell at 1,200. They extended also to Schaffhausen and the Grisons, where they gave rise to disorders. Two of the sect undertook to go and preach in the Popish canton of Schwitz; the unhappy creatures were seized and burned. They died calling on the name of the Savior.⁹

In some cases fanaticism developed into madness; and that madness gave birth to atrocious deeds which did more to open the eyes of the people, and banish this sect from the soil of Switzerland, than all the punishments with which the magistrates pursued it. One melancholy and most revolting instance has come down to us. In a solitary house in the canton of St. Gall there lived an aged farmer, John Schuker, who, with his family and servants, had received the "new baptism." Two of his sons were specially noted for the warmth of their zeal. On Shrove Tuesday the father killed a calf and invited his Anabaptist friends to the feast. The company, the wine, the fanatical harangues and visionary revelations in which the night was spent, would seem to have upset the reason of one of the sons. His features haggard, his eyes rolling wildly, and speaking with hollow voice, he approached his brother, Leonard, with the gall of the calf in the bladder, and thus addressed him, "Bitter as gall is the death thou shalt die." He then ordered him to kneel down. Leonard obeyed. A presentiment of evil seized the company. They bade the wretched man beware what he did. "Nothing will happen," he replied, "but the will of the Father." Turning to his brother, who was still kneeling before him, and hastily seizing a sword, he severed his head from his body at a single blow. The spectators were horror-struck. The headless corpse and the blood-stained maniac were terrible sights. They had witnessed a crime like that of Cain. Groans and wailings succeeded to the fanatical orisons in which the night had been spent. Quickly over the country flew the news of the awful deed. The wretched fratricide escaping from the house, half naked, the reeking

⁹Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 234, 235.

sword in his hand, and posting with rapid steps through hamlet and village to St. Gall, to proclaim with maniac gestures and frenzied voice “the day of the Lord,” exhibited in his own person an awful example of the baleful issues in which the Anabaptist enthusiasm was finding its consummation. It was now showing itself to men with the brand of Cain on its brow. The miserable man was seized and beheaded. ¹⁰

[63] This horrible occurrence was followed by a tragedy nearly as horrible. We have mentioned above the name of Manx, one of the leaders of the fanatics. This man the magistrates of Zurich sentenced to be drowned in the lake. In adjudging him to this fate they took account, not of his views on baptism, or any opinions strictly religious, but of his sentiments on civil government. Not only did he deny the authority of magistracy, but he gave practical effect to his tenets by teaching his followers to resist payment of legal dues, and by instigating them to acts of outrage and violence, he had been repeatedly imprisoned, but always returned to his former courses on being set at liberty. The popular indignation against the sect, intensified by the deed we have just narrated, and the danger in which Switzerland now stood, of becoming the theater of the same bloody tragedies which had been enacted in Germany the year before, would no longer permit the council to wink at the treasonable acts of Manx. He was again apprehended, and this time his imprisonment was followed by his condemnation. The sentence was carried out with due formality. He was accompanied to the water’s edge by his brother and mother, now an old woman, and the unacknowledged wife of the prebend. They exhorted him to constancy, but indeed he exhibited no signs of shrinking. They saw the executioner lead him into the boat; they saw him rowed out to deep water; they saw him taken up and flung into the lake; they heard the sullen plunge and saw the water close over him. The brother burst into tears, but the mother stood and witnessed all with dry eyes. ¹¹

In these proceedings Zwingle had no share. This fanatical outburst had affected him with profound sorrow. He knew it would be

¹⁰Bullinger, Chron., tom. 1, p. 324 - apud D’Aubigne, bk. 11, chap. 10. Christoffel, p. 285.

¹¹Hotringer, tom. 3, p. 385 - apud D’Aubigne, bk. 11, chap. 10. Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 332. Christoffel, p. 285.

said, "See what bitter fruits grow on the tree of Reform." But not only did he regard the reproach as unjust, he looked to the Gospel as the only instrumentality able to cope with this fanaticism. He pleaded with the magistrates to withhold their punishments, on the ground that the weapons of light were all that were needed to extirpate the evil. These Zwingle plied vigorously. The battle against Anabaptism cost him "more sweat," to use his own expression, than did his fight with the Papacy. But that sweat was not in vain. Mainly through his labours the torrent of Anabaptist fanaticism was arrested, and what threatened fatal disaster at the outset was converted into a blessing both to Zwingle and to the Protestant Church of Switzerland. The latter emerged from the tempest purified and strengthened. Instead of an accusation the Anabaptist outbreak was a justification of the Reformation. Zwingle's own views were deepened and purified by the controversy. He had been compelled to study the relation in which the Old and New Testaments stand to one another, and he came to see that under two names they are one book, that under two forms they are one revelation; and that as the transplanting of trees from the nursery to the open field neither alters their nature nor changes their uses, so the transplanting of the institutions of Divine revelation from the Old Testament, in the soil of which they were first set, into the New Testament or Gospel dispensation where they are permanently to flourish, has not in the least changed their nature and design, but has left them identically the same institutions: they embody the same principles and subserve the same ends. Baptism, he argued in short, is circumcision, and circumcision was baptism, under a different outward form.

Proceeding on this principle, the sum of what he maintained in all his disputations with the Anabaptists, and in all that he published from the press and the pulpit, was that inasmuch as circumcision was administered to infants under the Old Testament, it is clear that they were regarded as being, by their birth, members of the Church, and so entitled to the seal of the covenant. In like manner the children of professing parents under the New Testament are, by their birth, members of the Church, and entitled to have the Sacrament of baptism administered to them: that the water in baptism, like the blood in circumcision, denotes the removal of an inward impurity and the washing by the Spirit in order to salvation; and that as circumcision

bound to the observance of God's ordinances, so baptism imposes an obligation to a holy life. ¹²

¹²Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 237. Christoffel, pp. 272, 273.

Chapter 4: Establishment of Protestantism at Bern [64]

Bern prepares to Follow up the Baden Disputation—Resolves to institute a Conference—Summoned for January, 1528—Preparations and Invitations—The Popish Cantons Protest against holding the Conference—Charles V. Writes Forbidding it—Reply of the Bernese German Deputies—Journey of Swiss Deputies—Deputies in all 350—Church of the Cordeliers—Ten Theses—Convert at the Altar—Fete of St. Vincent—Matins and Vespers Unsung—The Magnificat Exchanged for a Mourning Hymn—Clergy Subscribe the Reformed Propositions—Mass, etc., Abolished—Reforming Laws—Act of Civic Grace—The Lord's Supper

Picture: Street in Bern.

Picture: Dr. Haller Dispensing the Lords Supper in Bern Cathedral.

The disputation at Baden had ended in the way we have already described. The champions engaged in it had returned to their homes. Eck, as his manner was, went back singing his own praises and loudly vaunting the great victory he had won. Ecolampadius had returned to Basle, and Haller to Bern, not at all displeased with the issue of the affair, though they said little. While the Romanist champions were filling Switzerland with their boastings, the Protestants quietly prepared to gather in the fruits.

The pastors, who from various parts of Switzerland had been present at the disputation, returned home, their courage greatly increased. Moreover, on arriving in their several spheres of labor they found a fresh interest awakened in the cause. The disputation had quickened the movement it was meant to crush. They must follow up their success before the minds of men had time to cool down. This was the purpose now entertained especially by Bern, the proudest and most powerful member of the Swiss Confederacy.

Bern had been halting for some time between two opinions. Ever as it took a few paces forward on the road of Reform, it would stop,

turn round, and cast lingering and regretful looks toward Rome. But now it resolved it would make its choice once for all between the Pope and Luther, between the mass and the Protestant sermon. In November, 1527, it summoned a Diet to debate the question. "Unhappy Helvetia," said some, "thus torn by religious opinions and conflicts. Alas! the hour when Zwingli introduced these new doctrines." But was the state of Switzerland so very sad that it might justly envy the condition of other countries? As the Swiss looked from his mountains he beheld the sky of Europe darkened with war-clouds all round. A fierce tempest had just laid the glory of Rome in the dust. Francis I. and Henry of England, with Milan, Venice, and Florence, were leaguings against the emperor. Charles was unsheathing his sword to spill more blood while that of recent battles was scarcely dry. The deep scars of internecine conflict and hate were yet fresh on the soil of Germany. Ferdinand of Austria was claiming the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, and fighting to rescue the provinces and inhabitants of Eastern Europe from the bloody scimitar of the Turk. Such was the state of Europe when the lords and citizens of Bern assembled in their Great Council on the Sabbath after Martinmas, 1527, resolved to institute in the beginning of the coming year a conference on religion, after the model of Zurich, to the intent "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." ¹

The preparations were on a scale commensurate with the rank of the city and the gravity of the affair. Invitations were sent to the four Bishops of Lausanne, Basle, Constance, and Sion, who were asked to be present either in person or by deputy, under penalty of the loss of all rights and revenues which they claimed within the canton of Bern in virtue of their episcopal dignity.

The Bernese sent to all the cantons and free towns of the Helvetic Confederacy, desiring them to send their theologians and learned men of both parties to the conference, to the end that, freely and without compulsion to any one, their common Confederacy might make profession of a common faith. They further ordered that

¹Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 361. Christoffel. p. 188.

all the pastors and cures in the canton should repair to Bern on the first Sunday of January, and assist at the conference from its opening to its close, under pain of deprivation of their benefices. Addressing the learned men of the State, "Come," said the lords of Bern, "we undertake for your safety, and guarantee you all liberty in the expression of your opinions."

One man was honoured with a special invitation, Thomas Murner namely, who, as our readers may recollect, gave so comic a close to the conference at Baden. His pleasantries threatened to become serious things indeed to the Swiss. He was daily scattering among the cantons the most virulent invectives against the Zwinglians, couched in brutal language, fitted only to kindle the fiercest passions and plunge the Confederacy into war. Their Excellencies did well in giving the Cordelier an opportunity of proving his charges in presence of the conference. Murner did not come himself, but took care to send a violent philippic against the Bernese.²

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The adherents of the old faith, with one accord, entered their protest against the holding of such a conference. They claimed to have won the victory at Baden, but it would seem they wished no more such victories. The four bishops came first with a strong remonstrance. The seven Popish cantons followed suit, conjuring the Bernese to desist from a project that was full of danger, and abide by a Church in which their fathers had been content to live and die: even the Emperor Charles wrote exhorting them to abandon their design and await the assembling of a General Council. "The settlement of the religious question," he added, "does not pertain to any one city or country, but to all Christians"³ - that is, practically to himself and the Pope. There could not possibly be stronger proofs of the importance the Romanists attached to the proposed conference, and the decisive influence it was likely to exert on the whole of Switzerland. The reply of the Bernese was calm and dignified. "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 shall only not depart from the Word of God."

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²Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 362.

³Ibid., pp. 363-368.

⁴Christoffel, p. 189.

All eyes were turned on Zwingli. From far and near clergy and learned men would be there, but Zwingli must take command of the army, he must be the Achilles of the fight. The youthful Haller and the grey-headed Kolb had done battle alone in Bern until now, but the action about to open required a surer eye and a sturdier arm. Haller wrote in pressing terms to this “best-beloved brother and champion in the cause of Christ,” that he would be pleased to come. “You know,” he said, “how much is here at stake, what shame, mockery, and disgrace would fall upon the Evangel and upon us if we were found not to be competent to the task. My brother, fail not.”⁵

To this grand conference there came deputies not from Switzerland only, but from many of the neighboring countries. On New Year’s Eve, 1528, more than a hundred clergy and learned men assembled at Zurich from Suabia, invitations having been sent to the towns of Southern Germany.⁶ The doctors of St. Gall, Schaffhausen, Glarus, Constance, Ulm, Lindau, Augsburg, and other places also repaired to the rendezvous at Zurich. On the following morning they all set out for Bern, and with them journeyed the deputies from Zurich - Zwingli, Burgomaster Roist, Conrad Pellican,⁷ Sebastien Hoffmeister, Gaspard Grossmann, a great number of the rural clergy, Conrad Schmidt, Commander of Kussnacht; Pierre Simmler, Prior of Kappel; and Henry Bullinger, Regent in the college, of the same place.⁸

At the head of the cavalcade rode the Burgomaster of Zurich, Roist. By his side were Zwingli and several of the councilors, also on horseback. The rest of the deputies followed. A little in advance of the company rode the town herald, but without his trumpet, for they wished to pass on without noise. The territory to be traversed on the way to Bern was owned by the Popish cantons. The deputies had asked a safe-conduct, but were refused. “There will be abundance of excellent game abroad,” was the news bruited through Popish Switzerland; “let us go a-hunting.” If they seriously meant what they said, their sport was spoiled by the armed escort that accompanied the

⁵Ibid., p. 188.

⁶Christoffel, p. 189.

⁷Superior of the Franciscans at Basle, and afterwards Professor of Divinity at Zurich. His exegetical powers enabled him to render great service to the Reformation.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 368, 369.

travelers. Three hundred men with arquebuss on shoulder marched right and left of them. ⁹ In this fashion they moved onwards to Bern, to take captive to Christ a proud city which no enemy had been able to storm. They entered its gates on the 4th of January, and found already arrived there numerous deputies, among others Ecolampadius of Basle, and Bucer and Capito of Strasburg.

The Bernese were anxious above all things to have the question between the two Churches thoroughly sifted. For this end they invited the ablest champions on both sides, guaranteeing them all freedom of debate. They heard of a worthy Cordelier at Grandson, named De Marie Palud, a learned man, but too poor to be able to leave home. The lords of Bern dispatched a special messenger with a letter to this worthy monk, earnestly urging him to come to the conference, and bidding the courier protect his person and defray his expenses on the road. ¹⁰ If Eck and the other great champions of Rome were absent, it was because they chose not to come. The doctor of Ingolstadt would not sit in an assembly of heretics where no proof, unless drawn from the Word of God, would be received, nor any explanation of it admitted unless it came from the same source. Did any one ever hear anything so unreasonable? asked Eck. Has the Bible a tongue to refute those who oppose it? The roll-call showed a great many absentees besides Eck. The names of the Bishops of Basle, Sion, Constance, and Lausanne were shouted out in accents that rung through the church, but the echoes of the secretary's voice were the only answer returned. The assemblage amounted to 350 persons - priests, pastors, scholars, and councilors from Switzerland and Germany.

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The Church of the Cordeliers was selected as the place of conference. A large platform had been erected, and two tables placed on it. At the one table sat the Popish deputies, round the other were gathered the Protestant disputants. Between the two sat four secretaries, from whom a solemn declaration, tantamount to an oath, had been exacted, that they would make a faithful record of all that was said and done. Four presidents were chosen to rule in the debate. ¹¹

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⁹Ibid. Christoffel, p. 189. De'Aubigne, bk. 15, chap. 2.

¹⁰Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 369.

¹¹Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 371.

The disputation lasted twenty consecutive days, with the single interruption of one day, the fete of St. Vincent, the patron saint of Bern. It commenced on the 6th January, and closed on the 27th. On Sunday as on other days did the conference assemble. Each day two sessions were held - one in the morning, the other after dinner; and each was opened with ¹² prayer.

Ten propositions ¹³ were put down to be debated. They were declarations of the Protestant doctrine, drawn so as to comprehend all the points in controversy between the two Churches. The discussion on the mass occupied two whole days, and was signalled at its close by a dramatic incident which powerfully demonstrated where the victory lay.

From the Church of the Cordeliers, Zwingli passed to the cathedral, to proclaim from its pulpit, in the hearing of the people, the proofs he had maintained triumphantly in the debate. At one of the side altars stood a priest, arrayed in pall and chasuble and all necessary sacerdotal vestments for saying mass. He was just about to begin the service when Zwingli's voice struck upon his ear. He paused to listen. "He ascended into heaven," said the Reformer in a slow and solemn voice, reciting the creed; "and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty," pausing again; "from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." "These three articles," said Zwingli, "cannot stand with the mass." The words flashed conviction into the mind of the priest. His resolution was taken on the spot. Stripping off his priestly robes and flinging them on the altar, he turned his eyes in the direction of Zwingli, and said in the hearing of all in the cathedral, "If the mass rest on no better foundation, I will neither read it now, nor read it more." ¹⁴ This victory at the very foot of the altar was hailed as an omen of a full triumph at no great distance.

Three days thereafter was the fete of St. Vincent. The canons of the college waited on the magistrates to know the pleasure of their Excellencies respecting its celebration. They had been wont to observe the day with great solemnity in Bern. "Those of you," said

¹²Ibid.

¹³Subdivided into twenty in the course of the discussion. Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 373, 374.

¹⁴Christoffel, p. 190.

the magistrates to the canons, "who can subscribe the 'ten Reformed propositions' ought not to keep the festival; those of you who cannot subscribe them, may." Already the sweet breath of toleration begins to be felt. On St. Vincent's Eve all the bells were tolled to warn the citizens that tomorrow was the festival of the patron saint of their city. The dull dawn of a January morning succeeded; the sacristans made haste to open the gates of the cathedral, to light the tapers, to prepare the incense, and to set in order the altar-furniture: but, alas! there came neither, priest nor worshipper at the hour of service. No matins were sung under the cathedral roof that morning.

The hour of vespers came. The scene of the morning was renewed. No evensong broke the silence. The organist was seated before his instrument, but he waited in vain for the coming of canon to mingle his chant, as the wont was, with the peal of the organ. When he looked about him, half in terror, and contrasted the solitude around him with the crowd of vested canons and kneeling worshippers, which used on such occasions to fill choir and nave of the cathedral, and join their voices with the majestic strains of the Magnificat, his heart was full of sadness; the glory had departed. He began to play on the organ the Church's mourning hymn, "O wretched Judas, what hast thou done that thou hast betrayed thy Lord?" and the music pealed along roof and aisle of the empty church. It sounded like a dirge over the fall of the Roman worship. "It was the last piece," says Ruchat, "that was played on that organ, for soon thereafter it was broken in pieces."¹⁵

The conference was at an end. The Reformers had won an easy victory. Indeed Zwingli could not help complaining that Eck and other practiced champions on the Roman side had not been present, in order to permit a fuller development of the strength of the Protestant argument.¹⁶ Conrad Treger of Friburg, Provincial of the Augustines, did his best, in the absence of the doctor of Ingolstadt, to maintain the waning glory and tottering authority of Rome; but it is not surprising that he failed where Eck himself could not have

¹⁵Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 453, 454.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 474.

succeeded. The disputants were restricted to Scripture, and at this weapon Zwingli excelled all the men of his time.¹⁷

[69] The theologians had done their part: their Excellencies of Bern must now do theirs. Assembling the canons and ecclesiastics of the city and canton, the magistrates asked them if they wished to subscribe the Reformed theses. The response was hearty. All the canons subscribed the articles, as did also the Prior and Sub-Prior of the Dominicans, with six of their brethren, and fifty-two cures and other beneficed clergy of the city as well as the rural parts.¹⁸

Having dismissed the members of the conference with honour, defraying the expenses of those they had specially invited, and appointing a guard of 200 armed men to escort the Zurich deputies through the territory of the Five Cantons, the magistrates set about bringing the worship into conformity with the Reformed creed which the clergy had so unanimously subscribed. The lords in council decreed that the observance of the mass should cease in Bern, as also in those landward parishes whose cures had adopted the Reformed confession. The sacrifice abolished, there was no further need of the altar. The altars were pulled down. A material object of worship stands or falls with a material sacrifice; and so the images shared the fate of the altars. Their fragments, strewed on the porch and floor of the churches, were profanely trodden upon by the feet of those whose knees had so recently been bent in adoration of them. There were those who witnessed these proceedings with horror, and in whose eyes a church without an altar and without an image had neither beauty nor sanctity. "When the good folks of the Oberland come to market," said these men, "they will be happy to put up their cattle in the cathedral."

An august transaction did that same building - albeit its altars were overturned and its idols demolished witness on the 2nd of

¹⁷"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 linguistic 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." (Christoffel, p. 190.)

¹⁸Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 475.

February, 1528. On that day all the burgesses and inhabitants of Bern, servants as well as masters, were assembled in the cathedral, at the summons of the magistrates, and swore with uplifted hands to stand by the council in all their measures for the Reformation of religion. ¹⁹ Secured on this side, the magistrates published an edict on the 7th of February, in thirteen articles, of which the following are the chief provisions: -

1st. They approved and confirmed the “ten propositions,” ordaining their subjects to receive and conform themselves to them, and taking God to witness that they believed them to be agreeable to the Word of God.

2nd. They released their subjects from the jurisdiction of the Bishops of Basle, Constance, Sion, and Lausanne.

3rd. They discharged the deans and chapters from their oath of obedience, the clergy from their vow of celibacy, and the people from the law of meats and festivals.

4th. The ecclesiastical goods they apportioned to the payment of annuities to monks and nuns, to the founding of schools and hospitals, and the relief of the poor. Not a penny did they appropriate to their ²⁰ own use.

5th. Games of chance they prohibited; the taverns they ordered to be closed at nine o’clock; houses of infamy they suppressed, banishing their wretched inmates from the city. ²¹

Following in the steps of Zurich, they passed a law forbidding the foreign service. What deep wounds had that service inflicted on Switzerland! Orphans and widows, withered and mutilated forms, cowardly feelings, and hideous vices had all entered with it! Henceforward no Bernese was to be at liberty to sell his sword to a foreign potentate or shed his own or another’s blood in a quarrel that did not belong to him. In fine, “they made an inscription,” says Sleidan, “in

¹⁹Ibid., tom. 1, p. 478.

²⁰Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 479-481.

²¹Ibid.

golden letters, upon a pillar, of the day and the year when Popery was abolished, to stand as a monument to posterity.”²²

The foreign deputies did not depart till they had seen their Excellencies of Bern honour the occasion of their visit by an act of civic clemency and grace. They opened the prison doors to two men who had forfeited their lives for sedition. Further, they recalled all the exiles. “If a king or emperor,” said they, “had visited our city, we would have released the malefactors, exhorting them to amendment. And now that the King of kings, and the Prince who owns the homage of our hearts, the Son of God and our Brother, has visited our city, and has opened to us the doors of an eternal prison, shall we not do honour to him by showing a like grace to those who have offended against us?”²³

[70] One other act remained to seal the triumph which the Gospel had won in the city and canton of Bern. On Easter Sunday the Lord’s Supper was celebrated after what they believed to be the simple model of primitive times. “That Sunday was a high day.” Bern for centuries had been in the tomb of a dark superstition; but Bern is risen again, and with a calm joy she celebrates, with holy rites, her return from the grave. Around the great minister lies the hushed city; in the southern sky stand up the snowy piles of the Oberland, filling the air with a dazzling brightness. The calm is suddenly broken by the deep tones of the great bell summoning the citizens to the cathedral. Thither all ranks bend their steps; dressed with ancient Swiss simplicity, grave and earnest as their fathers were when marching to the battle-field, they troop in, and now all are gathered under the roof of their ancient minister: the councilor, the burgess, the artizan; the servant with his master, and by the side of the hoar patriarch the fresh form and sparkling eye of youth. On that cathedral floor is now no altar; on its wall no image. No bannered procession advances along its aisles, and no cloud of incense is seen mounting to its roof; yet never had their time-honored temple

²²Sleidan, bk. 6, p. 112. Ruchat insinuates a doubt of this, on the ground that Sleidan is the only historian who records the fact, and that no trace of the monument is known. But we know that a similar pillar was erected at Geneva to commemorate the completion of its Reformation, and afterwards demolished, although the inscription it bore has been preserved.

²³Christoffel, p. 191. Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 485, 486.

- the house where their fathers had worshipped - appeared more venerable, and holy, than it did in the eyes of the Bernese this day.

Over the vast assembly rises the pulpit; on it lies the Bible, from which Berthold Haller is to address to them the words of life. Stretching from side to side of the building is the Communion table, covered with a linen cloth: the snows of their Alps are not whiter. The bread and the cup alone are seen on that table. How simple yet awful these symbols! How full of a gracious efficacy, and an amazing but blessed import, presenting as they do to the faith of the worshipper that majestic Sufferer, and that sublime death by which death has been destroyed! The Mighty One, he who stood before Pilate, but now sitteth on the right hand of God, is present in the midst of them, seen in the memorials of his passion, and felt by the working of his Spirit.

The sermon ended, Haller descends from the pulpit, and takes his stand, along with the elders of the flock, at the Communion table. With eyes and hands lifted up he gives thanks for this memorial and seal of redemption. Then a hymn, sung in responses, echoes through the building. How noble and thrilling the melody when with a thousand tongues a thousand hearts utter their joy! The song is at an end; the hushed stillness again reigns in aisle and nave of the vast fabric. Haller takes the bread, and breaking it in the sight of all, gives it to the communicants, saying, "This is my body; take, eat." He takes the cup, and says, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for you; drink ye all of it." Within that "sign" lies wrapped up, to their faith, the Divine and everlasting "thing signified." They receive, with the bread and wine, a full forgiveness, an eternal life - in short, Christ and the benefits of his redemption. Faith opens the deep fountains of their soul, their love and sorrow and joy find vent in a flood of tears; scarcely have these fallen when, like the golden light after the shower, there comes the shout of gladness, the song of triumph: "They sing a new song, saying, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: for thou hast redeemed us unto God with thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and

we shall reign on the earth.”²⁴ Such was the worship that succeeded the pantomimic rites and histrionic devotion of the Romish Church.

²⁴Revelation 5:9, 10, 12.

Chapter 5: Reformation Consummated in Basle

All Switzerland Moved—The Oberland—Surprise and Anger of its Herdsmen—Basle—Its Importance—Ecolampadius—Protestants of Basle Petition for Abolition of Mass—Popular Conflicts—Temporizing Policy of Council—Citizens take Arms—New Delays by the Council—New Demands of the People—The Night of the 8th of February—The City Barricaded—Two Thousand Men in Arms—The Senate's Halfconcession—The Idols Broken—Idols of Little Basle—Edict of Senate Establishing the Reform—Ash-Wednesday—Oath of the People—Exodus of the Priests—Departure of Erasmus

Picture: The Iconoclasts at Basle Burning Images and Idols.

The triumph of the Gospel in Bern was felt on sides. It gave new life to the Protestant movement in every part of the country. On the west it opened the door for the entrance of the Protestant faith into French-speaking Switzerland. Farel was already in those parts, and had commenced those labours which we shall afterwards have occasion to trace to that grand issue to which a greater was destined to conduct them. On the east, in German Helvetia, the movement, quickened by the impulse communicated from Bern, was consummated in those towns and villages where for some time it had been in progress. From the Grisons, on the Italian frontier, to the borders of the Black Forest, where Basle is washed by the waters of the Rhine, the influence of Bern's accession was felt, and the Protestant movement quickened. [71]

The great mountains in the center of the land, where the glaciers have their seat, and the great rivers their birth-place, were alone unmoved. Not unmoved indeed, for the victory at Bern sent a thrill of surprise and horror through the Oberland. Shut up with their flocks in the mists and gorges of their mountains, living apart from the world, spending their days without books, untrained to reflect, nor ever coming in contact with a new idea, these mountaineers so

brave, so independent, but so ignorant and superstitious, had but one aim, even to abide steadfast to the traditions of their fathers, and uphold Rome. That Switzerland should abandon the faith it had held from immemorial times they accounted a shameful and horrible thing. They heard of the revolution going on in the plains with indignation. A worship without mass, and a church without an image, were in their eyes no better than atheism. That the Virgin should be without matins or vespers was simply blasphemy. They trembled to dwell in a land which such enormities were beginning to pollute. They let drop ominous threats, which sounded like the mutterings of the thunder before the storm bursts and discharges its lightning's and hailstones on the plains below. Such a tempest was soon to break over Switzerland, but first the work of Reformation must proceed a little further.

Next to Zurich and Bern, Basle was the city of greatest importance in the Swiss Confederacy. Its numerous and rich foundations, its university, founded as we have said by Eneas Sylvius, nearly a century before, its many learned men, and its famous printing-presses enabled it to wield a various and powerful influence. It was the first spot in all Helvetia on which the Protestant seed had been cast. So early as 1505, we saw Thomas Wittembach entering its gates, and bringing with him the knowledge of the sacred tongues, and of that Divine wisdom of which these tongues have been made the vehicle. A few years later we find Zwingle and Leo Juda sitting at his feet, and listening to his not yet fully comprehended anticipations of a renovated age and a restored faith. ¹ The seed that fell from the hand of Wittembach was reinforced by the writings of Luther, which the famous printer Frobenius scattered so plentifully on this same soil. After this second sowing came the preacher Capito, to be succeeded by the eloquent Hedio, both of whom watered that seed by their clear and pious expositions of the Gospels. In 1522, a yet greater evangelist settled in Basle, Ecolampadius, under whom the Reformation of this important city was destined, after years of waiting and conflict, to be consummated. Ecolampadius, so scholarly, so meek and pious, was to the prompt and courageous Zwingle what Melancthon was to Luther.

¹See ante, bk. 8, chap. 5.

With all his great parts, Ecolampadius was somewhat deficient in decision and courage. We have seen him combating alone at Baden in 1526, and at Bern by the side of Zwingli in 1528, yet all the while he had not taken the decisive step in his own city. Not that he felt doubt on the question of doctrine; it was the dangers that deterred him from carrying over Basle to the side of Protestantism. But he came back from Bern a stronger man. The irresolute evangelist returned the resolved Reformer; and the learned Basle is now to follow the example of the warlike Bern.

At this time (1528) the Lutherans were in a great majority in Basle. They were 2,500 against 600 Roman Catholics.² Tumults were of frequent occurrence, arising out of the religious differences. On the 23rd December the Reformed assembled without arms, to the number of 300 and upwards, and petitioned the magistrates to abolish the observance of the mass, saying that it was “all abomination before God,” and asking why “to please the priests they should draw down his anger on themselves and their children.” They further craved of the magistrates that they should interdict the Pope’s preachers, till “they had proved their doctrine from the Word of God,” and they offered at the same time to take back the mass as soon as the “Roman Catholics had shown from the Scriptures that it was good,” which sounded like a promise to restore it at the Kalends of April. The Roman Catholics of Little Basle, which lay on the other bank of the Rhine, and was mostly inhabited by Romanists, assembled in arms, and strove to obstruct the passage of the petitioners to the town hall. The Senate, making trial of soft words, advised both parties to retire to their homes, and - the hour we presume being late-“go to sleep.”³ The council affected to be neutral, the spirit of Erasmus pervading the higher ranks of Basle. Two days thereafter, being Christmas Day, both parties again assembled. This time the Reformed came armed as well as the Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholics were the first to stir; the terrible news that they were arming circulated from house to house, and brought out the Lutherans, to the number of about 800. The alarm still flying from door to door roused others, and at last the number amounted to

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²Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 74.

³Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 75.

3,000.⁴ Both parties remained under arms all night. After four days deliberation, during which the streets were in a state of tumult, and all the gates were closed except two, which were strongly guarded, the Senate hit on an expedient which they thought would suffice to restore the peace between the two parties. They enacted that the “Evangel” should be preached in all churches, and as regarded mass that every man should be at liberty to act as his conscience might direct; no one would be prevented giving attendance on it, and no one would be compelled to do so.

This ordinance made the scales incline on the side of the Reformers. It was a step in the direction of free preaching and free worship; the Reformed, however, refused to accept it as a basis of peace. The agitation still continued. Basle wore the appearance of a camp, which a sudden blow from either side, or a rash word, might at any moment change into a battle-field.

News of what was going on in Basle flew through the Confederation. From both the Reformed and Popish cantons came deputies to offer their meditation. It was whispered among the Roman Catholics that the Lutherans were bringing in their confederates to fight for them. This rumor raised their fury to a yet higher pitch. A war of hearths seemed imminent.

The Senate made another attempt to restore the peace. They decreed that a public disputation on the mass should take place on the second Sabbath after Pentecost, and that meanwhile in three of the churches only should mass be celebrated, and that only one mass a day should be said, high mass namely.⁵ Now, thought the magistrates, we have found the means of restoring calm to the agitated waters. Basle will resume its lettered quiet.

These hopes were doomed to be disappointed. The publication of the edict evoked a greater tempest than ever. On the reading of it, loud and vehement voices resounded on both sides. “No mass - no mass - not even a single one - we will die sooner.”⁶ Counter-shouts were raised by the Romanists. “We are ready to die for the mass,”

⁴Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 76.

⁵Ibid., p. 77.

⁶Zwingle, Epp., 2, p. 225 - D'Aubigne, bk. 15, ch. 5.

cried they, waving their arms menacingly to add to the vehemence of their voices; “if they reject the mass - to arms! to arms!”⁷

The magistrates were almost at their wit’s end. Their temporizing, instead of appeasing the tempest, was but lashing it into greater fury. They hit on another device, which but showed that their stock of expedients was nearly exhausted. They forbade the introduction of the German psalms into those churches where it had not been the wont to sing them.⁸ It was hardly to be expected that so paltry a concession would mollify the Roman Catholics.

The Romish party, fearing that the day was going against them, had recourse to yet more violent measures. They refused the decree to hold a disputation on the mass after Pentecost. One thing was clear to them, that whether the mass was founded on the Word of God or not, it attracted to Basle large sums from the Popish districts, every penny of which would be cut off were it abolished. Seeing then, if its proof were dubious, its profit was most indubitable, they were resolved to uphold it, and would preach it more zealously than ever. The pulpits began to thunder against heresy; Sebastien Muller, preacher in the Cathedral of St. Peter, mounted the pulpit on the 24th January, 1529, and losing his head, at no time a cool one, in the excess of his zeal, he broke out in a violent harangue, and poured forth a torrent of abusive epithets and sarcastic mockeries against the Reformed. His sermon kindled into rage the mass of his hearers, and some Lutherans who were present in the audience were almost in risk of being torn in pieces.⁹

This fresh outbreak quickened the zeal on the other side, not indeed into violence, but activity. The Reformed saw that the question must be brought to an issue, either for or against the mass, and that until it was so their lives would not be safe in Basle. They, accordingly, charged their committee to carry their complaint to the Senate, and to demand that the churches should be provided with “good preachers” who would “proclaim to them the pure Word of God.” Their Excellencies received them graciously, and promised

⁷Zwingle, Epp., 2, p. 225.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 78.

⁹Ibid.

them a favorable answer. The magistrates were still sailing on two tacks. ¹⁰

[73] Fifteen days passed away, but there came no answer from the Senate. Meanwhile, a constant fire of insults, invectives, and sanguinary menaces was kept up by the Roman Catholics upon the Reformed, which the latter bore with wonderful patience seeing that they formed the vast majority of the citizens, and that those who assailed them with these taunts and threatenings were mostly the lower orders from the suburb of the Little Basle. The Reformed began to suspect the Senate of treachery; and seeing no ending to the affair but a bloody encounter, in which one of the two parties would perish, they convoked an assembly of the adherents of the Reformation. On the 8th February, 800 men met in the Church of the Franciscans, and after prayer to God, that he would direct them to those measures that would be for his glory, they entered on their deliberations. To the presence of “the fathers and relatives of the priests” in the council they attributed that halting policy which had brought Basle to the edge of an abyss, and resolved, as the only effectual cure, that the council should be asked to purge itself. ¹¹ They agreed, moreover, that the election of the senators henceforward should be on a democratic basis - above-board, and in the hands of the people.

“Tomorrow,” said the council, somewhat startled, “we will give you an answer.”

“Your reply,” rejoined the citizens, “must be given tonight.”

No eyes were to be closed that night in Basle. The Senate had been sitting all day. There was time for an answer, yet none had been forthcoming. They had been put off till tomorrow. What did that mean? Was it not possible that the intervening night would give birth to some dark plot which the Senate might even now be hatching against the public safety? They were 1,200 men, all well armed. They sent again to the council-hall to say, “Tonight, not tomorrow, we must have your answer.” It was nine of the evening. The Senate replied that at so late an hour they could not decide on a matter of so great moment, but that to-morrow they should without fail give their

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 78, 79.

¹¹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 79.

answer, and meanwhile they begged the citizens to retire in peace to their homes. ¹²

The citizens resolved not to separate. On the contrary they sent once more, and for the last time, to the Senate, to demand their answer that very night. Their Excellencies thought good no longer to trifle with the armed burghers. Longer delay might bring the whole 1,200 warriors into the Senate House. To guard against an irruption so formidable, they sent a messenger when near midnight to say that all members of Senate who were relatives of priests would be excluded from that body, and as to the rest of their demands, all things touching religion and policy would be regulated according to their wish. ¹³

The answer was so far satisfactory; but the citizens did not view it as a concession of their demands in full. Their enemies might yet spring a mine upon them; till they had got something more than a promise, they would not relax their vigilance or retire to their dwellings. Dividing themselves into three companies they occupied three different quarters of the city. They planted six pieces of cannon before the Hotel de Ville; they barricaded the streets by drawing chains across them; they took possession of the arsenal; they posted strong guards at the gates and in the towers on the wall; and kindling immense torches of fir-trees, they set them on high places to dispel with their flickering beams the darkness that brooded over the city. So passed the night of the 8th February, 1529, in Basle.

The leaders of the Romanists began to quail before the firm attitude of the citizens. The burgomaster, Henry Meltinger with his son-in-law, and several councilors, stole, under cover of the darkness, to the Rhine, and embarking in one of the boats that lay moored on its banks, made their escape on its rapid current. Their flight, which became known over-night, increased the popular uneasiness and suspicion. "They are gone to fetch the Austrians," said the people. "Let us make ready against their return." When day broke they had 2,000 men in arms. ¹⁴

At eight in the morning the Senate sent to the committee of the citizens to say that they had designated twelve senators, who were

¹²Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 80.

¹³Ruchat, tom 2, p. 81.

¹⁴Ibid.

to absent themselves when religious affairs were treated of, but that the men so designated refused to submit unconditionally, and had appealed their cause for a hearing before the other cantons. The citizens were willing to meet them there, but on this condition, that the appellants paid their own expenses, seeing they were prosecuting their own private quarrel, whereas the citizens defending the cause of the commonwealth and posterity were entitled to have their charges defrayed from the public treasury. ¹⁵ On this point the Senate sat deliberating till noon without coming to any conclusion. Again the cry of treachery was raised. The patience of the burghers was exhausted. They sent a detachment of forty men to inspect all the posts in the city in case of surprise. The troops marched straight to the Cathedral of St. Peter. One of them raising his halberd struck a blow with all his force on a side door. It was that of a closet in which the idols had been stowed away. The door was shivered; one of the images tumbled out, and was broken in pieces on the stony floor. A beginning having been made, the idols, one after another, were rolled out, and soon a pile of fragments - heads, trunks, and limbs - covered the floor. Erasmus wondered that "they wrought no miracle to save themselves, for if all accounts were true, prodigies had been done on more trivial occasions."

The priests raised an outcry, and attempted resistance, but this only hastened the consummation they deplored. The people came running to the cathedral. The priests fled before the hurricane that had swept into the temple, and shutting themselves up in the vestry, listened with dismay and trembling, as one and another of the idols was overturned, and crash succeeded crash; the altars were demolished, the pictures were torn down, and the fragments being carried out and piled up, and set on fire in the open squares, continued to burn till far in the evening, the citizens standing round and warming their hands at the blaze in the chilly air. The Senate, thinking to awe the excited and insurgent citizens, sent to ask them what they did. "We are doing in an hour," said they, "what you have not been able to do in three years." ¹⁶

¹⁵Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 82. Gerdesius, *Hist. Evan. Renov.*, tom. 2, p. 371; Gron. and Brem., 1746.

¹⁶Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 82, 83. Gerdesius, tom. 2, p. 872.

The iconoclasts made the round of Basle, visiting all its churches, and destroying with pike and axe all the images they found. The Romanists of Little Basle, knowing the storm that was raging on the other side of the Rhine, and fearing that it would cross the bridge to their suburb, so amply replenished with sacred shrines, offered to purge their churches with their own hands. The images of Little Basle were more tenderly dealt with than those of St. Peter's and other city churches. Their worshippers carried them reverently to upper rooms and garrets, and hid them, in the hope that when better times returned they would be able to bring them out of the darkness, and set them up in their old places. The suburban idols thus escaped the cremation that overtook their less fortunate brethren of St. Ulric and St. Alban. ¹⁷

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The magistrates of Basle, deeming it better to march in the van of a Reform than be dragged at the tail of a revolution, now granted all the demands of the citizens. They enacted, 1st, that the citizens should vote in the election of the members of the two councils; 2ndly, that from this day the idols and mass should be abolished in the city and the canton, and the churches provided with good ministers to preach the Word of God; 3rdly, that in all matters appertaining to religion and the commonweal, 260 of the members of the guilds should be admitted to deliberate with the Senate. ¹⁸ The people had carried the day. They had secured the establishment of the Protestant worship, and they had placed the State on a constitutional and popular basis. Such were the triumphs of these two eventful days. The firmness of the people had overcome the neutrality of the Senate, the power of the hierarchy, the disfavor of the learned, and had achieved the two liberties without shedding a drop of blood. "The commencement of the Reformation at Basle," says Ruchat, "was not a little tumultuous, but its issue was happy, and all the troubles that arose about religion were terminated without injury to a single citizen in his life or goods."

The third day, 10th of February, was Ash-Wednesday. The men of Basle resolved that their motto that day should be "Ashes to ashes." The images that had escaped cremation on the evening of the 8th

¹⁷Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 83.

¹⁸Gerdesius, tom. 2, p. 372. Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 84. Sleidan, bk. 6, p. 117.

were collected in nine piles and burned on the Cathedral Square.¹⁹ The Romanists, Ecolampadius informs us, “turned away their eyes, shuddering with horror.” Others remarked, “the idols are keeping their Ash-Wednesday.” The idols had the mass as their companion in affliction, fragments of the demolished altars having been burned in the same fires.

On Friday, 12th of February, all the trades of the city met and approved the edict of the Senate, as an “irrevocable decree,” and on the following day they took the oath, guild by guild, of fidelity to the new order of things. On next Sunday, in all the churches, the Psalms were chanted in German, in token of their joy.²⁰

This revolution was followed by an exodus of priests, scholars, and monks. The rushing Rhine afforded all facilities of transport. No one fled from dread of punishment, for a general amnesty, covering all offenses, had set all fears at rest. It was dislike of the Protestant faith that made the fugitives leave this pleasant residence. The bishop, carrying with him his title but not his jurisdiction, fixed his residence at Poirentu. The monks peaceably departed “with their harems”²¹ to Friburg. Some of the chairs in the university were vacated, but new professors, yet more distinguished, came to fill them; among whom were Oswald Myconius, Sebastien Munster, and Simon Grynaeus. Last and greatest, Erasmus too departed. Basle was his own romantic town; its cathedral towers, its milky river, the swelling hills, with their fir-trees, all were dear to him. Above all, he took delight in the society of its dignified clergy, its polite scholars, and the distinguished strangers who here had gathered round him. From Basle this monarch of the schools had ruled the world of letters. But Protestantism had entered it, and he could breathe its air no longer. He must endure daily mortification’s on those very streets where continual incense had been offered to him; and rather than do so he would leave the scene of his glory, and spend the few years that might yet remain to him elsewhere.

133 Embarking on the Rhine in presence of the magistrates and a crowd of citizens, who had assembled to do him honour, he spoke his adieu to his much-loved Basle as the boat was unmooring:

¹⁹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 84. Gerdesius, tom. 2, p. 372. Sleidan, bk. 6, p. 117.

²⁰Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 84. Gerdesius, tom. 2, p. 372. Sleidan, bk. 6, p. 117.

²¹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 86.

“Jam Basilea vale!”²² (Basle, farewell, farewell!) and departed for Friburg, in Brisgau.²³

²²Ibid. Gerdesius, tom. 2, p. 374.

²³The tomb of Erasmus is to be seen in the Cathedral-church at Basle, in front of the choir. The epitaph does not give the year of his death, imply styling him a “septuagenarian.”

[76] **Chapter 6: League of the Five Cantons with Austria
- Switzerland Divided**

The Light Spreading—The Oberland in Darkness—The Gospel Invades the Mountains—League of the Five Cantons with Austria—Persecution Begun—Martyrdom of Pastor Keyser—The Christian Coburghery—The Breach among the Swiss Cantons Widening—Dean Bullinger—The Men of Gaster—Idols that won't March—Violence of the Popish Cantons—Effort of Zurich to Avert War—The Attempt Abortive—War Proclaimed—Zwingle's Part in the Affair—Was it Justifiable?

Picture: The Departure of Erasmus from Basle.

It is a great crime to force an entrance for the truth by the sword, and compel unwilling necks to bow to it. It is not less a crime to bar its path by violence when it is seeking to come in by legitimate and peaceable means. This was the error into which the five primitive cantons of Switzerland now changed. Their hardy inhabitants, as they looked down from under the overhanging glaciers and icy pinnacles of their great mountains, beheld the new faith spreading over the plains at their feet. It had established itself in Zurich; the haughty lords of Bern had welcomed it; Schaffhausen and St. Gall had opened their gates to it; and even Basle, that abode of scholars, had turned from Plato and Aristotle, to sit at the feet of apostles. Along the chain of the Jura, by the shores of the Lemane, to the very gates of a city as yet immersed in darkness, but destined soon to become the brightest luminary in that brilliant constellation, was the light travelling. But the mountains of the Oberland, which are the first to catch the natural day, and to flash their early fires all over Switzerland, were the last to be touched with the Reformed dawn now rising on Christendom. With the light brightening all round, they remained in the darkness.

The herdsmen of these cantons saw with grief and alarm the transformation which was passing upon their country. The glory

was departing from it. They felt only horror as messenger after messenger arrived in their mountains and told them what was transacting on the plains below; that the altars at which their fathers had worshipped were being cast down; that the images to which they had bent the knee were being flung into the flames; that priest and monk were being chased away; that the light of holy taper was being extinguished, and that silence was falling on those holy orisons whose melodies welcomed the morn and greeted the departure of the day; that all those rites and customs, in short, which, were wont to beautify and sanctify their land were being abolished, and a defiling and defiant heresy was rearing its front in their stead.

The men of the Forest Cantons learned with yet greater indignation and dismay that this pestilent faith had come to their very gates, and was knocking for admission. Nay, it was even penetrating into their grand valleys. This was not to be borne. They must make haste, for soon their own altars would be overturned, their crucifixes trampled in the mire, and the light of their holy tapers extinguished. They resolved to oppose the entrance of the Reformation as they would that of the plague; but they could oppose it by the only means of resistance which they understood the faggot and the sword.

Their alarm was intensified when they learned that Protestantism, performing a flank movement, was attacking them in the rear. It had crossed the Alps, and was planting itself in Italy. There was at that time (1530) a little band of Carmelite monks in Locarno, on the fertile and lovely shores of Lake Maggiore, who had come to the knowledge of a free salvation, and who, under the protection of Zurich, whose suzerainty then extended to that part of Italy, were laboring to initiate the Reformation of their native land. The men of the Five Cantons saw themselves about to be isolated, shut up in their mountains, cut off even from Italy, the cradle of their faith. They could sit still no longer.

But whither shall they turn? They could not wage war themselves against the Reformed cantons. These cantons were superior in men and money, and they could not hope to cope successfully with them. They must seek other allies. By doing so they would break the league of brotherhood with the other cantons, for they had resigned the right of forming new alliances without the consent of all the other members of the Federation; but they hoped to conduct the

[77] negotiations in secret. They turned their eyes to Austria. This was the last quarter from which a Swiss canton might have been expected to seek help. Had they forgotten the grievous yoke that Austria had made them bear in other days? Had they forgotten the blood it cost their fathers to break that yoke? Were they now to throw away what they had fought for on the gory fields of Morgarten and Sempach? They were prepared to do this. Religious antipathy overcame national hatred; terror of Protestantism suspended their dread of their traditional foe. Even Austria was astonished, and for awhile was in doubt of the good faith of the Five Cantons. They were in earnest, however, and the result was that a league was concluded, and sworn to on both sides, the 23rd of April, 1529, at Waldshut. ¹ The Switzer of Unterwalden and Uri mounted the peacock's feather, the Austrian badge, and grasped in friendship the hands of the men with whom his fathers had contended to the death. The leading engagement in the league was that all attempts at forming new sects in the Five Cantons should be punished with death, and that Austria should give her aid, if need were, by sending the Five Cantons 6,000 foot-soldiers, and 400 horse, with the proper complement of artillery. It was further agreed that, if the war should make it necessary, the Reformed cantons should be blockaded, and all provisions intercepted. ²

Finding Austria at their back, the men of the Five Cantons had now recourse, in order to defend the orthodoxy of their valleys, to very harsh measures indeed. They began to fine, imprison, torture, and put to death the professors of the Reformed faith. On the 22nd May, 1529, Pastor Keyser was seized as he was proceeding to the scene of his next day's labor, which lay in the district between the lakes of Zurich and Wallenstadt, and carried to Schwitz. He was condemned; and although the cities of Zurich and Glarus interceded for him, he was carried to the stake and burned. When he heard his sentence he fell a-weeping; but soon he was so strengthened from above that he went joyfully to the stake, and praised the Lord Jesus in the midst of the flames for accounting him worthy of the honour of dying for the Gospels. ³

¹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 103.

²Christoffel, p. 235. Bullinger, Chron., tom. 2, pp. 49-59.

³Christoffel, p. 420.

Thus did the men of the mountains fling down their defiance to the inhabitants of the plains. The latter had burned dead idols, the former responded by burning living men. This was the first-fruits of the Austrian alliance. You must stop in your path, said Unterwalden to Zurich, you must set up the altars you have cast down, recall the priests you have chased away, rekindle the tapers you have extinguished, or take the penalty. The Forest Cantons were resolved to deal in this fashion, not only with all Protestants caught on their own territory, but also with the heresy of the plains. They would carry the purging sword to Zurich itself. They would smother the movement of which it was the center in the red ashes of its overthrow. Fiercer every day burned their bigotry. The priests of Rome and the pensioners of France and Italy were exciting the passions of the herdsmen. The clang of arms was resounding through their mountains. A new crusade was preparing: in a little while an army of fanatics would be seen descending the mountains, on the sanguinary but pious work of purging Zurich, Bern, and the other cantons from the heresy into which they had sunk.

Zwingle had long foreseen the crisis that had now arisen. He felt that the progress of the religious Reform in his native land would eventually divide Switzerland into two camps. The decision of the Forest Cantons would, he felt, be given on the side of the old faith, to which their inhabitants were incurably wedded by their habits, their traditions, and their ignorance; and they were likely, he foresaw, to defend it with the sword. In the prospect of such an emergency, he thought it but right to themselves and to their cause that the Reformed cantons should form a league of self-defense. He proposed (1527) a Christian Co-burghery, in which all the professors of the Reformed faith might be united in a new Reformed federation. The suggestion approved itself to the great body of his co-patriots. Constance was the first city to intimate its adhesion to the new state; Bern, St. Gall, Mulhansen, Basle, Schaffhausen, and Strasburg followed in the order in which we have placed them. By the end of the year 1529 this new federation was complete.

Every day multiplied the points of irritation between the Reformed 'red the Popish cantons. The wave of Reformed influence from Bern had not yet spent itself, and new towns and villages were from time to time proclaiming their adhesion to the Reformed faith.

Each new conversion raised the alarm and animosity of the Five Cantons to a higher pitch of violence. In Bremgarten the gray-haired Dean Bullinger thus addressed his congregation from the pulpit, February, 1529: "I your pastor have taught you these three-and-thirty years, walking in blind darkness, what I myself have learned from blind guides. May God pardon my sin done in ignorance, and enlighten me by his grace, so that henceforth I may lead the flock committed to me into the pastures of his Word." The town council, which a year before had promised to the Five Cantons to keep the town in the old faith, deposed the dean from his office. Nevertheless, Bremgarten soon thereafter passed over to the side of Protestantism, and the dean's son, Henry Bullinger, was called to fill his father's place, and proved an able preacher and courageous champion of the Reformed faith. ⁴

The men of Gaster, a district which was under the joint jurisdiction of Popish Schwitz and Protestant Glarus, in carrying out their Reform, threw a touch of humor into their iconoclastic acts, which must have 'brought a grim smile upon the faces of the herdsmen and warriors of the Oberland when told of it. Having removed all the images from their churches, in the presence of the deputies from Schwitz sent to prevail on them to abide in the old religion, they carried the idols to a point where four roads crossed. Setting them down on the highway, "See," said they, addressing the idols, "this road leads to Schwitz, this to Glarus, this other to Zurich, and the fourth conducts to Coire. Take the one that seems good unto you. We will give you a safe-conduct to whatever place you wish. But if you do not move off we tell you that we will burn you." The idols, despite this plain warning, refused to march, and their former worshippers, now their haters, taking them up, threw them into the flames. ⁵

The deputies from Schwitz, who had been witnesses of the act, returned to tell how they had been affronted. Schwitz haughtily commanded the men of Gaster to abandon the heresy they had embraced and re-establish the mass. They craved in reply to have their error proved to them from the Holy Scriptures. To this the only

⁴Christoffel, p. 413.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 107.

answer was a threat of war. This menace made the Protestants of Gaster east themselves for help on Zurich; and that protection being accorded, matters became still more embroiled between Zurich and the Five Cantons.

These offenses on the side of the Reforming cantons were altogether unavoidable, unless at the expense of suppressing the Reform movement. Not so the acts in which the Popish cantons indulged by way of retaliation: these were wholly gratuitous and peculiarly envenomed. Thomas Murner, the ribald monk, whom we have already met at Bern, labored zealously, and but too successfully, to widen the breach and precipitate the war in which so much blood was to be shed. He published daily in his "Black Calendar" lampoons, satires, and caricatures of the Protestants. A master of what is now known as "Billingsgate," he spared no abusive epithet in blackening the men and maligning their cause. The frontispiece that garnished his "Calendar" represented Zwingli suspended from a gallows; underneath which were the words, "Calendar of the Lutheran-Evangelical Church Robbers and Heretics." The followers of the Reformation were compendiously classified in the same elegant publication as "impotent unprincipled villains, thieves, lick-spittles, dastards, and knaves;" and he proposed that they should be disposed of in the following summary fashion, even "burned and sent in smoke to the devil."⁶ These insults and ribaldries, instead of being discouraged, were hailed by the Five Cantons and widely diffused, although in so doing they were manifestly scattering "firebrands, arrows, and death."

Zurich and the Reformed cantons saw war at no great distance, nevertheless they resolved to make another effort to avert it. In a Diet (21st April, 1529) held in Zurich, without the Five Cantons, it was resolved to call on these cantons to withdraw from their league with Austria, to cease murdering the Reformed pastors, and to silence the shameful vituperations of Murner. They appointed further an embassy to proceed to these cantons, and entreat them not to violate the federal compact. The deputies as they went the round of the Five Cantons with the olive-branch were only scoffed at. "No preaching!" shouted the men of Zug. "We wish the new faith

⁶Christoffel, p. 233.

eternally buried,” said those of Uri. “Your seditious parsons,” said Lucerne, “undermine the faith as erst in Paradise the serpent swung his folds round Adam and Eve. We will preserve our children, and our children’s children, from such poison.” “We,” said they in Unterwalden, “and the other Wald towns, are the true old confederates, the real Swiss.” As he was leaving the place the deputy saw on the house of the town-clerk a gallows painted, on which the arms of Zurich, Bern, Basle, and Strasburg were suspended. At Schwitz only did the council admit the ambassadors to an audience.⁷ Thus the proffered conciliation of their brethren was rudely and arrogantly put away by the Five Cantons. Everywhere the Reformed deputies were insulted and sent back.

[79] It was evident that the Popish cantons were bent on quarrelling.
 [80] But we shall mistake if we suppose that they were animated by a chivalrous and high-minded attachment to the faith of their fathers. A greed of the foreign pensions, quite as much as devotion to the “Holy Father,” swayed them in adopting this course. The deterioration of manners consequent on the foreign service was visible in every part of Switzerland, in Zurich as well as Unterwalden; but it was in the Five Cantons that this corruption was the deepest, because these were the cantons most addicted to this disgraceful warfare. The preaching of the Gospel revealed the evils and iniquities of this practice, and threatened to put an end to it, and of course to the gold that flowed from it; hence the fierce hostility of the men of the Oberland to the Reformation.⁸ Not only their idols and altars, but their purses also were at stake.

The patience of the Reformed cantons was well-nigh exhausted. There was no end of insults, provocation’s, and lampoons. The maltreatment and murder of their brethren in the faith, the return of their deputies shamefully used, and now the burning pile of Keyser - here was enough to fill up the cup. Zwingle thought that, the question of religion apart, the public order demanded that these outrages should be stopped. He was told, moreover, that the mountaineers were

⁷Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 109, 110. Christoffel, p. 416.

⁸The deteriorating influence of the foreign service was felt in Germany, though in less degree than in Switzerland. Morals, patriotism, and public order it undermined. We find the German States complaining to Maximilian II. that the mercenaries on returning from foreign service were guilty of the greatest enormities.

arming, that the Austrian auxiliaries on the frontier were enlisting soldiers, that war was determined on the Popish side, and that it would be wise in the interests of peace to strike the first blow. Let us, said Zwingle, attack the Five Cantons on several points at once. Let us convince them that resistance is useless. Our present peace is only war, with this difference, that it is the blood of one side only that is being spilt. Our war will be peace. Zwingle hoped thus the campaign would be bloodless. The Council of Zurich on the 3rd of June resolved on war, proclaiming it in the first instance against Schwitz.⁹

The Reformer's conduct in this affair has been much criticized. Some historians of great name have blamed him, others have not less warmly defended him. Let us look a little at what he did, and the reasons that appear to justify and even necessitate the line of action he adopted. While taking a leading part in the affairs of the State at this crisis, he continued to labor as indefatigably as ever in preaching and writing. He sought, in doing what he now did, simply to take such means as men in all ages of the world, and in all stages of society, guided by the light of reason and the laws which the Creator has implanted in the race, have taken to defend their lives and liberties. The members of that Confederation were Christians, but they were also citizens. Christianity did not annihilate, it did not even abridge the privileges and powers of their citizenship. If while they were Romanists they had the right to defend their lives, their homes, and their possessions against all assailants, whether within or without Switzerland; and if, further, they had the right of protecting their fellow-citizens who, guilty of no crime, had been seized, and in violation of inter-cantonal law were threatened with a cruel death, surely they retained the same rights as professors of the Reformed faith. But it may be said - nay, it has been said that it was Church federation and not State federation that ought to have been had recourse to. But at that time the State and the Church were inextricably mingled in Switzerland: their separate action was not at that moment possible; and, even though it had been possible, pure Church action would not have met the case; it would have been tantamount to no action. The Forest Cantons, impelled by their

⁹Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 113, 114. Christoffel, p. 420.

bigotry and supported by Austria, would have fallen sword in hand upon the professors of the Gospel in Helvetin and rooted them out.

Besides, does not the Gospel by its Divine efficacy rear around it, sooner or later, a vast number of powerful and valuable forces? It nourishes art, plants courage, and kindles the love of liberty. For what end? For this among others, to be, under the providence of God, a defense around itself. When Christians are utterly without human succour and resource, they are called to display their faith by relying wholly on God, who, if it is his purpose to deliver them, well knows how to do so. Then their faith has in it reason as well as sublimity. But if means are laid to their hand, and they forbear to use them, on the plea that they are honoring God by showing their trust in him, they are not trusting but tempting God, and instead of exercising faith are displaying fanaticism.

Zwingle, it has been further said, was a pastor, and the call to combine and stand to the defense of their liberties now addressed to the Reformed cantons ought to have come from another than him. But Zwingle was a citizen and a patriot, as well as a pastor. His wonderfully penetrating, comprehensive, and forecasting intellect made him the first politician of his country; he could read the policy of its enemies better than any one else; he had penetrated their purposes; he saw the dangers that were gathering round the Reformed cantons; and his sagacity and experience taught him the measures to be adopted. No other man in all Switzerland knew the matter half so well. Was he to stand aloof and withhold the counsel, the suggestion, the earnest exhortation to action, and let his country be overwhelmed, on the plea that because he was in sacred office it did not become him to interfere? Zwingle took a different view of his duty, and we think justly. When the crisis came, without in the least intermitting his zeal and labours as a minister, he attended the meetings of council, he gave his advice, he drew plans, he thundered in the pulpit, he placed even his military experience acquired in Italy at the service of his countrymen; combining, in short, the politician, patriot, and pastor all in one, he strove to kindle the same ardent flame of patriotism in the hearts of his fellow-citizens that burned so strongly in his own, and to roll back the invasion which threatened all that was of value in the Swiss Confederation with destruction. The combination was an unusual one, we admit, but the times and

the emergency were also unusual. That Zwingli may have always preserved the golden mean when the parts he had to act were so various, and the circumstances so exciting, we are not prepared to maintain. But we do not see how his policy in the main can be impugned, without laying down the maxim that when civil liberty only is at stake is it right to have recourse to arms, and that when the higher interests of faith and religious liberty are mixed up with the quarrel, we are bound to do nothing - to stand unarmed and inactive in the presence of the enemy.

Chapter 7: Arms - Negotiations - Peace

Zurich Girds on the Sword—Mustering in the Popish Cantons—4,000 Warriors March from Zurich—Encamp at Kappel—Halt—Negotiations, Peace—Zwingle Dislikes it—Zwingle's Labours—His Daily Life—His Dress, etc., Arrangement of his Time, His Occupations—Amusements Writings

Picture: View on Lake Maggiore.

Picture: Zurich.

First came the startling news to the Swiss Reformers that the Five Cantons had struck a league with Austria. Next came the flash of Keyser's martyr-pile. This was succeeded by the clang of military preparations. Zurich saw there was not a moment to be lost. The council of the canton met; it was resolved to support, religious liberty, and put a stop to the beheadings and burnings which the Popish cantons had commenced. But to carry out this resolution they must gird on the sword. Zurich declared ¹ war.

From Zug sounded forth the summons to arms on the other side. There was a mustering of warriors from all the valleys and mountains around. From the rich meadows of Uri, which the footsteps of Ten had made for ever historic; from that lovely strand where rise the ramparts of Lucerne, reflected on its noble lake, and shaded by the dark form of the cloud-capped Pilatus; from those valleys of Unterwalden, whose echoes are awakened by the avalanches of the Jungfrau; from the grassy plains of Schwitz on the east, armed men poured forth prepared to fight for the faith of their fathers, and to quench in blood the new religion which Zwingle and Zurich had introduced, and which was spreading like an infection over their country. The place of rendezvous was the deep valley where the waters of Zug, defended all round by mighty mountains, and covered by their shadows, lie so still and sluggish in their bed.

¹Sleidan, bk. 6, p. 120.

On the 9th of June, 4,000 picked soldiers, fully armed, and well furnished with artillery and provisions, under the command of Captain George Berguer, with Conrad Schmidt, Pastor of Kussnacht, as their chaplain, issued from the gates of Zurich, and set out to meet the foe. ² The walls and towers were crowded with old men and women to witness their departure. Among them rode Zwingle, his halberd across his shoulder, ³ the same, it is said, he had carried at Marignano. Anna, his wife, watched him from the ramparts as he rode slowly away. Crossing the Albis Alp, the army of Zurich encamped at Kappel, near the frontier of the canton of Zug.

It was nine of the evening when the Zurich warriors encamped at Kappel. Next morning, the 10th of June, they sent a herald at daybreak with a declaration of war to the army of the Five Cantons assembled at Zug. The message filled the little town with consternation. The sudden march of the Zurich army had taken it unawares and found it unprepared; its armed allies were not yet arrived; the women screamed; the men ran to and fro collecting what weapons they could, and dispatching messengers in hot haste to their Confederates for assistance.

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In the camp of the Zurichers preparations were making to follow the herald who had carried the proclamation of hostilities to Zug. Had they gone forward the enemy must have come to terms without striking a blow. The van-guard of the Zurichers, marshaled by its commander William Toenig, was on the point of crossing the frontier. At that moment a horseman was observed spurring his steed uphill, and coming towards them with all the speed he could. It was Landamman Ebli of Glarus. "Halt!" he cried, "I come from our Confederates. They are armed, but they are willing to negotiate. I beg a few hours delay in hopes that an honorable peace may be made. Dear lords of Zurich, for God's sake prevent the shedding of blood, and the ruin of the Confederacy." The march of the Zurich warriors was suspended. ⁴

²Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 114, 115. Christoffel, p. 421.

³The Swiss field-chaplains carried a weapon on service up till the most recent time. Zwingle's halberd, which he had already used in the battle of Marignano, had no other significance than the later side-weapon of the field-preacher. (Christoffel, p. 421.)

⁴Christoffel, p. 423. Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 115.

Landamman Ebli was the friend of Zwingli. He was known to be an honorable man, well disposed towards the Gospel, and all enemy of the foreign service. All hailed his embassy as a forerunner of peace. Zwingli alone suspected a snake in the grass. He saw the campaign about to end without the loss of a single life; but this halt inspired him with melancholy and a presentiment of evil. As Ebli was turning round to return to Zug, Zwingli went up to him, and earnestly whispered into his ear the following words, "Godson Amman,⁵ you will have to answer to God for this mediation. The enemy is in our power, and unarmed, therefore they give us fair words. You believe them and you mediate. Afterwards, when they are armed, they will fall upon us, and there will be none to mediate." "My dear godfather," replied Ebli, "let us act for the best, and trust in God that all will be well." So saying he rode away.

In this new position of affairs, messengers were dispatched to Zurich for instructions, or rather advice, for it was a maxim in the policy of that canton that "wherever the banner waves, there is Zurich." Meanwhile the tents of the soldiers were spread on the hill-side, within a few paces of the sentinels of the Five Cantons. Every day a sermon was preached in the army, and prayers were offered at meals. Disorderly women, who followed the armies of that age in shoals, were sent away as soon as they appeared. Not an oath was heard. Cards and dice were not needed to beguile the time. Psalms, national hymns, and athletic exercises filled up the hours among the soldiers of the two armies. Animosity against one another expired with the halt. Going to the lines they chatted together, ate together, and, forgetting their quarrel, remembered only that they were Swiss. Zwingli sat alone in his tent, oppressed by a foreboding of evil. Not that he wished to shed a drop of blood; it was his eagerness to escape that dire necessity that made him grudge the days now passing idly by. All had gone as he anticipated up till this fatal halt. Austria was too seriously occupied with the Turks to aid the Popish cantons just at this moment; and had the answer sent back by Landamman Ebli been the unconditional acceptance of the terms of Zurich or battle, it was not to be doubted that the Five Cantons would have preferred the former. The opportunity now passing was not likely to return;

⁵While Pastor of Glarus, Zwingli had become Godfather of the Landamman.

and a heavy price would be exacted at a future day for the indolence of the present hour.

After a fortnight's negotiations between Zurich and the Five Cantons, a peace was patched up.⁶ It was agreed that the Forest Cantons should abandon their alliance with Austria, that they should guarantee religious liberty to the extent of permitting the common parishes to decide by a majority of votes which religion they would profess, and that they should pay the expenses of the war. The warriors on both sides now struck their encampments and returned home, the Zurichers elate, the Romanists gloomy and sullen. The peace was in favor of Protestantism. But would it be lasting? This was the question that Zwingli had put to himself. When the army re-entered Zurich, he was observed, amid the acclamations that resounded on every side, to be depressed and melancholy. He felt that a golden opportunity had been lost of effectually curbing the bigotry and breaking the power of the Popish cantons, and that the peace had been conceded only to lull them asleep till their opponents were better prepared, when they would fall upon them and extinguish the Reform in blood. These presentiments were but too surely fulfilled.

This peace was due to the energy and patriotism of Zurich. Bern had contributed nothing to it; her warriors, who had often gone forth on a less noble quarrel, abode within their walls, when the men of Zurich were encamped on the slopes of the Albis, in presence of the foe. This want of firm union was, we apprehend, the main cause of the disastrous issue of Zwingli's plan. Had the four Reformed cantons - Basle, Zurich, Bern, and St. Gall - stood shoulder to shoulder, and presented an unbroken front, the Romanists of the mountains would hardly have dared to attack them. Division invited the blow under which Reformed Switzerland sank for awhile.

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The Reformer of Zurich is as yet only in mid-life, taking the "three-score and ten" as our scale of reckoning, but already it begins to draw toward evening with him. The shadows of that violent death with which his career was to close, begin to gather round him. We shall pause, therefore, and look at the man as we see him, in the

⁶The treaty was signed on the 26th of June, 1529, and consisted of seventeen articles. Their substance is given by Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 116-121.

circle of his family, or at work in his study. He is dressed, as we should expect, with ancient Swiss simplicity. He wears the wide coat of the canon, and on his head is the priest's hat, or "baretta." The kindness of his heart and the courage of his soul shine out and light up his face with the radiance of cheerfulness, humorous visitors, of all conditions, and on various errands, knock at his door, and are admitted into his presence. Now it is a bookseller, who comes to importune him to write something for an approaching book-fair; now it is a priest, who has been harshly used by his bishop, who craves his advice; now it is a brother pastor, who comes to ask help or sympathy; now it is a citizen or councilor, a friend from the country, who wishes to consul him on State affairs, or on private business. He receives all with genuine affability, listens with patience, and gives his answers in a few wise words. Sometimes, indeed, a sudden frown darkens his brow, and the lightning of his eye flashes forth, but it is at the discovery of meanness or hypocrisy. The storm, however, soon passes, and the light of an inward serenity and truthfulness again shines out and brightens his features. Towards well-meaning ignorance he is compassionate and tender.

In regard to his meals, his fare is simple. The dainties of his youth are the dainties of his manhood. Living in a city, with its luxuries at command, and sitting often at the table of its rich burghers, he prefers the milk and cheese which formed the staple of his diet when he lived among the shepherds of the Tockenurg. As to his pleasures they are not such as have a sting in them; they are those that delight the longest because the most natural and simple. His leisure - it is not much - is spent in the society of his accomplished and high-souled wife, in the education of his children, in conversation with his friends, and in music. In his college-days how often, as we have already seen, in company of his friend Leo Juda, did he awake the echoes of the valleys beside the romantic Basle with his voice or instrument! On the grander shores of the Zurcher-See he continued to cultivate the gift, as time served, with all the passion of an artist.

He is very methodical in his habits. His time is wisely divided, and none of it is frittered away by desultoriness or unpunctuality. Both in body and mind he is eminently healthy. Luther had even more than the joyous disposition of Zwingle, but not his robustness and almost uninterrupted good health. The Doctor of Wittemberg

complained that “Satan tilted through his head,” and at times, for weeks together, he was unable to work or write. Calvin was still more sickly. His “ten maladies” wore away his strength; but they had power over the body only; the spirit they did not approach to ruffle or weaken, and we stand amazed at the magnificence of the labours achieved in a frame so fragile and worn. But it was not so with the Reformer of Zurich; he suffered loss neither of time nor of power from ill-health; and this, together with the skillful distribution of his time, enabled him to get through the manifold labours that were imposed upon him.

He rose early. The hours of morning he spent in prayer and the study of the Scriptures. At eight o’clock he repaired to the cathedral to preach, or to give the “Prophecy,” or to the Professorial Hall, to deliver an exegesis from the Old and New Testaments alternately. At eleven he dined. After dinner, intermitting his labours, he spent the time in conversing with his family, or in receiving visitors, or walking in the open air. At two o’clock he resumed work, often devoting the afternoon to the study of the great writers and orators of Greece and Rome. Not till after supper does he again grant himself a respite from labor in the society of his family or friends. “Sometimes,” says Christoffel, “he sups in those mediaeval society-houses or guild-rooms - as they still exist in many of the Swiss towns - in the company of his colleagues, the members of the council, and other respectable and enlightened friends of evangelical truth. The later hours of the evening, and even a part of the night itself, he employs in writing his many letters.” If business is pressing, he can dispense with his night’s rest. During the disputation at Baden, as we have seen, he received each night letters from Ecolampadius. He sat up all night to write his answer, which had to be sent off before morning; and this continued all the while the conference was in session, so that, as Zwingli himself tells us, he was not in bed all the time - that is, six weeks. But, as Bullinger informs us, on other occasions he could take the necessary amount of sleep. Thus, with the careful distribution and economy of his time, combined with an iron constitution and a clear and powerful intellect, he was

able to master the almost overwhelming amount of work which the Reformation laid upon him.⁷

He complained that the many demands on his time did not leave him leisure to elaborate and polish his productions. The storms and emergencies of his day compelled him to write, but did not leave him time to revise. Hence he is diffuse after an unusual manner: not in style, which has the terse vigor of the ancients; nor in thinking, which is at once clear and profound; but in a too great affluence of ideas. He modestly spoke of what came from his pen as sketches rather than books. Scripture he interpreted by Scripture, and thus, in addition to a naturally penetrating intellect, he enjoyed eminently the teaching of the Spirit, which is given through the Word. Zwingle sought in converse with his friends to improve his heart; he read the great works of antiquity to strengthen his intellect and refine his taste; he studied the Bible to nourish his piety and enlarge his knowledge of Divine truth. But a higher means of improvement did he

149 employ - converse with God. "He strongly recommended prayer," says Bullinger, "and he himself prayed much daily." In this he resembled Luther and Calvin and all the great Reformers. What distinguished them from their fellows, even more than their great talents, was a certain serenity of soul, and a certain grandeur and strength of faith, and this they owed to prayer.

⁷These details respecting the daily life and habits of the Reformer of Zurich have been collected by Christoffel. "They are taken," he tells us, "from accounts, thoroughly consistent with themselves, of several of his friends and acquaintances, Myconius, Bullinger, and Bernhard Weiss. Myconius says, in addition, that he always studied and worked standing." (Christoffel, pp. 373, 374.)

Chapter 8: Proposed Christian Republic for Defence of Civil Rights

Another Storm brewing in the Oberland—Protestantism still spreading in Switzerland—A Second Crisis—Zwingle proposes a European Christian Republic—Negotiates with the German Towns, the King of France, and the Republic of Venice—Philip of Hesse to be put at the Head of it—Correspondence between Philip and Zwingle—League for Defense of Civil Rights only—Zwingle’s Labours for the Autonomy of the Helvetian Church

The peace which negotiation had given Zurich, Zwingle felt, would be short, but it was precious while it lasted, and he redoubled his efforts to turn it to account. He strove to carry the sword of the Spirit into those great mountains whose dwellers had descended upon them with the sword of the warrior, for he despaired of the unity and independence of his country save through the Gospel. His labours resulted, during this brief space, in many victories for the faith. At Schaffhausen fell the “great god,” namely, the mass. The Reformation was consummated in Glarus, in the Appenzell, and introduced into parts of Switzerland which had re-rosined till now under the yoke of Rome. So much for the freedom of conscience guaranteed by the peace of Kappel. Every day, as the men of the Forest Cantons looked from their lofty snow-clad summits, they beheld the symbols of the Roman faith vanishing from the plains beneath them; convents deserted, the mass abolished, and village after village meeting, discussing, and by vote adopting the Protestant worship. As yet they had been able to maintain the purity of their mountains, thanks to the darkness and the foreign gold, but they were beginning to be defiled by the feet of the Protestants, and how soon their stronghold might be conquered, and the flag of the Gospel unfurled where the banner of Rome had so long and so proudly waved, they could not tell. A Popish historian of the time, describing the activity of Zwingle and his fellow-laborers, says: “A set of

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wretched disturbers of the peace burst into the Five Cantons, and murdered souls by spreading abroad their songs, tracts, and little Testaments, telling the people they might learn the truth itself from these, and one did not require any more to believe what the priests said.”¹ While they were barring their gates in front, suddenly, as we have already said, Protestantism appeared in their rear. A shout came up from the Italian plains that the Gospel had entered that land, and that Rome had begun to fall. This brought on a second crisis.

We are approaching the catastrophe. Zwingle, meditating day and night how he might advance the Reformation and overthrow that terrible power which had held the nations so long in bondage, had begun to revolve mighty plans. His eye ranged over all Christendom; his glance penetrated everything; his comprehensive and organizing mind, enlarged by the crisis through which Christendom was passing, felt equal to the task of forming and directing the grandest projects. He had already instituted a Christian co-burghery in Switzerland to hold in check the Popish cantons; this idea he attempted to carry out on a grander scale by extending it to the whole of Reformed Christendom. Why should not, he said, all the Protestant States and nations of Europe unite in a holy confederation for frustrating the plans which the Pope and Charles V. are now concocting for the violent suppression of the Reformation? It was at this time that he visited Marburg, where he met Philip of Hesse, between whom and himself there existed a great harmony of view on the point in question. Both felt that it was the duty of the Protestant States to put forth their political and military strength in the way of repelling force by force. They meditated the forming of a great Christian republic, embracing the Reformed Swiss cantons, the free cities of Southern Germany, and the Protestant Saxon States in Central and Northern Germany. Zwingle even turned his eyes to Venice, where a Protestant movement of a promising kind had recently presented itself. He sent an ambassador to the republic, who came back with a secret assurance of aid in case of need. The Reformer was not without hope of enlisting France in the league. Overtures to that effect had in fact. been made by Francis I., who seemed not unwilling to leave the path of violence on which he had

¹Christoffel, p. 433.

entered, and take under his wing the Reformation of his country. This Protestant alliance was meant to extend from the Adriatic to the German Ocean, forming a Protestant power in Central Europe sufficient to protect conscience and the free preaching of the Gospel. This display of strength, Zwingle believed, would hold in check the emperor and the Pope, would be a rampart around the preachers and professors of the Protestant faith, and would prevent an Iliad of woes which he saw approaching to Christendom. The project was a colossal one.

At the head of this Protestant republic Zwingle proposed to place Philip the Magnanimous. Among the princes of that age he could hardly have made a better choice. It is probable that Zwingle communicated the project to him in his own Castle of Marburg, when attending the conference held in the autumn of that year (October, 1529) on the question of the Lord's Supper. The ardent mind of Philip would be set on fire by the proposal. He had in fact attempted to form a similar league of defense among the Reformed princes and cities of Germany. He had fretted under the restraints which Luther had imposed upon him; for ever as his hand touched his sword's hilt, to unsheathe it in defense of the friends of the Gospel, came the stern voice of the Reformer commanding him to forbear. He had been deeply mortified by the refusal of the Lutherans to unite with the Zwinglians, because it left them disunited in presence of that tremendous combination of force that was mustering on all sides against them. Now came the same thing in another form; for this new defensive alliance promised to gain all the ends he sought so far as these were political. Switzerland and South Germany it would unite; and he hoped, indeed he undertook, to induce the princes and States of North Germany also to accede to the league; and thus what time the emperor crossed the Alps with his legions - and he was now on his way northward, having shaken hands with the Pope over the proposed extermination of Lutheranism - he would find such a reception as would make him fain again to retreat across the mountains.

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Zwingle's journey to Marburg had been of signal importance to him in this respect. He had correctly divined the secret policy of the emperor, but at Strasburg he had obtained information which had given him a yet surer and deeper insight into the designs of

Charles. His informant was the town sheriff, James Sturm, a far-seeing statesman, devoted to the Reformed cause, and enjoying the friendship of many men of influence and position in Germany and France. Through them Sturm came into possession of important documents disclosing the emperor's plans against the Reformers. Zwingli forwarded copies of these to the secret council of Zurich, with the remark, "These are from the right workshop."

The substance of these documents is probably contained in the statements which Zwingli made to those statesmen who had his confidence. "The emperor," said he, "stirs up friend against friend, and enemy against enemy, in order to force himself between them as mediator, and then he decides with a partiality that leans to the interests of the Papacy and his own power. To kindle a war in Germany he excites the Castellan of Musso² against the Grisons, the Bishops of Constance and Strasburg against the cities of Constance and Strasburg, Duke George of Saxony against John, Elector of Saxony; the Bishops of the Rhine against the Landgrave of Hesse; the Duke of Savoy against Bern, and the Five Cantons against Zurich. Everywhere he makes division and discord. When the confusion has come to a head and all things are ripe he will march in with his Spaniards, and befooling one party with fair words, and falling upon the other with the sword, he will continue to strike till he has reduced all under his yoke. Alas! what an everthrow awaits Germany and all of us under pretense of upholding the Empire and re-establishing religion."³

After his return from Marburg, Zwingli corresponded with the landgrave on this great project. "Gracious prince," wrote he on the 2nd of November, 1529, "if I write to your Grace, as a child to a father, it is because of the confidence I have that God has chosen you for great events, which I dare not utter... We must bell the cat at last."⁴ To which the landgrave answered, "Dear Mr. Huldreich, I

²James von Medicis, a foolhardy adventurer, had seized on the Castle of Musso, at the entrance of the Veltelin, and thence harassed the inhabitants of the Grisons, the majority of whom had embraced Protestantism. His violent deeds are believed to have been prompted by the emperor, who sent him 900 Spanish soldiers, and the title of Margrave. (Christoffel.)

³Zwingli, Epp., 2, p. 429. Christoffel, pp. 404, 405. D'Aubigne, bk. 16, chap. 4.

⁴Zwingli, Epp., 2, p. 666. Christoffel, p. 407.

hope through the providence of God a feather will fall from Pharaoh,⁵ and that he will meet with what he little expects; for all things are in the way of improvement. God is wonderful. Let this matter touching Pharaoh remain a secret with you till the time arrives.”⁶

Like a thunder-cloud charged with fire, the emperor was nearing Germany, to hold the long-announced Diet of Augsburg. The Reformer’s courage rose with the approach of danger. The son of the Tockenburg shepherd, the pastor of a little town, dared to step forth and set the battle in array against this Goliath, the master of so many kingdoms. “Only base cowards or traitors,” he wrote to Councilor Conrad Zwick of Constance, “can look on and yawn, when we ought to be straining every nerve to collect men and arms from every quarter to make the emperor feel that in vain he strives to establish Rome’s supremacy, to destroy the privileges of the free towns, and to coerce us in Helvetia. Awake, Lindau! Arouse, ye neighbor cities, and play the men for your hearths and altars! He is a fool who trusts to the friendship of tyrants. Even Demosthenes teaches us that nothing is so hateful in their eyes as the freedom of cities. The emperor with one hand offers us bread, but in the other he conceals a stone.”⁷

Had the object aimed at been the compelling of the Romanists to abandon their faith or desist from the practice of its rites, Zwingli’s project would have been supremely execrable; but the Reformer did not for a moment dream of such a thing. He never lost sight of the great fact, that by the preaching of the Gospel alone can men be enlightened and converted. But he did not see why States, to the extent to which God had given them the power, should not resist those treacherous and bloody plots which were being hatched for the destruction of their faith and liberties. Luther disapproved of this policy entirely. Christians, he said, ought not to resist the emperor, and if he requires them to die they are to yield up their lives. It was by the stake of the martyr and not by the sword of the State, he never ceased to remind men, that the Gospel was to triumph. Luther, reared

⁵The name for the emperor in the correspondence between the landgrave and Zwingli. This correspondence was carried on in cipher, which was often changed, the better to preserve the secret.

⁶Christoffel, p. 407.

⁷Zwingli, Epp., March, 1530.

[88] in a convent and trained in habits of submission to authority, was to a much greater extent than Zwingli a man of the past. Zwingli, on the other hand, born in a republic, with all the elements and aspirations of constitutional liberty stirring in his breast, was a man of the present. Hence the different policies of these two men. It is impossible to say to what extent the atrocities that darkened the following years would have been prevented, had Zwingli's plan been universally acted upon. But the time for it was not yet come; and the Great Ruler by willing it otherwise has thrown a moral grandeur around the Reformation, which could not have belonged to it had its weapons been less spiritual and its triumph less holy.

In the midst of these negotiations for banding the Protestants in a great European confederacy for the defense of their civil and religious liberties, Zwingli did not for a moment abate his labours as a pastor. The consolidation of the Gospel in Switzerland must be the basis of all his operations. In 1530 he held synods in various parts of the country. At these measures were adopted for perfecting the autonomy of the Church: the ministers were examined; incapable and scandalous pastors were removed; superintendents to watch over moral and administer discipline

155 were appointed; and arrangements set on foot for giving a competent salary to every minister. In February, 1531, it was agreed that whenever any difficulty should arise in doctrine or discipline an assembly of divines and laymen should be convoked, which should examine what the Word of God says on the matter, and decide accordingly. ⁸

⁸Christoffel, sec. 9. 3. D'Aubigne, bk. 16, chap. 3.

Chapter 9: Gathering of a Second Storm

Persecution renewed by the Five Cantons—Activity of Zwingle—Address of the Reformed Pastors—Bern proposes Blockade of the Five Cantons—Zwingle Opposed—No Bread, etc—Zwingle asks his Dismissal—Consents to Remain—Meeting at Bremgarten—The Comet—Alarming Portents—Zwingle’s Earnest Warnings-Unheeded

Picture: Zwingle Departing to Join the Army.

Picture: The Death of Zwingle.

Every Step of the Gospel nearer their mountains made the men of the Five Cantons only the more determined to rend the treaty in which they had bound themselves to their brethren. They had already violated its spirit. The few professors of the Reformed faith in their territory they drove out, or imprisoned, or burned. In the common parishes - that is, the communes governed now by the Reformed, and now by the Popish cantons - they committed the same atrocities when their turn of jurisdiction came. They imprisoned the preachers and professors of the Reformed faith, confiscated their goods, cut out their tongues, beheaded and burned them. Calumnies were next circulated to inflame the popular wrath against the Protestants; then followed wrathful speeches; at last was heard the clang of arms; it was evident that another tempest was brewing among the mountains of the Oberland.

A General Diet of the Swiss Confederation was convoked at Baden on the 8th of January, 1531. ¹ It was unable to come to any decision. Meanwhile the provocation’s which the Forest Cantons were daily offering were becoming intolerable, yet how were they to be restrained? Behind those cantons stood the emperor and Ferdinand, both, at this hour, making vast preparations; and should war be commenced, who could tell where it would end? Meanwhile it was of the last importance to keep alive the patriotism of

¹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 353.

the people. Zwingle visited in person the Confederate cantons; he organized committees, he addressed large assemblies; he appealed to everything that could rouse Swiss valor. The armies of Rome were slowly closing around them; the Spaniards were in the Grisons; the emperor was in Germany; soon they would be cut off from their fellow-Protestants of other lands and shut up in their mountains. They must strike while yet they had the power. It would be too late when the emperor's sword was at their gates, and the Romanists of their own mountains had fallen like an avalanche upon them. Never had their fathers bled in so holy a cause.

The heroes of the past seemed all to live again in this one man. Wherever he passed he left behind him a country on fire.

[89] A Diet of the Reformed cantons was held at Arau on the 12th of May, to decide on the steps to be taken. The situation, they said, was this: "The Mountain Cantons remain Roman Catholic; they divide Switzerland into two camps; they keep open the door for the armed hordes of foreign bigotry and despotism. How shall we restore Swiss unity?" they asked. "Not otherwise than by restoring unity of faith." They did not seek to compel the Five Cantons to renounce Popery, but they believed themselves justified in asking them to cease from persecuting the preachers of the Gospel in the common parishes, and to tolerate the Reformed doctrine in their valleys. This was the demand of the four Reformed cantons.

The Pastors of Zurich, Bern, Basle, and Strasburg assembled in Zwingle's house the 5th of September, 1530, and speaking in the name of the Reformed cantons addressed to their Popish confederates the following words: "You know, gracious lords, that concord increases the power of States, and that discord overthrows them. You yourselves are a proof of the first. May God prevent you from becoming also a proof of the second. For this reason we conjure you to allow the Word of God to be preached among you. When has there ever existed, even among the heathen, a people which saw not that the hand of God alone upholds, a nation? Do not two drops of quicksilver unite as soon as you remove that which separates them? Away then with that which separates you from your cities, that is, the absence of the Word of God, and immediately the Almighty will unite us as our fathers were united. Then placed in your mountains, as in the center of Christendom, you will be an example to it, its

protection and its refuge; and after having passed through this vale of tears, being the terror of the wicked and the consolation of the faithful, you will at last be established in eternal happiness.”

“The minister’s sermon is rather long,” said some, with a yawn, in whose hearing this address was read. The remonstrance was without effect.

Zwingle earnestly counseled a bold and prompt blow - in other words, an armed intervention. He thought this the speediest way to bring the Mountain Cantons to reasonable terms. Baden, though admitting that the Five Cantons had broken the national compact, and that the atrocities they were committing in shameful violation of their own promises justified war, thought it better, nevertheless, that a milder expedient should be tried.

Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Lucerne were dependent for their daily supplies upon the markets and harvests of the plains. Shut out from these, they had no alternative but surrender or death by famine. “Let us blockade these cantons,” said Bern. Zurich and Zwingle strongly disapproved of this measure. It confounded, they said, the innocent with the guilty; whereas war would smite only the latter. The blockade, however, was resolved upon and rigorously carried out. The markets of the entire region around were closed, and the roads leading to the towns blockaded. Instantaneously the Five Cantons were enclosed in a vast desert; bread, wine, and salt suddenly failed from their chalets, and the horrors of famine began to reign in their mountains. This calamity was the more severely felt inasmuch as the preceding year had been one of dearth, and the “sweating sickness” had visited their valleys, adding its ravages to the sufferings caused by the failure of the crops. ²

A wail of suffering and a cry of indignation arose from the mountains. A General Diet was opened at Bremgarten on the 14th of June, in presence of the deputies of several foreign Powers. The Five Cantons demanded that, first of all, the blockade should be raised; till this was done they would listen to no proposition. Bern and Zurich replied: “The blockade we will not raise till you shall have ceased your persecutions, and opened your own valleys to the

²Christoffel, pp. 445, 446.

free preaching of the Gospel.” Conciliation was impossible; the conference broke up, and the breach remained unclosed.

This was a terrible complication. Nothing but a united and bold policy, Zwingli saw, could extricate them from it. But instead of this, the Council of Zurich was every day displaying greater vacillation and feebleness. The lukewarm and timid were deserting the Reform, its old enemies were again raising their heads. Courage and patriotism were lacking to meet the ire of the mountaineers, roused by the half-measures which had been adopted. Ruin was coming on apace. The burden of the State rested on Zwingli; he felt he could no longer accept a position in which he was responsible for evils which were mainly owing to the rejection of those measures he had counseled. He appeared before the Great Council on the 26th of July, 1531, and, with a voice choking with emotion, said: “For eleven years I have preached the Gospel among you, and warned you of the dangers that would threaten the Confederacy if the Five Cantons - that is to say, the party which lives by pensions and mercenary service - should gain the upper hand. All has been of no avail. Even now you elect to the council men who covet this blood-money. I will no longer be responsible for the mischief that I cannot prevent; I therefore desire my dismissal.”³ He took his departure with tears in his eyes.

Thus was the pilot leaving the ship at the moment the storm was about to strike it. The councilors were seized with dismay. Their former reverence and affection for their magnanimous and devoted leader revived. They named a deputation to wait on him and beg him to withdraw his resignation. Zwingli took three days to consider what course he should pursue. These were days of earnest prayer. At length he reappeared in the council, his eyes dimmed, and his face bearing traces of the conflict through which he had passed. “I will stay with you,” said he, “and I will labor for the safety of the State - until death.”

For a moment the union and courage of Zurich revived. Zwingli began again to have hope. He thought that could he rouse to action the powerful canton of Bern, all might yet be well; the gathering tempest in the mountains might be turned back, and the iron hand

³Christoffel, p. 447.

that lay so heavy upon conscience and the preaching of the Gospel lifted off. He arranged a midnight meeting with the deputies of Bern at Bremgarten, and put the matter before them thus: - "What is to be done?" said he. "Withdraw the blockade? - the cantons will then be more haughty and insolent than ever; Enforce it? - they will take the offensive, and if their attack succeed, you will behold our fields red with the blood of the Protestants, the doctrine of truth cast down, the Church of Christ laid waste, all social relations overthrown, our adversaries more irritated and hardened against the Gospel, and crowds of monks and priests again filling our rural districts, streets, and temples." He paused; then solemnly added, "And yet that also will have an end." The words of Zwingle had deeply impressed the Bernese. "We see," said they, "all the disasters that impend over our common cause, and will do our utmost to ward them off."

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Zwingle took his departure while it was yet dark. His disciple, the young Bullinger, who was present, and relates what was said at the interview, accompanied him a little way. The parting was most sad, for the two were tenderly attached, and in the hearts of both was a presentiment that they should meet no more on earth. ⁴ A strange occurrence took place at the gate of the town. As Zwingle and his friends approached the sentinels, a personage in robes white as snow suddenly appeared, and threw the soldiers into panic. So the guard affirmed, for Zwingle and his friends saw not the apparition. ⁵

The Council of Zurich sank down again into their former apathy. The pensioners - the foreign gold formed the great obstacle, Zwingle felt, to the salvation of his country. It had corrupted the virtue and undermined the patriotism of the Mountain Cantons, and it had bred treachery and cowardice in even the Reformed councils. Zwingle's appeals grew more stirring every hour. "Ruin," said he, "is at the door;" but he felt that his words were spoken to dead men; his heart was almost broken.

In the August of that year a comet of unusual size appeared in the heavens. ⁶ As night after night, with lengthening tail and fiercer blaze, it hung suspended in the west, it attracted the gaze and awoke the terrors of all. On the night of the 15th of August, Zwingle and his

⁴Christoffel, p. 449.

⁵Bullinger, Chron., tom. 3, p. 49.

⁶This was Halley's Comet, that makes its appearance about every seventy-six years.

friend George Muller, the former Abbot of Wettingen, contemplated it from the burying-ground of the great minister. "What may this star signify, dear Huldreich?" inquired Mailer. "It is come to light me to my grave," replied Zwingle, "and many an honest man with me."⁷ "With God's grace, no," said Mailer. "I am rather short-sighted," rejoined Zwingle, "but I foresee great calamities in the future:⁸ there comes a great catastrophe; but Christ will not finally forsake us; the victory will remain with our cause."

Portent was heaped upon portent, and rumor followed rumor. Not a locality but furnished its wonder, prognosticating calamity, and diffusing gloomy forebodings over the country. At Brugg, in Aargau, a fountain, not of water, but of blood, was reported to have opened suddenly, and to be dyeing the earth with gore. The sky of Zug was illumined with a meteor in the form of a shield, and noises as of men engaged in conflict came from the hollows of the mountains. In the Brunig Pass banners were seen to wave upborne by no earthly hand, and stirred by no earthly breeze; while on the calm surface of the Lucerne Lake spectral ships were seen careering, manned with spectral warriors.⁹

There was no need of such ghostly signs; the usual symptoms of approaching disaster were but too manifest to those who chose to read them. Zwingle perceived them in the disunion and apathy of the Reformed cantons, in the growing audacity of the enemy, and in the sinister rumors which were every day brought from the mountains. He raised his voice once more; it was in vain: the men who trembled before the portents which their imagination had conjured up, were unmoved by the sober words of the one man whose sagacity foresaw, and whose patriotism would have averted, the coming ruin.

⁷Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 387.

⁸Zwingle, Epp., 2, p. 626.

⁹Christoffel, pp. 449, 450.

Chapter 10: Death of Zwingle

Forest Cantons decide on War—Assembling of their Army—Zurich dispatches 600 Men—Tedious Debates in the Council—A Night of Terror—Morning—The Great Banner Clings to its Staff—Depression—700 mustered instead of 4,000—Zwingle Mounts his Steed—Parting with his Wife and Children—Omens—The Battle—Bravery of the Zurichers—Overwhelmed by Numbers—The Carnage—Zwingle Mortally Wounded—Dispatched by Camp Followers—Tidings of his Death—Grief and Dismay

In the beginning of October the preparations of the Five Cantons for war were completed. Their Diet assembled at Brunnen, on the banks of the Lake of Lucerne; a vote was taken, and the campaign was decided upon. Straightway the passes were seized that no one might tell it in Zurich. ¹ The avalanche hung trembling on the mountain's brow; but a dead calm reigned in Zurich and the other Reformed cantons, for the rumors of war had suddenly ceased. It was the calm before the tempest.

On the 9th of October the mountain warriors assembled in their chapels, heard mass, and then, to the number of 8,000, began their march toward the Protestant frontier. They set up their standard at Baar, between the canton of Zug and the canton of Zurich. The men of Schwytz, Uri, Zug, Unterwalden, and Lucerne hastened to assemble round it. Their ranks were swelled by soldiers from the Italian valleys, and deserters from Zurich and Bern. Another Popish host, 12,000 strong, spread themselves over the free parishes, inflicting all the horrors of war wherever they came. Tidings reached Zurich that the bolt had fallen the war was begun; the enemy was at Baar, on the road to Zurich.

On receiving this startling intelligence on the evening of the 9th, the council hastily assembled; but instead of sounding the tocsin,

¹Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 395.

or calling the people to arms, they dispatched two councilors to reconnoiter, and then retired to rest.

At day-break of the 10th another messenger arrived at Zurich, confirming the intelligence of the previous day. The Great Council assembled in the morning, but still professed to doubt the gravity of the situation. Messenger after messenger arrived; at last came one who told them that the enemy had crossed the frontier, and seized upon Hitzkylch. On hearing this, the councilors turned pale. They were alarmed at last. It was now resolved, although only after a lengthened debate, to send forward Goeldi, with 600 men and artillery. ² This was the vanguard; the main body was to follow. Crossing the Albis, Goeldi and his men arrived at Kappel during the night. He had instructions not to engage the forces of the enemy till succors arrived.

Lavatar, the commander-in-chief of the forces of the canton, earnestly counseled a levy en masse, and the instant dispatch of a powerful body to the frontier. There followed another tedious debate in the council; the day wore away, and it was evening before the council were able to come to the determination to send an army to defend their invaded country.

The sun went down behind the Albis. The city, the lake, and the canton were wrapped in darkness; with the darkness came trembling and horror. The bells were rung to summon to arms. They had hardly begun to toll when a tempest burst forth, and swept in terrific fury over Zurich and the surrounding country. The howling of the winds, the lashing of the waves of the lake, the pealing of the steeple-bells, the mustering of the landsturm, and the earthquake, which about nine o'clock shook the city and canton, formed a scene of terror such as had seldom been witnessed. Few eyes were that night closed in sleep. In the dwellings of Zurich there were tears, and loud wailings, and hasty and bitter partings of those who felt that they embraced probably for the last time.

The morning broke; the tempest was past and gone, the mountains, the lake, and the green acclivities of the Albis were fairer than ever. But the beauty of morning could not dispel the gloom which had settled in the hearts of the Zurichers. The great banner

²Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 388. Christoffel, p. 452.

was hoisted on the town-hall, but in the still air it clung to its staff. "Another bad omen," said the men of Zurich, as they fixed their eyes on the drooping flag.

Beneath that banner there assembled about 700 men, where 4,000 warriors ought to have mustered. These were without, uniform, and insufficiently armed. The council had appointed Zwingle to be war-chaplain. He well knew the hazards of the post, but he did not shirk them. He pressed Anna, his wife, to his bruised and bleeding heart; tore himself from his children, and with dimmed eyes but a resolute brow went forth to mount his horse, which stood ready at the door. He vaulted into the saddle, but scarcely had he; touched it when the animal reared, and began to retreat backwards. "He will never return," said the spectators, who saw in this another inauspicious omen. ³

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The little army passed out of the gates about eleven of the forenoon. Anna followed her husband with her eyes so long as he was visible. He was seen to fall behind his troop for a few minutes, and those who were near him distinctly heard him breathing out his heart in prayer, and committing himself and the Church to God. The soldiers climbed the Albis. On arriving at "The Beech-tree" on its summit they halted, and some proposed that they' should here wait for reinforcements. "Hear ye not the sound of the cannon beneath us?" said Zwingle; "they are fighting at Kappel; let us hasten forward to the aid of our brethren." The troop precipitated its march. ⁴

The battle between the two armies had been begun at one o'clock, and the firing had been going on for two hours when the Zurichers bearing the "great banner" joined their comrades in the fight. ⁵ It seemed at first as if their junction with the van would turn the day in their favor. The artillery of Zurich, admirably served and advantageously posted, played with marked effect upon the army of the Five Cantons spread out on a morass beneath. ⁶ But unhappily a wood on the left flank of the Zurich army had been left unoccupied, and the mountaineers coming to the knowledge of this oversight

³Christoffel, pp. 452, 453.

⁴Ibid., p. 453.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 408.

⁶Ibid.

climbed the hill, and under cover of the trees opened a murderous fire upon the ranks of their opponents. Having discharged their fire, they rushed out of the wood, lance in hand, and furiously charged the Zurichers. The resistance they encountered was equally resolute and brave. The men of Zurich fought like lions; they drove back the enemy. The battle swept with a roar like that of thunder through the wood. The fury and heroism on both sides, the flight and the pursuit of armed men, the clash of halberds and the thunder of artillery, the shouts of combatants, and the groans of the dying, mingling in one dreadful roar, were echoed and re-echoed by the Alps till they seemed to rock the mountains and shake the earth. In their advance the Zurichers became entangled in a bog. Alas! they were fatally snared. The foe returned and surrounded them. At this moment the troop under Goeldi, a traitor at heart, fled. Those who remained fought desperately, but, being as one to eight to the men of the Five Cantons, their valor could avail nothing against odds so overwhelming. "Soon they fell thick," says Christoffel, "like the precious grain in autumn, beneath the strokes of their embittered foes, and at length were obliged to abandon the battle-field, leaving upon it more than five hundred who slept the sleep of death, or who were writhing in the agony of death-wounds." On this fatal field fell the flower of Zurich - the wisest of its councilors the most Christian of its citizens, and the ablest of its pastors.

But there is one death that affects us more than all the others. Zwingle, though present on the field, did not draw sword: he restricted himself to his duties as chaplain. When the murderous assault was made from the forest, and many were falling around him, he stooped down to breathe a few words into the ear of a dying man. While thus occupied he was struck with a stone upon the head, and fell to the earth. Recovering in a little he rose, but received two more blows. As he lay on the ground a hostile spear dealt him a fatal stab, and the blood began to trickle from the wound. "What matters it?" said he; "they may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul." These were the last words he uttered. ⁷

⁷Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 412. The student of the classics will remember the words that Epaminondas addressed to his companions when dying - "It is not an end of my life that is now come, but a better beginning."

The darkness fell, the stars came out, the night was cold. Zwingle had fallen at the foot of a pear-tree, and lay extended on the earth. His hands were clasped, his eyes were turned to heaven, and his lips moved in prayer. The camp-followers were now prowling over the field of battle. Two of them approached the place where the Reformer lay. "Do you wish for a priest to confess yourself?" said they. The dying man shook his head. "At least," said they, "call in your heart upon the Mother of God." He signified his dissent by another shake of the head. Curious to know who this obstinate heretic was, one of them raised his head, and turned it toward one of the fires which had been kindled on the field. He suddenly let it fall, exclaiming, "Tis Zwingle!"⁸ It happened that Bockinger, an officer from Unterwalden, and one of those pensioners against whom Zwingle had so often thundered, was near. The name pronounced by the soldier fell upon his ear. "Zwingle!" exclaimed he; "is it that vile heretic and traitor Zwingle? He had hardly uttered the words when he raised his sword and struck him on the throat. Yielding to this last blow, Zwingle died (October 11, 1531)."⁹

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It was on the field of battle that the Reformer met death. But the cause for which he yielded up his life was that of the Reformation of the Church and the regeneration of his country. He was not less a martyr than if he had died at the stake.

When the terrible tidings reached Zurich that Zwingle was dead, the city was struck with affright. The news ran like lightning through all the Reformed cantons and spread consternation and sorrow. Switzerland's great patriot had fallen. When Ecolampadius of Basle learned that the Reformer was no more, his heart turned to stone, and he died in a few weeks. The intelligence was received with profound grief in all the countries of the Reformation. All felt that a great light had been quenched; that one of the foremost champions in the Army of the Faith had fallen, at a moment when the hosts of Rome were closing their ranks, and a terrible onset on the Truth was impending.

Zurich made peace with the Five Cantons, stipulating only for toleration. In the common parishes the Reformed faith was sup-

⁸Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 412.

⁹The pear-tree under which Zwingle died has perished. A rough massive block of stone, with a tablet, and an inscription in German and Latin, has taken its place.

pressed, the altars were set up, mass restored, and the monks crept back to their empty cells. Luther, when told of the death of Zwingli and Ecolampadius, remembered the days he had passed with both of these men at Marburg, and was seized with so pungent a sorrow that, to use his own words, he “had almost died himself.” Ferdinand of Austria heard of the victory of Kappel, but with different feelings. “At last,” he thought, “the tide has turned,” and in Kappel he beheld the first of a long series of victories to be achieved by the sword of Rome. He wrote to his brother, Charles V., calling upon him to come to the aid of the Five Cantons, and beginning at the Alps, to traverse Christendom at the head of his legions, purging out heresy, and restoring the dominion of the old faith.

Zwingli had fallen; but in this same land a mightier was about to arise.

**Book 12: Protestantism in Germany from
the Augsburg Confession to the Peace of
Passau**

Chapter 1: The Schmalkald League

The Augsburg Confession—The Emperor's Hopes and Disappointments—Melancthon's Despair—Luther's Courage—Formation of Schmalkald League—The Kings of France, England, etc., invited to Enter it—The Swiss Rejected—Luther's Hesitation—The Turk Invades Europe—Charles offers Peace to the Protestants—Peace of Ratisbon—The Church has Rest Fifteen Years

Picture: Doorway of Ratisbon Cathedral.

We have already traced the history of Protestantism in Germany from the day of the Theses (1517) to the day of the Augsburg Confession (1530). The interval between these two dates is short; but what a train of important and brilliant events marks its currency, and how different the Christendom of one era to the Christendom of the other! If the hammer of Luther, nailing his propositions to the door of the Schloss-kirk, sounded the knell of the Old times, the Augsburg Confession, presented only thirteen years afterwards, opens to us the gates of the New world.

Where in all history are we to look for a transition so vast, accomplished in so short a time? Of all the factors in human affairs, that which despots commonly account the weakest, and of which they sometimes take no account at all, is immeasurably the strongest - Conscience. It is more powerful than philosophy, more powerful than letters, more powerful than the sword. The schoolmen had toiled for ages to enlighten the world, but it was seen at last that their intellectual subtlety could not break the chains of the human soul. [96] Their day faded into the night of mysticism. Next came the revival of letters, the sure prelude, it was said, of a new age.

But civilization and liberty did not come at the call of the Humanists, and after flourishing a little while letters began to retrace their steps towards the pagan tomb from which they had come. Scepticism was descending upon the world. But when the Word of God touched

the conscience, the world felt itself shaken by a power mightier than that of schools or armies. It tottered upon its foundations. The veil was rent from the heart of Christendom.

We resume our narrative at the point where we broke it off the old town of Augsburg in the year 1530. What a numerous, brilliant, and motley gathering is that which its walls now enclose! Here are all the sovereign princes, dukes, and counts of the Empire, with their courts and their men-at-arms. Here are all the great scholars and theologians of Germany, her Popish dignitaries and her Protestant Reformers. Here too, in the train of the chief personages, is much that is neither princely nor scholarly - lacqueys and men-at-arms, idlers and sight-seers from far and near, who crowd the streets, fill the taverns, and disturb the peace and quiet of the city by engaging in battles of a different kind from those which exercise the prowess of the combatants in the Palatinate Chapel. A great place is empty in this vast gathering - that of Luther. But he is no farther off than the Castle of Coburg, where, sitting apart and maintaining a keen correspondence with his friends, he can make his spirit felt in the Diet and, unseen, guide the course of its debates.

All being gathered into Augsburg, in obedience to the summons of the emperor, at last with great pomp comes the emperor himself, Charles, master of two worlds. Behind him what a long and brilliant train! Kings, Papal legates, ambassadors, archbishops, priests, friars, and some ten thousand men-at-arms. It is Mediaevalism rising up in a power and glory unknown to it for ages, feeling instinctively that its last struggle is come with a power before which it is destined to fall.

Before crossing the Alps, Charles V. had had an interview with the Pope at Bologna, and these two potentates had come to an understanding touching the policy to be pursued towards the Lutherans. They must be required to submit to the Church. This was the summary and simple solution that awaited the problem of the age. There was, it is true, the promise of a Council in the future, and of whatever reforms that Council might be pleased to grant; but, first, the Lutherans must return to their obedience. So then the end of the heresy was near - the Pope and the emperor, the two masters of Christendom, had decreed its extirpation. The brilliant assemblage now gathered from east to west of Germany had come to witness the

burial of the Lutheran revolt, and the resurrection in new glory and power of Roman Catholicism.

But how mortifying to this master of so many kingdoms! He who had been twice victorious over his great rival Francis I., who had dictated peace at almost the gates of Paris, who had bowed the Pope to his policy, was withstood, thwarted, beaten by these heretical princes and excommunicated preachers. He was compelled to hear them read their Confession in open Diet; and thus had he erected a stage, and got together an audience, for the greater eclat of that Lutheranism which he expected to see sink into eternal annihilation beneath the weight of his arms and the prestige of his authority. A whole winter's scheming with the Pope had suddenly collapsed.

But Charles could do something toward veiling the humiliation he could not but feel. He bade his theologians prepare an answer to the Confession of the Protestant princes and divines. Another unfortunate step. The blundering and sophistry of Dr. Eck acted as a foil to a document which combined the strength of Luther and the elegance of Melanchthon. The Augsburg Confession stood higher than ever. The emperor bade the Protestants consider themselves refuted. It would seem that he himself had but small faith in this refutation, for he made haste to throw his sword in along with the pen of Dr. Eck against the Protestants. On the 19th of November, 1530, he issued a decree,¹ addressed to the Protestant princes, States and cities, commanding them, under peril of his displeasure, to return to their obedience to the See of Rome, and giving them till the next spring (15th of April) to make their choice between submission and war. Dr. Eck was rewarded for his services at the Council by the Bishopric of Vienna, which gave occasion to the witty saying of Erasmus, that "the poor Luther had made many rich."²

The edict of the emperor forbade from that hour all further conversions to Protestantism, under pain of forfeiture of goods and life; it further enacted that all which had been taken from the Roman Catholics should be restored; that the monasteries and religious houses should be rebuilt; that the old ceremonies and rites should be observed; and that no one who did not submit to this decree should

¹Sleidan, bk. 7, pp. 135-137.

²Ibid., p. 139.

sit in the Imperial Chamber, the supreme court of judicature in the Empire; and that all classes should assist with their lives and fortunes in carrying out this edict. ³ The edict of Spires was directed mainly against Luther; the ban of Augsburg was wider in its scope; it fell on all who held his opinions in Germany - on princes, cities, and peasants.

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Melancthon was overwhelmed with dismay. He was “drowned,” says Sleidan, “with sighs and tears.” ⁴ Happily, Luther yet lived. His magnanimity and faith rose to the occasion. He looked the great emperor and his persecuting edict in the face, and in a characteristic publication foretold that the edict would be a failure, and that even the emperor’s sword, strong as it was, was not strong enough to extinguish the light and bring back the darkness.

The spirit of Luther fired the princes. At Christmas, 1530, they met at Schmalkald to deliberate on the steps to be taken. That their religion and liberties must be defended at all costs was with them an axiom. The only question then was, How? They formed the League, known in history as the League of Schmalkald, engaging to stand by one another in the defense of their faith and their liberties, and in particular to resist any attempt that might be made by arms to carry out the Edict of Augsburg. ⁵ For this purpose they were to maintain, each of them, for the space of six years, a military force ready to assist any principality or town which might be attacked by the imperial arms.

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It was not the question of their religious liberties only that made it seem expedient for the Protestant princes to form this confederacy. To this were added political considerations of no small weight. Recent successes had greatly increased the power, and widened in the same proportion the ambition, of Charles V. The emperor was at this moment revolving schemes dangerous to the constitution and civil liberties of Germany. He had made his brother Ferdinand of Austria be elected King of the Romans. To elect a King of the Romans was to designate the future Emperor of Germany. This was a violation of the Golden Bull of Charles IV., inasmuch as it was a manifest attempt on the part of Charles to vest the imperial crown in

³Sleidan, bk. 7, pp. 129, 140. Mosheim, cent. 16, sec. 1, chap. 3; Glas., 1881.

⁴Sleidan, bk. 7, p. 140. Seckendorf, lib. 2, p. 180.

⁵Sleidan, bk. 7, p. 142. Robertson, bk. 5, p. 175.

his family, and to render that dignity hereditary which the Golden Bull declared to be elective. The Protestant princes saw revolution in all this. The emperor was making himself master. They must resist this usurpation in time; hence the Schmalkald League, made first at Christmas, 1530, and renewed a year after, at Christmas, 1531, with the addition of a great many princes and cities. They wrote to the Kings of France, England, Denmark, and to the maritime towns in the north of Germany, to enter the League, or otherwise assist in their enterprise. The answers returned were in every case favorable, though considerations of policy made the writers postpone joining the League for the present.

This bold step failed at first to meet Luther's approval. It looked like war, and he shuddered at anything that threatened to bring war and the Gospel into contact. But when it was explained to him that the League was purely defensive; that it was meant to attack no one; that it was simply an arrangement for enabling its members to exercise unitedly, and therefore more successfully, their natural rights of self-defense, on behalf of what was dearer to them and to their countrymen than life itself, he acquiesced in the League of the princes.

The measure undoubtedly was right in itself, and was demanded by the circumstances of extreme peril in which Protestantism was now apparently placed. It linked the Protestant States of Germany into one confederation, under the aegis of which the Protestant faith might be preached, and its doctrines professed, without terror of the stake. Further, we recognize in the Schmalkald League a decided step in the progress of Protestantism. Protestantism as a principle or doctrine was developed in the teaching of the Reformers. But Protestantism was never meant to remain a mere principle. Its mission was to create around it a new political, social, and intellectual world. At the center of that world the Protestant principle took its place, sitting there as on a throne, or rather dwelling in it as its soul, and in times of peril calling to its defense all those forces - arts, letters, free constitutions which itself had created. The beginning of this new political world was at Schmalkald.

A great many princes and free cities, in addition to the original confederates, had subscribed the League, and now its attitude was a somewhat imposing one. The Swiss Protestant cantons held out their

hand, but were repulsed. They were held to be disqualified by their sentiments on the Lord's Supper.⁶ This was a grave error. It was nearly as great an error on the other side when the Kings of France and England, who could hardly be more orthodox in the eyes of the Germans than were the Zwinglians, were invited to join the League.⁷ Happily these monarchs sent replies which saved the Leaguers from the political entanglements in which an alliance with these scheming and selfish potentates would have been sure to land them.⁸ This was the very danger that Luther had feared. He foresaw the League growing strong and beginning to lean on armies, neglecting the development of the religious principle in whose vitality alone would consist the consolidation, power, and success of their federation. If the rampart should smother the heavenly fire it was meant to enclose, both would perish together.

When the spring of 1531 came, the emperor, instead of beginning hostilities, paused. The sword that was to have swept German Protestantism from the face of the earth, and which was already half drawn, was thrust back into its sheath. Besides the Schmalkald League, other things had arisen to convince the emperor of the extreme hazard of attempting at this moment to enforce the Edict of Augsburg. France, whose monarch was still smarting from the memories of Pavia and the imprisonment at Madrid, threatened to break the peace and commence hostilities against him. The irrepressible Turk was again appearing in the east of Europe. Further, the emperor had given umbrage to the Popish princes of Germany by making his brother Ferdinand be elected King of the Romans, and so could not; count on the aid of his own party. Thus, ever as Charles put his hand upon his sword's hilt, a new difficulty started up to prevent him drawing it. It must have seemed, even to himself, as if a greater power than the Schmalkald Confederacy were fighting against him.

The issue was that Charles, on a survey of his position, found that he must postpone the enforcing of the Edict of Augsburg to a more convenient time, and meanwhile he must come to an understanding with the Protestants. Accordingly, after tedious and difficult negotia-

⁶Sleidan, bk. 8, p. 151.

⁷Ibid., p. 145. Robertson, bk. 5, p. 176.

⁸Sleidan, bk. 8, pp. 149, 150.

tions, a peace was agreed upon at Nuremberg, July 23rd, and ratified in the Diet at Ratisbon, August 3rd, 1532. In this pacification the emperor granted to the Lutherans the free and undisturbed exercise of their religion, until such time as a General Council or an Imperial Diet should decide the religious question; and the Protestants - now seven princes and twenty-four cities

- promised to aid the emperor in his war against the Turk. ⁹ Thus the storm that looked so dark rolled away without inflicting any harm on those over whom it had lowered so ominously. The finest army which united Christendom had yet raised marched against the Turks; "and the emperor," says the Abbs Millot, "who had not yet appeared at the head of his troops (a thing surprising in an age of heroism), on this occasion took the command. He had the glory of disconcerting a formidable enemy, whose forces are said to have amounted to three hundred thousand men." ¹⁰ Solyman, intimidated by this display of force, withdrew his devastating hordes without coming to a battle; and the emperor leaving Germany in order to superintend the vast military projects he was now setting on foot in other countries, the Church had rest from persecution, and the period of her tranquillity was prolonged for well-nigh a decade and a half.

⁹Robertson, bk. 5., p. 176. Mosheim, cent. 16., sec. i., chap. 3. Sleidan, bk. 8., p. 160.

¹⁰Abbe Millot, *Elements of General History* (translated from the French), vol 4., rP. 286, 287;. Lend., 1779.

Chapter 2 : The German Anabaptists, or the “Heavenly Kingdom”

Peace in the Church: in the World Distress—Its Four Great Rulers—Troubles of Henry VIII—Mortification’s of Francis I—Labours of Charles V—Griefs of Clement VII—A Contrast—The Anabaptist Prophets—Matthias the Baker—The New “Mount Zion”—Morals of the Sect—Buckholdt the Tailor—The “Heavenly Kingdom”—Buckholdt the King of the “Heavenly Kingdom”—Nominates Twelve Apostles—Sends out Twenty-eight Evangelists—Their Instructions and Departure—Their Fate—Marriage Abolished—Minster, the Den of this Crew, Besieged and Taken—Buckholdt put to Death—Lesson

Picture: Luther on his Deathbed.

If the Church had rest, society around it was terribly convulsed - “on the earth” was “distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.” What miserable and distracted lives were those which were led by the four great potentates that governed Europe! Cares, perplexities, and disappointments came crowding in upon them, and filled up every hour of every day of their outwardly brilliant, but inwardly most unhappy existences.

Henry of England had commenced his great divorce. The delays and doublings of the Vatican kept him in a perpetual fume, and when at length his suit reached its final issue fix the Papal court, the haughty monarch was thrown into a paroxysm of rage, which shaped itself ultimately into a course of crime. His impetuous and choleric temper could as little brook the opposition he was meeting with from the Protestants of his own kingdom, who had thrown off Popery while he had thrown off only the Pope, and aimed at stepping into his vacant place in the consciences of his subjects.

Francis I. of France was every year becoming a guiltier and a more wretched man. His rival, Charles V., had robbed him of the laurels he had won in his earlier campaigns. To the anger and [100]

shame which his imprisonment in Madrid left rankling in his soul were added the loss of the Italian duchies, and the recent humiliating peace of Cam-bray. Francis gave himself no rest, if haply he might wipe out these disgraces and humble the haughty man who had inflicted them upon him. He intrigued to sow dissension between Clement and the emperor; he toiled to raise new armaments in the hope that past defeats would be forgotten in the splendor of new victories; but all that he reaped from these harassing labours was only to add thereby to the weight of his subjects' burdens, and to the list of his own embarrassments and disappointments.

The career of Charles V. was outwardly more prosperous, but at the heart of his glory were labor and sorrow. Raised above all other men in point of worldly state, the emperor was in hourly terror of falling from the dazzling pinnacle on which he stood, and in order to maintain himself was compelled to have continual resort to fresh levies, new battles, and the expenditure of yet more millions of gold crowns, till at length the gulf was dug into which himself and his kingdom finally descended. Not to speak of Francis, who was a thorn in his side; nor of Clement, whose fickle alliance gave him little satisfaction, the emperor held no faith in the order of things which he had established in Italy and Germany, and labored under continual apprehensions of his system falling in pieces around him. But worst of all he was haunted by the spectre of Lutheranism, which a true instinct told him would one day rob him of his Empire; nor could he understand how it should happen that every time he raised his sword to make an end of that detested thing, the Turk unexpectedly presented himself, and seemed with menacing gestures to forbid the blow.

As regards the fourth great power of the age, Clement VII. of Rome, these were not times when Popes any more than temporal monarchs could sleep in peace. His ghostly empire was falling in pieces; kings and nations were escaping from under the tiara, and neither anathemas nor concessions - and both were tried by turns - could bring them back. Germany had revolted from its obedience; half the Swiss cantons had lifted up the heel of heretical pravity; Sweden and Denmark were going the same downward road, and England was following fast after them. There never before had been so unfortunate a Pontificate, and there have been few so anxious,

perplexed, and unhappy Popes, though there have been many more vicious ones. Nor was Clement more happy in the sovereigns that remained with him than in those that had deserted him. The most Christian King of France and his most Catholic Majesty of Spain were fully as troublesome as useful to him. Instead of the two pillars of his throne, they rather resembled two colossal swords suspended above it, which threatened ever and anon to fall and crush it. Much artifice and management did it require on the part of Clement to poise the one against the other. At no time did the views and interests of all three coincide. On one object only were they able to agree - the overthrow of Protestantism; but even here their jealousies and rivalships prevented their acting in concert. Their conflicting passions drew them into a whirl of excitement and of war against one another, which wasted their years, burdened their treasuries, and devastated their kingdoms.

Compared with the spectacles we have been contemplating, how truly sublime the position of Luther and his fellow-Reformers! From their closets they wield a far mightier power than Charles and Francis do from their thrones. Not armies to ravage, but ideas to enlighten the earth do they send forth. By the silent but majestic power of truth they are seen dethroning errors, pulling down tyrannies, planting the seeds of piety and liberty, and nursing the infancy of arts and letters, and free States, which are destined to remain the fruit of their labours and the monument of their wisdom when the victories of Charles and of Francis have been forgotten, and the fabric of their political greatness has mouldered into dust.

The Church of Germany, during these years of peace, extended on every side. All her great teachers were still spared to her. Luther, Melancthon, and the band of eminent men around them, still unbroken, were guiding her counsels and propagating her doctrines. By her side stood the League warding off the sword of Charles, or whoever might wish to attack her. The timid found courage to avow their convictions, and ranged themselves on the Protestant side. Whole districts in Northern and Central Germany came over. Anhalt and Pomerania, Augsburg, Frankfort, Hanover, and Kempten were among the new accessions. This did not escape the notice of the emperor, but, meanwhile, it was not in his power to prevent it - he dared hardly show his displeasure at it.

[101] The prosperity of these peaceful days was, alas! disturbed by a most deplorable outbreak of lawless passion and horrible fanaticism. We have already narrated the tumults and bloodshed of which the provinces of Upper Germany were the scene about a decade before, caused by the efforts of men who had espoused principles that converted the liberty of the Gospel into worse than pagan licentiousness. The seeds of these evils were still in the soil, and the days of peace brought them to the surface a second time. In 1533, two Anabaptist prophets - John Matthias, a baker of Haarlem, and John Buckholdt, a tailor in Leyden - with a body of their followers, seized upon the city of Munster, in Westphalia, ¹ judging it a convenient spot from which to propagate their abominable tenets. They gave out that God had commissioned them to put down all magistracy and government, and establish the kingdom of heaven, which from its center in Munster, or Mount Zion, as they styled it, was to reign over all the nations of the earth. Matthias, the baker, was the first monarch of this new kingdom. His talent for enterprise, his acts of sanctity, and his fervid enthusiasm fitted him for his difficult but impious project. He abolished all distinctions of rank, proclaimed a community of goods, made all eat at a common table, and abrogating marriage, permitted a plurality of wives, himself setting the example, which his followers were not slow to imitate. ²

Matthias, the baker, soon died, and was succeeded by John Buckholdt, the tailor. It was now that the new "heavenly kingdom" shone forth in all its baleful splendor. Buckholdt gave out that it was the will of God, made known to him by special revelation, that he should sit upon the throne of his father David, and discharge the august office of universal monarch of the world. He ordered a crown and scepter, both of the best gold, to be prepared for him; and he never appeared abroad without these insignia of his sovereignty. He dressed himself in the most sumptuous garments, had a Bible and naked sword carried before him, and coined money stamped with his own image.

He fell into a sleep of three days, and on awakening, calling for pen and ink, he wrote down on a slip of paper the names of

¹Sleidan, bk. 10., p. 193. Robertson, bk. 5., p. 180.

²Sleidan, bk. 10., pp. 194, 195.

twelve men of good family in Munster, whom he nominated heads of "the twelve tribes of Israel." He had a high throne erected in the market-place, covered with cloth of gold, where, attended by his officers of state, his guards, and his wives, of whom one bore the title of queen, he heard complaints and administered justice. ³

He had, moreover, a body of missionaries, whose office it was to proclaim the "true doctrine." Twenty-eight of these men were sent forth to preach in the cities around, and to say that the "kingdom of heaven" had been set up at Munster; that John of Leyden had been commissioned by God to govern all the nations of the world; that the time was come when the meek should inherit the earth, and the wicked be rooted out of it; and that the most terrible judgments would fall on all who should refuse to enter the "heavenly kingdom." One only of these twenty-eight deputies returned to "Mount Zion," to tell what acceptance their message had met with.

Of the sending out of these missionaries Sleidan gives the following graphic description: - "One day," says he, "Buckholdt sounded a trumpet through all the streets, and commanded the citizens to meet him armed at the gate of the cathedral. When they came to the place of rendezvous they found a supper prepared. They are ordered to sit down, being about 4,000 of them; afterwards about a thousand more sit down, who were on duty while the first number were at supper. The king and the queen, with their household servants, wait at the table. After they had eaten, and supper was almost done, the king himself gives every one a piece of bread, with these words: Take eat, shew forth the Lord's death. The queen in like manner, giving them a cup, bids them Shew forth the Lord's death. When this was over, the prophet before-mentioned gets into the pulpit, and asks them if they would obey the Word of God? When they all told him, Yes: It is the command of the Heavenly Father, says he, that we should send out about twenty-eight teachers of the Word, who are to go to the four quarters of the world, and publish the doctrine which is received in this city. Then he repeats the names of his missionaries, and assigns them all their respective journeys. Six are sent to Osenburg, six to Vardendorp, eight to Soest, and as many to Coesfeld. Afterwards the king and queen and the waiters sat down

³Ibid., p. 196. Robertson, bk. 5., pp. 181,182. Mosheim, cent. 16., sec. 1., chap. 3.

[102] to supper with those who were designed for this expedition... After supper, those eight-and-twenty men we mentioned are sent away by night. To every one, besides provision by the way, was given a crown in gold, which they were to leave in those places that refused to believe their doctrine, as a testimony of their ruin and eternal destruction, for rejecting that peace and saving doctrine which they had been offered. These men went out accordingly, and when they had reached their respective posts they cry out in the towns that men must repent, otherwise they would shortly be destroyed. They spread their coats upon the ground before the magistrates, and throw down their crowns before them, and protest they were sent by the Father to offer them peace if they would receive it. They command them to let all their fortunes be common; but if they refused to accept it, then this gold should be left as a token of their wickedness and ingratitude. They added ‘that these were the times foretold by all the prophets in which God would make righteousness flourish all the world over; and when their king had fully discharged his office, and brought things to that perfection, so as to make righteousness prevail everywhere, then the time would be come in which Christ would deliver up the kingdom to the Father.’

“As soon as they had done their speech,” says Sleidan, “they were apprehended, and examined, first in a friendly manner, but afterwards upon the rack, concerning their faith, and way of living, and how the town (Munster) was fortified. Their answer was that they only taught the true doctrine, which they were ready to maintain with the hazard of their lives; for since the times of the apostles the Word of God was never rightly delivered, nor justice observed. That there were but four prophets, whereof two were righteous, David and John of Leyden; the other two wicked, viz., the Pope and Luther, and this latter the worst.”⁴

Buckholdt combined the duties of missionary with those of universal sovereign. Not only did he press upon his preachers to exhort their hearers to use the liberty wherewith the Gospel had invested them, more especially in the matter of marriage; he would himself at times ascend his throne in the market-place, and turning it into a pulpit, would harangue the people on the propriety of following

⁴Sleidan, bk. 10., pp. 196, 197.

his example in the matter of taking to themselves more wives. This was surely an unnecessary labor, considering that the passions of the citizens were no longer restrained either by the authority of laws or by the sense of decency. In the wake of lust, as always happens, came blood.

Munster, the den of this filthy crew, stank in the nostrils of Papist and Protestant alike. It was a thing so supremely offensive and disgusting that it was not possible to live in the same country with it. No matter whether one believed in the mass or in Protestantism, this "heavenly kingdom" was more than either religion could tolerate; and must, in the name of that common humanity of which it was the reproach, be swept away. The princes of the Rhine Provinces in 1535 united their forces and marched against the city - now strongly fortified. They besieged and took it. Buckholdt was led about in chains and exhibited in several German towns. He was finally brought back to Munster, the scene of his grandeur and crimes, and there subjected to an agonising death.⁵ The body of the prophet was - after death - put into an iron cage; and the dead bodies of two of his followers being similarly dealt with, all three were hung at the top of the city-tower, as a public spectacle and warning - Buckholdt in the midst, and on either side a companion.

Luther sought to make his countrymen understand the lesson taught them by these deplorable occurrences. The Gospel, he said, was the only safe path between two abysses. Rome by usurping authority over the moral law had opened one abyss, the prophets of Munster by abrogating that law had opened another. The Gospel, by maintaining the supremacy of that law, placed the conscience under the authority of God, its rightful Ruler, and so gave man liberty without licentiousness; and if the world would avoid falling headlong into the gulf that yawned on either hand, it must go steadily forward in the road of Protestantism. Rome and Munster might seem wide apart, but there was a point where the two met. From the indulgence-box of Tetzels came an immunity from moral obligation, quite as complete as that of the "heavenly kingdom" of the Anabaptist prophet of Munster.

⁵Sleidan, bk. 10., p. 202. Robertson, bk. 5., p. 183.

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Chapter 3 : Accession of Princes and States to

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Protestantism

Wurtemberg—Captivity of Duke Christopher—Escape—Philip of Hesse takes Arms to Restore the Duke—His Success—The Duke and Wurtemberg Join the Protestants—Death of Duke George—Accession of Albertine-Saxony to Protestantism—All Central and Northern Germany now Protestant—Austria and Bavaria still Popish—Protestant Movements in Austria—Petition of Twenty-four Austrian Nobles—Accession of the Palatinate—The Elector-Archbishop of Cologne embraces Protestantism—Expelled from his Principality—Barbarossa-Dissimulation of the Emperor—Purposes War

We turn to Protestantism, which, as we have said above, was continually multiplying its adherents and enlarging its area. At this hour a splendid addition was unexpectedly made to its territorial domain. In the year 1519, Duke Ulrich of Wurtemberg had been expelled his dominions, having made himself odious to his subjects by his profligate manners and tyrannical dispositions. ¹ The emperor, Charles V, seized on his territory, gave it to his brother Ferdinand of Austria, who occupied it with his troops; and to make all sure the emperor carried off Christopher, the son of the duke, in his train. The young captive, however, contrived to give his majesty the slip. The imperial cavalcade was slowly winding up the northern slopes of the Alps. It might be seen disappearing this moment as it descended into some gorge, or wound round some spur of the mountain, and coming fully into view the next as it continued its toilsome ascent toward the summit of the pass. The van of the long and brilliant procession now neared the snows of the summit while its rear was only in mid-ascent. The young duke, who meditated flight - watching his opportunity - fell behind. The vigilance of the guards was relaxed; a friendly rock interposed between him and the imperial cavalcade. He saw

¹Robertson, bk. 5., p. 184.

that the moment was come. He turned his horse's head and, followed by a single attendant whom he had let into the secret, fled, while the emperor continued his progress upward.² When at length his flight was known the pursuit began in hot haste. But it was all in vain. The pursuers returned without him; and it was given out that the young Duke of Wurtemberg, in crossing the mountains, had been slain by brigands, or had perished by accident.

Years wore on: the duke was believed to be dead. Meanwhile the Wurtembergers found the yoke of Austria - under which the emperor had placed them - more unbearable than that of Ulrich, which they had cast off, and began to sigh for their legitimate ruler. It was now the year 1532. It came to be known that the young Christopher was still alive; that he had been all the while in hiding with his relations on the confines of Alsace and Burgundy; and that he had embraced the Reformed faith in his retirement. As these same opinions had been spreading in Wurtemberg, the desire was all the stronger on the part of the inhabitants of that territory to have the son of their former sovereign, the young duke, back as their prince.

The advantage of strengthening the League of Schmalkald and enlarging the Protestant area by so splendid an addition as Wurtemberg was obvious to the Protestant princes. But this could not be done without war. Luther and Melancthon recoiled from the idea of taking arms. The League was strictly defensive. Nevertheless, Philip of Hesse, one of its most active members, undertook the project on his own responsibility. He set about raising an army in order to drive out the Austrians and restore Christopher to his dukedom.

Further, the Landgrave of Hesse came to a secret arrangement with the King of France, who agreed to furnish the money for the payment of the troops. It was the moment to strike. The emperor was absent in Spain, Ferdinand of Austria had the Turk on his hands, Francis I - ever ready to ride post between Rome and Wittemberg - had sent the money, and Protestant Germany had furnished the soldiers.

The landgrave began the campaign in the end of April: his first battle was fought on the 13th of May, and by the end of June he had brought the war to a successful issue. Ferdinand had to relinquish

²Sleidan, bk. 9., p. 174.

the dukedom, Ulrich and his son Christopher were restored,³ and with them came liberty for the new opinions. A brilliant addition had been made to the Schmalkald League, and a Protestant wedge driven into Southern Germany.

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Nor did this close the list of Protestant successes. Among the German princes was no more restless, resolute, and consistent opponent of Lutheranism than George, Duke of Albertine-Saxony. His opposition, based on a sincere belief in the doctrines of Romanism, was inflamed by personal antipathy to Luther. He raged against the Reformer as a fire-brand and revolutionist; and the Reformer in his turn was at no pains to conceal the contempt in which he held the duke, whom he commonly styled the "clown." On the 24th of April, 1539, George, Duke of Saxony, died. By his death without issue for his two sons had predeceased him - his succession fell to his brother Henry, whose attachment to Protestantism was as zealous as had been that of his deceased brother to Popery. Duke George ordered in his last will that his brother should make no change in the religion of his States, and failing fulfillment of this condition he bequeathed his kingdom to the emperor and Ferdinand of Austria. Henry on the first news of his brother's death hastened to Dresden, and disregarding the injunction in the will on the matter of religion, he took possession of the kingdom by making himself be proclaimed, not only in the capital, but in Leipsic and other great towns. Luther was invited to preach a course of sermons at Leipzig, to initiate the people into the doctrines of the Reformed faith; and in the course of a few weeks the ancient rites were changed and the Protestant worship was set up in their room. The change was hailed with joy by the majority of the inhabitants, some of whom had already embraced the Reformed opinions, but were restrained from the avowal of them by the prisons and executioners of Duke George. The accession of this powerful dukedom to the Schmalkald League converted what had heretofore been a danger - lying as it did in the heart of the Lutheran States - into a buttress of the Protestant cause.⁴

In Brandenburg were thousands of Protestants, but secretly for fear of Elector Joachim. In 1539, Joachim I. died, with him fell

³Sleidan, bk. 9., pp. 172, 173. Robertson, bk. 5., p. 184.

⁴Sleidan, bk. 12., pp. 249, 250.

the mass, and on its ruins rose the Protestant worship. Brunswick followed in 1542.⁵ A chain of Protestant States now extended, in an almost unbroken line, from the shores of the Baltic to the banks of the Rhine.

The whole of Central and Northern Germany was now Protestant. On the side of the old faith there remained only Austria, Bavaria, the Palatinate, and the ecclesiastical principalities of the Rhine. Nor did it seem that these States would long be able to resist the advances of Protestantism. In all of them a religious movement was already on foot, and if peace should be prolonged for a few years they would, in all likelihood, be permanently added to the side of the Reform. On the 13th of December, 1541, a petition was presented to Ferdinand, in the name of the nobility and States of Austria, praying for the free exercise of religion.⁶ The petition was signed by twenty-four nobles and ten cities, among which was Vienna. The neighboring provinces of Styria and Carniola joined in the request for freedom of conscience. Referring to the miseries of their times, the wars, pestilences, and famines which these sixteen years had witnessed, and the desolations which the Turk had inflicted, the petitioners pointed to the corruption of religion as the cause which had drawn this terrible chastisement upon them. "In the whole body politic," say they, "there is nothing pure or sound; all discipline both public and private is laid aside... We truly know no other medicine, most dread sovereign, than that the word of God be truly taught, and the people stirred up to amendment of life, that in confidence thereof they may withstand the violences of the Turks, for in the true worshipping of God all our safety consist Wherefore we humbly beseech your Majesty to give command that the Gospel be purely taught, especially that point of doctrine which relates to justification, viz., that our sins are pardoned through Christ alone. In the next place, that men be exhorted to the practice of charitable and good works, which are as it were the fruit and signs of faith. In like manner that they who desire it may have the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper given them according to the custom of the primitive Church; that injunction be also laid upon the bishops, that according to the late

⁵Ib., bk. 14., p. 298.

⁶Sleidan, bk. 14., p. 285.

decree of the Empire, that they reform what is amiss in the Church, that they appoint able ministers to instruct the people, and not to turn out sound preachers as they have always done hitherto.”⁷

To this request King Ferdinand would fain have said peremptorily and roundly, “No;” but with Hungary pressing him on the one side, and the Turk on the other, he dared not use such plainness of speech. He touched, in his reply, on the efforts he had made to have “the Word of God rightly preached, according to the traditions of the Fathers, and the interpreters of the Church;” he spoke sanguinely of the coming Council which was to compose all differences about religion, and exhorted them meanwhile to “avoid innovations, and follow in the footsteps of their fathers, and walk in the old way of their religion.”⁸

[106] In Bavaria, the call for Reform was met by the appointment of a Church visitation into the state of the clergy. The investigation had proceeded but a short way when it became evident to what that road would lead, and the business was wound up with all the expedition possible, before the Roman Church should be utterly discredited, and her cause hopelessly damaged in the eyes of the people.

In the Palatinate the movement bore fruit. The elector provided Protestant preachers for the churches; permitted the Sacrament to be dispensed in both kinds; gave the priests leave to marry; and on January 10th, 1546, Divine service, in the tongue of the people, was celebrated in room of the mass in the Cathedral-church of Heidelberg.⁹

The ecclesiastical electorate of Cologne caused more uneasiness to the emperor and the Pope than all the rest. It was at this hour trembling in the balance. Its prince-bishop had come to be persuaded of the truth of Protestantism, and was taking steps to reform his principality. He invited Bucer to preach in Bonn and other towns, and he had prevailed on Melancthon to come to Cologne, and assist in drawing up a scheme of Reformation. The secession from the Roman ranks of one who held a foremost place among the princes of Germany would, it was foreseen, be a terrible blow both to the Popedom and the Empire. The Archbishop of Cologne was one of

⁷Ib., pp. 286, 287.

⁸Ib., p. 287.

⁹Sleidan, bk. 16., p. 356.

the four ecclesiastical electors, the other three being the Archbishops of Mainz, Treves, and Salzburg, and his conversion would make a radical change in the electoral college. The majority would be shifted to the Protestant side, and the inevitable consequence would be the exclusion of the House of Austria from the Empire. This could not but alarm Charles.

But the evil would not end there. There was a goodly array of ecclesiastical principalities - some half-a-hundred - scattered over Germany. Their bishops were among the most powerful of the German magnates. They wielded the temporal as well as the spiritual jurisdiction, the sword was as familiar to their hand as the crosier, and they were as often in the field, at the head of armies, as in the chapter-house, in the midst of their clergy. They were, as may be believed, the firmest pillars of the Popedom in Germany. If so influential an electorate as that of Cologne should declare for Lutheranism, it was hard to say how many of these ecclesiastical principedoms would follow suit. Those in Northern Germany had already gone over. The Rhenish electorates had till now remained firm; only Cologne, as yet, had wavered. But the danger was promptly met. The Pope, the emperor, the chapter, and the citizens of Cologne, all combined to resist the measures of the elector-bishop, and maintain the faith he appeared on the point of abandoning. The issue was that the archbishop, now an old man, was obliged to succumb.¹⁰ Under pressure of the Pope's ban and the emperor's arms he resigned his electorate, and retired into private life. Thus Cologne remained Popish.

The emperor clearly saw how matters were going. The progress of Lutheranism had surpassed even his fears. Principality after principality was going over to the Schmalkald League; each new perversion was, he believed, another prop of his power gone; thus was the Empire slipping from under him. He could hardly hope that even his hereditary dominions would long be able to resist the inroads of that heresy which had overflown the countries around them. He must adopt decisive measures. From this time (January, 1544) his mind was made up to meet the Protestants on the battle-field.

¹⁰Sleidan, bk. 15., p. 313; bk. 16., pp. 340 - 351.

But the emperor was not yet ready to draw the sword. He was on the eve of another great war with France. To the growing insolence and success of Solyman in Eastern Europe was now added an irruption of the Turks in the South. The fleet of Barbarossa was off the harbor of Toulon, and waited only the return of spring to carry terror and desolation to the coast of Southern Europe. While these obstacles existed the emperor wore peace on his lips, though war was in his heart. He ratified at Ratisbon and Spires the Decree of Nuremberg (1532), which gave substantial toleration to the Protestants. He dangled before their eyes the apple with which he had so long tempted them - the promise of a Council that should heal the schism; and thus for two years he lulled them into security, till he had settled his quarrels with Francis and Solyman, and completed his preparations for measuring swords with the League, and then it was that the blow fell under which the Protestant cause in Germany was for awhile all but crushed.

Chapter 4: Death and Burial of Luther

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Preparations for War—Startling Tidings—Luther’s Journey to Eisleben—Illness on the Road—Enters Eisleben—Preaches—His Last Illness—Death—His Personal Appearance—Varillas’ Estimate of him as a Preacher—The Supper-table in the Augustine Convent—Luther’s Funeral—The Tomb in the Schloss-kirk

Picture: The Luther Memorial at Worms.

Picture: Catherine von Bora: Wife of Luther.

The man of all others in Germany who loved peace was Luther. War he abhorred with all the strength of his great soul. He could not conceive a greater calamity befalling his cause than that the sword should be allied with it. Again and again, during the course of his life, when the opposing parties were on the point of rushing to arms the Reformer stepped in, and the sword leapt back into its scabbard. Again war threatens. On every side men are preparing their arms: hosts are mustering, and mighty captains are taking the field. We listen, if haply that powerful voice which had so often dispersed the tempest when the bolt was ready to fall shall once more make itself heard. There comes instead the terrible tidings - Luther is dead!

In January, 1546, the Reformer was asked to arbitrate in a dispute between the Counts of Mansfeld, touching the line of their boundaries. Though not caring to meddle in such matters he consented, moved chiefly by the consideration that it was his native province to which the matter had reference, and that he should thus be able to visit his birthplace once more. He was taken ill on the road, but recovering, he proceeded on his journey. On approaching Mansfeld he was met by the counts with a guard of honour, and lodged at their expense in his native town of Eisleben. “He was received by the Counts of Mansfeld and all escort of more than one hundred horsemen, and entered the town,” writes Maimbourg, “more like a prince than a prophet, amidst the salute of cannon and the ringing of the bells in all the churches.”

Having dispatched to the satisfaction of the counts the business that took him thither, he occasionally preached in the church and partook of the Communion; but his strength was ebbing away. Many signs warned him that he had not long to live, and that where he had passed his morning, there was he spending his eve - an eve of reverence and honour more than kingly. "Here I was born and baptised," said he to his friends, "what if I should remain here to die also?" He was only sixty-three, but continual anxiety, ceaseless and exhausting labor, oft-recurring fits of nervous depression, and cruel maladies had done more than years to waste his strength. On the 17th of February he dined and supped with his friends, including his three sons - John, Martin, and Paul - and Justus Jonas, who had accompanied him. "After supper," says Sleidan, "having withdrawn to pray, as his custom was, the pain in his stomach began to increase. Then, by the advice of some, he took a little unicorn's horn in wine, and for an hour or two slept very sweetly in a couch in the stove. When he awoke he retired to his chamber, and again disposed himself to rest." ¹ Awakening after a short slumber, the oppression in his chest had increased, and perceiving that his end was come he addressed himself to God in these words: -

"O God, my heavenly Father, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, God of all consolation, I give thee thanks that thou hast revealed unto me thy Son Jesus Christ, in whom I have believed; whom I have confessed; whom I have loved; whom I have declared and preached; whom the Pope of Rome, and the multitude of the ungodly, do persecute and dishonor; I beseech thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul. O heavenly Father, though I be snatched out of this life; though I must now lay down this body; yet know I assuredly that I shall abide with thee for ever, and that no man can pluck me out of thy hands."

His prayer had winged its way upward: his spirit was soon to follow. Three times he uttered the words, his voice growing fainter at each repetition, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth!" and, says Sleidan, "he in a manner

¹Sleidlan, bk. 16., p. 362.

gently slept out of this life, without any bodily pain or agony that could be perceived.”²

Thus does that sun go down whose light had filled for so many years, not the skies of Germany only, but those of all Christendom. The place left empty in the world by Luther’s departure was like that which the natural sun leaves void in the firmament when he sets in the west. And, further, as the descent of the luminary of day is followed by the gathering of the shades and the deepening of the darkness around the dwellings of men, so too was the setting of this other sun. No sooner was Luther laid in his grave than the shadows began to gather round Germany, and soon they deepened into a night of calamity and war. We are not sure that the brilliance which departed when the tomb closed over the Reformer has to this day fully returned to the Fatherland.

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Luther’s career had been a stormy one, yet its end was peace. He had waged incessant battle, not with the emperor and the Pope only, but also with a more dreadful foe, who had often filled his mind with darkness. Yet now he dies expressing his undimmed joy and his undying trust in his Savior. It is also very remarkable that the man whose life had been so often sought by Popes, kings, priests, and fanatics of every grade, died on his bed; Luther often said that it would be a great disgrace to the Pope if he should so die. “All of you, thou Pope, thou devil, ye kings, princes, and lords, are Luther’s enemies; and yet ye can do him no harm. It was not so with John Huss. I take it there has not been a man so hated as I these hundred years.” During the last twenty-five years of his life - that is, ever since his appearance at the Diet of Worms - the emperor’s ban and the Pope’s anathema had hung about him; yet there fell not to the ground a hair of his head. The great sword of the emperor, which conquered Francis and chastised the Turk, could not approach the doctor of Wittemberg. The Reformer lived in his little unarmed Saxon town all his days; he rose up and lay down in peace; he toiled day by day forging his bolts and hurling them with all his might at the foe; and that foe dreaded his pen and tongue more than the assault of whole armies. To be rid of him Rome would have joyfully given the half of her kingdom; but not a day, not an hour of life was

²Ibid., p. 363

she able to take from him. The ancient command had gone forth, "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm." And so we find Luther finishing his course, as the natural sun, after a day of tempest, is sometimes seen to finish his, amid the golden splendors of a calm eventide.³

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It were vain, and superfluous to boot, to attempt drawing a character of Luther. He paints himself, and neither needs nor will permit any other, whether friend or foe, to draw his portrait. Immeasurably the greatest spirit of his age, his colossal figure filled Christendom. But we cannot be too often reminded whence his greatness sprang; and happily it can be expressed in a single word. It was his Faith - faith in God. There have been men of as commanding genius, of as fearless courage, of as inflexible honesty, of as persuasive popular eloquence, and as indefatigable in labor and unchangeable in purpose, who yet have not revolutionized the world. It was not this assemblage of brilliant qualities and powers which enabled Luther to achieve what he did. They aided him, it is true, but the one power in virtue of which he effected the Reformation was his faith. His faith placed him in thorough harmony with the Divine mind and the Divine government; the wisdom with which he spake was thus the wisdom of God, and it enlightened the world; the object he aimed at was what God had purposed to bring to pass, and so he prospered in his great undertaking. This is the true mystic potency of which priests in all ages have pretended, though falsely, to be possessed; it descended in all its plenitude upon Luther, but what brought it down from its native source in the skies was not any outward rite, but the power of faith.

³A monument, in memorial of the great Reformer has been erected at Worms. This monument, so noble as a work of art, and so interesting from what it commemorates, occupied nine years in the execution, and is said to have cost 17,000 pounds. The central figure is Luther's statue in bronze, eleven feet in height. He holds a Bible in his left hand, to which he points with the right, while his gaze is directed upwards. At his feet sit four of the greatest among the precursors of the Reformation. In front are Huss on the right and Savonarola on the left. At the back are Wicliffe on the right and Peter Waldo on the left. On the side pedestals in front are Philip the Magnanimous on the right and Frederick the Wise on the left. At the back are Melancthon on the right and Reuchlin on the left. On lower pedestals are allegorical figures of the towns of Magdeburg, Augsburg, and Spire, and between these are the arms of the twenty-four towns of Germany which were the first to embrace the Reformation.

There is one quality of the illustrious Reformer of which we have said little, namely, his eloquence in the pulpit. Of the extraordinary measure in which he possessed this gift we shall permit two Popish witnesses to bear testimony. Varillas says of him: "In him nature would appear to have combined the spirit of the Italian with the body of the German; such are his vivacity and his industry, his vigor and his eloquence. In the study of philosophy and scholastic theology he was surpassed by none; and at the same time none could equal him in the art of preaching. He possessed in perfection the highest style of eloquence; he had discovered the strong and the weak sides of the human understanding, and knew the ways by which to lay hold of both; he had the art of sounding the inclinations of his hearers, however various and eccentric they might be; he knew how to rouse or allay their passions, and if the topics of his discourse were too high and incomprehensible to convince them, he could carry all before him by a forcible attack on the imagination through the vehemence of his imagery. Such was Luther in the pulpit; there he tossed his hearers into a tempest and calmed them down again at his pleasure. But when he descended from the pulpit it was only to exercise a still more absolute reign in his private conversation. He stirred men's minds without discomposing them, and inspired them with his sentiments by a mode of which none could discover either the action or the traces. In short, he triumphed by the elegance of his German style over those who had been struck with his eloquence and captivated by his conversation; and as nobody spoke or wrote his native language so well as he, none have ever since spoken or written it with so much purity."

Another writer, hostile to Luther and the Reformation - Florimond de Raemond - speaking of his eloquence says: "When declaiming from the pulpit, as if smitten by a frenzy, with action suited to the word, he struck the minds of his hearers in the most marvelous manner, and carried them away in a torrent wherever he would - a gift and power of speech which is seldom found among the nations of the North."

There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between Luther in public, where his temper appeared so imperious and his onsets were so fierce and overwhelming, and Luther in private, where he was gentle as a child. In men like Luther the love of truth, which in

public kindles into passion and vehemency in the face of opposition, becomes mildness and love in the midst of the congenial circle. “Whoever has known him and seen him often and familiarly,” writes Melancthon of him, “will allow that he was a most excellent man, gentle and agreeable in society, not in the least obstinate and given to disputation, yet with all the gravity becoming his character. If he showed any great severity in combating the enemies of the true doctrine, it was from no malignity of nature, but from ardour and enthusiasm for the truth.”⁴ Communion with God through his Word, and in prayer, were the two chief means by which he nourished his faith, and by consequence his strength. “I have myself,” says Melancthon, “often found him shedding bitter tears, and praying earnestly to God for the welfare of the Church. He devoted part of each day to the reading of the Psalms and to invoking God with all the fervor of his soul.”⁵ His sublime task was to draw forth the light of the Word from its concealment, and replace it in the temple, in the school, and in the dwelling.

His personal appearance has been well sketched by one of his biographers: “In stature he was not much above the ordinary height, but his limbs were firmly set; he had an open, right valiant countenance; a broad German nose, slightly aquiline; a forehead rather wide than lofty, with beetling brows; large lips and mouth; eyes full of lustre, which were compared to the eagle’s or the lion’s; short curling dark hair, and a distinguishing wart on the right cheek. In the early part of his career his figure was emaciated to the last degree, subsequently it filled out, and in his latter years inclined to corpulency. His constitution was naturally of the strongest cast; one of the common mould must have sunk under his unparalleled energy; and he was never better than with plenty of toil and study, and a moderate diet, such as his accustomed herring and pease.”⁶

As the patriarchs of old sat in the door of their tent to bid the wayfarer welcome to its shade and hospitality, so dwelt Luther in the Augustine convent. Its door stood open to all. Thither came the poor for alms, the sick for medicine, and distinguished strangers from all parts of Europe to see and converse with its illustrious occupant.

⁴Ukert, tom. ii., p. 12.

⁵Ukert, tom. ii., p. 7.

⁶Worsley, *Life of Martin Luther*, vol. 2., p. 391.

The social meal was the supper. Luther would come to the table, weary with the labours of the day, not unfrequently holding a book in his hand, in which he would continue for some time reading. All kept silent till he had lifted his eyes from the page. Then he would inquire the news; this was the signal for conversation, which soon became general. Around his board would be gathered, it might be, some of his fellow-professors; or old friends from a distance, as Link from Nuremberg, or Probst from Bremen; or eminent scholars from distant lands; or statesmen and courtiers, who chanced to be traveling on some embassy. Men of every rank and of all professions found their way to the supper-table in the Augustine convent, and received an equal welcome from the illustrious host.

In those days news traveled slowly, for the newspaper was not then in being, and the casual traveller was often the first to bring the intelligence to Wittemberg, that some great battle had been fought, or that the Turk had again broken into Christendom, or that a new Pope had to be sought for the vacant chair of St. Peter. No likelier place was there to get early information of what was passing in the world than at the supper-table in the Augustine. If the guests were delighted, the traveller too was rewarded by hearing Luther's comments on the news he had been the first to retail.

How often were statesmen astonished at the deeper insight and truer forecast of the Reformer in matters belonging to a province which they deemed exclusively their own! With terrible sagacity he could cut right into the heart of a policy, and with characteristic courage would tear the mask from kings. Or it might happen that some distinguished scholar from a distant land was a guest in the Augustine. What an opportunity for ascertaining the true translation of some word, which had occurred, it might be, in a passage on which the Reformer had been occupied that very day! If the company at table was more promiscuous, so, too, was the conversation. Topics grave and gay would come up by turns. Now it was the scheme of the monarch, and now the affairs of the peasant that were passed in review. Shrewd remarks, flashes of wit, bursts of humor, would enliven the supper-room. The eye of Luther would begin to burn, and with beaming face he would look round on the listeners as he scattered amongst them his sayings, now serious, now playful, now droll, but always embodying profound wisdom. Supper ended,

Aurifaber, or some other of the company, would retire and commit to writing the more notable things that had just fallen from the Reformer, that so in due time what had been at first the privilege of only a few, might become the property of all in Luther's Table Talk. A Latin chant or a German hymn, sung by a chores of voices, in which Luther's tenor was easily distinguishable, would close the evening.

[112] Luther was dead: where would they lay his dust? The Counts of Mansfeld would fain have interred him in their own family vault; but John, Elector of Saxony, commanded that where his labours had been accomplished, there his ashes should rest. Few kings have been buried with such honors. Setting out for Wittemberg, relay after relay of princes, nobles, magistrates, and peasants joined the funeral procession, and swelled its numbers, till it looked almost like an army on its march, and reminded one of that host of mourners which bore the patriarch of Old Testament story from the banks of the Nile to his grave in the distant Machpelah. As the procession passed through Halle and other towns on its route, the inhabitants thronged the streets so as almost to stop the cortege, and sang, with voices thrilling with emotion., psalms and hymns, as if instead of a funeral car it; had been the chariot of a conqueror, whose return from victory they were celebrating with paeans. And truly it was so. Luther was returning from a great battle-field, where he had encountered the powers and principalities of spiritual despotism, and had discomfited them by the sword of the spirit. It was meet, therefore, that those whom he had liberated by that great victory should carry him to his grave, not as ordinary men are carried to the tomb, but as heroes are led to the spot where they are to be crowned. On the 22nd of February, the cavalcade reached Wittemberg. As it drew near the gates of the town the procession was joined by Catherine von Bora, the wife of Luther. The carriage in which she was seated, along with her daughter and a few matrons, followed immediately after the body, which, deposited in a leaden coffin covered with black velvet, was carried on a car drawn by four horses. It was taken into the Schloss-kirk,⁷ and some funeral hymns being sung, Pomeranus ascended the pulpit and gave an appropriate address. Melancthon next delivered

⁷Not in the Cathedral, as is often stated, but in the Schloss-kirk, or Castle church, adjoining the eastern gate of Wittenberg, the same on the door of which Luther nailed his

an eloquent oration, after which the coffin was lowered into the grave by certain learned men selected for the purpose, amid the deep stillness, broken only by sobs, of the princes, magistrates, pastors, and citizens gathered round the last resting-place of the great Reformer. ⁸

Theses. There his grave is seen at this day. A little in advance of the pulpit are the tombs of the two electors, Frederick and John; and some four yards or so beyond these are the graves of Luther and Melancthon. Lovely in their lives, they are not divided in the tomb. Over the grave of Luther is the following inscription in Latin: - "Here lies interred the body of Martin Luther, Doctor of Divinity, who died at Eisleben, the place of his birth, on the 18th of February, in the year of Christ 1546; having lived 63 years, 3 months, and 10 days."

⁸See Seckendorf, lib. in., sec. 133.

Chapter 5: The Schmalkald War, and Defeat of the Protestants

The Emperor's League with Pope Paul III—Charles's Preparations for War—His Dissimulation—The Council of Trent—Its Policy—The Pope's Indiscretion—The Army of the Schmalkald League—Treachery of Prince Maurice—The Emperor's Ban—Vacillation of the Protestants—Energy of the Emperor—Maurice Seizes his Cousin's Electorate—Elector John Returns Home—Landgrave Philip Defeated—The Confederates Divide and Sue for Pardon—Charles Master

Picture: Burial of Luther in the Schloss Kirk: Wittemberg.

Picture: View of Trent.

For two years war had lowered over Germany, but while Luther lived the tempest was withheld from bursting. The Reformer was now in his grave, and the storm came on apace. The emperor pushed on his preparations more vigorously than ever. He arranged all his other affairs, that he might give the whole powers of his mind, and the undivided strength of his arms, to the suppression of Lutheranism. He ended his war with France. He patched up a truce with the Turk, his brother Ferdinand submitting to the humiliation of an annual payment of 50,000 crowns to Solyman. He recruited soldiers in Italy and in the Low Countries, and he made a treaty with the Pope, Paul III. There were points in which the policy of these two potentates conflicted; but both agreed that all other matters should give place to that one which each accounted the most important.

What the object was, which held the first place in the thoughts of both, was abundantly clear from the treaty now concluded between the Pope and the emperor, the main stipulation of which was as follows: - "The Pope and the emperor, for the glory of God, and the public good, but especially the welfare of Germany, have entered into league together upon certain articles and conditions; and, in the first place, that the emperor shall provide an army, and all things

necessary for war, and be in readiness by the month of June next ensuing, and by force and arms compel those who refuse the Council, and maintain those errors, to embrace the ancient religion and submit to the Holy See.”¹ The Pope, in addition to 100,000 ducats which he had already advanced, stipulated to deposit as much more in the Bank of Venice toward defraying the expense of the war; to maintain at his own charge, during the space of six months, 12,000 foot and 500 horse; to grant the emperor for this year one-half of the Church revenues all over Spain; to empower him to alienate as much of the abbey-lands in that country as would amount to 500,000 ducats; and that both spiritual censures and military force should be employed against any prince who might seek to hinder the execution of this treaty.² “Thus did Charles V.,” says the Abbe Millot, “after the example of Ferdinand the Catholic, make a mock of truth, and use the art of deceiving mankind as an instrument for effecting his purposes.”³

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Another step toward war, though it looked like conciliation, was the meeting of the long-promised and long-deferred Council. In December previous, there had assembled at the little town of Trent some forty prelates, who assumed to represent the Universal Church, and to issue decrees which should be binding on all the countries of Christendom, although Italy and Spain alone were as yet represented in the Council. Hitherto, the good Fathers had eschewed everything like business, but now the emperor’s preparations being nearly completed, the Council began “to march.” Its first decrees showed plainly the part allotted to it in the approaching drama. “They were an open attack,” says the Abbe Millot, “on the first principles of Protestantism.”⁴ The Council, in its third session, decreed that the traditions of the Fathers are of equal authority with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and that no one is to presume to interpret Scripture in a sense different from that of the Church.⁵ This was in reality to pre-judge all the questions at issue, and to render further discussion between the two parties but a

¹Sleidan, bk. 17., p. 381.

²Sleidan, bk. 17., p. 382. Pallavicino, lib. 8., cap. 1, p. 541.

³Millot, vol. 4., p. 313.

⁴Ibid., p. 311.

⁵Sleidan, bk. 17., pp. 373, 374.

waste of time. Obviously the first step toward the right settlement of the controversy was to agree on the rule according to which all matters in dispute were to be determined. The Protestants affirmed that the one infallible authority was the Word of God. They made their appeal to the tribunal of Holy Scripture; they could recognize no other judge. The sole supremacy of Scripture was in fact the corner-stone of their system, and if this great maxim were rejected their whole cause was ad-judged and condemned.

But the Council of Trent began by repudiating this maxim, which is comprehensive of all Protestantism. The tribunal, said the Council, to which you must submit yourselves and your cause is Tradition and the Scriptures, as interpreted by the Church. This was but another way of saying, "You must submit to the Church." This might well amaze the Protestants. The controversy lay between them and the Church, and now they were told that they must accept their opponent for their judge. Every one knew how the Church interpreted the questions at issue. The first decree of the Council, then, embraced all that were to follow; it secured that nothing should emanate from the Council save a series of thoroughly Popish decisions or dogmas, all of them enjoined like the first under pain of anathema.

It was clear that the Fathers had assembled at Trent to pass sentence on the faith of the German people as heresy, and then the emperor would step in with his great sword and give it its death-blow.

Meanwhile Charles pursued his policy of dissimulation. The more he labored to be ready for war, the louder did he protest that he meant only peace. He cherished the most ardent wishes for the happiness of Germany, so did he affirm; he had raised only some few insignificant levies; he had formed no treaty that pointed to war; and he contrived to have an interview with Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, who, he knew, saw deepest into his heart and most suspected his designs, and by his consummate duplicity, and his earnest disavowals of all hostile intentions, he succeeded in removing from the mind of the landgrave all apprehensions that war was impending. On his return from this interview Philip communicated his favorable impressions of the situation to his confederates, and thus were the suspicions of the Protestants again lulled to sleep.

But soon they were rudely awakened. From every quarter came rumors of the armaments the emperor was raising. Seeing Charles

was at war with neither Francis nor Solyman, nor any other Power, for what could he intend these preparations, except the extinction of Protestantism? The Lutheran princes had warnings from their friends in Italy and England that their ruin was intended. Finally there came a song of triumph from Rome: Paul III., full of zeal, and not doubting the issue of an undertaking that inexpressibly delighted him, told the world that the overthrow of Lutheranism was at hand. “Paul himself,” says the Abbe Millot, “betrayed this dark transaction. Proud of a league formed against the enemies of the Holy See, he published the articles of it in a bull, exhorting the faithful to concur in it, in order to gain indulgences.”⁶ This was a somewhat embarrassing disclosure of the emperor’s projects, and compelled him to throw off the mask a little sooner than he intended. But even when he avowed the intentions which he could no longer conceal, it was with an astuteness and duplicity which to a large extent disguised his real purpose. “He had address enough,” says Millot, “to persuade part of the Protestants that he was sincere.” True, he said, it was Germany he had in his eye in his warlike preparations; but what he sought; was not to interfere with its religious opinions, but to punish certain parties who had broken its peace. The Schmalkald League was an empire within an empire, it could not consist with the imperial supremacy: besides certain recent proceedings of some of its members called for correction. This pointed unmistakably to John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and Philip, Landgrave of Hesse.

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The pretext was a transparent one, but it enabled the timid, the lukewarm, and the wavering to say, This war does not concern religion, it is a quarrel merely between the emperor and certain members of the League. How completely did the aspect the matter now assumed justify the wisdom of the man who had lately been laid in his grave in the Schlosskirk of Wittemberg! How often had Luther warned the Protestants against the error of shifting their cause from a moral to a political basis! The former, he ever assured them, would, when the day of trial came, be found to have double the strength they had reckoned upon in fact, to be invincible; whereas the latter, with an imposing show, would be found to have no strength at all.

⁶Millot, vol. 4., p. 313.

Meanwhile the major part of the Protestants, being resolved to repel force by force, made vigorous preparation for war, "They solicited the Venetians," says the Abbe Millot, "the Swiss, Henry VIII., and Francis I. to support them against a despotism which, after having enslaved Germany, would extend itself over the rest of Europe. None of these negotiations succeeded, but they could dispense with foreign assistance. In a few months they levied an army of more than fourscore thousand armed men, furnished with every necessary in abundance. The Electors of Cologne and Brandenburg remained neutral, as did also the Elector Palatine."⁷ The Margrave of Misnia, and the two princes of Brandenburg, though all Protestants, declared for the emperor. The Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Wurtemberg, the princes of Anhalt, the cities of Augsburg, Ulm, and Strasburg, alone set this formidable armament on foot. The League was divided from the very commencement of the campaign; but what completed the disorganization of the Protestant camp, and paved the way for the tragedy that followed, was the treachery of Prince Maurice of Saxony.

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Maurice was the son of that William who succeeded Duke George, the noted enemy of Luther. William, a weak prince, was now dead, and his son Maurice was Duke of Albertine-Saxony. Neglected in youth, he had grown to manhood restless, shrewd, self-reliant, self-willed, with ambition as his ruling passion. He was a Protestant, but without deep religious convictions. In choosing his creed he was influenced quite as much by the advantage it might offer as by the truth it might contain. He was largely imbued with that skeptical spirit which is fatal to all strength of character, elevation of soul, and grandeur of aim. The old race of German princes and politicians, the men who believing in great principles were capable of a chivalrous devotion to great causes, was dying out, and a new generation, of which Prince Maurice was the pioneer, was taking their place. In the exercise of that worldly wisdom on which he plumed himself, Maurice weighed both sides, and then chose not the greater cause but the greater man, or he whom he took to be so, even the Emperor Charles. With him, he felt assured, would remain the victory, and

⁷Millot, vol. 4., pp. 313, 314

as he wished to share its spoils, which would be considerable, with him he cast in his lot.

On the 20th of July the blow fell. On that day the emperor promulgated his ban of outlawry against the two Protestant chiefs, John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and Philip, Landgrave of Hesse.⁸ This step was the more bold as it ought to have been authorized by the Diet. The war, now that it had come, found the League neither united nor prepared. But notwithstanding some cowardly defections it was able to bring into the field 47,000 troops⁹ The first question was, who should have the command? Philip of Hesse was the better soldier, but John Frederick of Saxony was the greater prince. Could a landgrave command an elector? In the settlement of this nice point much time was wasted, which had better have been devoted to fighting. The campaign, from its commencement in the midsummer of 1546, to its close in the spring of 1547, was marked, on the part of the League, by vacillation and blundering. There was no foresight shown in laying its plans, no vigor in carrying them out. The passes of the Tyrol were strangely left undefended, and the Spanish and Italian soldiers, unopposed, deployed on the German plains. The troops which Charles had raised in the Low Countries in like manner were suffered to cross the Rhine without a blow being struck¹⁰ Before the arrival of these levies, the emperor's army was not more than 10,000 strong. His camp at Ingolstadt might easily have been surprised and taken by the superior forces of the League, and the campaign ended at a blow.¹¹ While the Protestant leaders were debating whether they ought to essay this, the imperial reinforcements arrived, and the opportunity was lost. Money began to fail the League, sickness broke out in their army, and, despairing of success, the soldiers and officers began to disperse to their several homes. Without fighting a battle the League abandoned Southern Germany, the first seat of the war, leaving Wurtemberg, and the

⁸Sleidan, bk. 17., p. 389. Robertson, *Hist. Charles V.*, bk. 8., p. 249.

⁹Robertson makes the Protestant army amount to 70,000 foot, 15,000 horse, with - corresponding train of artillery. (*Hist. Charles V.*, bk. 8., p. 248.) Millot, in the passage quoted above, agrees with him, saying nearly 80,000.

¹⁰Sleidan, bk. 18., p. 397.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 397. Millot, vol. 4., p. 315. Robertson, bk. 8., p. 251.

Palatinate, and the cities of Ulm, Augsburg, and others, to make what terms they could with the emperor. ¹²

Prince Maurice now undertook the execution of the imperial ban on the dominions of the elector. When John Frederick was informed of this, he set out from the camp of the League to defend his dukedom, now ravaged by the arms of his former ally. He was pursued by the army of the emperor, overtaken on the Elbe at Muhlberg (24th April, 1547), routed, taken captive, stripped of his electorate, and consigned to prison. The emperor parted the elector's dominions between Maurice and his brother Ferdinand. ¹³

Landgrave Philip was still in the field. But reflecting that his forces were dispirited and shattered while the army of the emperor was unbroken and flushed with victory, he concluded that further resistance was hopeless. He therefore resolved to surrender. His son-in-law, Prince Maurice, used all his influence with the emperor to procure for him easy terms. Charles was inexorable; the landgrave's surrender must be unconditional. ¹⁴ All that Maurice could effect was a promise from the emperor that his father-in-law should not be imprisoned. If this promise was ever given it was not kept, for no sooner had Philip quitted the emperor's presence, after surrendering to him, than he was arrested and thrown into confinement. ¹⁵

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So ended the Schmalkald war. It left Charles more completely master of Germany than he had ever been before. There was now no outward obstruction to the restoration of the ancient worship. The Protestants appeared to be completely in the emperor's power. They had neither sword nor League wherewith to defend themselves. They were brought back again to their first but mightiest weapon - martyrdom. If, instead of stepping down into the arena of battle, they had offered themselves to the stake, not a tithe of the blood would have been shed that was spilt in the campaign, and instead

¹²Sleidan, bk. 18., p. 421. Robertson, bk. 8., p. 255.

¹³Sleidan, bk. 19., pp. 426, 427, 428. Millot, vol. 4., p. 320. Robertson, bk. 9., pp. 265, 266.

¹⁴Sleidan, bk. 19., pp. 429-431. Robertson, bk. 9., p. 269.

¹⁵The story goes that the change of a single German word sufficed to change the landgrave's fate from liberty to imprisonment. Nicht einiges Gefangis - not imprisoned - was changed, it is said, into nicht ewigis Gefangis - not perpetually imprisoned. The story, however, is doubted; it certainly has not been proved, and the silence of Sleidan, who wrote only a few years after the event, discredits its truth.

of being lowered, the moral power of Protestantism thereby would have been immensely raised.

But we dare not challenge the right of the Protestant princes to combine, and repel force by force. It was natural, in reckoning up the chances of success, that they should count swords, especially when they saw how many swords were unsheathed on the other side. But no greater calamity could have befallen the Reformation than that Protestantism should have become, in that age, a great political power. Had it triumphed as a policy it would have perished as a religion. It must first establish itself on the earth as a great spiritual power. This could not be done by arms. And so, ever and anon, it was stripped of its political defenses that the spiritual principle might have room to grow, and that all might see that the conquests of the Reformation were not won for it by force, nor its dominion and rule given it by princes, but that by its own strength did it grow up and wax mighty.

Chapter 6 : The “Interim” - Re-Establishment of Protestantism

All seems Lost—Humiliation of Germany—Taxes—The “Interim”—Essentially a Restoration of Popery—Persecutions by which it was Enforced—The Climax of the Emperor’s Power—It Falls—The Pope Forsakes him—Maurice Turns against him—Manifesto of Maurice—Flight of the Emperor—Peace of Passau—Treaty of Augsburg—Reestablishment of Protestantism in Germany—Charles’s Abdication and Retirement to the Monastery of St. Juste—Reflections

Picture: The Council of Trent.

Picture: Arrival of Charles V. at St. Juste.

It did seem as if the knell of the Lutheran Reformation had been rung out. The emperor’s triumph was complete, and he had it now in his power to settle the religious question as he chose. From the southern extremity of Wurtemberg, as far as the Elbe the provinces and the cities had submitted and were in the occupation of the imperial troops. Of the three leading princes of the League, one was the ally of the emperor, the other two were his prisoners. Stripped of title and power, their castles demolished, their lands confiscated, Charles was leading them about from city to city, and from prison to prison, and with wanton cruelty exhibiting them as a spectacle to their former subjects. Germany felt itself insulted and disgraced in this open and bitter humiliation of two of its most illustrious princes. The unhappy country was made still further to feel the power of the conqueror, being required to pay a million and a half crowns - an enormous sum in those days - which Charles levied without much distinction between those who had served and those who had opposed him in the late war. ¹ “The conqueror publicly insulted the Germanic body by leading its principal members in captivity from town to town. He oppressed all who joined the League of Schmalkald with heavy

¹Robertson, bk. 9., p. 272.

taxes, carried off their artillery, and disarmed the people; levied contributions at his pleasure from his allies, and treated them as if they had been his own subjects Ferdinand exercised the same despotism over the Bohemians, and stripped them of almost all their privileges.”²

Events abroad left Charles yet more free to act the despot in Germany. His two rivals, Henry VIII. of England and Francis I. of France, were removed from the scene by death, and he had now little cause to fear opposition to his projects in the quarters from which the most formidable resistance aforesaid had come. Of the four potentates - Leo of Rome and the Kings of England, France, and Spain - whose greatness had signalled, and whose ambition had distracted, the first half of the sixteenth century, Charles was now the sole survivor; - but his sun was nearer its setting than he thought

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Master of the situation, as he believed, the emperor proceeded to frame a creed for his northern subjects. It was styled the “INTERIM.” Meant to let Lutheran Germany easily down, it was given out as a half-way compromise between Wittemberg and Rome. The concoctors of this famous scheme were Julius Pflug, Bishop of Naumberg, Michael Sidonius, and John Agricola, a Protestant, but little trusted by his brethren.³ As finally adjusted, after repeated corrections, this new creed was the old faith of Rome, a little freshened up by ambiguities of speech and quotations from Scripture. The Interim taught, among other things, the supremacy of the Pope, the dogma of transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the invocation of the saints, auricular confession, justification by works, and the sole right of the Church to interpret the Scriptures; in short, not one concession did Rome make. In return for swallowing a creed out-and-out Popish, the Protestants were to be rewarded with two paltry boons. Clergymen already married were to be permitted to discharge their office without putting away their wives; and where it was the wont to dispense the Sacrament in both kinds the custom was still to be tolerated. This was called meeting the Protestants half-way.⁴

²Millot, vol. 4., p. 322.

³Sleidan, bk. 20., p. 454.

⁴Ibid., p. 458. Millot, vol. 4., p. 323.

Nothing was to be altered in the canon of the mass, nothing changed in the ceremonies of baptism. In every city church two masses were to be said daily; in village churches and landward parishes, one, especially on holidays. Exorcism, chrism, oil, etc., were to be retained; as were also vestments, ornaments, vessels, crosses, altars, candles, and images. The compilers added, without intending to be in the least satirical, "that if anything have crept in which may give occasion to superstition, it be taken away."⁵

This document was presented (May 15th, 1548) by the emperor to the Diet at Augsburg. It was read according to form. Without giving time for any discussion, the Archbishop of Mainz, President of the Electoral College, hastily rose, and thanking the emperor for this new token of his care about the Church, and his pious wish to heal her divisions, expressed the Diet's concurrence in the new scheme. Not a dissent was tendered; the Diet sat silent, awed by the emperor's soldiers, who had been massed around Augsburg. The Interim was straightway promulgated by the emperor: all were to conform to it under pain of his displeasure, and it was to remain in force until a free General Council could be held.⁶

Astute and far-seeing as the emperor was within his own province, the Interim remains the monument of his short-sightedness in matters outside of that province. Great as his experience had been of the world and its affairs, he did not yet know man. He knew the weakness of man, his self-love, his covetousness, and his ambition; but he did not know that in which lies his strength - namely, in conscience. This was the faculty that Protestantism had called into existence, and it was with this new power - which Charles did not understand, or rather did not believe in - that he was now rushing into conflict. He thought he was advancing to victory, when the issue showed that he was marching to destruction.

The emperor now proceeded to enforce the Interim. "The emperor insisted on the observance of it with the authority of a master that would be obeyed."⁷ He was astonished to find that a matter which he had taken to be so simple should give rise to so many difficulties. The Interim, for which he had anticipated a chorus of

⁵Sleidan, bk. 20., p. 458.

⁶Sleidan, bk. 20., p. 460. Millot, vol. 4., p. 324.

⁷Millot, vol. 4., p. 324.

welcome on all sides, had hardly a friend in the world beyond the narrow circle of its compilers. It stank in the nostrils of the Vatican authorities. It gave offense in that quarter, not in point of substance, for theologically there was little to complain of, but in point of form. That the emperor in virtue of his own sole authority should frame and promulgate a creed was not to be tolerated; it was to do the work of a Council; it was, in fact, to seat himself in the chair of the Pope and to say, “I am the Church.” Besides, the cardinals grudged even the two pitiful concessions which had been made to the Protestants.

In Germany the reception which the Interim met with was different in the different provinces. In Northern Germany, where the emperor’s arm could hardly reach, it was openly resisted. In Central Germany it in a manner fell to the ground. Nuremberg, Ulm, Augsburg accepted it. Prince Maurice, to please Charles, had it proclaimed in his dominions, but, in tenderness to his former allies, he excused himself from enforcing it. It was otherwise in Upper or Southern Germany. There the Churches were purified from their Protestant defilement. The old rites were restored, Protestant magistrates were replaced by Popish ones, the privileges of the free cities were violated, and the inhabitants driven to mass by the soldiers of the emperor. The Protestant pastors were forced into exile, or rendered homeless in their native land. Four hundred faithful preachers of the Gospel, with their wives and families, wandered without food or shelter ill Southern Germany. Those who were unable to escape fell into the hands of their enemy and were led about in chains. ⁸

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There is one submission that pains us more than all the others. It is that of Melancthon. Melancthon and the Wittemberg divines, laying down the general principle that where things indifferent only are in question it is right to obey the commands of a lawful superior, and assuming that the Interim, which had been slightly manipulated for their special convenience, conflicted with the Augustan Confession in only indifferent points, and that it was well to preserve the essentials of the Gospel as seed-corn for better times, denied their Protestantism, and bowed down in worship of the emperor’s religion. ⁹

⁸Sleidan, bk. 20., p. 461. Kurtz, Hist. Ot Christian Church, p. 79.

⁹Kurtz, pp. 79, 80.

But amid so many prostrate one man stood nobly erect. John Frederick of Saxony, despite the suffering and ignominy that weighed upon him, refused to accept the Interim. Hopes of liberty were held out to induce him to indorse the emperor's creed, but this only drew from him a solemn protestation of his adherence to the Protestant faith. "God," said the fallen prince, "has enlightened me with the knowledge of his Word; I cannot forsake the known truth, unless I would purchase to myself eternal damnation; wherefore, if I should admit of that decree which in many and most material points disagrees with the Holy Scriptures, I should condemn the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which I have hitherto professed, and in words and speech approve what I know to be impious and erroneous. That I retain the doctrine of the Augustan Confession, I do it for the salvation of my soul, and, slighting all worldly things, it is now my whole study how, after this painful and miserable life is ended, I may be made partaker of the blessed joys of life everlasting."¹⁰

Believing Roman Catholicism to be the basis of his power, and that should Germany fall in two on the question of religion, his Empire would depart, Charles had firmly resolved to suppress Lutheranism, by conciliation if possible; if not, by arms. He had been compelled again and again to postpone the execution of his purpose. He had appeared to lose sight of it in the eager prosecution of other schemes. Yet, no; he kept it ever in his eye as the ultimate landing-place of all his projects and ambitions, and steadily pursued it through the intrigues and wars of thirty years. If he combated the King of France, if he measured swords with the Turk, if he undertook campaigns in the north of Africa, if he coaxed and threatened by turns his slippery ally, the Pope, it was that by overcoming these rivals and enemies, he might be at liberty to consolidate his power by a consummating blow against heresy in Germany. That blow he had now struck. There remained nothing more to be achieved. The League was dissolved, the Protestants were at his feet. Luther, whose word had more power than ten armies, was in his grave. The emperor had reached the goal. After such ample experience of the burdens of power, he would now pause and taste its sweets.

¹⁰Steidan, bk. 20., p. 462.

It was at this moment, when his glory was in its noon, that the whole aspect of affairs around the emperor suddenly changed. As if some malign star had begun to rule, not a friend or ally had he who did not now turn against him.

It was at Rome that the first signs of the gathering storm appeared. The accession of power which his conquests in Germany had brought the emperor alarmed the Pope. The Papacy, he feared, was about to receive a master. “Paul III already repented,” says the Abbe Millot, “of having contributed to the growth of a power that might one day make Italy its victim; besides, he was offended that he received no share of the conquests, nor of the contributions.”¹¹

Paul III., therefore, recalled the numerous contingent he had sent to the imperial army to aid in chastising the heretics. The next step of the Pope was to order the Council of Trent to remove to Bologna. A sudden sickness that broke out among the Fathers furnished a pretext, but the real motive for carrying the Council to Italy was a dread that the emperor would seize upon it, and compel it to pass such decrees as he chose. A religious restoration, of which Charles himself was the high priest, was not much to the taste of the Pope, and what other restoration had the emperor as yet accomplished? He had put down Lutheranism to set up Caesarism. He was about to play the part of Henry of England. So was it whispered in the Vatican.

Nearer him, in Germany, a yet more terrible tempest was brewing. “So many odious attempts against the liberties of Germany brought on a revolution.”¹² The nation felt that they had been grossly deceived. They had been told before the war began that it formed no part of the emperor’s plans to alter the Reformed religion. The Protestant ministers turned out of office and banished, their churches in possession of mass-priests, blazing with tapers, and resounding with chants and prayers in an unknown tongue, told how the promise had been kept. To deception was added insult. In the disgrace of its two most venerated chiefs, Germany beheld its own disgrace. As every day renewed its shame, so every day intensified its indignation. Prince Maurice saw the gathering storm, and felt that he would be

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¹¹Millot, vol. 4., p. 316.

¹²Millot, vol. 4., p. 828. 2

the first to be swept away by it. His countrymen accused him as the author of the calamities under which Germany was groaning. They addressed him as “Judas,” and assailed him in daily satires and caricatures. At last he made his choice: he would atone for his betrayal of his Protestant confederates by treachery to the emperor.

He divulged his purpose to the princes. They found it difficult not to believe that he was digging a deeper pit for them. Able at length to satisfy them of his sincerity, they willingly undertook to aid him in the blow he meditated striking for the liberties of Germany. He had a large force under him, which he was employing professedly in the emperor’s service, in the siege of Magdeburg, a town which distinguished itself by its brave resistance to the Interim. Maurice protracted the siege without discovering his designs. When at last Magdeburg surrendered, the articles of capitulation were even conformable to the views of Charles, but Maurice had privately assured the citizens that they should neither be deprived of the exercise of their religion nor stripped of their privileges. In a word, he so completely extinguished their former hatred of him, that they now elected him their burgrave.¹³ The force under him, that had been employed in the siege of Magdeburg, Maurice now diverted to the projected expedition against the emperor. He farther opened communications with King Henry II., who made a diversion on the side of France, by entering Lorraine, and taking possession of the imperial city of Metz, which he annexed to the French monarchy. All these negotiations Maurice conducted with masterly skill and profound secrecy.

[121] The emperor meanwhile had retired to Innsbruck in the Tyrol. Lulled into security by the artifices of Maurice, Charles was living there with a mere handful of guards. He had even fewer ducats than soldiers, for his campaigns had exhausted his money-chest. In March, 1552, the revolt broke out. The prince’s army amounted to 20,000 foot and 5,000 horse, and before putting it in motion he published a manifesto, saying that he had taken up arms for the Protestant religion and the liberties of Germany, both of which were

¹³Millot, vol. 4., p. 329.

menaced with destruction, and also for the deliverance of Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, from a long and unjust imprisonment ¹⁴

The emperor, on being suddenly and rudely awakened from his security, found himself hemmed in on every side by those who from friends had been suddenly converted into foes. The Turk was watching him by sea. The French were striking at him by land. In front of him was the Pope, who had taken mortal offense; and behind him was Maurice, pushing on by secret and forced marches, “to catch,” as he irreverently said, “the fox in his hole.” And probably he would have done as he said, had not a mutiny broken out among his troops on the journey, which, by delaying his march on Innsbruck, gave Charles time to learn with astonishment that all Germany had risen, and was in full march upon Innsbruck. The emperor had no alternative but flight.

The night was dark, a tempest was raging among the Alps; Charles was suffering from the gout, and his illness unfitted him for horseback. They placed him in a litter, and lighting torches to guide them in the darkness, they bore the emperor over the mountains, by steep and rugged paths, to Villach in Carinthia. Prince Maurice entered Innsbruck a few hours after Charles had quitted it, to find that his prey had escaped him. ¹⁵

The emperor’s power collapsed when apparently at its zenith. None of the usual signs that precede the fall of greatness gave warning of so startling a downfall in the emperor’s fortunes. His vast prestige had not been impaired. He had not been worsted on the battle-field; his military glory had suffered no eclipse; nor had any of his kingdoms been torn from him; he was still master of two worlds, and yet, by an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, he was rendered helpless in presence of his enemies, and had to save his liberty, if not his life, by a hasty and ignominious flight. It would be difficult, in all history, to find such another reverse of fortune. The emperor never fully recovered either himself or his Empire.

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There followed, in July, the Peace of Passau. The main article in that treaty was that the Protestants should enjoy the free and undisturbed possession of their religion till such time as a Diet of all the

¹⁴Millot, vol. 4., pp. 330, 331.

¹⁵Sleidan, bk. 24., pp. 559, 560. Millot, vol. 4., p. 331. Robertson, Charles V., bk. 10., pp. 298, 299.

States should effect a permanent arrangement, and that failing such a Diet the present agreement should remain in force for ever. ¹⁶ This was followed by the Treaty of Augsburg in 1555. This last ratified and enlarged the privileges conceded to the Protestants in the pacification of Passau, and gave a legal right to the Augustan Confession to exist side by side with the creed of the Romish Church. ¹⁷ The ruling idea of the Middle Ages, that one form of religion only could exist in a country, was then abandoned; yet with some unwillingness on both sides; for the Lutherans, not less than the emperor, had some difficulty in shaking themselves free of the exclusiveness of former times. The members of the Reformed Church, the followers of Zwingle and Calvin, were excluded from the privileges secured in the treaties of Passau and Augsburg, nor was legal toleration extended to them till the Peace of Westphalia, a century later.

To the emperor how mortifying this issue of affairs! To overthrow the Protestant religion in Germany, and restore the Popish worship to its ancient dominancy, was the one object of all his campaigns these five years past. His efforts had led to just the opposite result. He had been compelled to grant toleration to Lutheranism, and all things appertaining to the churches, schools, and pastors of Germany had returned to the position in which they were before the war. He was in the act of putting the crown upon the fabric of his power, when lo! it suddenly fell into ruin.

At the beginning of his career, and when just entering on his great combat with the Reformation, Charles V., as we have already seen, staked kingdom and crown, armies and treasures, body and soul, in the battle with Protestantism. ¹⁸ Thirty years had passed since then, and the emperor was now in circumstances to say how far he had succeeded. Hundreds of thousands of lives had he sacrificed and millions of money had he squandered in the contest, but Protestantism, so far from being extinguished, had enlarged its area, and multiplied its adherents four-fold. While the fortunes of Protestantism flourished day by day, how different was it with those of the emperor! The final issue as regarded Spain was as yet far from being reached, but already as regarded Charles it shaped itself

¹⁶Sleidan, bk. 24., pp. 570, 571.

¹⁷Ibid., bk. 26., pp. 626, 627.

¹⁸See ante, bk. 6., chap. 7, p. 346.

darkly before his eyes. His treasury empty, his prestige diminished, discontent and revolt springing up in all parts of his dominions, his toils and years increasing, but bringing with them no real successes, he began to meditate retiring from the scene, and entrusting the continuance of the contest to his son Philip. In that very year, 1555, he committed to him the government of the Netherlands, and soon thereafter that of the Spanish and Italian territories also.¹⁹ In 1556 he formally abdicated the Empire, and retired to bury his grandeur and ambition in the monkish solitude of St. Juste.

Disembarking in the Bay of Biscay, September, 1556, he proceeded to Burgos, and thence to Valladolid, being borne sometimes in a chair, sometimes in a horse-litter. So thoroughly had toil and disease done their work upon him, that he suffered exquisite pain at every step. A few only of his nobles met him on his journey, and these few rendered him so cold an homage, that he was now made painfully aware that he was no longer a monarch. From Valladolid he pursued his journey to Placentia in Estremadura, near to which was a monastery belonging to the Order of St. Jerome, so delightfully situated that Charles, who had chanced to visit it many years before, had long dreamed of ending his days here. It lay in a little vale, watered by a brook, encircled by pleasant hills, and possessing a soil so fertile and an air so salubrious and sweet, that it was esteemed the most delicious spot in Spain.

Before his arrival an architect had added eight rooms to the monastery for the emperor's use. Six were in the form of monks' cells, with bare walls; the remaining two were plainly furnished. Here, with twelve servants, a horse for his use, and a hundred thousand crowns, which he had reserved for his subsistence, and which were very irregularly paid, lived Charles, so lately at the head of the world, "spending his time," says the continuator of Sleidan, "in the innocent acts of grafting, gardening, and reconciling the differences of his clocks, which yet he never could make to strike together, and therefore ceased to wonder he had not been able to make men agree in the niceties of religion."²⁰

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¹⁹Robertson, Charles V., bk. 11., pp. 333, 334. Millot, vol. 4., pp. 344, 345.

²⁰Sleidan, Continuation, bk. 1., p. 7; Lond., 1689. Millot, vol. 4, p. 354.

As soon as he had set foot upon the shore of Spain, “he prostrated himself upon the earth,” says the same writer, “and kissing it he said, ‘Hail, my beloved mother; naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and now I return naked to thee again, as to another mother; and here I consecrate and give to thee my body and my bones, which is all the acknowledgment I can give for all thy numerous benefits bestowed upon me.’”²¹

What a striking contrast! The career of Charles ends where that of Luther begins. From a convent we see Luther come forth to enlighten the world and become a king of men: year by year his power expands and his glory brightens. At the door of a convent we behold Charles bidding adieu to all his dominion and grandeur, to all the projects he had formed, and all the hopes he had cherished. The one emerges from seclusion to mount into the firmament of influence, where a place awaits him, which he is to hold for ever: the other falls suddenly from the heaven of power, and the place that knew him knows him no more. In the emphatic language of Scripture, “that day his thoughts perish.”

²¹Ibid. Robertson, bk. 12., pp. 389, 340.

**Book 13: From Rise of Protestantism in
France (1510) to Publication of the
Institutes (1536)**

Chapter 1: The Doctor of Etaples, the First Protestant Teacher in France

Arrival of a New Actor—Central Position of France—Genius of its People—Tragic Interest of its Protestantism—Louis XII—Perdam Babylonis Nomen,—The Councils of Pisa and the Lateran Francis I. and Leo X—Jacques Lefevre—His Birth and Education Appointed to a Chair in the Sorbonne—His Devotions—His Lives of the Saints—A Discovery—A Free Justification—Teaches this Doctrine in the Sorbonne—Agitation among the Professors—A Tempest gathering

Picture: View of the Sorbonne prior to 1789.

Picture: Lefevre Lecturing at the Sorbonne

The area of the Reformation - that great movement which, wherever it comes, makes all things new is about to undergo enlargement. The stage, already crowded with great actors - England, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark - is to receive another accession. The plot is deepening, the parts are multiplying, and the issues give promise of being rich and grand beyond conception. It is no mean actor that is now to step upon that stage on which the nations do battle, and where, if victorious, they shall reap a future of happiness and glory; but if vanquished, there await them decadence, and shame, and ruin. The new nationality which has come to mingle in this great drama is France.

At the opening of the sixteenth century, France held a foremost place among the countries of Europe. It might not unworthily aspire to lead in a great movement of the nations. Placed in the center of the civilized West, it touched the other kingdoms of Christendom at a great many points. On its south and south-east was Switzerland; on its east and north-east were Germany and the Low Countries; on its north, parted from it only by the narrow sea, was England At all its gates, save those that looked towards Italy and Spain, was the Reformation waiting for admission. Will France open, and heartily

welcome it? Elevated on this central and commanding site, the beacon-lights of Protestantism will shed their effulgence all around, making the day clearer where the light has already dawned, and the night less dark where the shades still linger.

The rich endowments of the people made it at once desirable and probable that France would embrace the Reformation. The French genius is one of marvelous adaptability. Quick, playful, trenchant, subtle, it is able alike to concentrate itself in analytical investigations, and to spread itself out in creations of poetic beauty and intellectual sublimity. There is no branch of literature in which the French people have not excelled. They have shone equally in the drama, in philosophy, in history, in mathematics, and in metaphysics. Grafted on a genius so elegant and yet so robust, so playful and yet so Penetrating - in short, so many sided - Protestantism will display itself under a variety of new and beautiful lights, which will win converts in quarters where the movement has not been regarded hitherto as having many attractions to recommend it - nay, rather where, it has been contemned as "a root out of a dry ground."

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We are entering on one of the grandest yet most tragic of all the pages of our history. The movement which we now behold entering France is to divide - deeply and fiercely divide the nation; for it is a characteristic of the French people that whatever, cause they embrace, they embrace with enthusiasm; and whatever cause they oppose, they oppose with an equal enthusiasm. As we pass on the scenes will be continually shifting, and the quick alternations of hope and fear will never cease to agitate us. It is, so to speak, a superb gallery we are to traverse; colossal forms look down upon us as we pass along. On this hand stand men of gigantic wickedness, on that men of equally gigantic virtue - men whose souls, sublimed by piety and trust in God, have attained to the highest pitch of endurance, of self-sacrifice, of heroism. And then the lesson at the close, so distinct, so solemn. For we are justified in affirming that in a sense France has glorified Protestantism more by rejecting it than other countries have done by accepting it.

We lift the curtain at the year 1510. On its rising we find the throne of France occupied by Louis XII., the wisest sovereign of his time. He has just assembled a Parliament at Tours to resolve for him the question whether it is lawful to go to war with the Pope, who

violates treaties, and sustains his injustice by levying soldiers and fighting battles? ¹ The warlike Julius II. then occupied the chair which a Borgia had recently filled. Ignorant of theology, with no inclination, and just as little capacity, for the spiritual duties of his see, Julius II. passed his whole time in camps and on battle-fields. With so bellicose a priest at its center, Christendom had but little rest. Among others whom the Pope disquieted was the meek and upright Louis of France; hence the question which he put to his Parliament. The answer of that assembly marks the moral decadence of the Papacy, and the contempt in which the thunderbolts of the Vatican were beginning to be held. "It is lawful for the king," said they, "not only to act defensively but offensively against such a man" ² Fortified by the advice of his Parliament, Louis gave the command to his armies to march, and two years later he indicated sufficiently his own opinion of the Papacy and its crowned chief, when he caused a coin to be struck at Naples bearing the words, *Perdan Babylonis nomen* ³ These symptoms announced the near approach of the new times.

Other things were then being transacted which also gave plain indication that the old age was about to close and a new age to open. Weary of a Pope who made it his sole vocation to marshal armies and conquer cities and provinces, who went in person to the battle-field, but never once appeared in the pulpit, the Emperor Maximilian I. and Louis of France agreed to convoke a Council ⁴ for "the Reformation of the Church in its head and members." That Council was now sitting at Pisa. It summoned the Pope to its bar, and when Julius II. failed to appear, the Council suspended him from his office, and forbade all people to obey him. ⁵ The Pope treated the decree of the Fathers with the same contempt which he had shown to their summons. He convoked another Council at the Lateran, made void that of Pisa, with all its decrees, fulminated excommunication against Louis, ⁶ suspended Divine worship in France, and delivered

¹Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, tom. 15., pp. 87, 88; Paris, 1742.

²Mezeray, tom. 4.

³"I will destroy the name of Babylon." (Thauni, *Hist.*, lib. 1., p. 11; ed. Aurel, 1626.)

⁴Platina, *Vit. de Pont. Jul. II.*, p. 259. Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, tom. 25., p. 203.

⁵Mezeray, tom. 4., p. 457.

⁶Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, tom. 25., p. 204.

the kingdom to whomsoever had the will and the power to seize upon it. ⁷

Thus Council met Council, and the project of the two sovereigns for a Reformation came to nothing, as later and similar attempts were destined to do.

For the many evils that pressed upon the world, a Council was the only remedy that the age knew, and at every crisis it betook itself to this device. God was about to plant in society a new principle, which would become the germ of its regeneration.

Julius II. was busied with his Council of the Lateran when (1513) he died, and was succeeded in the Papal chair by Cardinal John de Medici, Leo X. With the new Pope came new manners at Rome. Underneath, the stream of corruption continued steadily to flow, but on the surface things were changed. The Vatican no longer rang with the clang of arms. Instead of soldiers, troops of artists and musicians, crowds of masqueraders and buffoons now filled the palace of the Pope. The talk was no longer of battles, but of, pictures and statues and dancers. Soon Louis of France followed his former opponent, Julius II., to the grave. He died on the 1st January, 1515, and was succeeded by his nephew, Francis I.

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The new Pope and the new king were not unlike in character. The Renaissance had touched both, communicating to them that refinement of outward manners, and that aesthetical rather than cultivated taste, which it never failed to impart to all who came under its influence. The strong, wayward, and selfish passions of the men it had failed to correct. Both loved to surround themselves with pomps. Francis was greedy of fame, Leo was greedy of money, and both were greedy of pleasure, and the characteristic passions of each became in the hand of an overruling Providence the means of furthering the great movement which now presents itself on the scene.

The river which waters great kingdoms, and bears on its bosom the commerce of many nations, may be traced up to some solitary fountain among the far-off hills. So was it with that river of the Water of Life that was now to go forth to refresh France. It had its first rise in a single soul. It is the year 1510, and the good Louis XII.

⁷Guicciardini, lib. 11., p. 395. Laval., vol. 1., p. 10.

is still upon the throne. A stranger visiting Paris at that day, more especially if of a devout turn, would hardly have failed to mark an old man, small of stature and simple in manners, going his round of the churches and, prostrate before their images, devoutly “repeating his hours.” This man was destined to be, on a small scale, to the realm of France what Wicliffe had been, on a large, to England and the world - “the morning star of the Reformation.” His name was Jacques Lefevre. He was born at Etaples, a village of Picardy,⁸ about the middle of the previous century, and was now verging on seventy, but still hale and vigorous. Lefevre had all his days been a devout Papist, and even to this hour the shadow of Popery was still around him, and the eclipse of superstition had not yet wholly passed from off his soul. But the promise was to be fulfilled to him, “At evening time it shall be light.” He had all along had a presentiment that a new day was rising on the world, and that he should not depart till his eyes had seen its light.

The man who was the first to emerge from the darkness that covered his native land is entitled to a prominent share of our attention. Lefevre was in all points a remarkable man. Endowed with an inquisitive and capacious intellect, hardly was there a field of study open to those ages which he had not entered, and in which he had not made great proficiency. The ancient languages, the belles lettres, history, mathematics, philosophy, theology; - he had studied them all. His thirst for knowledge tempted him to try what he might be able to learn from other lands besides France. He had visited Asia and Africa, and seen all that the end of the fifteenth century had to show. Returning to France he was appointed to a chair in the Sorbonne, or Theological Hall of the great Paris University, and soon he drew around him a crowd of admiring disciples. He was the first luminary, Erasmus tells us, in that constellation of lights; but he was withal so meek, so amiable, so candid, and so full of loving-kindness, that all who knew him loved him. But there were those among his fellow-professors who envied him the admiration of which he was the object, and insinuated that the man who had visited so many countries, and had made himself familiar with so many subjects, and some of them so questionable, could hardly

⁸Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Reformers au Royaume de France*, tom. 1.,p. 1, Lille, 1841.

have escaped some taint of heresy, and could not be wholly loyal to Mother Church.

They set to watching him; but no one of them all was so punctual and exemplary in his devotions. Never was he absent from mass; never was his place empty at the procession, and no one remained so long as Lefevre on his knees before the saints. Nay, often might this man, the most distinguished of all the professors of the Sorbonne, be seen decking the statues of Mary with flowers.⁹ No flaw could his enemies find in his armor.

Lefevre, thinking to crown the saints with a fairer and more lasting garland than the perishable flowers he had offered to their images, formed the idea of collecting and re-writing their lives. He had already made some progress in his task when the thought struck him that he might find in the Bible materials or hints that would be useful to him in his work. To the Bible - the original languages of which he had studied - he accordingly turned. He had unwittingly opened to himself the portals of a new world. Saints of another sort than those that had till this moment engaged his attention now stood before him - men who had received a higher canonisation than that of Rome, and whose images the pen of inspiration itself had drawn. The virtues of the real saints dimmed in his eyes the glories of the legendary ones. The pen dropped from his hand, and he could proceed no farther in the task on which till now he had labored with a zeal so genial, and a perseverance so untiring.

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Having opened the Bible, Lefevre was in no haste to shut it. He saw that not only were the saints of the Bible unlike the saints of the Roman Calendar, but that the Church of the Bible was unlike the Roman Church. From the images of Paul and Peter, the doctor of Etaples now turned to the Epistles of Paul and Peter, from the voice of the Church to the voice of God. The plan of a free justification stood revealed to him. It came like a sudden revelation - like the breaking of the day. In 1512 he published a commentary, of which a copy is extant in the Bibliotheque Royale of Paris, on the Epistles of Paul. In that work he says, "It is God who gives us, by faith, that righteousness which by grace alone justifies to eternal life."¹⁰

⁹History of the Protestants of France, by G. D. Felice, D.D.; vol. 1., p. 2; Lond., 1853.

¹⁰D'Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 339.

The day has broken. This utterance of Lefevre assures us of that. It is but a single ray, it is true; but it comes from Heaven, it is light Divine, and will yet scatter the darkness that broods over France. It has already banished the gloom of monkery from the soul of Lefevre; it will do the same for his pupils - for his countrymen, and he knows that he has not received the light to put it under a bushel. Of all places, the Sorbonne was the most dangerous in which to proclaim the new doctrine. For centuries no one but the schoolmen had spoken there, and now to proclaim in the citadel and sanctuary of scholasticism a doctrine that would explode what had received the reverence, as it had been the labor, of ages, and promised, as was thought, eternal fame to its authors, was enough to make the very stones cry out from the venerable walls, and was sure to draw down a tempest of scholastic ire on the head of the adventurous innovator. Lefevre had attained an age which is proverbially wary, if not timid; he knew well the risks to which he was exposing himself, nevertheless he went on to teach the doctrine of salvation by grace. There rose a great commotion round the chair whence proceeded these unwonted sounds. With very different feelings did the pupils of the venerable man listen to the new teaching. The faces of some testified to the delight which his doctrine gave them. They looked like men to whose eyes some glorious vista had been suddenly opened, or who had unexpectedly lighted upon what they had long but vainly sought. Astonishment or doubt was plainly written on the faces of others, while the knitted brows and flashing eyes of some as plainly bespoke the anger that inflamed them against the man who was razing, as they thought, the very foundations of morality.

The agitation in the class-room of Lefevre quickly communicated itself to the whole university. The doctors were in a flutter. Reasonings and objections were heard on every side, frivolous in some cases, in others the fruit of blind prejudice, or dislike of the doctrine. But some few were honest, and these Lefevre made it his business to answer, being desirous to show that his doctrine did not give a license to sin, and that it was not new, but old; that he was not the first preacher of it in France, that it had been taught by Irenaeus in early times, long before the scholastic theology was heard of; and especially that this doctrine was not his, not Irenaeus', but God's, who had revealed it to men in his Word.

Mutterings began to be heard of the tempest that was gathering in the distance; but as yet it did not burst, and meanwhile Lefevre, within whose soul the light was growing clearer day by day, went on with his work.

It is important to mark that these occurrences took place in 1512. Not yet, nor till five years later, was the name of Luther heard of in France. The monk of Wittemberg had not yet nailed his Theses against indulgences to the doors of the Schloss-kirk. From Germany then, most manifest it is, the Reformation which we now see springing up on French soil did not come.

Even before the strokes of Luther's hammer in Wittemberg are heard ringing the knell of the old times, the voice of Lefevre is proclaiming beneath the vaulted roof of the Sorbonne in Paris the advent of the new age. The Reformation of France came out of the Bible as really as the light which kindles mountain and plain at daybreak comes out of heaven. And as it was in France so was it in all the countries of the Reform. The Word of God, like God himself, is light; and from that enduring and inexhaustible source came forth that welcome clay which, after a long and protracted night, broke upon the nations in the morning of the sixteenth century.

Chapter 2 : Farel, Briconnet, and the Early Reformers of France

A Student from the Dauphinese Alps—William Farel—Enters University of Paris—Becomes a Pupil Of Lefevre—His Doubts—Passes with Lefevre into the New Day—Preaches in the Churches—Retires to Switzerland—William Briconnet, Bishop of Meaux—Briconnet goes on a Mission to Rome—State of the City—His Musings on his Way back—Change at Meaux—The Bible—What Briconnet Saw in it—Begins the Reformation of his Diocese—Characters of Francis I. and Margaret of Valois

Picture: Cathedral of Meaux

Among the youth whom we see gathered round the chair of the aged Lefevre, there is one who specially attracts our notice. It is easy to see that between the scholar and his master there exists an attachment of no ordinary kind. There is no one in all that crowd of pupils who so hangs upon the lips of his teacher as does this youth, nor is there one on whom the eyes of that teacher rest with so kindly a light. This youth is not a native of France. He was born among the Alps of Dauphine, at Gap, near Grenoble, in 1489. His name is William Farel.

[129] His parents were eminently pious, measured by the standard of that age. Never did morning kindle into glory the white mountains, in the midst of which their dwelling was placed, but the family was assembled, and the bead-roll duly gone over; and never did evening descend, first enkindling then paling the Alps, without the customary hymn to the Virgin. The parents of the youth, as he himself informs us, believed all that the priests told them; and he, in his turn, believed all that his parents told him.

Thus he grew up till he was about the age of twenty - the grandeurs of nature in his eye all hours of the day, but the darkness of superstition deepening year by year in his soul. The two - the glory of the Alps and the glory of the Church - seemed to blend

and become one in his mind. It would have been as hard for him to believe that Rome with her Pope and holy priests, with her rites and ceremonies, was the mere creation of superstition, as to believe that the great mountains around him, with their snows and their pine-forests, were a mere illusion, a painting on the sky, which but mocked the senses, and would one day dissolve like an unsubstantial though gorgeous exhalation. "I would gnash my teeth like a furious wolf," said he, speaking of his blind devotion to Rome at this period of his life, "when I heard any one speaking against the Pope."

It was his father's wish that he should devote himself to the profession of arms, but the young Farel aspired to be a scholar. The fame of the Sorbonne had reached him in his secluded native valley, and he thirsted to drink at that renowned well of learning. Probably the sublimities amid which he daily moved had kept alive the sympathies of a mind naturally ardent and aspiring. He now (1510) set out for Paris, presented himself at the gates of its university, and was enrolled among its students.

It was here that the young Dauphinese scholar became acquainted with the doctor of Etaples. There were but few points to bring them together, one would have thought, and a great many to keep them apart. The one was young, the other old; the one was enthusiastic, the other was timid; but these differences were on the surface only. The two were kindred in their souls, both were noble, unselfish, devout, and in an age of growing skepticism and dissoluteness the devotion of both was as sincere as it was ardent. This was the link that bound them together, and the points of contrast instead of weakening only tended the more firmly to cement their friendship. The aged master and the young disciple might often be seen going their rounds in company, and visiting the same shrines, and kneeling before the same images.

But now a change was commencing in the mind of Lefevre which must part the two for ever, or bind them together yet more indissolubly. The spiritual dawn was breaking in the soul of the doctor of Etaples; would his young disciple be able to enter along with him into that new world into which the other was being translated? In his public teaching Lefevre now began to let fall at times crumbs of the new knowledge he had gleaned from the Bible. "Salvation is of grace," would the professor say to his pupils. "The Innocent

One is condemned and the criminal is acquitted.” “It is the cross of Christ alone that openeth the gates of heaven and shutteth the gates of hell.”¹ Farel started as these words fell upon his ear. What did they import, and where would they lead him? Were then all his visits to the saints, and the many hours on his knees before their images, to no purpose - prayers flung into empty space? The teachings of his youth, the sanctities of his home, nay, the grandeurs of the mountains which were associated in his mind with the beliefs he had learned at their feet, rose up before him, and appeared to frown upon him, and he wished he were back again, where, encompassed by the calm majesty of the hills, he might no longer feel these torturing doubts.

Farel had two courses before him, he must either press forward with Lefevre into the light, or abjuring his master as a heretic, plunge straightway into deeper darkness. Happily God had been preparing him for the crisis. There had been for some time a tempest in the soul of the young student. Farel had lost his peace, and the austerities he had practiced with a growing rigor had failed to restore it. What Scripture so emphatically terms “the terrors of death and the pains of hell” had taken hold upon him. It was while he was in this state, feeling that he could not save himself, and beginning to despair of ever being saved, that the words were spoken in his hearing, “The cross of Christ alone openeth the gates of heaven.” Farel felt that this was the only salvation to suit him, that if ever he should be saved it must be “of grace,” “without money and without price,” and so he immediately pressed in at the portal which the words of Lefevre had opened to him, and rejoined his teacher in the new world into which that teacher himself had so recently entered.² The tempest was at an end: he was now in the quiet haven. “All things,” said he, “appear to me under a new light. Scripture is cleared up.” “Instead of the murderous heart of a ravening wolf, he came back,” he tells us, “quietly like a meek and harmless lamb, having his heart entirely withdrawn from the Pope and given to Jesus Christ.”³

[130] For a brief space Jacques Lefevre and Guillaume Farel shone like twin stars in the morning sky of France. The influence of Lefevre was none the less efficient that it was quietly put forth,

¹D’Aubigne, vol. 3., pp. 339 - 344.

²Felice, Hist. of Protestants of France, vol. 1., p. 3.

³Farel, GaJeoto. D’Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 345.

and consisted mainly in the dissemination of those vital truths from which Protestantism was to spring among the young and ardent minds that were gathered round his chair, and by whom the new doctrine was afterwards to be published from the pulpit, or witnessed for on the scaffold. "Lefevre was the man," says Theodore Beza, "who boldly began the revival of the pure religion of Jesus Christ, and as in ancient times the school of Socrates sent forth the best orators, so from the lecture-room of the doctor of Etaples issued many of the best men of the age and of the Church."⁴ Peter Robert Olivetan, the translator of the first French Bible from the version of Lefevre, is believed to have been among the number of those who received the truth from the doctor of Etaples, and who, in his turn, was the means of enlisting in the service of Protestantism the greatest champion whom France, or perhaps any other country, ever gave to it.

While Lefevre scattered the seed in his lecture-room, Farel, now fully emancipated from the yoke of the Pope, and listening to no teaching but that of the Bible, went forth and preached in the temples. He was as uncompromising and bold in his advocacy of the Gospel as he had aforetime been zealous in behalf of Popery. "Young and resolute," says Felice, "he caused the public places and temples to resound with his voice of thunder."⁵ He labored for a short time in Meaux,⁶ where Protestantism reaped its earliest triumphs: and when the gathering storm of persecution drove him from France, which happened soon thereafter, Farel directed his steps towards those grand mountains from which lie had come, and preaching in Switzerland with a courage which no violence could subdue, and an eloquence which drew around him vast crowds, he introduced the Reformation into his native land. He planted the standard of the cross on the shores of the lake of Neuchatel and on those of the Lemane, and eventually carried it within the gates of Geneva, where we shall again meet him. He thus became the pioneer of Calvin.

We have marked the two figures - Lefevre and Farel - that stand out with so great distinctness in this early dawn. A third now appears whose history possesses a great although a melancholy interest.

⁴Beza, *Icones*.

⁵Felice, vol. 1., pp. 1, 2.

⁶Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Reformees*, tom. 1., p. 4.

After the doctor of Etaples no one had so much to do with the introduction of Protestantism into France as the man whom we now bring upon the stage.⁷ He is William Bricconnet, Count of Montbrun, and Bishop of Meaux, a town about eight leagues east of Paris, and where Bossuet, another name famous in ecclesiastical annals, was also, at an after-period, bishop. Descended from a noble family, of good address, and a man of affairs, Bricconnet was sent by Francis I. on a mission to Rome. The most magnificent of all the Popes - Leo X. - was then in the Vatican, and Bricconnet's visit to the Eternal City gave him an opportunity of seeing the Papacy in the noon of its glory, if now somewhat past the meridian of its power.

It was the same Pope to whom the Bishop of Meaux was now sent as ambassador to whom the saying is ascribed, "What a profitable affair this fable of Christ has been to us!" To Luther in his cell, alone with his sins and his conscience, the Gospel was a reality; to Leo, amidst the statues and pictures of the Vatican, his courtiers, buffoons and dancers, the Gospel was a fable. But this "fable" had done much for Rome. It had filled it - no one said with virtues - but with golden dignities, dazzling honors, and voluptuous delights. This fable clothed the ministers of the Church in purple, seated them every day at sumptuous tables, provided for them splendid equipages drawn by prancing steeds, and followed by a long train of liveried attendants: while couches of down were spread for them at night on which to rest their wearied frames - worn out, not with watching or study, or the care of souls, but with the excitements of the chase or the pleasures of the table. The viol, the tabret, and the harp were never silent in the streets of Rome. Her citizens did not need to toil or spin, to turn the soil or plough the main, for the corn and oil, the silver and the gold of all Christendom flowed thither. They shed copiously the juice of the grape in their banquets, and not less copiously the blood of one another in their quarrels. The Rome of that age was the chosen home of pomps and revels, of buffooneries and villanies, of dark intrigues and blood-red crimes.⁸ "Enjoy we

⁷Beza, tom. 1., p. 3.

⁸Baptista Mantuan, a Carmelite, wrote thus on Rome: "Vivere qui sancte cupiris, discedite Roma. Omnia cum liceant, non licet esse bonum" - that is, "Good and virtuous men, make haste and get out of Rome, for here virtue is the one thing ye cannot practice: all else ye may do."

the Papacy,” said Leo, when elected, to his nephew Julian de Medici, “since God has given it to us.”

But the master-actor on this strange stage was Religion, or the “Fable” as the Pontiff termed it. All day long the bells tolled; even at night their chimes ceased not to be heard, telling the visitor that even then prayer and praise were ascending from the oratories and shrines of Rome. Churches and cathedrals rose at every few paces: images and crucifixes lined the streets: tapers and holy signs sanctified the dwellings: every hour processions of shorn priest, hooded monk, and veiled nun swept along, with banners, and chants, and incense. Every new day brought a new ceremony or festival, which surpassed in its magnificence and pomp that of the day before. What an enigma was presented to the Bishop of Meaux! What a strange city was Rome - how full of religion, but how empty of virtue! Its ceremonies how gorgeous, but its worship how cold; its priests how numerous, and how splendidly arrayed! It wanted only that their virtues should be as shining as their garments, to make the city of the Pope the most resplendent in the universe. Such doubtless were the reflections of Briconnet during his stay at the court of Leo.

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The time came that the Bishop of Meaux must leave Rome and return to France. On his way back to his own country he had a great many more things to meditate upon than when on his journey southward to the Eternal City. As he climbs the lower ridges of the Apennines, and casts a look behind on the fast-vanishing cluster of towers and domes, which mark the site of Rome on the bosom of the Campagna, we can imagine him saying to himself, “May not the Pope have spoken infallibly for once, and may not that which I have seen enthroned amid so much of this world’s pride and power and wickedness be, after all, only a ‘fable’?” In short, Briconnet, like Luther, came back from Rome much less a son of the Church than he had been before going thither.⁹

New scenes awaited him on his return, and what he had seen in Rome helped to prepare him for what he was now to witness in France. On getting back to his diocese the Bishop of Meaux was astonished at the change which had passed in Paris during his absence. There was a new light in the sky of France: a new influence

⁹Felice, vol. 1., p. 4.

was stirring in the minds of men. The good bishop thirsted to taste the new knowledge which he saw was transforming the lives and gladdening the hearts of all who received it.

He had known Lefevre before going to Rome, and what so natural as that he should turn to his old friend to tell him whence had come that influence, so silent yet so mighty, which was changing the world? Lefevre put the Bible into his hands: it was all in that book. The bishop opened the mysterious volume, and there he saw what he had missed at Rome - a Church which had neither Pontifical chair nor purple robes, but which possessed the higher splendor of truth and holiness. The bishop felt that this was the true Spouse of Christ.

The Bible had revealed to Briconnet, Christ as the Author of a free salvation, the Bestower of an eternal life, without the intervention of the "Church," and this knowledge was to him as "living water," as "heavenly food." "Such is its sweetness," said he, "that it makes the mind insatiable, the more we taste of it the more we long for it. What vessel is able to receive the exceeding fullness of this inexhaustible sweetness?"¹⁰ Briconnet's letters are still preserved in MS.; they are written in the mazy metaphorical style which disfigured all the productions of an age just passing from the flighty and figurative rhetoric of the schoolmen to the chaster models of the ancients, but they leave us in no doubt as to his sentiments. He repudiates works as the foundation of the sinner's justification, and puts in their room Christ's finished work apprehended by faith, and, laying little stress on external ceremonies and rites, makes religion to consist in love to God and personal holiness. The bishop received the new doctrine without experiencing that severe mental conflict which Farel had passed through. He found the gate not strait, and entered in - somewhat too easily perhaps - and took his place in the little circle of disciples which the Gospel had already gathered round it in France - Lefevre, Farel, Roussel, and Vatable, all four professors in the University of Paris - although, alas! he was not destined to remain in that holy society to the close.

Of the five men whom Protestantism had called to follow it in this kingdom, the Bishop of Meaux, as regarded the practical work of Reformation, was the most powerful. The whole of France he saw

¹⁰MS. Bibl. Royale. Paris - ex D'Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 353,

needed Reformation; where should he begin? Unquestionably in his own diocese. His rectors and cures walked in the old paths. They squandered their revenues in the dissolute gaieties of Paris, while they appointed ignorant deputies to do duty for them at Meaux. In other days Briconnet had looked on this as a matter of course: now it appeared to him a scandalous and criminal abuse. In October, 1520, he published a mandate, proclaiming all to be “traitors and deserters who, by abandoning their flocks, show plainly that what they love is their fleece and their wool.” He interdicted, moreover, the Franciscans from the pulpits of his diocese. At the season of the grand fetes these men made their rounds, amply provided with new jests, which put their hearers in good humor, and helped the friars to fill their stomachs and their wallets. Briconnet forbade the pulpits to be longer desecrated by such buffooneries. He visited in person, like a faithful bishop, all his parishes; summoned the clergy and parishioners before him: inquired into the teaching of the one and the morals of the other: removed ignorant cures, that is, every nine out of ten of the clergy, and replaced them with men able to teach, when such could be found, which was then no easy matter. To remedy the great evil of the time, which was ignorance, he instituted a theological seminary at Meaux, where, under his own eye, there might be trained “able ministers of the New Testament;” and meanwhile he did what he could to supply the lack of laborers, by ascending the pulpit and preaching himself, “a thing which had long since gone quite out of fashion.” ¹¹

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Leaving Meaux now, to come back to it soon, we return to Paris. The influence of Briconnet’s conversion was felt among the high personages of the court, and the literary circles of the capital, as well as amidst the artizans and peasants of the diocese of Meaux. The door of the palace stood open to the bishop, and the friendship he enjoyed with Francis I. opened to Briconnet vast opportunities of spreading Reformed views among the philosophers and scholars whom that monarch loved to assemble round him. One high-born, and wearing a mitre, was sure to be listened to where a humbler Reformer might in vain solicit audience. The court of France was then adorned by a galaxy of learned men - Budaeus, Du Bellay,

¹¹Laval., vol. 1., p. 22.

Cop, the court physician, and others of equal eminence - to all of whom the bishop made known a higher knowledge than that of the Renaissance. ¹² But the most illustrious convert in the palace was the sister of the king, Margaret of Valois. And now two personages whom we have not met as yet, but who are destined to act a great part in the drama on which we are entering, make their appearance.

The one is Francis I., who ascended the throne just as the new day was breaking over Europe; the other is his sister, whom we have named above, Margaret of Angouleme. The brother and sister, in many of their qualities, resembled each other. Both were handsome in person, polished in manners, lively in disposition, and of a magnanimous and generous character. Both possessed a fine intellect, and both were fond of letters, which they had cultivated with ardour. Francis, who was sometimes styled the Mirror of Knighthood, embodied in his person the three characteristics of his age - valor, gallantry, and letters; the latter passion had, owing to the Renaissance, become a somewhat fashionable one. "Francis I.," says Guizot, "had received from God all the gifts that can adorn a man: he was handsome, and tall, and strong; his amour, preserved in the Louvre, is that of a man six feet high; his eyes were brilliant and soft, his smile was gracious, his manners were winning." ¹³

Francis aspired to be a great king, but the moral instability which tarnished his many great qualities forbade the realization of his idea. It was his fate, after starting with promise in every race, to fall behind before reaching the goal. The young monarch of Spain bore away from him the palm in arms. Despite his great abilities, and the talents he summoned to his aid, he was never able to achieve for France in politics any but a second place. He chased from his dominions the greatest theological intellect of his age, and the literary glory with which he thought to invest his name and throne passed over to England. He was passionately fond of his sister, whom he always called his "darling;" and Margaret was not less devoted in affection for her brother. For some time the lives, as the tastes, of the two flowed on together; but a day was to come when they would be parted. Amid the frivolities of the court, in which she mingled

¹²Ben, tom. 1., p. 2.

¹³Guizot, Hist. of France, vol. 3., p. 2; Lond., 1874.

without defiling herself with its vices, the light of the Gospel shone upon Margaret, and she turned to her Savior. Francis, after wavering some time between the Gospel and Rome, between the pleasures of the world and the joys that are eternal, made at last his choice, but, alas! on the opposite side to that of his lovely and accomplished sister. Casting in his lot with Rome, and staking crown, and kingdom, and salvation upon the issue, he gave battle to the Reformation.

We turn again to Margaret, whose grace and beauty made her the ornament of the court, as her brilliant qualities of intellect won the admiration and homage of all who came in contact with her.¹⁴ This accomplished princess, nevertheless, began to be unhappy. She felt a heaviness of the heart which the gaieties around her could not dispel. She was in this state, ill at ease, yet not knowing well what it was that troubled her, when Briconnet met her (1521).¹⁵ He saw at once to the bottom of her heart and her griefs. He put into her hand what Lefevre had put into his own - the Bible; and after the eager study of the Word of God, Margaret forgot her fears and her sins in love to her Savior. She recognized in him the Friend she had long sought, but sought in vain, in the gay circles in which she moved, and she felt a strength and courage she had not known till now. Peace became an inmate of her bosom. She was no longer alone in the world. There was now a Friend by her side on whose sympathy she could cast herself in those dark hours when her brother Francis should frown, and the court should make her the object of its polished ridicule.

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In the conversion of Margaret a merciful Providence provided against the evil days that were to come. Furious storms were at no great distance, and although Margaret was not strong enough to prevent the bursting of these tempests, she could and did temper their bitterness. She was near the throne. The sweetness of her spirit was at times a restraint upon the headlong passions of her brother. With quiet tact she would defeat the plot of the monk, and undo the chain of the martyr, and not a few lives, which other wise would

¹⁴Brantome, *Vie des Femmes Illustres*, p. 341.

¹⁵*Felice*, vol. 1., p. 6. The correspondence between Margaret and Briconnet is still preserved in MS. in the Royal Library at Paris. The MS., which is a copy, bears this inscription - *Lettres des Marguerite, Reine de Navarre*, and is also marked *Supplement Francais*. No. 337, fol.1. It is a volume containing not less than 800 pp.

have perished on the scaffold, were through her interposition saved to the Reformation.

Chapter 3 : The First Protestant Congregation of France

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A Bright Morning—Sanguine Anticipations of the Protestants—Lefevre Translates the Bible—Bishop of Meaux Circulates it—The Reading of it at Meaux—Reformation of Manners—First Protestant Flock in France—Happy Days—Complaints of the Tavern-keepers—Murmurs of the Monks—The King Incited to set up the Scaffold—Refuses—The “Well of Meaux.”

A morning without clouds was rising on France, and Briconnet and Lefevre believed that such as the morning had been so would be the day, tranquil and clear, and waxing ever the brighter as it approached its noon. Already the Gospel had entered the palace. In her lofty sphere Margaret of Valois shone like a star of soft and silvery light, clouded at times, it is true, from the awe in which she stood of her brother and the worldly society around her, but emitting a sweet and winning ray which attracted the eye of many a beholder.

The monarch was on the side of progress, and often made the monks the butt of his biting satire. The patrons of literary culture were the welcome guests at the Louvre. All things were full of promise, and, looking down the vista of coming years, the friends of the Gospel beheld a long series of triumphs awaiting it - the throne won, the ancient superstition overturned, and France clothed with a new moral strength becoming the benefactress of Christendom. Such was the future as it shaped itself to the eyes of the two chief leaders of the movement. Triumphs, it is true, glorious triumphs was the Gospel to win in France, but not exactly of the kind which its friends at this hour anticipated. Its victories were to be gained not in the lettered conflicts of scholars, nor by the aid of princes; it was in the dungeon and at the stake that its prowess was to be shown. This was the terrible arena on which it was to agonize and to be crowned. This, however, was hidden from the eyes of Briconnet and

Lefevre, who meanwhile, full of faith and courage, worked with all their might to speed on a victory which they regarded as already half won.

The progress of events takes us back to Meaux. We have already noted the Reformation set on foot there by the bishop, the interdict laid on the friars, who henceforward could neither vent their buffooneries nor fill their wallets, the removal of immoral and incapable cures, and the founding of a school for the training of pastors. Briconnet now took another step forward; he hastened to place the Reform upon a stable basis - to open to his people access to the great fountain of light, the Bible.

It was the ambition of the aged Lefevre, as it had been that of our own Wicliffe, to see before he died every man in France able to read the Word of God in his mother tongue. With this object he began to translate the New Testament. ¹ The four Gospels in French were published on the 30th October, 1522; in a week thereafter came the remaining books of the New Testament, and on the 12th October, 1524, the whole were published in one volume at Meaux. ² The publication of the translated Bible was going on contemporaneously in Germany. Without the Bible in the mother tongues of France and Germany, the Reformation must have died with its first disciples; for, humanly speaking, it would have been impossible otherwise to have found for it foothold in Christendom in face of the tremendous opposition with which the powers of the world assailed it.

The bishop, overjoyed, furthered with all his power the work of Lefevre. He made his steward distribute copies of the four Gospels to the poor gratis. ³ "He spared," says Crespin, "neither gold nor silver," and the consequence was that the New Testament in French was widely circulated in all the parishes of his diocese.

The wool trade formed the staple of Meaux, and its population consisted mainly of wool-carders, spinners, weavers. ⁴ Those in the surrounding districts were peasants and vine-dressers. In town and country alike the Bible became the subject of study and the theme of talk. The artizans of Meaux conversed together about it as they

¹Beza, tom. 1., p. 1.

²D'Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 337.

³Felice, vol. 1., p. 5.

⁴Beza, tom. 1., p. 4.

plied the loom or tended the spindle. At meal-hours it was read in the workshops. The laborers in the vineyards and on the corn-fields, when the noontide came and they rested from toil, would draw forth the sacred volume, and while one read, the rest gathered round him in a circle and listened to the words of life. They longed for the return of the meal-hour, not that they might eat of the bread of earth, but that they might appease their hunger for the bread whereof he that eateth shall never die. ⁵

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These men had grown suddenly learned, “wiser than their teachers,” to use the language of the book they were now so intently perusing. They were indeed wiser than the tribe of ignorant cures, and the army of Franciscan monks, whose highest aim had been to make their audience gape and laugh at their jests. Compared with the husks on which these men had fed them, this was the true bread, the heavenly manna. “Of what use are the saints to us?” said they. “Our only Mediator is Christ.” ⁶ To offer any formal argument to them that this book was Divine, they would have felt to be absurd. It had opened heaven to them. It had revealed the throne of God, and their way to it by the one and only Savior. Whose book, then, could this be but God’s? and whence could it have come but from the skies?

And well it was that their faith was thus simple and strong, for no less deep a conviction of the Gospel’s truth would have sufficed to carry them through what awaited them. All their days were not to be passed in the peaceful fold of Meaux. Dark temptations and fiery trials, of which they could not at this hour so much as form a conception, were to test them at no distant day. Could they stand when Briconnet should fall? Some of these men were at a future day to be led to the stake. Had their faith rested on no stronger foundation than a fine logical argument - had their conversion been only a new sentiment and not a new nature - had that into which they were now brought been a new system merely and not a new world - they could not have braved the dungeon or looked death in the face. But these disciples had planted their feet not on Briconnet, not on Peter, but on “the Rock,” and that “Rock” was Christ: and

⁵Acres des Martyrs, p. 182 - a chronicler of the fifteenth century, quoted by D’Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 378.

⁶Felice, vol. 1., p. 5.

so not all the coming storms of persecution could cast them down. Not that in themselves they could not be shaken - they were frail and fallible, but their "Rock" was immovable; and standing on it they were unconquerable

- unconquerable alike amid the dark smoke and bitter flames of the Place de Greve as amid the green pastures of Meaux.

But as yet these tempests are forbidden to burst, and meanwhile let us look somewhat more closely at this little flock, to which there attaches this great interest, that it was the first Protestant congregation on the soil of France. They were the workmanship, not of Briconnet, but of the Spirit, who by the instrumentality of the Bible had called them to the "knowledge of Christ," and the "fellowship of the saints." Let us mark them at the close of the day. Their toil ended, they diligently repaired from the workshop, the vineyard, the field, and assembled in the house of one of their number. They opened and read the Holy Scriptures; they conversed about the things of the Kingdom; they joined together in prayer, and their hearts burned within them. Their numbers were few, their sanctuary was humble, no mitred and vested priest conducted their services, no choir or organ-peal intoned their prayers; but ONE was in the midst of them greater than the doctor of the Sorbonne, greater than any King of France, even he who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway" - and where he is, there is the Church.

The members of this congregation belonged exclusively to the working class. Their daily bread was earned in the wool-factory or in the vineyard. Nevertheless a higher civilization had begun to sweeten their dispositions, refine their manners, and ennoble their speech, than any that the castles of their nobility could show. Meek in spirit, loving in heart, and holy in life, they presented a sample of what Protestantism would have made the whole nation of France, had it been allowed full freedom among a people who lacked but this to crown their many great qualities.

By-and-by the churches were opened to them. Their conferences were no longer held in private dwellings: the Christians of Meaux now met in public, and usually a qualified person expounded to them, on these occasions, the Scriptures. Bishop Briconnet took his turn in the pulpit, so eager was he to hold aloft "that sweet, mild, true, and only light," to use his own words, "which dazzles and enlightens

every creature capable of receiving it; and which, while it enlightens him, raises him to the dignity of a son of God.”⁷ These were happy days. The winds of heaven were holden that they might not hurt this young vine; and time was given it strike its roots into the soil before being overtaken by the tempest.

A general reformation of manners followed the entrance of Protestantism into Meaux. No better evidence could there be of this than the complaints preferred by two classes of the community especially - the tavern-keepers and the monks. The toppers in the wine-shops were becoming fewer, and the Begging Friars often returned from their predatory excursions with empty sacks. Images, too, if they could have spoken, would have swelled the murmurs at the ill-favored times, for few now bestowed upon them either coin or candles. But images can only wink, and so they buried their griefs in the inarticulate silence of their own bosoms. Blasphemies and quarrellings ceased to be heard; there were now quiet on the streets and love in the dwellings of the little town.

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But now the first mutterings of the coming storm began to be heard in Paris; even this brought at first only increased prosperity to the Reformed Church at Meaux. It sent to the little flock new and greater teachers. The Sorbonne - that ancient and proud champion of orthodoxy - knew that these were not times to slumber: it saw Protestantism rising in the capital; it beheld the flames catching the edifice of the faith. It took alarm: it called upon the king to put down the new opinions by force. Francis did not respond quite so zealously as the Sorbonne would have liked. He was not prepared to patronize Protestantism, far from it; but, at the same time, he had no love for monks, and was disposed to allow a considerable margin to “men of genius,” and so he forbade the Sorbonne to set up the scaffold. Still little reliance could be placed upon the wavering and pleasure-loving king, and Lefevre, on whom his colleagues of the Sorbonne had contrived to fasten a quarrel, might any hour be apprehended and thrown into prison. “Come to Meaux,” said Briconnet to Lefevre and Farel, “and take part with me in the work which is every day developing into goodlier proportions”⁸ They

⁷Acres des Martyrs, p. 182 - D’Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 379.

⁸Laval. vol. 1., p. 22.

accepted the invitation; quitting the capital they went to live at Meaux, and thus all the Reformed forces were collected into one center.

The glory which had departed from Paris now rested upon this little provincial town. Meaux became straightway a light in the darkness of France, and many eyes were turned towards it. Far and near was spread the rumor of the “strange things” that were taking place there, and many came to verify with their own eyes what they had heard. Some had occasion to visit its wool markets; and others, laborers from Picardy and more distant places, resorted to it in harvest time to assist in reaping its fields; these visitors were naturally drawn to the sermons of the Protestant preachers; moreover, French New Testaments were put into their hands, and when they returned to their homes many of them carried with them the seeds of the Gospel, and founded churches in their own districts,⁹ some of which, such as Landouzy in the department of Aisne, still exist.¹⁰ Thus Meaux became a mother of Churches: and the expression became proverbial in the first half of the sixteenth century, with reference to any one noted for his Protestant sentiments, that “he had drunk at the well of Meaux.”¹¹

We love to linger over this picture, its beauty is so deep and pure that we are unwilling to tear ourselves from it. Already we begin to have a presentiment, alas! to be too sadly verified hereafter, that few such scenes will present themselves in the eventful but tempestuous period on which we are entering. Amid the storms of the rough day coming it may solace us to look back to this delicious daybreak. But already it begins to overcast. Lefevre and Farel have been sent away from the capital. The choice that Paris has made, or is about to make, strikes upon our ear as the knell of coming evil. The capital of France has already missed a high honour, even that of harboring within her walls the first congregation of French Protestants. This distinction was reserved for Meaux, though little among the many magnificent cities of France. Paris said to the Gospel, “Depart. This is the seat of the Sorbonne; this is the king’s court; here there is no room for you; go, hide thee amid the artizans, the fullers and

⁹Felice, vol. 1., p. 6.

¹⁰D’Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 379.

¹¹Felice, vol. 1., p. 6.

woolcombers of Meaux.” Paris knew not what it did when it drove the Gospel from its gates. By the same act it opened them to a long and dismal train of woes - faction, civil war, atheism, the guillotine, siege, famine, death.

Chapter 4 : Commencement of Persecution in France

The World's Center—The Kingdoms at War—In the Church,
Peace—The Flock at Meaux—Marot's Psalms of David universally
Sung in France—The Odes of Horace—Calvin and Church
Psalmody—Two Champions of the Darkness, Beda and
Duprat—Louisa of Savoy—Her Character—The Trio that
Governed France—They Unsheathe the Sword of
Persecution—Briconnet's Fall

Picture: Protestant Laborer of Meaux Reading the Scriptures to his Friends.

The Church is the center round which all the affairs of the world revolve. It is here that the key of all politics is to be found. The continuance and advance of this society is a first principle with him who sits on the right hand of Power, and who is at once King of the Church and King of the Universe; and, therefore, from his lofty seat he directs the march of armies, the issue of battles, the deliberation of cabinets, the decision of kings, and the fate of nations, so as best to further this one paramount end of his government. Here, then, is the world's center; not in a throne that may be standing to-day, and in the dust to-morrow, but in a society - a kingdom - destined to outlast all the kingdoms of earth, to endure and flourish throughout all the ages of time.

It cannot but strike one as remarkable that at the very moment when a feeble evangelism was receiving its birth, needing, one should think, a fostering hand to shield its infancy, so many powerful and hostile kingdoms should start up to endanger it. Why place the cradle of Protestantism amid tempests? Here is the powerful Spain; and here, too, is the nearly as powerful France. Is not this to throw Protestantism between the upper and the nether mill-stones? Yet he "who weigheth the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," permitted these confederacies to spring up at this hour, and to wax

thus mighty. And now we begin to see a little way into the counsels of the Most High touching these two kingdoms. Charles of Spain carries off the brilliant prize of the imperial diadem from Francis of France. The latter is stung to the quick; from that hour they are enemies; war breaks out between them; their ambition drags the other kingdoms of Europe into the arena of conflict; and the intrigues and battles that ensue leave to hostile princes but little time to persecute the truth. They find other uses for their treasures, and other enterprises for their armies. Thus the very tempests by which the world was devastated were as ramparts around that new society that was rising up on the ruins of the old. While outside the Church the roar of battle never ceased, the song of peace was heard continually ascending within her. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore, will not we fear, although the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be removed."

From this hasty glance at the politics of the age, which had converted the world into a sea with the four winds warring upon it, we come back to the little flock at Meaux. That flock was dwelling peacefully amid the green pastures and by the living waters of truth. Every day saw new converts added to their number, and every day beheld their love and zeal burning with a purer flame. The good Bishop Briconnet was going in and out before them, feeding with knowledge and understanding the flock over which, not Rome, but the Holy Ghost had made him overseer. Those fragrant and lovely fruits which ever spring up where the Gospel comes, and which are of a nature altogether different from, and of a quality infinitely superior to, those which any other system produces, were appearing abundantly here. Meaux had become a garden in the midst of the desert of France, and strangers from a distance came to see this new thing, and to wonder at the sight. Not unfrequently did they carry away a shoot from the mother plant to set it in their own province, and so the vine of Meaux was sending out her branches, and giving promise, in the opinion of some, at no distant day of filling the land with her shadow.

At an early stage of the Reformation in France, the New Testament, as we have related in the foregoing chapter, was translated into

[138] the vernacular of that country. This was followed by a version of the Psalms of David in 1525, the very time when the field of Pavia, which cost France so many lives, was being stricken. Later, Clement Marot, the lyrical poet, undertook - at the request of Calvin, it is believed the task of versifying the Psalms, and accordingly thirty of them were rendered into metre and published in Paris in 1541, dedicated to Francis I. ¹ Three years afterwards (1543), he added twenty others, and dedicated the collection, "to the ladies of France." In the epistle dedicatory the following verses occur: -

" Happy the man whose favor'd ear
In golden days to come shall
hear
The ploughman, as he tills the ground,
The carter, as he drives
his round,
The shopman, as his task he plies,
With psalms or sacred
melodies
Whiling the hours of toil away! Oh! happy he who hears
the lay
Of shepherd or of shepherdess,
As in the woods they sing and
bless
And make the rocks and pools proclaim
With them their great
Creator 's name! Oh! can ye brook that God invite
Them before you
to such delight?

Begin, ladies, begin!..." ²

The prophecy of the poet was fulfilled. The combined majesty and sweetness of the old Hebrew Psalter took captive the taste and genius of the French people. In a little while all France, we may say, fell to singing the Psalms. They displaced all other songs, being sung in the first instance to the common ballad music. "This holy ordinance," says Quick, "charmed the ears, heart, and affections of court and city, town and country. They were sung in the Louvre, as well as in the Pres des Clercs, by the ladies, princes, yea, by Henry II. himself. This one ordinance alone contributed mightily to the downfall of Popery and the propagation of the Gospel. It took so much with the genius of the nation that all ranks and degrees of men practiced it, in the temples and in their families. No gentleman professing the Reformed religion would sit down at his table without praising God by singing. It was an especial part of their morning and evening worship in their several houses to sing God's praises."

This chorus of holy song was distasteful to the adherents of the ancient worship. Wherever they turned, the odes of the Hebrew

¹The only known copy of this work is in the Royal Library of Stuttgart.

²Guizot, *Hist. of France*, vol. 3., p. 170; Lond., 1874.

monarch, pealed forth in the tongue of France, saluted their ears, in the streets and the highways, in the vineyards and the workshops, at the family hearth and in the churches. "The reception these Psalms met with," says Bayle, "was such as the world had never seen."³ To strange uses were they put on occasion. The king, fond of hunting, adopted as his favorite Psalm, "As pants the hart for water-brooks," etc. The priests, who seemed to hear in this outburst the knell of their approaching downfall, had recourse to the expedient of translating the odes of Horace and setting them to music, in the hope that the pagan poet would supplant the Hebrew one.⁴ The rage for the Psalter nevertheless continued unabated, and a storm of Romish wrath breaking out against Marot, he fled to Geneva, where, as we have said above, he added twenty other Psalms to the thirty previously published at Paris, making fifty in all. This enlarged Psalter was first published at Geneva, with a commendatory preface by Calvin, in 1543. Editions were published in Holland, Belgium, France, and Switzerland, and so great was the demand that the printing, presses could not meet it. Rome forbade the book, but the people were only the more eager on that account to possess it.

Calvin, alive to the mighty power of music to advance the Reformation, felt nevertheless the incongruity and indelicacy of singing such words to profane airs, and used every means in his power to rectify the abuse. He applied to the most eminent musicians in Europe to furnish music worthy of the sentiments. William Franc, of Strasburg, responding to this call, furnished melodies for Marot's Psalter; and the Protestants of France and Holland, dropping the ballad airs, began now to sing the Psalms to the noble music just composed. Now, for the first time, was heard the "Old Hundredth," and some of the finest tunes still in use in our Psalmody. After the death of Marot (1544) Calvin applied to his distinguished coadjutor, Theodore Beza, to complete the versification of the Psalms. Beza, copying the style and spirit of Marot, did so,⁵ and thus Geneva had the honour of giving to Christendom the first whole book of Psalms ever rendered into the metre of any living language.

³Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, art, Marot, notes N, O, P.

⁴Apeloge pour les Reformateurs, etc., tom. 1., p, 129; Rotterdam, 1683.

⁵M'Crie, *Life of John Knox*. vol. 1., p, 378; Edin., 1831.

This narration touching the Psalms in French has carried us a little in advance of the point of time we had reached in the history. We retrace our steps.

[139] A storm was brewing at Paris. There were two men in the capital, sworn champions of the darkness, holding high positions. The one was Noel Beda, the head of the Sorbonne. His chair - second only, in his own opinion, to that of the Pope himself - bound him to guard most sacredly from the least heretical taint that orthodoxy which it was the glory of his university to have preserved hitherto wholly uncontaminated. Beda was a man of very moderate attainments, but he was moderate in nothing else. He was bustling, narrow-
[140] minded, a worshipper of scholastic forms, a keen disputant, and a great intriguer. "In a single Beda," Erasmus used to say, "there are three thousand monks." Never did owl hate the day more than Beda did the light. He had seen with horror some rays struggle into the shady halls of the Sorbonne, and he made haste to extinguish them by driving from his chair the man who was the ornament of the university - the doctor of Etaples.

The other truculent defender of the old orthodoxy was Antoine Duprat. Not that he cared a straw for orthodoxy in itself, for the man had neither religion nor morals, but it fell in with the line of his own political advancement to affect a concern for the faith. A contemporary Roman Catholic historian, Beaucaire de Peguilhem, calls him "the most vicious of bipeds." He accompanied his master, Francis I., to Bologna, after the battle of Marignano, and aided at the interview at which the infamous arrangement was effected, in pursuance of which the power of the French bishops and the rights of the French Church were divided between Leo X. and Francis I. This is known in history as the Concordat of Bologna; it abolished the Pragmatic Sanction - the charter of the liberties of the Gallican Church - and gave to the king the power of presenting to the vacant sees, and to the Pope the right to the first-fruits. A red hat was the reward of Duprat's treachery. His exalted office - he was Chancellor of France - added to his personal qualities made him a formidable opponent. He was able, haughty, overbearing, and never scrupled to employ violence to compass his ends. He was, too, a man of insatiable greed. He plundered on a large scale in the king's behoof, by putting up to sale the offices in the gift of the crown; but he

plundered on a still larger scale in his own, and so was enormously rich. By way of doing a compensatory act he built a few additional wards to the Maison de Dieu, on which the king, whose friendship he shared without sharing his esteem, is said to have remarked "that they had need to be large if they were to contain all the poor the chancellor himself had made."⁶ Such were the two men who now rose up against the Gospel.⁷

They were set on by the monks of Meaux. Finding that their dues were diminishing at an alarming rate the Franciscans crowded to Paris, and there raised the cry of heresy. Bishop Briconnet, they exclaimed, had become a Protestant, and not content with being himself a heretic, he had gathered round him a company of even greater heretics than himself, and had, in conjunction with these associates, poisoned his diocese, and was laboring to infect the whole of France; and unless steps were immediately taken this pestilence would spread over all the kingdom, and France would be lost. Duprat and Beda were not the men to listen with indifferent ears to these complaints.

The situation of the kingdom at that hour threw great power into the hands of these men. The battle of Pavia - the Flodden of France - had just been fought. The flower of the French nobility had fallen on that field, and among the slain was the Chevalier Bayard, styled the Mirror of Chivalry. The king was now the prisoner of Charles V. at Madrid. Pending the captivity of Francis the government was in the hands of his mother, Louisa of Savoy. She was a woman of determined spirit, dissolute life, and heart inflamed with her house's hereditary enmity to the Gospel, as shown in its persecution of the Waldensian confessors. She had the bad distinction of opening in France that era of licentious gallantry which has so long polluted both the court and the kingdom, and which has proved one of the most powerful obstacles to the spread of the pure Gospel. It must be added, however, that the hostility of Louisa was somewhat modified and restrained by the singular sweetness and piety of her daughter, Margaret of Valois. Such were the trio - the dissolute Louisa, regent of the kingdom; the avaricious Duprat, the chancellor; and the

⁶Filice, vol. 1., p. 8.

⁷Sismondi, *Hist. de Francais*, 16. 387. Guizot, *Hist. of France*, vol. 3., pp. 193, 194.

bigoted Beda, head of the Sorbonne into whose hands the defeat at Pavia had thrown, at this crisis, the government of France. There were points on which their opinions and interests were in conflict, but all three had one quality in common - they heartily detested the new opinions.

The first step was taken by Louisa. In 1523 she proposed the following question to the Sorbonne: "By what means can the damnable doctrines of Luther be chased and extirpated from this most Christian kingdom?" The answer was brief, but emphatic: "By the stake;" and it was added that if the remedy were not soon put in force, there would result great damage to the honour of the king and of Madame Louisa of Savoy. Two years later the Pope earnestly recommended rigor in suppressing "this great and marvelous disorder, which proceeds from the rage of Satan;"⁸ otherwise, "this mania will not only destroy religion, but all principalities, nobilities, laws, orders, and ranks besides."⁹ It was to uphold the throne, preserve the nobles, and maintain the laws that the sword of persecution was first unsheathed in France!

The Parliament was convoked to strike a blow while yet there was time. The Bishop of Meaux was summoned before it. Briconnet was at first firm, and refused to make any concession, but at length the alternative was plainly put before him - abandon Protestantism or go to prison. We can imagine the conflict in his soul. He had read the woe denounced against him who puts his hand to the plough and afterwards withdraws it. He could not but think of the flock he had fed so lovingly, and which had looked up to him with an affection so tender and so confiding. But before him was a prison and mayhap a stake. It was a moment of supreme suspense. But now the die is cast. Briconnet declines the stake - the stake which in return for the life of the body would have given him life eternal. On the 12th of April, 1523,¹⁰ he was condemned to pay a fine, and was sent back to his diocese to publish three edicts, the first restoring public prayers to the Virgin and the saints, the second forbidding any one to buy or read the books of Luther, while the third enjoined silence on the Protestant preachers.

⁸Felice, vol. 1., p. 9.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Galliard, Hist. de Francois I.

What a stunning blow to the disciples at Meaux! They were dreaming of a brilliant day when this dark storm suddenly came and scattered them. The aged Lefevre found his way, in the first instance, to Strasburg, and ultimately to Nerac. Farel turned his steps toward Switzerland, where a great work awaited him. Of the two Roussels, Gerard afterwards powerfully contributed to the progress of the Reformation in the kingdom of Navarre. ¹¹ Martial Mazurier went the same road with Briconnet, and was rewarded with a canonry at Paris. ¹² The rest of the flock, too poor to flee, had to abide the brunt of the tempest.

Briconnet had saved his mitre, but at what a cost! We shall not judge him. Those who joined the ranks of Protestantism at a later period did so as men “appointed unto death,” and girded themselves for the conflict which they knew awaited them. But at this early stage the Bishop of Meaux had not those examples of self-devotion before him which the martyr-roll of coming years was to furnish. He might reason himself into the belief that he could still love his Savior in his heart, though he did not confess him with the mouth: that while bowing before Mary and the saints he could inwardly look up to Christ, and lean for salvation on the Crucified One: that while ministering at the altars of Rome he could in secret feed on other bread than that which she gives to her children. It was a hard part which Briconnet put upon himself to act; and, without saying how far it is possible, we may ask how, if all the disciples of Protestantism had acted this part, could we ever have had a Reformation?

¹¹Laval., vol. 1., p. 8., Dedication.

¹²Ibid., vol. 1., p. 22.

Chapter 5: The First Martyrs of France

The Flock at Meaux—Denis, a “Meaux Heretic”—Visited in Prison by his former Pastor, Briconnet—The Interview—Men Burned and yet they Live—Pavane—Imprisoned for the Gospel—Recants—His Horror of Mind—Anew Confesses Christ—Is Burned—His the First Stake in Paris—Martyrdom of the Hermit of Livry—Leclerc, the Woolcomber—Acts as Pastor—Banished from Meaux—Retires to Metz—Demolishes the Images at the Chapel of Mary—Procession—Astonishment of Processionists—Leclerc Seized—Confesses—His Cruel Death—Bishop Briconnet

Picture: Denis Reproving the Bishop of Meaux.

Picture: View of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris (eighteenth century)

Briconnet had recanted: but if the shepherd had fallen the little ones of the flock stood their ground. They continued to meet together for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, the garret of a woolcomber, a solitary hut, or a copse serving as their place of rendezvous.¹ This congregation was to have the honour of furnishing martyrs whose blazing stakes were to shine like beacons in the darkness of France, and afford glorious proof to their countrymen that a power had entered the world which, braving the terror of scaffolds and surmounting the force of armies, would finally triumph over all opposition.

[142] Let us take a few instances. A humble man named Denis, one of the “Meaux heretics,” was apprehended; and in course of time he was visited in his prison by his former pastor, Briconnet. His enemies at times put tasks of this sort upon the fallen prelate, the more thoroughly to humiliate him. When the bishop made his unexpected appearance in the cell of the poor prisoner, Denis opened his eyes with surprise, Briconnet hung his with embarrassment. The bishop began with stammering tongue, we may well believe, to exhort the

¹Felice, vol. 1., p. 17.

imprisoned disciple to purchase his liberty by a recantation. Denis listened for a little space, then rising up and steadfastly fixing his eyes upon the man who had once preached to him that very Gospel which he now exhorted him to abjure, said solemnly, ““Whosoever shall deny me before men, him shall I also deny before my Father who is in heaven!”” Briconnet reeled backwards and staggered out of the dungeon. The interview over, each took his own way: the bishop returned to his palace, and Denis passed from his cell to the stake.²

That long and terrible roll on which it was so hard, yet so glorious, to write one’s name, was now about to be unfolded. This was no roll of the dead: it was a roll of the living; for while their contemporaries disappeared in the darkness of the tomb and were seen and heard of no more on earth, those men whose names were written there came out into the light, and shone in glory un-dimmed as the ages rolled past, telling that not only did they live, but their cause also, and that it should yet triumph in the land which they watered with their blood. This was a wondrous and great sight, men burned to ashes and yet living.

We select another from this band of pioneers. Pavane, a native of Boulogne and disciple of Lefevre, was a youth of sweetest disposition, but somewhat lacking in constitutional courage. He held a living in the Church, though he was not as yet in priest’s orders. Enlightened by the truth, he began to say to his neighbors that the Virgin could no more save them than he could, and that there was but one Savior, even Jesus Christ. This was enough: he was apprehended and brought to trial. Had he blasphemed Christ only, he would have been forgiven: he had blasphemed Mary, and could have no forgiveness. He must make a public recantation or, hard alternative, go to the stake. Terrified at death in this dreadful form, Pavane consented to purge himself from the crime of having spoken blasphemous words against the Virgin. On Christmas Eve (1524) he was required to walk through the streets bare-headed and barefooted, a rope round his neck and a lighted taper in his hand, till he came to the Church of Notre Dame. Standing before the portals

²Crespin, *Martyrol.*, p. 102. D’Aubigne, *Hist. Reform.* under Calvin, vol. 1., pp. 573, 574.

of that edifice, he publicly begged pardon of “Our Lady” for having spoken disparagingly of her. This act of penitence duly performed, he was sent back to his prison.

Returned to his dungeon, and left to think on what he had done, he found that there were things which it was more terrible to face than death. He was now alone with the Savior whom he had denied. A horror of darkness fell upon his soul. No sweet promise of the Bible could he recall: nothing could he find to lighten the sadness and heaviness that weighed upon him. Rather than drink this bitter cup he would a hundred times go to the stake. He who turned and looked on Peter spoke to Pavane, and reproved him for his sin. His tears flowed as freely as Peter’s did. His resolution was taken. His sighings were now at an end: he anew made confession of his faith in Christ. The trial of the “relapsed heretic” was short; he was hurried to the stake. “At the foot of the pile he spoke of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper with such force that a doctor said, ‘I wish Pavane had not spoken, even if it had cost the Church a million of gold.’”³ The fagots were quickly lighted, and Pavane stood with unflinching courage amid the flames till he was burned to ashes.

This was the first stake planted in the capital of France, or indeed within the ancient limits of the kingdom. We ask in what quarter of Paris was it set up? In the Place de Greve. Ominous spot! In the Place de Greve were the first French martyrs of the Reformation burned. Nearly three hundred years pass away; the blazing stake is no longer seen in Paris, for there are now no longer martyrs to be consumed. But there comes another visitant to France, the Revolution namely, bringing with it a dreadful instrument of death; and where does the Revolution set up its guillotine? In the same Place de Greve, at Paris. It was surely not of chance that on the Place de Greve were the first martyrs of the Reformation burned, and that on the Place de Greve were the first victims of the Revolution guillotined.

The martyrdom of Pavane was followed, after a short while, by that of the Hermit of Livry, as he was named. Livry was a small burgh on the road to Meaux. This confessor was burned alive before the porch of Notre Dame. Nothing was wanting which his persecutors

³Felice, vol. 1., p. 11.

could think of that might make the spectacle of his death terrible to the on-lookers. The great bell of the temple of Notre Dame was rung with immense violence, in order to draw out the people from all parts of Paris. As the martyr passed along the street, the doctors told the spectators that this was one of the damned who was on his way to the fire of hell. These things moved not the martyr; he walked with firm step and look undaunted to the spot where he was to offer up his life. ⁴

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One other martyrdom of these early times must we relate. Among the disciples at Meaux was a humble wool-comber of the name of Leclerc.

Taught of the Spirit, he was “mighty in the Scriptures,” and being a man of courage as well as knowledge, he came forward when Briconnet apostatised, and took the oversight of the flock which the bishop had deserted. Leclerc had received neither tonsure nor imposition of hands, but the Protestant Church of France had begun thus early to act upon the doctrine of a universal spiritual priesthood. The old state of things had been restored at Meaux. The monks had re-captured the pulpits, and, with jubilant humor, were firing off jests and reciting fables, to the delight of such audiences as they were able to gather round them. ⁵ This stirred the spirit of Leclerc; so one day he affixed a placard to the door of the cathedral, styling the Pope the Antichrist, and predicting the near downfall of his kingdom. Priests, monks, and citizens gathered before the placard, and read it with amazement. Their amazement quickly gave place to rage. Was it to be borne that a despicable wool-carder should attack the Pontiff? Leclerc was seized, tried, whipped through the streets on three successive days, and finally branded on the forehead with a hot iron, and banished from Meaux. While enduring this cruel and shameful treatment, his mother stood by applauding his constancy. ⁶

The wool-comber retired to Metz, in Lorraine. Already the light had visited that city, but the arrival of Leclerc gave a new impulse to its evangelisation. He went from house to house preaching the

⁴Beza, tom. 1., p. 4.

⁵Crespin, *Acres des Martyrs*, p. 183.

⁶Beza, tom. 1., p. 4. Laval., vol. 1., p. 23. Felice, vol. 1., p. 10. Guizot, vol. 3., p. 196.

Gospel; persons of condition, both lay and clerical, embraced the Reformed faith; and thus were laid in Metz, by the humble hands of a wool-carder, the foundations of a Church which afterwards became flourishing. Leclerc, arriving in Metz with the brand of heretic on his brow, came nevertheless with courage unabashed and zeal unabated; but he allowed these qualities, unhappily, to carry him beyond the limits of prudence.

A little way outside the gates of the city stood a chapel to Mary and the saints of the province. The yearly festival had come round, and to-morrow the population of Metz would be seen on their knees before these gods of stone. Leclerc pondered upon the command, "Thou shalt break down their images," and forgot the very different circumstances of himself and of those to whom it was originally given. At eve, before the gates were shut, he stole out of the city and passed along the highway till he reached the shrine. He sat down before the images in mental conflict. "Impelled," says Beza, "by a Divine afflatus,"⁷ he arose, dragged the statues from their pedestals, and, having broken them in pieces, strewed their fragments in front of the chapel. At daybreak he re-entered Metz.

All unaware of what had taken place at the chapel, the procession marshalled at the usual hour, and moved forward with crucifixes and banners, with flaring tapers and smoking incense. The bells tolled, the drums were beat, and with the music there mingled the chant of the priest. And now the long array draws nigh the chapel of Our Lady. Suddenly drum and chant are hushed; the banners are cast on the ground, the tapers are extinguished, and a sudden thrill of horror runs through the multitude. What has happened? Alas! the rueful sight. Strewn over the area before the little temple lie the heads, arms, legs of the deities the processionists had come to worship, all cruelly and sacrilegiously mutilated and broken. A cry of mingled grief and rage burst forth from the assembly.

The procession returned to Metz with more haste and in less orderly fashion than it had come. The suspicions of all fell on Leclerc. He was seized, confessed the deed, speedy sentence of condemnation followed, and he was hurried to the spot where he was to be burned. The exasperation of his persecutors had prepared

⁷Beza, *Icones*. Laval., vol. 1., p. 23. Guizot, vol. 3., p. 196

for him dreadful tortures. As he had done to the images of the saints so would they do to him. Unmoved he beheld these terrible preparations. Unmoved he bore the excruciating agonies inflicted upon him. He permitted no sign of weakness to tarnish the glory of his sacrifice. While his foes were lopping off his limbs with knives, and tearing his flesh with red-hot pincers, the martyr stood with calm and intrepid air at the stake, reciting in a loud voice the words of the Psalm -

“Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.” ([Psalm 115:4-9](#).)

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If Leclerc’s zeal had been indiscreet, his courage was truly admirable. Well might his death be called “an act of faith.” He had by that faith quenched the violence of the fire - nay, more, he had quenched the rage of his persecutors, which was fiercer than the flames that consumed him. “The beholders,” says the author of the Acts of the Martyrs, “were astonished, nor were they untouched by compassion,” and not a few retired from the spectacle to confess that Gospel for which they had seen the martyr, with so serene and noble a fortitude, bear witness at the burning pile.⁸

We must pause a moment to contemplate, in contrasted lights, two men - the bishop and the wool-comber. “How hardly shall they who have riches enter the kingdom of heaven!” was the saying of our Lord at the beginning of the Gospel dispensation. The saying has seldom been more mournfully verified than in the case of the Bishop of Meaux. “His declension,” says D’Aubigne, “is one of the most memorable in the history of the Church.” Had Briconnet been as the wool-carder, he might have been able to enter into the evangelical kingdom; but, alas! he presented himself at the gate, carrying a great burden of earthly dignities, and while Leclerc pressed in, the bishop was stopped on the threshold. What Briconnet’s reflections may

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⁸Laval. vol. 1. p. 38.

stake, and from the stake to the sky, we shall not venture to guess. May there not have been moments when he felt as if the mitre, which he had saved at so great a cost, was burning his brow, and that even yet he must needs arise and leave his palace, with all its honors, and by the way of the dungeon and the stake rejoin the members of his former flock who had preceded him, by this same road, and inherit with them honors and delights higher far than any the Pope or the King of France had to bestow

- crowns of life and garlands that never fade? But whatever he felt, and what ever at times may have been his secret resolutions, we know that his thoughts and purposes never ripened into acts. He never surrendered his see, or cast in his lot with the despised and persecuted professors of those Reformed doctrines, the Divine sweetness of which he appeared to have once so truly relished, and which aforesaid he labored to diffuse with a zeal apparently so ardent and so sincere. In communion with Rome he lived to his dying day. His real character remains a mystery. Is it forbidden to hope that in his last hours the gracious Master, who turned and looked on Peter and Pavane, had compassion on the fallen prelate, and that, the blush of godly shame on his face, and the tears of unfeigned and bitter sorrow streaming from his eyes, he passed into the presence of his Savior, and was gathered to the blessed company above - now the humblest of

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250 them all - with whom on earth he had so often taken sweet counsel as they walked together to the house of God?

Chapter 6: Calvin: His Birth and Education

Greater Champions about to Appear—Calvin—His Birth and Lineage—His Appearance and Disposition—His Education—Appointed to a Chaplaincy—The Black Death—Sent to La Marche at Paris—Mathurin Cordier—Friendship between the Young Pupil and his Teacher—Calvin Charmed by the Great Latin Writers—Luther's and Calvin's Services to their respective Tongues—Leaves the School of La Marche

The young vine just planted in France was bending before the tempest, and seemed on the point of being uprooted. The enemies of the Gospel, who, pending the absence of the king, still a prisoner at Madrid, had assumed the direction of affairs, did as it pleased them. Beda and Duprat, whom fear had made cruel, were planing stake after stake, and soon there would remain not one confessor to tell that the Gospel had ever entered the kingdom of France. The Reformation, which as yet had hardly commenced its career, was already as good as burned out. But those who so reasoned overlooked the power of Him who can raise up living witnesses from the ashes of dead ones. The men whom Beda had burned filled a comparatively narrow sphere, and were possessed of but humble powers; mightier champions were about to step upon the stage, whom God would so fortify by his Spirit, and so protect by his providence, that all the power of France should not prevail against them, and from the midst of the scaffolds and blazing stakes with which its enemies had encompassed it, Protestantism would come forth to fill Christendom with disciples and the world with light.

The great leader of the Reformation in Germany stepped at once upon the scene. No note sounded his advent and no herald ushered him upon the stage. From the seclusion of his monastery at Erfurt came Luther startling the world by the suddenness of his appearing, and the authority with which he spoke. But the coming of the great Reformer of France was gradual. If Luther rose on men like

a star that blazes suddenly forth in the dark sky, Calvin's coming was like that of day, sweetly and softly opening on the mountaintops, streaking the horizon with its silver, and steadily waxing in brightness till at last the whole heavens are filled with the splendor of its light.

Calvin, whose birth and education we are now briefly to trace, was born in humble condition, like most of those who have accomplished great things for God in the world. He first saw the light on the 10th of July, 1509, at Noyon in Picardy. ¹ His family was of Norman extraction. ² His grandfather was still living in the small town of Pont l'Eveque, and was a cooper by trade. His father, Gerard, was apostolic notary and secretary to the bishop, through whom he hoped one day to find for his son John preferment in the Church, to which, influenced doubtless by the evident bent of his genius, he had destined him. Yes, higher than his father's highest dream was the Noyon boy to rise in the Church, but in a more catholic Church than the Roman.

Let us sketch the young Calvin. We have before us a boy of about ten years. He is of delicate mould, small stature, with pale features, and a bright burning eye, indicating a soul deeply penetrative as well as richly emotional. There hangs about him an air of timidity and shyness ³ - a not infrequent accompaniment of a mind of great sensibility and power lodged in a fragile bodily organisation. He is thoughtful beyond his years; devout, too, up to the standard of the Roman Church, and beyond it; he is punctual as stroke of clock in his religious observances. ⁴ Nor is it a mere mechanical devotion which he practices. The soul that looks forth at those eyes

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¹Johannis Calvin Vita a Theodora Beza; Geneva, 1575. (No paging.)

²"La famille Cauvin etait d'origine normande; le grand-pere du Reformateur habitait Pont l'Eveque; il etait tonnelier." Ferdinand Rossignol, *Les Protestants Illustres*; Paris, 1862. M. Rossignol adds in a foot-note: "Chauvin - dans le dialecte Picard on prononqait Cauvin - le Reformateur signa les oeuvres latines Calvinus, et, faisant passercette orthographe dans le franqais, se nomma lui-meme Calvin."

³"Ego qui natura subrusticus, umbram et otium semper amavi," says he of himself in his Epistle to the Reader in his *Commentarey on the Psalms*. (Calvini Opp., vol 3.; Amsterdam, 1667)

⁴"Ac primo quidem quum superstitionibus Papatus magis pertinaciter addictus essem" (I was at first more obstinately attached than any one to Papal superstions). - Calvini Opp., vol. 3.

can go mechanically about nothing. As regards his morals he has been a Nazarite from his youth up: no stain of outward vice has touched him. This made the young Calvin a mystery in a sort to his companions. By the beauty of his life, if not by words, he became their unconscious reprovcr. ⁵

From his paternal home the young Calvin passed to the stately mansion of the Mommors, the lords of the neighborhood. The hour that saw Calvin cross this noble threshold was a not uneventful one to him. He was not much at home in the stately halls that now opened to receive him, and often, he tells us, he was fain to hide in some shady corner from the observation of the brilliant company that filled them. But the discipline he here underwent was a needful preparation for his life's work. Educated with the young Mommors, but at his father's cost, ⁶ he received a more thorough classical grounding, and acquired a polish of manners to which he must ever have remained a stranger had he grown up under his father's humble roof. He who was to be the counsellor of princes, a master in the schools, and a legislator in the Church, must needs have an education neither superficial nor narrow.

The young Calvin mastered with wonderful ease what it cost his class-fellows much labor and time to acquire. His knowledge seemed to come by intuition. While yet a child he loved to pray in the open air, thus giving proof of expansiveness of soul. The age could not think of God but as dwelling in "temples made with hands." Calvin sublimely realized him as One whose presence fills the temple of the universe. In this he resembles the young Anselm, who, lifting his eyes to the grand mountains that guard his native valley of Aosta, believed that if he could climb to their summit he would be nearer him who has placed his throne in the sky. At this time the chaplaincy of a small church in the neighborhood, termed La Gesine, fell vacant, and Gerard Chauvin, finding the expense of his son's education too much for him, solicited and obtained (1521) from the bishop the appointment for his son John. ⁷ Calvin was then only twelve years of age; but it was the manner of the times for even younger persons to hold ecclesiastical offices of still higher grade

⁵Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

- to have a bishop's crozier, or a cardinal's hat, before they were well able to understand what these dignities meant.⁸ The young Chaplain of Gesine had his head solemnly shorn by the bishop on the eve of Corpus Christi,⁹ and although not yet admitted into priest's orders, he became by this symbolic act a member of the clergy, and a servant of that Church of which he was to become in after-life, without exception, the most powerful opponent, and the foe whom of all others she dreaded the most.

Two years more did the young Chaplain of La Gesine continue to reside in his native town of Noyon, holding his title, but discharging no duties, for what functions could a child of twelve years perform? Now came the Black Death to Noyon. The pestilence, a dreadful one, caused great terror in the place, many of the inhabitants had already been carried off by it, and the canons petitioned the chapter for leave to live elsewhere during its ravages. Gerard Chauvin, trembling for the safety of his son, the hope of his life, also petitioned the chapter to give the young chaplain "liberty to go wherever he pleased, without loss of his allowance." The records of the chapter show, according to the Vicar-General Desmay, and the Canon Levasseur, that this permission was granted in August, 1523.¹⁰ The young Mommors were about to proceed to Paris to prosecute their studies, and Gerard Chauvin was but too glad of the opportunity of sending his son along with his fellow-students and comrades, to study in the capital. At the age of fourteen the future Reformer quitted his father's house. "Flying from one pestilence," say his Romish historians, "he caught another."

At Paris, Calvin entered the school or college of La Marche. There was at that time in this college a very remarkable man, Mathurin Cordier, who was renowned for his exquisite taste, his pure Latinity, and his extensive erudition.¹¹ These accomplishments might have opened to Cordier a path to brilliant advancement, but he was one of those who prefer pursuing their own tastes, and retaining

⁸France had a cardinal who was only sixteen, Odel de Chatillon, brother of the famous admiral. Portugal had one of only twelve; and Leo X., who nominated him, had himself been created Archbishop of Aix at five years of age.

⁹Desmay, *Vie de Calvin*, p. 31.

¹⁰Ann. de Noyon, p. 1160.

¹¹Beza, *Vita Calvinii*.

their independence, to occupying a position where they should to some extent have to sacrifice both. He devoted his whole life to the teaching of youth, and his fame has come down to our own days in connection with one of his books still used in some schools under the title of Cordier's Colloquies.

One day Mathurin Cordier saw a scholar, about fourteen years of age, fresh from the country, enter his school. His figure was slender, his features were sallow, but his eye lent such intelligence and beauty to his face that the teacher could not help remarking him. Cordier soon saw that he had a pupil of no ordinary genius before him, and after the first few days the scholar of fourteen and the man of fifty became inseparable. At the hour of school dismissals it was not the play-ground, but his loving, genial instructor, who grew young again in the society of his pupil, that Calvin sought. Such was the great teacher whom God had provided for the yet greater scholar. [148]

Mathurin Cordier was not the mere linguist. His mind was fraught with the wisdom of the ancients. The highest wisdom, it is true, he could not impart, for both master and pupil were still immersed in the darkness of superstition, but the master of La Marche initiated his pupil into the spirit of the Renaissance, which like a balmy spring was chasing away the winter of the Middle Ages, and freshening the world with the rich verdure and attractive blossoms of ancient civilization. The severe yet copious diction of Cicero, the lofty thoughts and deep wisdom of this and of other great masters of Roman literature, the young Calvin soon learned to appreciate and to admire. He saw that if he aspired to wield influence over his fellowmen, he must first of all perfect himself in the use of that mighty instrument by which access is gained to the heart and its deep fountains of feeling, and its powerful springs of action touched and set in motion - language, namely, and especially written language. From this hour the young student began to graft upon his native tongue of France those graces of style, those felt cities of expression, that flexibility, terseness, and fire, which should fit it for expressing with equal ease the most delicate shade of sentiment or the most powerful burst of feeling.

It is remarkable surely that the two great Reformers of Europe should have been each the creator of the language of his native country. Calvin was the father of the French tongue, as Luther

was the father of the German. There had been a language in these countries, doubtless, since the days of their first savage inhabitants, a "French" and a "German" before there was a Calvin and a Luther, just as there was a steam-engine before James Watt. But it is not more true that Watt was the inventor of the steam-engine, by making it a really useful instrument, than it is true that Luther and Calvin were the creators of their respective tongues as now spoken and written. Calvin found French, as Luther had found German, a coarse, meager speech - of narrow compass, of small adaptability, and the vehicle of only low ideas. He breathed into it a new life. A vastly wider compass, and an infinitely finer flexibility, did he give it. And, moreover, he elevated and sanctified it by pouring into it the treasures of the Gospel, thereby enriching it with a multitude of new terms, and subliming it with the energies of a celestial fire. This transformation in the tongue of France the Reformer achieved by the new thinking and feeling he taught his countrymen; for a language is simply the outcome of the life of the people by whom it is spoken. Under a lean and attenuated body," says one of his enemies, "he displayed already a lively and vigorous spirit, prompt at repartee, bold to attack; a great faster, either on account of his health, and to stop the fumes of the headache which assaulted him continually, or to have his mind more free for writing, studying, and improving his memory. He spoke but little, but his words were always full of gravity, and never missed their aim; he was never seen in company, but always in retirement."

¹² How unlike the poetic halo that surrounds the youth of Luther! "But," asks Bungener, "is there but one style of poetry, and is there no poetry in the steady pursuit of the good and true all through the age of pleasure, illusion, and disorder?" ¹³

That Calvin was the father of French Protestantism is, of course, admitted by all; but we less often hear it acknowledged that he was the father of French literature. Yet this service, surely a great one, ought not to be passed over in silence. It is hard to say how much the illustrious statesmen and philosophers, the brilliant historians and poets, who came after him, owed to him. They found in the language, which he had so largely helped to make fit for their use, a suitable

¹²Florimond de Raemond, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Heresy of his Age*.

¹³Bungener, *Life of Calvin*, p. 13; Edin. 1863.

vehicle for the talent and genius by which they made themselves and their country famous. Their wit, their sublimity, and their wisdom would have been smothered in the opaque, undramatic, poverty-stricken, and inharmonious phraseology to which they would have been forced to consign them. Than language there is no more powerful instrumentality for civilising men, and there is no more powerful instrumentality for fashioning language than the Gospel. Luther," says Bossuet, "triumphed orally, but the pen of Calvin is the more correct. Both excelled in speaking the language of their country." "To Calvin," says Etienne Pasquier, "our tongue is greatly indebted." "No one of those who preceded him excelled him in writing well," says Raemon, "and few since have approached him in beauty and felicity of language."

Calvin fulfilled his course under Cordier, and in 1526 he passed to the College of Montaigu, one of the two seminaries in Paris - the Sorbonne being the other for the training of priests. His affection for his old master of La Marche, and his sense of benefit received from him, the future Reformer carried with him to the new college - nay, to the grave. In after-years he dedicated to him his Commentary on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. In doing so he takes occasion to attribute to the lessons of Cordier all the progress he had made in the higher branches of study, and if posterity, he says, derives any fruit from his works, he would have it known that it is indebted for it, in part at least, to Cordier.

Chapter 7 : Calvin's Conversion

Calvin in the Montaigu—His Devotions and Studies—Auguries of
 his Teachers—Calvin still in Darkness—Trebly
 Armed—Olivetán—Discussions between Olivetan and
 Calvin—Doubts Awakened—Great Struggles of Soul—The Priests
 Advise him to Confess—Olivetán sends him to the Bible—Opens
 the Book—Sees the Cross—Another Obstacle—The
 “Church”—Sees the Spiritual Glory of the True Church—The Glory
 of the False Church Vanishes—One of the Great Battles of the
 World—Victory and its Fruits

Picture: Calvin and his Cousin in Friendly Argument

Picture: John Calvin.

On crossing the threshold of La Montaigu, Calvin felt himself in a new but not a better atmosphere. Unlike that of La Marche, which was sunny with the free ideas of Republican Rome, the air of Montaigu was musty with the dogmas of the school-men. But as yet Calvin could breathe that air. The student with the pale face, and the grave and serious deportment, did not fail to satisfy the most scholastic and churchy of the professors at whose feet he now sat. His place was never empty at mass; no first did he ever profane by tasting forbidden dish; and no saint did he ever affront by failing to do due honour to his or her fete-day.

The young student; was not more punctual in his devotions than assiduous in his studies. So ardent was he in the pursuit of knowledge that often the hours of meal passed without his eating. Long after others were locked in sleep he was still awake; he would keep poring over the page of schoolman or Father till far into the morning. The inhabitants of that quarter of Paris were wont to watch a tiny ray that might be seen streaming from a certain window of a certain chamber - Calvin's - of the college after every other light had been extinguished, and long after the midnight hour had passed. His teachers formed the highest hopes of him. A youth of so fine

parts, of an industry so unflagging, and who was withal so pious, was sure, they said, to rise high in the Church. They prognosticated for him no mere country curacy or rectorship, no mere city diocese, nothing less was in store for such a scholar than the purple of a cardinal. He who was now the pride of their college, was sure in time to become one of the lights of Christendom. Yes! one of the lights of Christendom, the student with the pale face and the burning eye was fated to become. Wide around was his light to beam; nor was it the nations of Europe only, sitting meanwhile in the shadow of Rome, that Calvin was to enlighten, but tribes and peoples afar off, inhabiting islands and continents which no eye of explorer had yet discovered, and no keel of navigator had yet touched, and of which the Christendom of that hour knew nothing.

But the man who had been chosen as the instrument to lead the nations out of their prison-house was meanwhile shut up in the same doleful captivity, and needed, first of all, to be himself brought out of the darkness. The story of his emancipation - his struggles to break his chain

- is instructive as it is touching. Calvin is made to feel what Scripture so emphatically terms "the power of darkness," the strength of the fetter, and the helplessness of the poor captive, that "remembering the gall and the wormwood" he may be touched with pity for the miseries of those he is called to liberate, and may continue to toil in patience and faith till their fetters are broken.

The Reformation was in the air, and the young student could hardly breathe without inhaling somewhat of the new life; and yet he seemed tolerably secure against catching the infection. He was doubly, trebly armed. In the first place, he lived in the orthodox atmosphere of the Montaigu; he was not likely to hear anything there to corrupt his faith: secondly, his head had been shorn; thus he stood at the plough of Rome, and would he now turn back? Then, again, his daily food were the schoolmen, the soundly nutritious qualities of whose doctrines no one in the Montaigu questioned. Over and above his daily and hourly lessons, the young scholar fortified himself against the approaches of heresy by the rigid observance of all outward rites. True, he had a mind singularly keen, penetrating, and inquisitive; but this did not much help the matter; for when a mind of that caste takes hold of a system like the Papacy, it is with a tenacity

that refuses again to let it go; the intellect finds both pleasure and pride in the congenial work of framing arguments for the defense of error, till at last it becomes the dupe of its own subtlety. This was the issue to which the young Calvin was now tending. Every day his mind was becoming more one-sided; every day he contemplated the Papacy more and more, not as it was in fact, but as idealised and fashioned in his own mind; a few years more and his whole thinking, reasoning, and feeling would have been intertwined and identified with the system, every avenue would have been closed and barred against light, and Calvin would have become the ablest champion that ever enrolled himself in the ranks of the Roman Church. We should, at this day, have heard much more of Calvin than of Bellarmine.

But God had provided an opening for the arrow to enter in the triple armor in which the young student was encasing himself. Calvin's cousin, Olivetan, a disciple of Lefevre's, now came to Paris. Living in the same city, the cousins were frequently in each other's company, and the new opinions, which were agitating Paris, and beginning to find confessors in the Place de Greve, became a topic of frequent converse between them. ¹ Nay, it is highly probable that Calvin had witnessed some of the martyrdoms we have narrated in a previous chapter. The great bell of Notre Dame had summoned all Paris - and why not Calvin? - to see how the young Pavane and the hermit of Livry could stand with looks undismayed at the stake. Olivetan and Calvin are not of one mind on the point, and the debates wax warm. Olivetan boldly assails, and Calvin as boldly defends, the dogmas of the Church. In this closet there is a great battle-field. There are but two combatants before us, it is true; but on the conflict there hang issues far more momentous than have depended on many great battles in which numerous hosts have been engaged. In this humble apartment the Old and the New Times have met. They struggle the one with the other, and as victory shall incline so will the New Day rise or fade on Christendom. If Olivetan shall be worsted and bound again to the chariot-wheel of an infallible Church, the world will never see that beautiful version of the New Testament in the vernacular of France, which is destined to accomplish so much

¹Beza, Vita Calvini.

in the way of diffusing the light. But if Calvin shall lower his sword before his cousin, and yield himself up to the arguments of Lefevre's disciple, what a blow to Rome! The scholar on whose sharp dialectic weapon her representatives in Paris have begun to lean in prospect of coming conflict, will pass over to the camp of the enemy, to lay his brilliant genius and vast acquirements at the feet of Protestantism.

The contest between the two cousins is renewed day by day. These are the battles that change the world - not those noisy affairs that are fought with cannons and sabres, but those in which souls wrestle to establish or overthrow great principles. "There are but two religions in the world," we hear Olivetan saying. "The one class of religions are those which men have invented, in all of which man saves himself by ceremonies and good works; the other is that one religion which is revealed in the Bible, and which teaches man to look for salvation solely from the free grace of God." "I will have none of your new doctrines," Calvin sharply rejoins; "think you that I have lived in error all my days?" But Calvin is not so sure of the matter as he looks. The words of his cousin have gone deeper into his heart than he is willing to admit even to himself; and when Olivetan has taken farewell for the day, scarce has the door been closed behind him when Calvin, bursting into tears, falls upon his knees, and gives vent in prayer to the doubts and anxieties that agitate him.

The doubts by which his soul was now shaken grew in strength with each renewed discussion. What shall he do? Shall he forsake the Church? That seems to him like casting himself into the gulf of perdition. And yet can the Church save him? There is a new light breaking in upon him, in which her dogmas are melting away; the ground beneath him is sinking. To what shall he cling? His agitation grew anon into a great tempest. He felt within him "the sorrows of death," and his closet resounded with sighs and groans, as did Luther's at Erfurt. This tempest was not in the intellect, although doubtless the darkness of his understanding had to do with it; its seat was the soul - the conscience. It consisted in a sense of guilt, a consciousness of vileness, and a shuddering apprehension of wrath. So long as he had to do merely with the saints, creatures like himself, only a little holier it might be, it was all well. But now he was standing in the presence of that infinitely Holy One, with

whom evil cannot dwell. He was standing there, the blackness and vileness of his sin shown in the clear light of the Divine purity; he was standing there, the transgressor of a law that says, "The soul that sinneth shall die" - that death how awful, yet that award how righteous! - he was standing there, with all in which he had formerly trusted - saints, rites, good works - swept clean away, with nothing to protect him from the arm of the Lawgiver. He had come to a Judge without an advocate. It did not occur to him before that he needed an advocate, at least other than Rome provides, because before he saw neither God's holiness nor his own guilt; but now he saw both.

The struggle of Calvin was not the perplexity of the skeptic unable to make up his mind among conflicting systems, it was the agony of a soul fleeing from death, but seeing as yet no way of escape. It was not the conflict of the intellect which has broken loose from truth, and is tossed on the billows of doubt and unbelief a painful spectacle, and one of not infrequent occurrence in our century; Calvin's struggle was not of this sort; it was the strong wrestlings of a man who had firm hold of the great truths of Divine revelation, although not as yet of all these truths, and who saw the terrible realities which they brought him face to face with, and who comprehended the dreadful state of his case, fixed for him by his own transgressions on the one hand, and the irrevocable laws of the Divine character and government on the other.² A struggle this of a much more terrific kind than any mere intellectual one, and of this latter sort was the earnestness of the sixteenth century. Not knowing as yet that "there is forgiveness with God," because as yet he did not believe in the "atonement," through which there cometh a free forgiveness, Calvin at this hour stood looking into the blackness of eternal darkness. Had he doubted, that doubt would have mitigated his pain; but he did not and could not doubt; he saw too surely the terrible reality, and knew not how it was to be avoided. Here was himself, a transgressor; there was the law, awarding death, and there was the Judge ready - nay, bound - to inflict it: so Calvin felt.

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The severity of Calvin's struggle was in proportion to the strength of his self-righteousness. That principle had been growing within him from his youth upwards. The very blamelessness of his life, and

²Calvini Opusc., p. 125.

the punctuality with which he discharged all the acts of devotion, had helped to nourish it into rigor and strength; and now nothing but a tempest of surpassing force could have beaten down and laid in the dust a pride which had been waxing higher and stronger with every rite he performed, and every year that passed over him. And till his pride had been laid in the dust it was impossible that he could throw himself at the feet of the Great Physician.

But meanwhile, like King Joram, he went to physicians “who could not heal him of his disease;” mere empirics they were, who, gave him beads to count and relics to kiss, instead of the “death” that atones and the “blood” that cleanses. “Confess!”³ cried the doctors of the Montaigu, who could read in his dimmed eye and wasting form the agony that was raging in his soul, and too surely divined its cause. “Confess, confess!” cried they, in alarm, for they saw that they were on the point of losing their most promising pupil, on whom they had built so many hopes. Calvin went to his confessor; he told him - not all - but as much as he durst, and the Father gave him kindly a few anodynes from the Church’s pharmacopoeia to relieve his pain. The patient strove to persuade himself that his trouble was somewhat assuaged, and then he would turn again to the schoolmen, if haply he might forget, in the interest awakened by their subtleties and speculations, the great realities that had engrossed him. But soon there would descend on him another and fiercer burst of the tempest, and then groans louder even than before would echo through his chamber, and tears more copious than he had yet shed would water his couch.⁴

One day, while the young scholar of the Montaigu was passing through these struggles, he chanced to visit the Place de Greve, where he found a great crowd of priests, soldiers, and citizens gathered round a stake at which a disciple of the new doctrines was calmly yielding up his life. He stood till the fire had done its work, and a stake, an iron collar and chain, and a heap of ashes were the only memorials of the tragedy he had witnessed. What he had seen awakened a train of thoughts within him. “These men,” said he to himself, “have a peace which I do not possess. They endure the

³Calvini Opusc., p. 125.

⁴Ibid.: “Non sine gemitu ac lacrymis.”

fire with a rare courage. I, too, could brave the fire, but were death to come to me, as it comes to them, with the sting of the Church's anathema in it, could I face that as calmly as they do? Why is it that they are so courageous in the midst of terrors that are as real as they are dreadful, while I am oppressed and tremble before apprehensions and forebodings? Yes, I will take my cousin Olivetan's advice, and search the Bible, if haply I may find that 'new way' of which he speaks, and which these men who go so bravely through the fire seem to have found." He opened the Book which no one, says Rome, should open unless the Church be by to interpret. He began to read, but the first effect was a sharper terror. His sins had never appeared so great, nor himself so vile as

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now.

He would have shut the Book, but to what other quarter could he turn? On every side of him abysses appeared to be opening. So he continued to read, and by-and-by he thought he could discern dimly and afar off what seemed a cross, and One hanging upon it, and his form was like the Son of God. He looked again, and the vision was clearer for now he thought he could read the inscription over the head of the Sufferer: "He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." A ray now shone through his darkness; he thought he could see a way of escape - a shelter where the black tempest that lowered over him would no longer beat upon his head; already the great burden that pressed upon him was less heavy, it seemed as if about to fall off, and now it rolled down as he kept gazing at the "Crucified." "O Father," he burst out - it was no longer the Judge, the Avenger - "O Father, his sacrifice has appeased thy wrath; his blood has washed away my impurities; his cross has borne my curse; his death has atoned for me!" In the midst of the great billows his feet had touched the bottom: he found the ground to be good: he was upon a rock.

Calvin, however, was not yet safe on shore and past all danger. One formidable obstacle he had yet to surmount, and one word expresses it - the Church. Christ had said, "Lo, I am with you always." The Church, then, was the temple of Christ, and this made unity - unity in all ages and in all lands - one of her essential attributes.

The Fathers had claimed this as a mark of the true Church. She must be one, they had said. Precisely so; but is this unity outward and visible, or inward and spiritual? The “*Quod semper, quod ubique et ab omnibus,*” if sought in an outward, realization, can be found only in the Church of Rome. How many have fallen over this stumbling-block and never risen again; how many even in our own age have made shipwreck here! This was the rock on which Calvin was now in danger of shipwreck. The Church rose before his eyes, a venerable and holy society; he saw her coming down from ancient times, covering all lands, embracing in her ranks the martyrs and confessors of primitive times, and the great doctors of the Middle Ages, with the Pope at their head, the Vicar of Jesus Christ. This seemed truly a temple of God’s own building. With all its faults it yet was a glorious Church, Divine and heavenly. Must he leave this august society and join himself to a few despised disciples of the new opinions? This seemed like a razing of his name from the Book of Life. This was to invoke excommunication upon his own head, and write against himself a sentence of exclusion from the family of God - nay, from God himself! This was the great battle that Calvin had yet to fight.

How many have commenced this battle only to lose it! They have been beaten back and beaten down by the pretended Divine authority of “the Church,” by the array of her great names and her great Councils, and though last, not least, by the terror of her anathemas. It is not possible for even the strongest minds, all at once, to throw off the spell of the great Enchantress Nor would even Calvin have conquered in this sore battle had he not had recourse to the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Ever and anon he came back to the Bible; he sought for the Church as she is there shown - a spiritual society, Christ her Head, the Holy Spirit her life, truth her foundation, and believers her members - and in proportion as this Church disclosed her beauty to him, the fictitious splendor and earthly magnificence which shone around the Church of Rome waned, and at last vanished outright. There can be no Church,” we hear Calvin saying to himself, “where the truth is not. Here, in the Roman Communion, I can find only fables, silly inventions, manifest falsehoods, and idolatrous ceremonies. The society that is founded on these things cannot be the Church. If I shall come back to the

truth, as contained in the Scriptures, will I not come back to the Church? and will I not be joined to the holy company of prophets and apostles, of saints and martyrs? And as regards the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, let me not be awed by a big word. If without warrant from the Bible, or the call of the Christian people, and lacking the holiness and humility of Christ, the Pope place himself above the Church, and surround himself with worldly pomps, and arrogate lordship over the faith and consciences of men, is he therefore entitled to homage, and must I bow down and do obeisance? The Pope," concluded Calvin, "is but a scarecrow, dressed out in magnificences and fulminations. I will go on my way without minding him."

In fine, Calvin concluded that the term "Church" could not make the society that monopolized the term really "the Church." High-sounding titles and lofty assumptions could give neither unity nor authority; these could come from the Truth alone; and so he abandoned "the Church" that he might enter the Church - the Church of the Bible.

The victory was now complete. The last link of Rome's chain had been rent from his soul; the huge phantasmagoria which had awed and terrified him had been dissolved, and he stood up in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free. Here truly was rest after a great fight - a sweet and blessed dawn after a night of thick darkness and tempest.

Thus was fought one of the great battles of the world. When one thinks of what was won for mankind upon this field, one feels its issues important beyond all calculation, and would rather have conquered upon it than have won all the victories and worn all the laurels of Caesar and Alexander. The day of Calvin's conversion is not known, but the historian D'Aubigne, to whose research the world is indebted for its full and exact knowledge of the event, has determined the year, 1527; and the place, Paris - that city where some of the saints of God had already been put to death, and where, in years to come, their blood was to be poured out like water. The day of Calvin's conversion is one of the memorable days of time.

Chapter 8 : Calvin Becomes a Student of Law

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Gate of the New Kingdom—Crowds Pressing to Enter—The Few only Able to do so—Lefevre and Farel Sighing for the Conversion of Francis I—A Greater Conversion—Calvin Refuses to be made a Priest -Chooses the Profession of Law—Goes to Orleans—Pierre de l’Etoile—Calvin becomes his Scholar—Teaching of Etoile on the Duty of the State to Punish Heterodoxy—Calvin among his College Companions—A Victory—Calvin Studies Greek—Melchior Wolmar—Calvin Prepared for his Work as a Commentator—His Last Mental Struggle

The Reformation has come, and is setting up anew the kingdom of the Gospel upon the earth. Flinging wide open its portals, and stationing no sentinel on the threshold, nor putting price upon its blessings, it bids all enter. We see great multitudes coming up to the gate, and making as if they would press in and become citizens of this new State. Great scholars and erudite divines are groping around the door, but they are not able to become as little children, and so they cannot find the gate. We see ecclesiastics of every grade crowding to that portal; there stands the purple cardinal, and there too is the frocked friar, all eagerly inquiring what they may do that they may inherit eternal life; but they cannot part with their sins or with their self-righteousness, and so they cannot enter at a gate which, however wide to the poor in spirit, is strait to them. Puissant kings, illustrious statesmen, and powerful nations come marching up, intent seemingly on enrolling themselves among the citizens of this new society. They stand on the very threshold; another step and all will be well; but, alas! they hesitate; they falter; it is a moment of terrible suspense. What blinds them so that they cannot see the entrance? It is a little word, a potent spell, which has called up before them all imposing image that looks the impersonation of all the ages, and the embodiment of all apostolic virtues and blessings - “the Church.” Dazzled by this apparition, they pause - they reel

backwards - the golden moment passes; and from the very gates of evangelical light, they take the downward road into the old darkness. The broad pathway is filled from side to side by men whose feet have touched the very threshold of the kingdom, but who are now returning, some offended by the simplicity of the infant Church; others scared by the scaffold and the stake; others held back by their love of ease or their love of sin. A few only are able to enter in and earn the crown, and even these, enter only after sore rightings and great agonies of soul. It was here that the Reformation had its beginning - not in the high places of the world, amid the ambitions of thrones and the councils of cabinets. It struggled into birth in the low places of society, in closets, and the bosoms of the penitent, amid tears and strong cries and many groans.

Paris was not one of those cities that were destined to be glorified by the light of Protestantism, nevertheless it pleased God, as narrated in the last chapter, to make it the scene of a great conversion.¹ Lefevre and Farel were sighing to enrol among the disciples of the Gospel a great potentate, Francis I. If, thought they, the throne can be gained, will not the preponderance of power on the side of the Gospel infallibly assure its triumph in France? But God, whose thoughts are not as man's thoughts, was meanwhile working for a far greater issue, the conversion even of a pale-faced student in the College of Montaigu, whose name neither Lefevre nor Farel had ever happened to hear, and whose very existence was then unknown to them. They little dreamed what a conflict was at that very hour going on so near to them in a small chamber in an obscure quarter of Paris. And, although they had known it, they could as little have conjectured that when that young scholar had bowed to the force of the truth, a mightier power would have taken its place at the side of the Gospel than if Francis and all his court had become its patrons and champions. Light cannot be spread by edict of king, or by sword of soldier. It is the Bible, preached by the evangelist, and testified to by the martyr, that is to bid the Gospel, like the day, shine forth and bless the earth.

¹Desmay says that it was at Orleans, and Raemond that it was at Bourges, that Calvin first acquired a taste for heresy. Both are mistaken: Calvin brought that taste with him to the old city of Aurelian.

From the hour of Calvin's conversion he became the center of the Reformation in France, and by-and-by the center of the Reformation in Christendom: consequently in tracing the several stages of his career we are chronicling the successive developments of the great movement of Protestantism. His eyes were opened, and he saw the Church of Rome disenchanting of that illusive splendor - that pseudo-Divine authority - which had aforesaid dazzled and subdued him. Where formerly there stood a spiritual building, the House of God, the abode of truth, as he believed, there now rose a temple of idols. How could he minister at her altars? True, his head had been shorn, but he had not yet received that indelible character which is stamped on all who enter the priesthood, and so it was not imperative that he should proceed farther in that path. He resolved to devote himself to the profession of law. This mode of retreat from the clerical ranks would awaken no suspicion.

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It is somewhat remarkable that his father had come, at about the same time, to the same resolution touching the future profession of his son, and thus the young Calvin had his parent's full consent to his new choice - a coincidence which Beza has pointed out as a somewhat striking one. The path on which Gerard Chauvin saw his son now entering was one in which many and brilliant honors were to be won: and not one of those prizes was there which the marvelous intellect and the rare application of that son did not bid fair to gain. Already Gerard in fancy saw him standing at the foot of the throne, and guiding the destinies of France. Has Calvin then bidden a final adieu to theology, and are the courts of law and the offices of State henceforth to claim him as their own? No! he has turned aside but for a little while, that by varying the exercise of his intellect he may bring to the great work that lies before him a versatility of power, all amplitude of knowledge, and a range of sympathy not otherwise attainable. Of that work he did not at this hour so much as dream, but He who had "called him from the womb, and ordained him a prophet to the nations," was leading him by a way he knew not.

The young student - his face still pale, but beaming with that lofty peace that succeeds such tempests as those which had beat upon him - crosses for the last time the portal of the Montaigu, and, leaving Paris behind him, directs his steps to Orleans, the city on

the banks of the Loire which dates from the days of Aurelian, its founder. In that city was a famous university, and in that university was a famous professor of law, Pierre de l'Etoile, styled the Prince of Jurists. ² It was the light of this "star" that attracted the young Calvin to Orleans.

The science of jurisprudence now became his study. And one of the maxims to which he was at times called to listen, as he sat on the benches of the class-room, enables us to measure the progress which the theory of liberty had made in those days. "It is the magistrate's duty," would "Peter of the Star" say to his scholars, "to punish offenses against religion as well as crimes against the State." "What!" he would exclaim, with the air of a man who was propounding an incontrovertible truth, "What! shall we hang a thief who robs us of our purse, and not burn a heretic who steals from us heaven!" So ill understood was then the distinction between the civil and the spiritual jurisdictions, and the acts falling under their respective cognisance. Under this code of jurisprudence were Calvin and that whole generation of Frenchmen reared. It had passed in Christendom for a thousand years as indisputably sound, serving as the cornerstone of the Inquisition, and yielding its legitimate fruit in those baleful fires which mingled their lurid glare with the dawn of the New Times. Under no other maxim was it then deemed possible for nations to flourish or piety to be preserved; nor was it till a century and a half after Calvin's time that this maxim was exploded, for of all fetters those are the hardest to be rent which have been forged by what wears the guise of justice, and have been imposed to protect what professes to be religion.

The future Reformer now sits at the feet of the famous jurist of Orleans, and, by the study of the law, whets that wonderful intellect which in days to come was to unravel so many mysteries, and dissolve the force of so many spells which had enchained the soul. What manner of man, we ask, was Calvin at Orleans? He had parted company with the schoolmen; he had bidden the Fathers of the Montaigu adieu, and he had turned his face, as he believed, towards the high places of the world. Did his impressions of Divine

²He became afterwards President of the Parliament of Paris. "He was accounted," says Beza, "the most subtle jurisconsult of all the doctors." (*Hist. des Eglises Reformees*, tom. 1., p. 6.)

things pass away, or did the grandeurs of time dim to his eye those of eternity? No; but if his seriousness did not disappear, his shyness somewhat did. His loving sympathies and rich genialities of heart, like a secret gravitation for they were not much expressed in words - drew companions around him, and his superiority of intellect gave him, without his seeking it, the lead amongst them. His fellow-students were a noisy, pleasure-loving set, and their revels and quarrels woke up, rather rudely at times, the echoes of the academic hall, and broke in upon the quiet of the streets; but the high-souled honour and purity of Calvin, untouched by soil or stain amidst the pastimes and Bacchanalian riots that went on around him, joined to his lofty genius, made him the admiration of his comrades. [157]

The nation of Picardy - for the students were classified into nations according to the provinces they came from - elected the young Calvin as their proctor, and in this capacity he was able, by his legal knowledge, to recover for his nation certain privileges of which they had been deprived. There have been more brilliant affairs than this triumph over the local authority who had trenched upon academic rights, but it was noisily applauded by those for whom it was won, and to the young victor this petty warfare was all earnest of greater battles to be fought on a wider arena, and of prouder victories to be won over greater opponents. The future Chancellor of the Kingdom of France - for no inferior position had Gerard Chauvin elected for his son to fill - had taken his first step on the road which would most surely conduct him to this high dignity. Step after step - to his genius how easy! - would bring him to it; and there having passed life in honorable labor, he would leave his name inscribed among those of the legislators and philosophers of France, while his bust would adorn the Louvre, or the Hall of Justice, and his bones, inurned in marble, would sleep in some cathedral aisle of Paris. Such was the prospect that opened out before the eye of his father, and, it is possible, before his own also at this period of his life. Very grand it was, but not nearly so grand as that which ended in a simple grave by the Rhone, marked only by a pine-tree, with a name like the brightness of the firmament, that needed no chiselled bust and no marble cenotaph to keep it in remembrance.

Calvin next went to Bourges. He was attracted to this city by the fame of Alciati of Milan, who was lecturing on law in its university.

The Italian loved a good table, and a well-filled purse, but he had the gift of eloquence, and a rare genius for jurisprudence. “Andrew Alciat,” says Beza, “was esteemed the most learned and eloquent of all the jurisconsults of his time.”³ The eloquence of Alciati kindled anew Calvin’s enthusiasm for the study of law. The hours were then early; but Calvin, Beza informs us, sat up till midnight, and, on awakening in the morning, spent an hour in bed recalling to memory what he had learned the evening previous. At Bourges was another distinguished man, learned in a wisdom that Alciati knew not, and whose prelections, if less brilliant, were more useful to the young student. Melchior Wolmar, a German, taught the Greek of Homer, Demosthenes, or Sophocles, “but less publicly,” says Bungener, “though with small attempts at concealment, the Greek of another book far mightier and more important.”⁴

When Calvin arrived in Bourges he knew nothing of Greek. His Latinity he had received at Paris from Mathurin Cordier, whose memory he ever most affectionately cherished; but now he was to be initiated into the tongue of ancient Greece. This service was rendered him by Melchior Wolmar,⁵ who had been a pupil of the celebrated Budaeus.

Calvin now had access to the Oracles of God in the very words in which inspired men had written them - an indispensable qualification surely in one who was to be the first great interpreter, in modern times, of the New Testament. He could more exactly know the mind of the Spirit speaking in the Word, and more fully make known to men the glory of Divine mysteries; said the commentaries of Calvin are perhaps unsurpassed to this day in the combined qualities of clearness, accuracy, and depth. They were in a sort a second giving of the Oracles of God to men. Their publication was as when, in the Apocalypse, “the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.”

Before leaving Orleans his spiritual equipment for his great work had been completed. The agony he had endured in Paris returned in part. He may have contracted from his law studies some of the dross

³Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 6.

⁴Bungener, *Life of Calvin*, p. 18.

⁵Beza, *Vita Calvinii*. Laval., *Hist. Reform in France*, vol. 1., p. 25. Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 6.

of earth, and he was sent back to the furnace for the last time. Doubts regarding his salvation began again to agitate him; the “Church” rose up again before him in all her huge fascination and enchantment. These were the very foes he had already vanquished, and left dead, as he believed, on the battle-field. Again they stood like menacing spectres in his path, and he had to recommence the fight, and as at Paris, so again in Orleans he had to wage it in the sweat of his face, in the sweat of his heart. “I am in a continual battle,” he writes; “I am assaulted and shaken, as when an armed man is forced by a violent blow to stagger a few steps backward.”⁶ Grasping once more the sword of the Spirit, he put his foes to flight, and when the conflict was over Calvin found himself walking in a clearer light than he had ever before enjoyed; and that light continued all the way even to his life’s end. There gathered often around him in after-days the darkness of outward trial, but nevermore was there darkness in his soul.

⁶Calvin, *Instit.*, lib. 3., cap. 2.

[158] **Chapter 9 : Calvin the Evangelist, and Berquin the Martyr**

Calvin Abandons the Study of the Law—Goes to Bourges—Bourges under Margaret of Navarre—Its Evangelisation already Commenced—The Citizens entreat Calvin to become their Minister—He begins to act as an Evangelist in Bourges—The Work extends to the Villages and Castles around—The Plottings of the Monks—His Father’s Death calls Calvin away—A Martyr, Louis de Berquin—His Youth—His Conversion—His Zeal and Eloquence in Spreading the Gospel—Imprisoned by the Sorbonnists—Set at Liberty by the King—Imprisoned a Second and a Third Time—Set at Liberty—Erasmus’ Counsel—Berquin Taxes the Sorbonnists with Heresy—An Image of the Virgin Mutilated—Berquin consigned to the Conciergerie—His Condemnation and Frightful Sentence—Efforts of Budaeus—Berquin on his Way to the Stake—His Attire—His Noble Behaviour—His Death

Picture: View of the Palace of Blois.

Picture: Young Calvin Expounding the Bible to a Family at Bourges.

Emerging from the furnace “purified seven times,” Calvin abandons the study of the law, casts behind him the great honors to which it invited him, turns again to the Church - not her whose head is on the Seven Hills

- and puts his hand to the Gospel plough, never to take it away till death should withdraw it. Quitting Orleans he goes to Bourges.

With Bourges two illustrious conquerors of former days had associated their names: Caesar had laid it in ashes; Charlemagne had raised it up from its ruins; now a greater hero than either enters it, to begin a career of conquests which these warriors might well have envied, destined as they were to eclipse in true glory and far outlast any they had ever achieved. It was here that Calvin made his first essay as an evangelist.

Bourges was situated in the province of Berry, and as Margaret, whom we have specially mentioned in former chapters, as the disciple and correspondent of Briconnet and Lefevre, had now become Queen of Navarre and Duchess of Berry, Bourges was under her immediate jurisdiction. Prepared to protect in others the Gospel which she herself loved, Bourges presented an opening for Protestantism which no other city in all France at that time did. Under Margaret it became a center of the evangelisation. For some time previous no little religious fermentation had been going on among its population. ¹ The new doctrines had found their way thither; they were talked of in its social gatherings; they had begun even to be heard in its pulpits; certain priests, who had come to a knowledge of the truth, were preaching it with tolerable clearness to congregations composed of lawyers, students, and citizens. It was at this crisis that Calvin arrived at Bourges.

His fame had preceded him. The Protestants gathered round him and entreated him to become their teacher. Calvin was averse to assume the office of the ministry. Not that he shrunk from either the labours or the perils of the work, but because he cherished a deep sense of the greatness of the function, and of his own unworthiness to fill it. "I have hardly learned the Gospel myself," he would say, "and, lo! I am called to teach it to others."

Not for some time did Calvin comply with these solicitations. His timidity, his sense of responsibility, above all his love of study, held him back. He sought a hiding-place where, safe from intrusion, he might continue the pursuit of that wisdom which it delighted him with each studious day to gather and give up, but his friends surprised him in his concealment, and renewed their entreaties. At last he consented. "Wonderful it is," he said, "that one of so lowly an origin should be exalted to so great a dignity." ²

But how unostentatious the opening of his career! The harvests of the earth spring not in deeper silence than does this great evangelical harvest, which, beginning in the ministry of Calvin, is destined to cover a world. Gliding along the street might be seen a youth

¹Laval., *Hist. Reform. in France*, vol. 1., p. 24.

²"Me Deus ab obscuris tenuibusque principiis extractum, hoc tam honorifico munere dignatus est, ut Evangelii praeco essem ac minister." (*Comment. in Lib. Psalm. - Calvini Opp.*, vol. 3., *Epist. ad Lect.*; ed. Amsterdam, 1667.)

[159] of slender figure and sallow features. He enters a door; he gathers round him the family and, opening the Bible, he explains to them its message. His words distil as the dew and as the tender rain on the grass. By-and-by the city becomes too narrow a sphere of labor, and the young evangelist extends his efforts to the hamlets and towns around Bourges.³ One tells another of the sweetness of this water, and every day the numbers increase of those who wish to drink of it. The castle of the baron is opened as well as the cottage of the peasant, and a cordial welcome is accorded the missionary in both. His doctrine is clear and beautiful, and as refreshing to the soul as light to the eye after long darkness. And then the preacher is so modest withal, so sweet in his address, so earnest in his work, and altogether so unlike any other preacher the people had ever known! “Upon my word,” said the Lord of Lignieres to his wife, “Master John Calvin seems to me to preach better than the monks, and he goes heartily to work too.”⁴

The monks looked with but small favor on these doings. The doors open to the young evangelist were shut against themselves. If they plotted to stop the work by casting the workman into prison, in a town under Margaret’s jurisdiction this was not so easy. The design failed, if it was ever entertained, and the evangelist went on sowing the seed from which in days to come a plentiful harvest was to spring. The Churches whose foundations are now being laid by the instrumentality of Calvin will yield in future years not only confessors of the truth, but martyrs for the stake.

In the midst of these labours Calvin received a letter from Noyon, his native town, saying that his father was dead.⁵ These tidings stopped his work, but it is possible that they saved him from prison. He had planted, but another must water; and so turning his face towards his birth-place, he quits Bourges not again to return to it. But the work he had accomplished in it did not perish. A venerable doctor, Michel Simon, came forward on Calvin’s departure, and kept alive the light in Bourges which the evangelist had kindled.

³Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 7.

⁴Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 7. Galliard, *Hist. de Francois I.*, tom. 7., p. 3; Paris, 1769.

⁵Beza, *Vita Calvini*. Beza speaks of Gerard Chauvin’s death as sudden - “repentina mors.”

On his journey to Noyon, Calvin had to pass through Paris. It so happened that the capital at that time (1529) was in a state of great excitement, another stake having just been planted in it, whereat one of the noblest of the early martyrs of France was yielding up his life. Providence so ordered it that the pile of the martyr and the visit of the Reformer came together. God had chosen him as the champion by whom the character of his martyrs was to be vindicated and their blood avenged on the Papacy, and therefore it was necessary that he should come very near, if not actually stand beside their stake, and be the eye-witness of the agonies, or rather the triumph, of their dying moments. Before tracing farther the career of Calvin let us turn aside to the Place de Greve, and see there “the most learned of the nobles of France” dying as a felon.

Louis de Berquin was descended of a noble family of Artois. ⁶ Unlike the knights of those days, who knew only to mount their horse, to handle their sword, to follow the hounds, or to figure in a tournament, Berquin delighted in reading and was devoted to study. Frank, courteous, and full of alms-deeds, he was beloved by all. His morals were as pure as his manners were polished: he had now reached the age of forty without calumny finding occasion to breathe upon him. He often went to court, and was specially welcomed by a prince who delighted to see around him men of intellectual accomplishments and tastes. Touching the religion of Rome, Berquin was blameless, having kept himself pure from his youth up. “He was,” says Crespin, “a great follower of the Papistical constitutions, and a great hearer of masses and sermons.” All the Church’s rites he strictly observed, all the Church’s saints he duly honoured, and he crowned all his other virtues by holding Lutheranism in special abhorrence. ⁷

But it pleased God to open his eyes. His manly and straightforward character made the maneuvers and intrigues of the Sorbonne specially detestable to him. Besides, it chanced to him to have a dispute with one of its doctors on a scholastic subtlety, and he opened his Bible to find in it proofs to fortify his position. Judge of his amazement when he perceived there, not the doctrines of Rome, but

⁶Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 5.

⁷Crespin, *Hist. des Mart.*, p. 96. Felice, vol. 1., p. 2.

the doctrines of Luther. His conversion was thorough. His learning, his eloquence, and his influence were from that hour all at the service of the Gospel. He labored to spread the truth among his tenantry in the country, and among his acquaintances in the city and at the court. He panted to communicate his convictions to all France. Many looked to him as the destined Reformer of his native land; and certainly his position and gifts made him the most considerable person at that time on the side of the Reform in France. "Berquin would have been a second Luther," said Beza, "had he found in Francis I. a second Elector."⁸

[160] The Sorbonne had not been unobservant; their alarm was great, and their anger was in proportion to their alarm. "He is worse than Luther," they exclaimed. Armed with the authority of Parliament the Sorbonne seized and imprisoned Berquin (1523). There was nothing but a stake for the man whose courage they could not daunt, and whose eloquence they could not silence, and all whose wit and learning were employed in laughing at their ignorance and exposing their superstition. But the king, who loved him, set him at liberty.

A second time the monks of the Sorbonne seized Berquin. A second time the king came to his rescue, advising him to be more prudent in future; but such strong convictions as those of Berquin could not be suppressed. A third time Berquin was seized, and the Sorbonnists thought that this time they had made sure of their prey. The king was a prisoner at Madrid: Duprat and Louisa of Savoy were all-powerful at Paris. But no: an order from Francis I., dated 1st April, 1526, arrived, enjoining them to suspend proceedings till his return; and so Berquin was again at liberty.

Berquin's courage and zeal grew in proportion as the plots of his enemies multiplied. Erasmus, who was trying to swim between two streams, foreseeing how the unequal contest must end, warned Berquin in these characteristic words: "Ask to be sent as ambassador to some foreign country; go and travel in Germany. You know Beda and such as he - he is a thousand-headed monster darting venom on every side. Your enemies are named legion. Were your cause better than that of Jesus Christ, they will not let you go till they have miserably destroyed you. Do not trust too much to the king's

⁸Benza, Icones

protection. At all events, do not compromise me with the faculty of theology.”⁹

Berquin did not listen to the counsel of the timid scholar. He resolved to stand no longer on the defensive, but to attack. He extracted from the writings of Beda and his colleagues twelve propositions, which he presented to the king, and which he charged with being opposed to the Bible and, by consequence, heretical.¹⁰

The Sorbonnists were confounded. That they, the pillars of the Church, and the lights of France, should be taxed with heresy by a Lutheran was past endurance. The king, however, not sorry to have an opportunity of humbling these turbulent doctors, requested them to disprove Berquin’s allegations from Scripture. This might have been a hard task; the affair was taking an ugly turn for the Sorbonne. Just at that time an image of the Virgin, at the corner of one of the streets, was mutilated. It was a fortunate incident for the priests. “These are the fruits of the doctrines of Berquin,” it was exclaimed; “all is about to be overthrown - religion, the laws, the throne itself - by this Lutheran conspiracy.” War to the knife was demanded against the iconoclasts: the people and the monarch were frightened; and the issue was that Berquin was apprehended (March, 1529) and consigned to the Conciergerie.¹¹

A somewhat remarkable occurrence furnished Berquin’s enemies with unexpected advantage against him in the prosecution. No sooner was he within the walls of his prison than the thought of his books and papers flashed across his mind. He saw the use his persecutors would make of them, and he sat down and wrote instantly a note to a friend begging him to destroy them. He gave the note to a domestic, who hid it under his clothes and departed.¹²

The man, who was not a little superstitious, trembled at the thought of the message which he carried, but all went well till he came to the Pont du Change, where, his superstition getting the better of his courage, he swooned and fell before the image of “Our Lady.” The passers-by gathered round him, and, unbuttoning his doublet that he might breathe the more freely, found the letter underneath. It

⁹Erasmi Epp., tom. 2., p. 1206.

¹⁰Felice, vol. 1., p. 14.

¹¹D’Aubigne, Reform. under Calvin, vol. 2., p. 47.

¹²Journal d’un Bourgeois de Paris, p. 381 - quoted by D’Aubigne.

was opened and read. "He is a heretic," said they: "Our Lady has done it. It is a miracle." The note was given to one of the bystanders, at whose house the monk then preaching the Lent sermons was that day to dine, who, perceiving its importance, carried it to Berquin's judges. ¹³ His books were straightway seized and examined by the twelve commissioners appointed to try him. On the 16th April, 1529, the trial was finished, and at noon Berquin was brought into court, and had his sentence read to him. He was condemned to make a public abjuration in the following manner: - He was to walk bare-headed, with a lighted taper in his hand, to the Place de Greve, and there he was to see his books burned; from the Place de Greve he was to pass to the front of the Church of Notre Dame, and there he was to do penance "to God and his glorious mother, the Virgin." After that his tongue, "that instrument of unrighteousness," was to be pierced; and, lastly, he was to be taken back to prison, and shut up for life within four walls of stone, and to have neither books to read, nor pen and ink to write. ¹⁴ Berquin, stunned by the atrocity of the sentence, at first remained silent, but recovering in a few minutes his composure, said, "I appeal to the king." This was his way of saying, I refuse to abjure.

[161] Among his twelve judges was the celebrated Hellenist, Budaeus, the intimate friend of Berquin, and a secret favourer of the new doctrines. Budaeus hastened after him to the prison, his object being to persuade him to make a recantation, and thereby save his life. In no other way he knew could Berquin escape, for already a second sentence stood drafted by his judges, consigning him to the stake should he refuse to do public penance. Budaeus threw himself at Berquin's feet, and implored him with tears not to throw away his life, but to reserve himself for the better times that were awaiting the Reformation in France. This was the side on which to attack such a man. But the prisoner was inflexible. Again and again Budaeus returned to the Conciergerie, and each time he renewed his importunities with greater earnestness. He painted the grand opportunities the future would bring, and did not hesitate to say that Berquin would incur no small guilt should he sacrifice himself. ¹⁵

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Felice, vol. 1., p. 15. *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 382.

¹⁵Crespin, *Hist. des Mart.*

The strong man began to bow. "The power of the Holy Ghost was extinguished in him for a moment," says one. He gave his consent to appear in the court of the Palace of Justice, and ask pardon of God and the king. Budaeus, overjoyed, hastened back to tell the Sorbonne that Berquin was ready to withdraw his appeal and make his recantation. How fared it the while with Berquin in the prison? His peace had forsaken him that same hour. He looked up to God, but the act which aforesaid had ever brought joy and strength into his heart filled him with terror. This darkness was his true prison, and not the stone walls that enclosed him. Could the Sorbonne deliver him from that prison, and was this the sort of life that he was reserving for the Reformation? Verily he would do great things with a soul lettered by fear and bound down by a sense of guilt! No, he could not live thus. He could die - die a hundred times, but to appear before the Sorbonne and to say of the Gospel, "I renounce it," and of the Savior, "I know him not," that he could not do. ¹⁶ And so when Budaeus returned, there was an air in the face of the prisoner which told its own tale before Berquin had had time to speak. He had weighed the two - recantation and the stake; and he had chosen the better part - though Budaeus hardly deemed it so - the stake.

The king, who it was possible might interpose at the last moment and save Berquin, was not indeed in Paris at this moment, but he was no farther away than at Blois. The Sorbonne must despatch their victim before a pardon could arrive from Blots.

A week's delay was craved in the execution of the sentence. "Not a day," said Beda. ¹⁷ But the prisoner has appealed to the royal prerogative. "Quick," responded his persecutors, "and let him be put to death." That same day, April 22nd, 1529, at noon, was Berquin led forth to die. The ominous news had already circulated through Paris, from every street came a stream of spectators, and a dense crowd gathered and surged round the prison, waiting to see Berquin led to execution. The clock struck the hour: the gates of the Conciergerie were flung open with a crash, and the melancholy procession was seen to issue forth.

¹⁶"At ego mortem subere, quam veritatis damnationem, vel tacitus approbare velim."
(Beza, *Icones*.)

¹⁷Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, p. 383 - quoted by D'Aubigne.

The passage of that procession through the streets was watched with looks of pity on the part of some, of wonder and astonishment on the part of others. It amazed not a few to find that the chief actor in that dismal tragedy was one of the first nobles of France. But the most radiant face in all that great concourse of men was that of Berquin himself. He was going - we had almost said to the stake, but of the stake he thought not - he was going to the palace of the sky; and what though a wretched tumbril was bearing him on his way? a better chariot - whose brightness it would have blinded the beholder to look upon - stood waiting to carry him upward as soon as he had passed through the fire; and what mattered it if those who knew not what he was going to, hooted or pitied him as he passed along? how soon would the look of pity and the shout of derision be forgotten in the presence of the "Blessed!"

The cart in which Berquin was placed moved forward at a slow pace. The crowd was great, and the streets of the Paris of those days were narrow, but the rate of progress enabled the multitude all the better to observe the way in which the martyr bore himself. As he rode along, escorted by a band of 600 bowmen, the spectators said one to another, as they marked the serenity of his looks and the triumph of his air, "He is like one who sits in a temple and meditates on holy things."¹⁸ And see," said they, "how bravely he is arrayed! He is liker one who is going to a bridal banquet than one who is going to be burned." And, indeed, it was so. Berquin had that morning dressed himself in his finest clothes. He wore no weeds; sign of mourning or token of woe would have belied him, as if he bewailed his hard lot, and grieved that his life should be given in the cause of the Gospel. He had attired himself in pleasant and even gay apparel. A citizen of Paris, who wrote a journal of these events, and who probably saw the martyr as he passed through the streets, tells us that "he wore a cloak of velvet, a doublet of satin and damask, and golden hose."¹⁹ This was goodly raiment for the fire. "But am I not," said Berquin, "to be this day presented at court - not that of Francis, but that of the Monarch of the Universe?"

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¹⁸Erasmi Epp., p. 1277.

¹⁹Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris. p. 384.

Arrived at the Place de Greve, he alighted from the vehicle and stood beside the stake. He now essayed to speak a few words to the vast assembly which he found gathered at the place of execution. But the monks who stood near, dreading the effect on the multitude of what he might say, gave the signal to their creatures, and instantly the shout of voices, and the clash of arms, drowned the accents of the martyr. "Thus," says Felice, "the Sorbonne of 1529 set the populace of 1793 the base example of stifling on the scaffold the sacred words of the dying."²⁰

What though the roll of drums drowned the last words of Berquin? It was his DEATH that must speak. And it did speak: it spoke to all France; and this, the most eloquent and powerful of all testimonies, no clamours could stifle.

The fire had done its work, and where a few minutes before stood the noble form of Berquin there was now only a heap of ashes. In that heap lay entombed the Reformation in France - so did both friend and foe deem. The Sorbonnists were overjoyed: the Protestants were bowed down under a weight of sorrow. There was no sufficient reason for the exultation of the one or the dejection of the other. Berquin's stake was to be, in some good measure, to France what Ridley's was to England - a candle which, by God's grace, would not be put out, but would shine through all that realm.²¹

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²⁰Felice, *Hist. of Prot.*, vol. 1., p. 16.

²¹Beza relates that Dr. Merlin, then Penitentiary of Paris, who had accompanied Berquin to the stake and saw him die, confessed before all the people that for a hundred years there had not died a better Christian than Berquin. The same historian also relates that on the night following his martyrdom (St. Martin's Eve) the wheat was smitten with hoar-frost, and there followed therefrom famine and plague in France. (*Hist. des Eglises. Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 5.)

Chapter 10 : Calvin at Paris, and Francis Negotiating with Germany and England

The Death of the Martyr not the Death of the Cause—Calvin at Noyon—Preaches at Pont l’Eveque—His Audience—How they take his Sermon—An Experiment—Its Lesson—Calvin goes to Paris—Paris a Focus of Literary Light—The Students at the University—Their Debates—Calvin to Polemics adds Piety—He Evangelises in Paris—Powers of the World—Spain and France kept Divided—How and Why—The Schmalkald League holds the Balance of Power—Francis I. approaches the German Protestants—Failure of the Negotiation -Francis turns to Henry VIII—Interview between Francis and Henry at Boulogne—Fetes—League between the Kings of France and England—Francis’s Great Error

Picture: Meeting of Henry VIII. and Francis I.

Berquin, the peer of France, and, greater still, the humble Christian and zealous evangelist, was no more. Many thought they saw in him that assemblage of intellectual gifts and evangelical virtues which fitted him for being the Reformer of his native land. However, it was not so to be. His light had shone brightly but, alas! briefly; it was now extinguished. Of Berquin there remained only a heap of ashes, over which the friends of Protestantism mourned, while its enemies exulted. But it was the ashes of Berquin merely, not of his cause, that lay around the stake. When the martyr went up in the chariot which, unseen by the crowd, waited to carry him to the sky, his mantle fell on one who was standing near, and who may be said to have seen him as he ascended. From the burning pile in the Place de Greve, the young evangelist of Bourges, whose name, destined to fill Christendom in years to come, was then all but unknown, went forth, endowed with a double portion of Berquin’s spirit, to take up the work of him who had just fallen, and to spread throughout France and the world that truth which lived when Berquin died.

How Calvin came to be in Paris at this moment we have already explained. Tidings that his father had died suddenly called him to Noyon. It cost him doubtless a wrench to sever himself from the work of the Gospel which he was preaching, not in vain, in the capital of Berry and the neighboring towns; still, he did not delay, but set out at once, taking Paris in his way. The journey from Paris to Noyon was performed, we cannot but think, in great weariness of heart. Behind him was the stake of Berquin, in whose ashes so many hopes lay buried; before him was the home of his childhood, where no father now waited to welcome him; while all round, in the horizon of France, the clouds were rolling up, and giving but too certain augury that the Reformation was not to have so prosperous a career in his native land as, happily, at that hour it was pursuing in the towns of Germany and amid the hills of the Swiss. But God, he tells us, “comforted him by his Word.”

Calvin had quitted Noyon a mere lad; he returns to it on the verge of manhood (1529), bringing back to it the same pale face and burning eye which had marked him as a boy. Within, what a mighty change! but that change his townsmen saw not, nor did even he himself suspect its extent; for as yet he had not a thought of leaving the communion of Rome. He would cleanse and rebuttress the old fabric, by proclaiming the truth within it. But an experiment which he made on a small scale at Noyon helped doubtless to show him that the tottering structure would but fall in pieces in his hands should he attempt restoration merely. [165]

The fame of the young scholar had reached even these northern parts of France, and the friends and companions of his youth wanted to hear him preach. If a half-suspicion of heresy had reached their ears along with the rumor of his great attainments, it only whetted their eagerness to hear him. The Church of Pont l’Eveque, where his ancestors had lived, was opened to him. When the day came, quite a crowd, made up of his own and his father’s acquaintances, and people from the neighboring towns, filled the church, all eager to see and hear the cooper’s grandson. Calvin expounded to them the Scriptures. ¹ The old doctrine was new under that roof and to those ears. The different feelings awakened by the sermon in different

¹Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

minds could be plainly read on the faces clustered so thickly around the pulpit. Some beamed with delight as do those of thirsty men when they drink and are refreshed. This select number embraced the leading men of the district, among whom were Nicholas Picot. On that day he tasted the true bread and never again turned to the husks of Rome. But the faces of the most part expressed either indifference or anger. Instead of a salvation from sin, they much preferred what the "Church" offered, a salvation in sin. And as regarded the priestly portion of the audience, they divined but too surely to what the preacher's doctrine tended, the overthrow namely of the "Church's" authority, and the utter drying-up of her revenues. Many a rich abbacy and broad acre, as well as ghostly assumption, would have to be renounced if that doctrine should be embraced. Noyon had given a Reformer to Christendom, but she refused to accept him for herself. The congregation at Pont l'Eveque was a fair specimen of the universal Roman community, and the result of the sermon must have gone far to convince the preacher that the first effect of the publication of the truth within the pale of the "Church" would be, not the re-edification, but the demolition of the old fabric, and that his ultimate aim must point to the rearing of a new edifice.

After a two months' stay Calvin quitted his native place. Noyon continued to watch the career of her great citizen, but not with pride. In after-days, when Rome was trembling at his name, and Protestant lands were pronouncing it with reverence, Noyon held it the greatest blot upon her escutcheon that she had the misfortune to have given birth to him who bore that name. Calvin had to choose anew his field of labor, and he at once decided in favor of Paris. Thither accordingly he directed his steps.

France in those days had many capitals, but Paris took precedence of them all. Besides being the seat of the court, and of the Sorbonne, and the center of influences which sooner or later made themselves felt to the extremities of the country, Paris had just become a great focus of literary light. Francis I., while snubbing the monks on the one hand, and repelling the Protestants on the other, kneeled before the Renaissance, which was in his eye the germ of all civilization and greatness. He knew the splendor it had lent to the house of Medici, and he aspired to invest his court, his kingdom, and himself with the same glory. Accordingly he invited a number

of great scholars to his capital: Budaeus was already there; and now followed Danes and Vatable, who were skilled, the former in Greek and the latter in Hebrew,² the recovery of which formed by far the most precious of all the fruits of the Renaissance. A false faith would have shunned such a spot: it was the very fact of the light being there that made Calvin hasten to Paris with the Gospel.

A great fermentation, at that moment, existed among the students at the university. Their study of the original tongues of the Bible had led them, in many instances, to the Bible itself. Its simplicity and sublimity had charms for many who did not much relish its holiness: and they drew from it an illumination of the intellect, even when they failed to obtain from it a renovation of the heart. A little proud it may be of their skill in the new learning, and not unwilling to display their polemical tact, they were ready for battle with the champions of the old orthodoxy wherever they met them, whether in the courts of the university or on the street. In fact, the capital was then ringing with a warfare, partly literary, partly theological; and Calvin found he had done well, instead of returning to Bourges and gathering up the broken thread of his labours, in coming to a spot where the fields seemed rapidly ripening unto harvest.

And, indeed, in one prime quality, at all times essential to work like his, but never more so than at the birth of Protestantism, Calvin excelled all others. In the beautiful union of intellect and devotion which characterised him he stood alone. He was as skillful a controversialist as any of the noisy polemics who were waging daily battle on the streets, but he was something higher. He fed his intellect by daily prayer and daily perusal of the Scriptures, and he was as devoted an evangelist as he was a skillful debater. He was even more anxious to sow the seed of the Kingdom in the homes of the citizens of Paris, than he was to win victories over the doctors of the Sorbonne. We see him passing along on the shady side of the street. He drops in at a door. He emerges after awhile, passes onward, enters another dwelling, where he makes another short stay, and thus he goes on, his unobtrusiveness his shield, for no one follows his steps or suspects his errand. While others are simply silencing

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²Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1., p. 4. Laval., *Hist. Reform. in France*, vol 1., p. 18.

opponents, Calvin is enlightening minds, and leaving traces in the hearts of men that are imperishable. In this we behold the beginnings of a great work - a work that is to endure and fill the earth, when all the achievements of diplomacy, all the trophies of the battle-field, and all the honors of the school shall have passed away and been forgotten.

Leaving the evangelist going his rounds in the streets and lanes of Paris, let us return for a little to the public stage of the world, and note the doings of those who as the possessors of thrones, or the leaders of armies, think that they are the masters of mankind, and can mould at will the destinies of the world. They can plant or they can pluck up the Reformation - so they believe. And true it is, emperors and warriors and priests have a part assigned them which they are to do in this great work. The priests by their scandals shook the hierarchy: the kings by their ambitions and passions pulled down the Empire; thus, without the world owing thanks to either Pope or Kaiser, room was prepared for a Kingdom that cannot be removed. The greatest monarchy of the day was Spain, which had shot up into portentous growth just as the new times were about to appear. The union of some, dozen of kingdoms under its scepter had given it measureless territory; the discovery of America had endowed it with exhaustless wealth, and its success; in the field had crowned its standards with the prestige of invincible power. At the head of this vast Empire was a prince of equal sagacity and ambition, and who was by turns the ally and the enemy of the Pope, yet ever the steady champion of the Papacy, with which he believed the union of his Empire and the stability of his power were bound up. Charles V., first and chiefly, the Protestants had cause to dread.

But a counterpoise had been provided. France, which was not very much less powerful than Spain, was made to weigh upon the arm of Charles, in order to deaden the blow should he strike at Protestantism. He did wish to strike at Protestantism, and sought craftily to persuade Francis to hold back the while. In the spring of 1531 he sent his ambassador Noircarmes to poison the ear of the King of France. Do you know what Lutheranism is? said Noircarmes to Francis one day. It means, concisely, three things, he continued - the first is the destruction of the family, the second is the destruction of property, and the third is the destruction of

the monarchy. Espouse this cause, said the Spanish ambassador, in effect, and you “let in the deluge.”³ If Noircarmes had substituted “Communism” for “Lutheranism,” he might have been regarded as foretelling what France in these latter days has verified.

And now we begin to see the good fruits reaped by Christendom from the disastrous battle of Pavia. It came just in time to counteract the machinations of Charles with the French monarch. The defeat of Francis on that field, and the dreary imprisonment in Madrid that followed it, planted rivalries and dislikes between the two powerful crowns of France and Spain, which kept apart two forces that if united would have crushed the Reformation. Inspired by hatred and dread of the Emperor Charles, not only had the insinuations of his ambassador the less power with Francis, but he cast his eyes around if haply he might discover allies by whose help he might be able to withstand his powerful rival on the other side of the Pyrenees. Francis resolved on making advances to the Protestant princes of Germany. He was all the more strengthened in this design by the circumstance that these princes, who saw a tempest gathering, had just formed themselves into a league of defense. In March, 1531, the representatives of the Protestant States met at Schmalkald, in the Electorate of Hesse, and, as we have elsewhere related, nine princes and eleven cities entered into an alliance for six years “to resist all who should try to constrain them to forsake the Word of God and the truth of Christ.” The smallest of all the political parties in Christendom, the position of the Schmalkalders gave them an influence far beyond their numbers; they stood between the two mighty States of France and Spain. The balance of power was in their hands, and, so far at least, they could play off the crowns of Spain and France against one another.

Accordingly next year Francis sent an ambassador - it was his second attempt - to negotiate an alliance with them. His first ambassador was a fool,⁴ his second was a wise man, Du Bellay,⁵ brother to the Archbishop of Paris, than whom there was no more accomplished man in all France. Du Bellay did what diplomatists only sometimes do, brought heart as well as head to his mission, for

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³Seckendorf, lib. 3., sec. 1; additio 1.

⁴D'Aubigne, Reform. in Europe, bk. 2., chap. 19.

⁵Ibid., bk. 2., chap. 21.

he wished nothing so much as to see his master and his kingdom of France cast off the Pope, and displaying their colors alongside those of Protestant Germany, sail away on the rising tide of Protestantism. Du Bellay told the princes that he had his master's express command to offer them his assistance in their great enterprise, and was empowered "to arrange with them about the share of the war expenses which his majesty was ready to pay." This latter proposal revealed the cloven foot. What was uppermost in the mind of the King of France was to avenge the defeat at Pavia; hence his eagerness for war. The League of Schmalkald bound the German princes to stand on the defensive only; they were not to strike unless Charles or some other should first strike at them. Luther raised his powerful voice against the proposed alliance. He hated political entanglements, mistrusted Francis, had a just horror of spilling blood, and he protested with all his might that the Protestants must rest the triumph of their cause on spiritual and not on carnal weapons; that the Gospel was not to be advanced by battles, and that the Almighty did not need that the princes of earth should vote him succors in order to the effectual completion of his all-wise and Divine plan. The issue was that the stipulation which Du Bellay carried back to Paris could not serve the purposes of his master.

Repulsed on the side of Germany, the King of France turned now to England. This was a quarter in which he was more likely to succeed. Here he had but one man to deal with, Henry VIII. To Henry, Protestantism was a policy merely, not a faith. He had been crossed in his matrimonial projects by the Pope, and so had his special quarrel with Clement VII., as Francis had his with Charles V. The French king sent a messenger across the Channel to feel the pulse of his "good brother" of England, and the result was that an interview was arranged between the two sovereigns - Henry crossing the sea with a brilliant retinue, and Francis coming to meet him with a train not less courtly. Taking up their quarters at the Abbot's Palace at Boulogne (October, 1532), the two monarchs unbosomed to each other their grievances and displeasures, and concerted together a joint plan for humiliating those against whom they bore a common grudge. While Francis and Henry were closeted for hours on end, amusement was found for their courtiers. Balls, masquerades, and other pastimes common in that age occupied that gay assemblage,

and helped to conceal the real business which was proceeding all the while in the royal closet. That business eventually found issue in a league between the Kings of France and England, in which they engaged to raise an army of 50,000 men, ostensibly to attack the Turk; but in reality to begin a campaign against the emperor and the Pope. ⁶ Now, thought Francis, I shall wipe out the disgrace of Pavia; and I, said Henry, shall chastise the insolence of Clement. But both were doomed to disappointment. This league which looked so big, and promised so much, came to nothing. Had this great army been assembled it would have shed much blood, but it would have enlightened no consciences, nor won any victories for truth. It might have humbled the Pope, it would have left the Papacy as strong as ever.

While Francis I. was looking so anxiously around him for allies, and deeming it a point of wisdom to lean on the monarch who could bring the largest army into the field, there was one power, the strength of which he missed seeing. That power had neither fleets nor armies at its service, and so Francis shunned rather than courted its alliance. It was fated, in his opinion, to go to the abyss, and should he be so imprudent as to link his cause with it, it would drag him down into the same destruction with itself. This was a natural but, for Francis, a tremendous mistake. The invisible forces are ever the strongest, and these were all on the side of Protestantism. But it is the eye of faith only that can see these. Francis looked with the eye of sense and could see nothing; and, therefore, stood aloof from a cause which, as it seemed to him, had so few friends, and so many and so powerful enemies. Francis and France lost more than Protestantism did.

⁶Herbert, *Life of Henry VIII.*, p. 366. Du Bellay, *Memoires*, pp. 171 - 174. Brantome, *Memoires*, tom. 1., p. 235 - quoted by D'Aubigne, *Reform. in Europe*, bk. 2., pp. 137 - 140.

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Chapter 11 : The Gospel Preached in Paris - A

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Martyr

Margaret of Navarre—Her Hopes—Resolves to have the Gospel Preached in France—The City Churches not to be had—Opens a Private Chapel in the Louvre—A Large and Brilliant Assembly convenes—The Preachers—Paris Penitent and Reforming—Agitation in the Sorbonne—The Sorbonnists apply to the King—The Monks occupy the Pulpits—They Threaten the King—Beda Banished—Excitement in Paris—The Populace Remain with Rome—The Crisis of France—The Dominican Friar, Laurent de la Croix—His Conversion—Preaches in France—Apprehended and conducted to Paris—His Torture—His Condemnation—His Behaviour at the Stake—France makes her Choice: she will Abide with Rome

Picture: Roussel Preaching in the Louvre.

Picture: View of St. Denis.

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Leaving princes to intrigue for their own ends, under cover of advancing religion, let us turn to the work itself, and mark how it advances by means of instrumentalities far different from those which kings know to employ. This brings before us, once more, a lady illustrious for her rank, and not less illustrious for her piety - Margaret, the sister of the king, and now Queen of Navarre. She saw her brother holding out his hand to the Protestants of Germany, and the King of England, and permitted herself to believe that the hour had at last come when Francis and his kingdom would place themselves on the path of the Reform, and that in the martyrdom of Berquin, which had filled her soul with so profound a sorrow, she had seen the last blood that would ever be sprit on the soil of France, and the last stake that would ever blaze in the Place de Greve for the cause of the Gospel. Full of these hopes, her zeal and courage grew stronger every day. Reflecting that she stood near the throne, that thousands in all parts of Reformed Christendom looked to her

to stand between the oppressor and his victim, and that it became her to avert, as far as was in her power, the guilt of innocent blood from her house and the throne of her brother, she girded herself for the part which it became her to act. The Gospel, said this princess, shall be preached in France, in the very capital, nay, in the very bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. The moment was opportune. The Carnival of 1533 was just ended. Balls and banquets had for weeks kept the court in a whirl and Paris in continual excitement, and, wearied with this saturnalia, Francis had gone to Picardy for repose. Margaret thus was mistress of the situation. She summoned Roussel to her presence, and told him that he must proclaim the "great tidings" to the population of Paris from its pulpits. The timid evangelist shook like aspen when this command was laid upon him. He remonstrated: he painted the immense danger: he acknowledged that it was right that the Gospel should be preached but he was not the man; let Margaret find some more intrepid evangelist. The queen, however, persisted. She issued her orders that the churches of Paris should be opened to Roussel. But she had reckoned without her host. The Sorbonne lifted its haughty head and commanded that the doors of the churches should be kept closed. The queen and the Sorbonne were now in conflict, but the latter carried the day. These Sorbonnists could be compared only to some of old, who professed to be the door-keepers of the kingdom of heaven, but would neither go in themselves, nor permit those that would to enter.

Margaret now bethought her of an expedient which enabled her to turn the flank of the doctors. She was resolved to have the Gospel preached in the capital of France, and to have it preached now; it might be the turning-point of its destiny, and surely it was a likelier way to establish the Reform than that of diplomatists, who were seeking to do so by leagues and battles, if the Sorbonnists were masters in the city, Margaret was mistress in the palace. She accordingly extemporised a chapel in the Louvre, and told Roussel that he must preach in it. This was a less formidable task than holding forth in the city pulpits. The queen publicly announced that each day at a certain hour a sermon would be preached under the royal roof, and that all would be welcome from the peer downwards. The Parisians opened their eyes in wonder. Here was something till now unheard of - the king's palace turned into a Lutheran conventicle! When the

hour came a crowd of all ranks was seen streaming in at the gates of the Louvre, climbing its staircase, and pressing on through the antechambers to the saloon, where, around Roussel, sat the King and Queen of Navarre, and many of the *grande*s of France. The preacher offered a short prayer, and then read a portion of Scripture, which he expounded with clearness and great impressiveness. The result bore testimony to the wisdom of Roussel and the power of the truth. A direct assault on the Papacy would but have excited the combative faculties of his hearers, the exposition of the truth awakened their consciences.

Every day saw a greater crowd gathering in the chapel. The saloon could no longer contain the numbers that came, and antechambers and corridors had to be thrown open to give enlarged space to the multitude. The assembly was as brilliant as it was numerous. Nobles, lawyers, men of letters, and wealthy merchants were mingled in the stream of bourgeoisie and artisans that each day, at the appointed hour, flowed in at the royal gates, and devoutly listened under the gorgeous roof of the Louvre to preaching so unwonted. Verily, he would have been a despondent man who, at that hour, would have doubted the triumph of the good cause in France.

Margaret, emboldened by the success which had attended her experiment, returned to her first idea, which was to get possession of the churches, turn out the monks, and for their ribald harangues substitute the pure Gospel. She wrote to her brother, who was still absent, and perhaps not ill-pleased to be so, making request to have the churches placed at her disposal. Francis granted her wish to the extent of permitting her the use of two of the city churches. He was willing to do Protestantism this service, being shrewd enough to see that his negotiations with English and German Protestants would speed none the worse, and that it might equally serve his purpose to terrify the Pope by the possible instant defection of France from its "obedience" to the "Holy See." One of the churches was situated in the quarter of St. Denis, and Margaret sent the Augustine monk Courault to occupy it, around whom there daily assembled a large and deeply impressed congregation gathered from the district. Berthaud, also an Augustine, occupied the pulpit of the other church

put by Francis at Margaret's disposal. ¹ A fountain of living water had the Queen of Navarre opened in this high place; inexpressible delight filled her soul as she thought that soon this refreshing stream would overflow all France, and convert the parched and weary land into a very garden. It was the season of Easter, and never had Lent like this been kept in Paris. The city, which so lately had rung from one end to the other with the wild joy and guilty mirth of the Carnival, was now not only penitent, but evangelical. "The churches were filled," says the historian Crespin, "not with formal auditors, but with men who received the glad tidings with great joy. Drunkards had become sober, the idle industrious, the disorderly peaceful, and libertines had grown chaste." Three centuries and more have rolled over Paris since then. Often, in the course of that time, has that city been moved, excited, stricken, but never in such sort as now. The same Spirit which, in the days of Noah's preaching, strove with the antediluvians, then shut up, as in prison, under the doom of the coming deluge, unless they repented, was manifestly striving, at this hour, with the men of Paris and of France, shut up, as in a prison, under a sentence which doomed them, unless they escaped by the door that Protestantism opened to them, to sink beneath the fiery billows of war and revolution.

What, meanwhile, were the doctors of the Sorbonne about? Were they standing by with shut mouths and folded arms, quietly looking on, when, as it must have seemed to them, the bark of Peter was drifting to destruction? Did they slumber on their watch-tower, not caring that France was becoming Lutheran? Far from it. They gave a few days to the hearing of the report of their spies, and then they raised the alarm. A flood of heresy, like the flood of waters that drowned the old world, was breaking in on France. They must stop it; but with what? The stake. "Let us burn Roussel," said the fiery Beda, "as we burned Berquin." ² The king was applied to for permission; for powerful as was the Sorbonne, it hardly dared drag the preacher from the Queen of Navarre's side without a warrant from Francis. The king would interfere neither for nor against. They applied to the chancellor. The chancellor referred them to the archbishop, Du

¹Laval., *Hist. Reform.*, vol. 1., p. 28.

²D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, vol. 2., p. 159.

Bellay. He too refused to move. There remained a fourth party to whom they now resolved to carry their appeal the populace. If they could carry the population of Paris with them they should yet be able to save Rome. With this object an agitation was commenced, in which every priest and monk had to bear his part. They sent their preachers into the pulpits. Shouting and gesticulating these men awoke, now the anger, now the horror of their fanatical hearers, by the odious epithets and terrible denunciations which they hurled against Lutheranism. They poured a host of mendicants into the houses of the citizens. These, as instructed beforehand, while they filled their wallets, dropped seditious hints that “the Pope was above the king,” adding that if matters went on as they were doing the crown would not long adorn the head of Francis. Still further to move the people against the queen’s preachers, processions were organized in the streets. For nine days a crowd of penitents, with sackcloth on their loins and ashes on their heads, were seen prostrate around the statue of St. James, loudly imploring the good saint to stretch out his staff, and therewith smite to the dust the hydra that was lifting up its abhorred head in France.

Nor did the doctors of the Sorbonne agitate in vain. The excitable populace were catching fire. Fanatical crowds, uttering revolutionary cries, paraded the streets, and the Queen of Navarre and her Protestant coadjutors, seeing the matter growing serious, sent to tell the king the state of the capital. The issue, in the first instance, was a heavy blow to the agitators. The king’s pride had been touched by the attack which the Romanists had made on the prerogative, and he ordered that Beda, and the more inflammatory spirits who followed him, should be sent into banishment.³ It was a trial of strength, not so much between Evangelism and Romanism as between the court and the university, and the Sorbonne had to bow its proud head. But the departure of Beda did not extinguish the agitation; the fire he had kindled continued to burn after he was gone. Not in a day were the ignorance and fanaticism, which had been ages a-growing, to be extirpated: fiery placards were posted on the houses; ribald ballads were sung in the streets. To the stake! to the stake! the fire is their home; As God hath

³Laval., *Hist. Reform.*, vol. 1., p. 29.

commanded, let justice be done,“

was the refrain of one of these unpolished but cruel productions. Disputations, plots, and rumors kept the city in a perpetual ferment. The Sorbonnists held daily councils; leaving no stone unturned; they worked upon the minds of the leading members of the Parliament of Paris, and by dint of persistency and union, they managed to rally to their standard all the ignorant, the fanatical, and the selfish - that is, the bulk of the population of the capital. The Protestant sermons were confirmed for some time; many conversions took place, but the masses remained on the side of Rome.

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This was the CRISIS of France - the day of its special visitation. More easily than ever before or since might France have freed its soul from the yoke of Rome, and secured for all coming time the glorious heritage of Protestant truth and liberty. This was, in fact, its second day of visitation. The first had occurred under Lefevre and Farel. That day had passed, and the golden opportunity that came with it had been lost. A second now returned, for there in the midst of Paris were the feet of them that “publish peace,” and that preach “the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” What all auspicious and blessed achievement if Margaret had been able to win the population of Paris to the Gospel! Paris won, France would have followed. It needed but this to crown its many happy qualities, and make France one of the most delightful lands on earth - a land full of all terrestrial good things; ennobled, moreover, by genius, and great in art as in arms. But Paris was deaf as adder to the voice of the charmer, and from that hour the destiny of France was changed. A future of countless blessings was fatally transformed into a future of countless woes. We behold woe on woe rising with the rising centuries, we had almost said with the rising years. If for a moment its sun looks forth, lo! there comes another tempest from the abyss, black as night, and bearing on its wings the fiery shower to scorch the miserable land. The St. Bartholomew massacre and civil wars of the sixteenth century, the dragonnades of the seventeenth, the revolution of the eighteenth, and the communism of the nineteenth are but the more notable outbursts of that revolving storm which for 300 years has darkened the heavens and devastated the land of France.

Paris had made its choice. And as in old time when men joined hands and entered into covenant they ratified the transaction by sacrifice, Paris sealed its engagement to abide by the Pope in the blood of a disciple of the Gospel. Had the Sorbonne been more completely master of the situation, Roussel would have been selected as the sacrifice; but he was too powerfully protected to permit the priests venturing on burning him, and a humbler victim had to be found. A Dominican friar, known by the name of Laurent de la Croix, had come to the knowledge of the Gospel in Paris. Straightway he threw off his cowl and cloak and monkish name, and fled to Geneva, where Farel received him, and more perfectly instructed him in the Reformed doctrines. To great natural eloquence he now added a clear knowledge and a burning zeal. Silent he could not remain, and Switzerland was the first scene of his evangelizing efforts. But the condition of poor France began to lie heavy on his heart, and though he well knew the perils he must brave, he could not restrain his yearnings to return and preach to his countrymen that Savior so dear to himself. Crossing the frontier, and taking the name of Alexander, he made his way to Lyons. Already Protestantism had its disciples in the city of Peter Waldo, and these gave a warm welcome to the evangelist. He began to preach, and his power to move the hearts of men was marvelous. In Lyons, the scene of Irenaeus' ministry, and the seat of a Church whose martyrs were amongst the most renowned of the primitive age, it seemed as if the Gospel, which here had lain a thousand years in its sepulcher, were rising from the dead. Alexander preached every day, this hour in one quarter of the city and the next in the opposite. ⁴ It began to be manifest that some mysterious influence was acting on the population. The agents of the priests were employed to scent it out; but it seemed as if the preacher, whoever he was, to his other qualities added that of invisibility. His pursuers, in every case, arrived to find the sermon ended, and the preacher gone, they knew not whither. This success in baffling pursuit made his friends in time less careful. Alexander was apprehended. Escorted by bowmen, and loaded with chains, he was sent to Paris.

⁴Fromant, *Actes et Gestes de Geneve*, p. 74. D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, bk. 2., chap. 32.

The guard soon saw that the prisoner they had in charge was like no other that had ever before been committed to their keeping. Before Paris was reached, the captain of the company, as well as several of its members, had, as the result of their prisoner's conversation with them, become converts to the Gospel. As he pursued his journey in bonds, Alexander preached at the inns and villages where they halted for the night. At every stage of the way he left behind him trophies of the Protestant faith.

The prisoner was comforted by the thought that his Master had turned the road to the stake into a missionary progress, and if in a few days he should breathe his last amid the flames, others would rise from his ashes to confess the truth when he could no longer preach it.

Arrived in Paris, he was brought before the Parliament. The prisoner meekly yet courageously confessed the Reformed faith. He was first cruelly tortured. Putting his limbs in the boot, the executioners drove in the wedges with such blows that his left leg was crushed. Alexander groaned aloud. "O God," he exclaimed, says Crespin, "there is neither pity nor mercy in these men! Oh, that I may find both in thee!" "Another blow," said the head executioner. The martyr seeing Budaeus among the assessors, and turning on him a look of supplication, said, "Is there no Gamaliel here to moderate the cruelty they are practicing on me?"⁵ Budaeus, great in the schools, but irresolute in the matters of the Gospel, fixing an eye of pity on Alexander, said, "It is enough: his torture is too much: forbear." His words took effect. "The executioners," says Crespin, "lifted up the martyr, and carried him to his dungeon, a cripple."⁶ He was condemned to be burned alive. In the hope of daunting him, his sentence, contrary to the then usual practice, was pronounced in his presence; but they who watched his face, instead of fear, saw a gleam of joy shoot, at the instant, athwart it. He was next made to undergo the ceremony of degradation. They shaved his crown, scraped his fingertips, and tore off his robe. "If you speak a word," said they, "we will cut out your tongue;" for about this time, according to the historian Crespin, this horrible barbarity began to be practiced upon

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⁵Crespin, *Martyrologie*, fol. 107.

⁶*Ibid.*

the confessors of the truth. Last of all they brought forth the robe of gold. When Alexander saw himself about to be arrayed in this dress, he could not, says Crespin, refrain from speaking. "O God," said he, "is there any higher honour than to receive the livery which thy Son received in the house of Herod?"

The martyr was now attired for the fire. Unable to walk to the place of execution, for one of his legs had been sorely mangled in the boot, they provided a cart, one usually employed to convey away rubbish, and placed the martyr in it. As he passed along from the Conciergerie to the Place Maubert he managed to stand up, and resting his hands on the sides of the cart and leaning over, he preached to the crowds that thronged the streets, commending to them the Savior for whom he was about to die, and exhorting them to flee from the wrath to come. The smile which his sentence had kindled on his face had not yet gone off it; nay, it appeared to glow and brighten the nearer he drew to the stake. "He is going to be burned," said the onlookers, "and yet no one seems so, happy as he."

Being come to the place of execution they lifted him out of the cart, placed him against the stake, and bound him to it with chains. He begged, before they should kindle the pile, that he might be permitted to say a few more last words to the people. Leave was given, and breaking into an ecstasy he again extolled that Savior for whom he was now to lay down his life, and again commended him to those around. The executioners, as they waited to do their office, gazed with mingled wonder and fear on this strange criminal. The spectators, among whom was a goodly number of monks, said, "Surely there is nothing worthy of death in this man," and smiting on their breasts, and bewailing his fate, with plenteous tears, exclaimed, "If this man is not saved, who of the sons of men can be so?"⁷ Well might the martyr, as he saw them weeping, have said, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves." A few sharp pangs, and to him would come joy for ever; but for them, alas! and for their children, the cry of the blood of the martyr, and of thousands more yet to be slain, was to be answered in a future dark with woes.

⁷"Quibus omnibus ita confectis rebus, erant, vel monachi, qui dicerent, Si hic salvus non esset, neminem salvum fore mortalem. Alii vero discedentes percutiebant pectus, discebantque gravem illi factam injuriam." (Acta Martyrum, ann. 1560, 4., p. 62 et seq. - ex Gerdesio, tom. 4., p. 86.)

Now that we find ourselves 300 years from these events, and can look back on all that has come and gone in Paris since, we can clearly see that the year 1533 was one of the grand turning-points in the history of France. Between the stake of Berquin and the stake of Alexander, there were three full years during which the winds of persecution were holden. During at least two of these years the Gospel was freely and faithfully preached in the capital; an influence from on High was plainly at work amongst the people. Five thousand men and women daily passed in at the gates of the Louvre to listen to Roussel; and numerous churches throughout the city were opened and filled with crowds that seemed to thirst for the Water of Life. Many “felt the powers of the world to come.” In these events, Providence put it distinctly to the inhabitants of Paris, “Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve. Will ye abide by the Papacy, or will ye cast in your lot with the Reformation?” and the men of Paris as distinctly replied, when the period of probation had come to an end, “We will abide by the Pope.” The choice of Paris was the choice of France. Scarcely were the flames of Alexander’s pile extinguished, when the sky of that country, which was kindling apace, as the friends of truth fondly thought, with the glories of the opening day, because suddenly overcast, and clouds of threatening blackness began to gather. In the spring of 1534 the churches of Paris were closed, the sermons were suppressed, 300 Lutherans were swept off to prison, and soon thereafter the burnings were resumed. But the ominous circumstance was that the persecutor was backed by the populace. Queen Margaret’s attempt to win over the population of the capital to the Gospel had proved a failure, and the consequence was that the Sorbonne, with the help of the popular suffrage, again set up the stake, and from that day to this the masses in France have been on the side of Rome.

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Chapter 12 : Calvin's Flight from Paris

Out of Paris comes the Reformer—The Contrasts of History—Calvin's Interview with the Queen of Navarre—Nicholas Cop, Rector of the Sorbonne—An Inaugural Discourse—Calvin Writes and Cop Delivers it—The Gospel in Disguise—Rage of the Sorbonne—Cop flies to Basle—The Officers on their way to Arrest Calvin—Calvin is let down by the Window—Escapes from Paris disguised as a Vine-Dresser—Arrives in Angouleme—Received at the Mansion of Du Tillet—Here projects the Institutes—Interview with Lefevre—Lefevre's Prediction

[175] Pepin of France was the first of the Gothic princes to appear before the throne of St. Peter, and lay his kingdom at the feet of the Pope. As a reward for this act of submission, the "Holy Father" bestowed upon him the proud title - for so have the Kings of France accounted it - of "Eldest Son of the Church." Throughout the thirteen centuries since, and amid much vicissitude of fortune, France has striven to justify the distinction she bears by being the firmest pillar of the Papal See. But, as D'Aubigne has observed, if Paris gave Pepin to the Popedom, it is not less true that Paris gave Calvin to the Reformation. This is the fact, although Calvin was not born in Paris. The little Noyon in Picardy had this honour, or disgrace as it accounted it. ¹ But if Noyon was the scene of Calvin's first birth, Paris was the scene of his second birth, and it was the latter that made him a Reformer. In estimating the influence of the two men, the pen of Calvin may well be thrown into the scale against the sword of Pepin.

As the cradle of Moses was placed by the side of the throne of Pharaoh, the Church's great oppressor, so the cradle of this second

¹ It is a curious fact that during the lifetime of Calvin a conflagration broke out in his native town of Noyon, and destroyed the entire quarter in which the house he was born in was situated, the house itself excepted, which remained uninjured in the midst of the vast gap the flames had created.

Moses was placed by the side of the chair of Pepin, the “Eldest; Son of the Church,” and the first of those vassal kings who stood round the Papal throne; and from the court of France, as Moses from the court of Egypt, Calvin went forth to rend the fetters of his brethren, and ring the knell of their oppressor’s power. The contrasts and resemblances of history are instructive as well as striking. They shed a beautiful light upon the Providence of God. They show us that the Great Ruler has fixed a time and a place for every event and for every man; that he sets the good over against the evil, maintaining a nice and equitable poise among events, and that while the laws of his working are eternal, the results are inexpressibly varied.

We have seen Calvin return to Paris in 1529. He was present in that city during those four eventful years when the novel and stirring scenes we have narrated were taking place. How was he occupied? He felt that to him the day of labor had not yet fully arrived; he must prepare against its approach by reading, by study, and by prayer. In the noisy combats with which the saloons, the halls of the Sorbonne, and even the very streets were then resounding, Calvin cared but little to mingle. His ambition was to win victories which, if less ostentatious, would be far more durable. Like his old teacher, Mathurin Cordier - so wise in his honesty - he wished solidly to lay the foundations, and was not content to rear structures which were sure to topple over with the first breeze. He desired to baptise men for the stake, to make converts who would endure the fire. Eschewing the knots of disputants in the streets, he entered the abodes of the citizens, and winning attention by his very shyness, as well as by the clearness and sweetness of his discourse, he talked with the family on the things that belonged to their peace. He had converted a soul while his friends outside had but demolished a syllogism. Calvin was the pioneer of all those who, since his day, have labored in the work of the recovery of the lapsed masses.

However, the fame he shunned did, the more he fled from it, but the more pursue him. His name was mentioned in the presence of the Queen of Navarre. Margaret must needs see the young evangelist.² We tremble as we see Calvin enter the Louvre to be presented at court. They who are in king’s houses wear “soft raiment,” and learn

²Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

to pursue middle courses. If Calvin is to be all to the Church he must be nothing to kings and queens. All the more do we tremble at the ordeal he is about to undergo when we reflect that, in combination with his sternness of principle and uprightness of aim, there are in Calvin a tenderness of heart, and a yearning, not for praise, but for sympathy, which may render him susceptible to the blandishments and flatteries of a court. But God went with him to the palace. Calvin's insight discovered even then, what afterwards became manifest to less penetrating observers, that, while Margaret's piety was genuine, it was clouded nevertheless by mysticism, and her opinions, though sound in the main, were too hesitating and halting to compass a full Reformation of the Church.

On these accounts he was unable to fully identify himself with the cause of the Queen of Navarre. Nevertheless, there were not a few points of similarity between the two which excited a mutual admiration. There was in both a beautiful genius; there was in both a lofty soul; there was in both a love of what is pure and noble; and especially there was in both - what is the beginning and end of all piety - a deep heaven-begotten reverence and love of the Savior. Margaret did not conceal her admiration of the young scholar and evangelist. His eye so steadfast, yet so keen; his features so calm, yet so expressive of energy; the wisdom of his utterances, and the air of serene strength that breathed around him - betokening a power within, which, though enshrined in a somewhat slender frame, was evidently awaiting a future of great achievements - won the confidence of the queen. ³ Calvin was in a fair way of becoming a frequent visitor at the palace, when an unexpected event drove the young scholar from Paris, and averted the danger, if ever it had existed, of the chief Reformer of Christendom becoming lost in the court chaplain.

That event fell out thus - Nicholas Cop, Rector of the Sorbonne, was the intimate friend of Calvin. It was October, 1533, and the session of the university was to open on the 1st of next month (All Saints' Day), when Cop was expected to grace the occasion with an inaugural discourse. What an opportunity, thought Calvin, of having the Gospel preached in the most public of all the pulpits of

³Ibid., p. 14. See also Calvini Opp.

Christendom! He waited on his friend Cop and broke to him his stratagem. But Cop felt unequal to the task of composing such an address as would answer the end. It was finally agreed between the two friends that Calvin should write, and that Cop should read the oration. It was a bold experiment, full of grave risks, of which its devisers were not unaware, but they had made up their minds to the dangerous venture.

The 1st of November arrived. It saw a brilliant assembly in the Church of the Mathurins - professors, students, the elite of the learned men of Paris, a goodly muster of Franciscans, some of whom more than half suspected Cop of a weakness for Lutheranism, and a sprinkling of the friends of the new opinions, who had had a hint of what was to happen. On a bench apart sat Calvin, with the air of one who had dropped in by the way. Cop rose, and proceeded amid deep silence to pronounce an oration in praise of "Christian Philosophy." But the philosophy which he extolled was not that which had been drawn from the academies of Greece, but that diviner wisdom to reveal which to man the Immortal had put on mortality. The key-note of the discourse was the "Grace of God," the one sole fountain of man's renewal, pardon, and eternal life. The oration, although Protestant in spirit, was very thoroughly academic. Its noble sentiments were clothed in language clear, simple, yet majestic.⁴

Blank astonishment was portrayed on the faces of the most part of the audience at the beginning of the oration. By-and-by a countenance here and there began to kindle with delight. Others among the listeners were becoming uneasy on their seats. The monks knit their brows, and shooting out fiery glances from beneath them, exchanged whispers with one another. They saw through the thin disguise in which the rector was trying to veil the Gospel. Spoken on "All Saints' Day," yet not a word about the saints did that oration contain! It was a desecration of their festival; an act of treason against these glorious intercessors; a blow struck at the foundations of Rome: so they judged, and rightly. The assembly rose, and then the storm burst. Heresy had reached an astounding pitch of audacity when it

⁴This discourse was discovered some years ago by Dr. Bonnet in the Library of Geneva, where it is still preserved. It was first given to the public by Dr. D'Aubigne, in his *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*. (See vol. 2., bk. 2., chap. 30.)

dared to rear its head in the very midst of the Sorbonne. It must be struck down at once.

Cop was denounced to the Parliament, then the supreme judge and executioner of heretics. Summoned to its bar, he resolved, strong in the integrity of his cause, and presuming not a little on his position as head of the first university in Christendom, to obey the citation. He was already on his way to the Palace of Justice, attired in his robes of office, his beadles and apparitors preceding him, with their maces and gold-headed staves, when a friend, pressing through the crowd, whispered into his ear that he was marching to his death. Cop saw the danger of prosecuting further this duel between the Parliament and the Sorbonne. He fled to Basle, and so escaped the fate already determined on for him. ⁵

When Cop was gone, it began to be rumored that the author of the address, which had set Parliament and the university in flames, was still in Paris, and that he was no other than Calvin. Such a spirit was enough to set all Christendom on fire: he must be burned. Already the lieutenant-criminal, Jean Morin, who for some time had had his eye on the young evangelist, ⁶ was on his way to apprehend him. Calvin, who deemed himself safe in his obscurity, was sitting quietly in his room in the College of Fortret ⁷ when some of his comrades came running into his chamber, and urged him to flee that instant. Scarcely had they spoken when a loud knocking was heard at the outer gate. It was the officers. Now their heavy tramp was heard in the corridor. Another moment and Calvin would be on his way to the Conciergerie, to come out of it only to the stake. That would, indeed, have been a blow to the Reformation, and probably would have changed the whole future of Christendom. But God interposed at this moment of peril. While some of his friends held a parley with the officers at the door, others, seizing the sheets on his bed, twisted them into a rope, fastened them in the window, and Calvin, catching hold of them, let himself down into the street of the Bernardins. ⁸

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⁵Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁶Maimbourg, *Hist. du Calvinisme*, p. 58.

⁷Gaillard, *Hist. de Francois*, tom., 1., livr. 4. p. 274.

⁸D'Au'bigne, *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, vol. 2., p. 279. Felice, *Hist. Prot. in France*, vol. 1., p. 35.

Dropped into the street, the fugitive traversed Paris with rapid steps, and soon reached the suburbs. His first agitation subsiding, he began to think how he could disguise himself, knowing that the officers of Morin would be on his track. Espying a vine-dresser's cottage, and knowing the owner to be friendly to the Gospel, he entered, and there arranged the plan of his flight. Doffing his own dress, he put on the coat of the peasant, and, with a garden hoe on his shoulder he set out on his journey. He went forth not knowing whither he went - the pioneer of hundreds of thousands who in after-years were to flee from France, and to seek under other skies that liberty to confess the Gospel which was denied them in their native land. To Calvin the disappointment must have been as keen as it was sudden. He had fondly hoped that the scene of his conversion would be the scene of his labours also. He saw too, as he believed, the Gospel on the eve of triumphing in France. Was it not preached in the churches of the capital, taught from some of the chairs of the Sorbonne, and honoured in the palace of the monarch? But God had arranged for both France and Calvin a different future from that which the young evangelist pictured to himself. The great kingdom of France was to harden its heart that God might glorify his power upon it, and Calvin was to go into exile that he might prepare in solitude those great works by which he was to instruct so many nations, and speak to the ages of the future.

Turning to the south, Calvin went on towards Orleans, but he did not stop there. He pursued his way to Tours, but neither did he halt there. Going onwards still, he traveled those great plains which the Loire and other streams water, so rich in meadows and tall umbrageous trees, and which are so loved by the vine, forming then as they do at this day the finest part of that fine country. After some weeks' wandering, he reached Angouleme, the birth-place of Margaret of Navarre.⁹ Here he directed his steps to the mansion of the Du Tillet, a noble and wealthy family, high in office in the State, famed moreover for their love of letters, and with one of whose members Calvin had formed an acquaintance in Paris. The exile had not miscalculated. The young Du Tiller, the only one of the family then at home, was delighted to resume in Angouleme the intercourse

⁹Beza. Vita Calvini.

begun in Paris. The noble mansion with all in it was at the service of Calvin.¹⁰

The mariner whose bark, pursued by furious winds, is suddenly lifted on the top of some billow mightier than its fellows, floated in safety over the reef on which it seemed about to be dashed, and safely landed in the harbor, is not more surprised or more thankful than Calvin was when he found himself in this quiet and secure asylum. The exile needed rest; he needed time for reading and meditation; he found both under this princely and friendly roof. The library of the chateau was one of the finest of which France, or perhaps any other country, in that age could boast, containing, it is said, some 4,000 volumes. Here he reposed, but was not idle. As Luther had been wafted away in the midst of the tempest to rest awhile in the Wart-burg, so Calvin was made to sit down here and equip himself for the conflicts that were about to open. Around him were the mighty dead, with nothing to interrupt his converse with them. An occasional hour would he pass in communing with his friend the young Louis du Tillet; but even this had to be redeemed. Nights without sleep, and whole days during which he scarcely tasted food, would Calvin pass in this library, so athirst was he for knowledge. It was here that Calvin projected his Institutes, which D'Aubigne styles "the finest work of the Reformation." Not that he wrote it here; but in this library he collected the materials, arranged the plan, and it may be penned some of its passages. We shall have occasion to speak of this great work afterwards; suffice it here to remark that it was composed on the model of those apologies which the early Fathers presented to the Roman emperors on behalf of the primitive martyrs. Again were men dying at the stake for the Gospel. Calvin felt that it became him to raise his voice in their defense; but how could he better vindicate them than by vindicating their cause, and proving in the face of its enemies and of the whole world that it was the cause of truth? But to plead such a cause before such an audience was no light matter. He prepared himself by reading, by much meditation, and by earnest prayer; and then he spoke in the Institutes with a voice that sounded through Europe, and the mighty reverberations of which have come down the ages. An opponent

¹⁰Felice, *Hist. Prot. In France*, vol. 1., p. 35.

of the Reformation chancing to enter, in after-years, this famous library, and knowing who had once occupied it, cast around him a look of anger, and exclaimed, "This is the smithy where the modern Vulcan forged his bolts; here it was that he wove the web of the Institutes, which we may call the Koran or Talmud of heresy."¹¹

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An episode of a touching kind varied the sojourn of Calvin at Angouleme. Lefevre still survived, and was living at Nerac, near to Angouleme, enjoying the protection and friendship of Margaret. Calvin, who yearned to see the man who had first opened the door of France to the Reformation, set out to visit him. The aged doctor and the young Reformer met for the first and last time. Calvin was charmed with the candor, the humility, the zeal, and the loving spirit of Lefevre - lights that appeared to shine the brighter in proportion as he in whom they dwelt drew towards the tomb. Lefevre, on his part, was equally struck with the depth of intellect and range of view exhibited by Calvin. A Reformer of loftier stature than any he had hitherto known stood before him. In truth, the future, as sketched by the bold hand of Calvin, filled him with something like alarm. Calvin's Reform went a good way beyond any that Lefevre had ever projected. The good doctor of Etaples had never thought of discarding the Pope and hierarchy, but of transforming them into Protestant pastors. He was for uniting the tyranny of the infallibility with the liberty of the Bible. Calvin by this time had abandoned the idea of Reforming Catholicism; his rule was the Word of God alone, and the hoped-for end a new structure on Divine foundations. Nevertheless, the aged Lefevre grasping his hand, and perhaps recalling to mind his own words to Farel, that God would send a deliverer, and that they should see it, said, "Young

306 man, you will be one day a powerful instrument in the Lord's hand; God will make use of you to restore the kingdom of heaven in France."¹²

¹¹Flor. Raemond, *Hist. Heres.*, vol. 2., p. 246 - ex D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform.* in *Europe*, vol. 3., p. 12.

¹²Beza, *Vita Calvini*. Lefevre is said to have expressed in his last days bitter regret for not having more openly professed the truth. See *Bulletin de la Soc. de l'Hist. Prot. Fr.* 11. 215.

Chapter 13 : First Protestant Administration of the Lord's Supper in France

Calvin goes to Poitiers—Its Society—Calvin draws Disciples round him—Re-unions—The Gardens of the Basses Treilles—The Abbot Ponthus—Calvin's Grotto—First Dispensation of the Lord's Supper in France—Formation of a Protestant Congregation—Home Mission Scheme for the Evangelisation of France—The Three First Missionaries—Their Labours and Deaths—Calvin Leaves Poitiers—The Church of Poitiers—Present State and Aspect of Poitiers

Picture: Celebration of the Lords Supper by Calvin and his Fellow-Protestants in the Grotto at Poicfiers

Picture: Poitiers as seen from the Aqueduct.

Calvin had been half-a-year at Angouleme, and now, the storm having blown over, he quitted it and returned northward to Poitiers. The latter was then a town of great importance. It was the seat of a flourishing university, and its citizens numbered amongst them men eminent for their rank, their learning, or their professional ability. Two leagues distant from the town is the battle-field where, in 1356, the Black Prince met the armies of France under John of Valois, and won his famous victory. Here, in the spring of 1534, we behold a humble soldier arriving to begin a battle which should change the face of the world. In this district, too, in former times lived Abelard, and the traces he had left behind him, though essentially skeptical, helped to prepare the way for Calvin. Thin, pale, and singularly unobtrusive, yet the beauty of his genius and the extent of his knowledge soon drew around the stranger a charmed circle of friends.

The Prior of Trois Moutiers, a friend of the Du Tillet's, opened his door to the traveller. The new opinions had already found some entrance into the learned society of Poitiers; but with Calvin came

a new and clearer light, which soon attracted a select circle of firm friends.

The chief magistrate, Pierre de La Planche, became his friend, and at his house he was accustomed to meet the distinguished men of the place, and under his roof, and sometimes in the garden, the Basses Treilles, did Calvin expound to them the true nature of the Gospel and the spiritual glory of the kingdom of heaven, thus drawing them away from idle ceremonies and dead formulas, to living doctrines by which the heart is renewed and the life fructified. Some contemned the words spoken to them, others received them with meekness and joy. Among these converts was Ponthus, abbot of a Benedictine convent in the neighborhood of Poitiers, and head of a patrician family. ¹ Forsaking a brilliant position, he was the first abbot in France who openly professed himself a disciple of the Reformed faith. Among his descendants there have been some who gave their lives for the Gospel; and to this day the family continue steadfastly on the side of Protestantism, adorning it by their piety not less than by their rank. ²

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It was at Poitiers that the evangelisation of France began in a systematic way. The school which Calvin here gathered round him comprehended persons in all conditions of life - canons, lawyers, professors, counts, and tradesmen. They discoursed about Divine mysteries as they walked together on the banks of the neighboring torrent, the Clain, or as they assembled in the garden of the Basses Treilles, where, like the ancient Platonists, they often held their re-unions. There, as the Papists have said, were the first beginnings in France of Protestant conventicles and councils. ³ "As it was in a garden," said the Roman Catholics of Poitiers, "that our first parents were seduced, so are these men being enchanted by Calvin in the garden of the Basses Treilles." ⁴

¹Beza, *Hist. des Eglises Ref.*, vol. 1., p. 63. Flor. Raemon, *Hist. Heres.*, vol. 7., p. 919.

²The late Count Alexander de St. George, for many years President of the Evangelical Society of Geneva, was a lineal descendant of Abbot Ponthus. (D'Aubigne.)

³"In horto illo primum Calvinisticum celebratum fuit concilium in Gallia." (Flor. Raemon, *Hist. Heres.*, vol. 2., p. 252.)

⁴D'Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 59.

By-and by it was thought prudent to discontinue these meetings in the Basses Treilles, and to seek some more remote and solitary place of re-union. A deep and narrow ravine, through which rolls the rivulet of the Clain, winds past Poitiers. Its rocks, being of the limestone formation, abound in caves, and one of the roomiest of these, then known as the “Cave of Benedict,” but which from that day to this has borne the name of “Calvin’s Grotto,” was selected as the scene of the future gatherings of the converts.⁵ It was an hour’s walk from the town. Dividing into groups, each company, by a different route, found its way to the cave. Here prayer was offered and the Scriptures expounded, the torrent rolling beneath, and the beetling rocks and waving trees concealing the entrance. In this grotto, so far as the light of history serves, was the Lord’s Supper celebrated for the first time in France after the Protestant fashion.⁶ On an appointed day the disciples met here, and Calvin, having expounded the Word and offered prayer, handed round the bread and cup, of which all partook, even as in the upper room at Jerusalem sixteen centuries before. The place had none of the grandeurs of cathedral, but “the glory of God and the Lamb” lent it beauty. No chant of priest, no swell of organ accompanied the service, but the devotion of contrite hearts, in fellowship with Christ, was ascending from that rocky chamber, and coming up before the throne in heaven. Often since have the children of the Reformation assembled in the dens and caves, in the forests, wildernesses, and mountains of France, to sing their psalm and celebrate their worship; and He who disdains the gorgeous temple, which unholy rites defile, has been present with them, turning the solitude of the low-browed cave into an august presence-chamber, in which they have seen the glory and heard the voice of the Eternal.

Calvin now saw, as the fruit of his labours, a little Protestant congregation in Poitiers. This did not content him; he desired to make this young Church a basis of evangelisation for the surrounding

⁵Lievre, *Hist. du Protestantisme du Poitou*, vol. 1., p. 23. Flor. Raemond, *Hist. Heres.*, vol. 2., p. 253. D’Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 61.

⁶“In locis illis secretis prima Calvinistea Coena celebrata fuit.” (Flor. Raemond, *Hist. Heres.*, vol. 2., p. 253.) “Raemond declares,” says D’Aubigne, “that he had spared no pains to trace out all Calvin’s career in France,” but the historian adds “that this has not prevented him from occasionally seasoning his narrative with abuse and calumny.”

provinces, and ultimately for the whole kingdom. One day in the little assembly he said, "Is there any one here willing to go and give light to those whom the Pope has blinded?"⁷ Jean Vernon, Philip Veron, and Albert Babinot stood up and offered themselves for this work. Veron and Babinot, turning their steps to the south and west, scattered the good seed in those fertile provinces and great cities which lie along the course of the Garonne. In Toulouse and Bordeaux they made many disciples. Obeying Calvin's instructions they sought to win the teachers of the youth, and in many cases they entirely succeeded; so that, as we find the staunch Roman Catholic Raemond complaining, "the minister was hid under the cloak of the magister," "the young were lost before they were aware of their danger," and "many with only down on their chins were so incurably perverted, that they preferred being roasted over a slow fire to renouncing their Calvinism."⁸ Jean Vernon remained at Poitiers, where he found an interesting field of labor among the students at the university. It was ever the aim of Calvin to unite religion and science. He knew that when these are divorced we have a race of fanatics on the one side, and of sceptics on the other; therefore, of his little band, he commanded one to abide at the university seat; and of the students not a few embraced the Reformed faith. These three missionaries, combining prudence with activity, and escaping the vigilance of the priests, continued to evangelise in France to their dying day. Veron and Babinot departed in peace; Vernon was seized as he was crossing the Alps of Savoy, and burned at Chambery. This was the first home-mission set agoing in modern times. After a stay of barely two months Calvin quitted Poitiers, going on by way of Orleans and Paris to Noyon, his birth-place, which he visited now for the last time. But he did not leave Poitiers as he had found it. There was now within its walls a Reformed Church, embracing many men distinguished by their learning, occupying positions of influence, and ready to confess Christ, if need were amid the flames.⁹

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⁷Flor. Raemond, Hist. Heres. vol. 2., p. 253.

⁸Ibid., vol. 2., chap. 9.

⁹This is attested by the Lettre de Ste. Marthe a Calvin, found by Jules Bonnet in the Library at Gotha (MSS. No. 401).

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It is deeply interesting to observe the condition at this day of a city around which the visit of Calvin has thrown so great an interest, and whose Church, founded by his hands, held no inconspicuous place among the Protestant Churches of France in the early days of the Reformation. ¹⁰ Poitiers, we dare say, like the city of Aosta in Italy, is in nowise proud of this episode in its history, and would rather efface than perpetuate the traces of its illustrious visitor; and, indeed, it has been very successful in doing so. We question whether there be now a dozen persons in all Poitiers who know that the great chief of the Reformation once honoured it by his residence, and that there he laid the foundations of a Protestant Church which afterwards gave martyrs to the Gospel. Poitiers is at this day a most unexceptionably Roman Catholic city, and exhibits all the usual proofs and concomitants of genuine Roman Catholicism in the dreariness and stagnation of its streets, and the vacuity and ignorance to be read so plainly on the faces of its inhabitants. The landscape around is doubtless the same as when Calvin went in and out at its gates. There is the same clear, dry, balmy sky; there is the same winding and picturesque ravine, with the rivulet watering its bottom, and its sides here terraced with vines, there overhung with white limestone rocks, while cottages perched amid fruit-trees, and mills, their wheels turned by the stream, are to be seen along its course. East and west of the town lie outspread those plains on which the Black Prince, in the fourteenth century, marshalled his bowmen, and where French and English blood flowed in commingled torrents, and where, 200 years later, Calvin restored to its original simplicity that rite which commemorates an infinitely greater victory than hero ever achieved on earth. Within its old limits, unchanged since the times of Calvin, is the town itself. Here has Poitiers been sitting all this long while, nursing its orthodoxy till little besides is left it to nurse. Manufactures and commerce have left it; it has but a scanty portion of the corn and wine which the plains around yield to others. Its churches and edifices have grown hoary and tottering; the very chimes of its bells have a weird and drowsy sound; and its citizens,

¹⁰In the autumn of 1869 the author passed along the great valley of the Loire on his way to Spain, visiting the places where Calvin had sojourned, and more especially Poitiers.

silent, listless, and pensive, look as if they belonged to the fifteenth century, and had no light to be seen moving about in the nineteenth.

In the center of Poitiers is a large quadrangular piazza, a fountain in the middle of it, a clock-tower in one of its angles, and numerous narrow lanes running out from it in all directions. These lanes are steep, winding, and ill-paved. In one of these lanes, but a little way from the central piazza, is a venerable pile of Gothic architecture, as old, at least, as the days of Calvin, and which may have served as the college amongst whose professors and students he found his first disciples. Its gables, turned to the street, show to the passer-by its rich oriels; and pleasant to the eye is its garden of modest dimensions, with its bit of velvet sward, and its trees, old and gnarled, but with life enough in their roots to send along their boughs, in spring, a rush of rich massy foliage.

A little farther off from the Piazza, in another lane which attains the width of a street, with an open space before it, stands the Cathedral, by much the most noticeable of all the buildings of Poitiers. Its front is a vast unrolled scroll of history, or perhaps we ought to say of biography. It is covered from top to bottom with sculptures, the subjects extremely miscellaneous, and some of them not a little grotesque. The lives of numerous Scripture heroes - patriarchs, warriors, and kings - are here depicted, being chiselled in stone, while in the alternate rows come the effigies of saints, and Popes, and great abbots; and, obtruding uncouthly among these venerable and dignified personages, are monsters of a form and genus wholly unknown to the geologist. A rare sight must this convention of ante-diluvians, of mediaeval Popes, and animals whose era it is impossible to fix, have presented when in the prime of its stony existence. But the whole goodly assemblage, under the influence of the weather, is slowly passing into oblivion, and will by-and-by disappear, leaving only the bare weather-worn sand-stone, unless the chisel come timeously to the rescue, and give the worthies that figure here a new lease of life.

Calvin must sometimes have crossed the threshold of this Cathedral and stood under this roof. The interior is plain indeed, offering a striking contrast to the gorgeous grotesqueness of the exterior. The walls, covered with simple whitewash, are garnished with a few poor pictures, such as a few pence would buy at a print-seller's. The usual

nave and aisle are wanting, and a row of stone pillars, also covered with whitewash, run along the center of the floor and support the roof of the edifice. It had been well if Poitiers had continued steadfast in the doctrine taught it by the man who entered its gates in the March of 1534. Its air at this hour would not have been so thick, nor its streets so stagnant, nor its edifices so crumbling; in short, it would not have been lying stranded now, dropped far astern in the world's onward march.

Chapter 14 : Catherine De Medici

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St. Paul—Calvin—Desire to Labor in Paris—Driven from this Field—Francis I. Intrigues to Outmanoeuvre Charles V—Offers the Hand of his Second Son to the Pope's Niece—Joy of Clement VII—The Marriage Agreed on—Catherine de Medici—Rise of the House of Medici—Cosmo I—His Patronage of Letters and Scholars—Fiesole—Descendants of Cosmo—Clement VII—Birth of Catherine de Medici—Exposed to Danger—Lives to Mount the Throne of France—Catherine as a Girl—Her Fascination—Her Tastes—Her Morals—Her Love of Power; etc

St. Paul when converted fondly hoped to abide at Jerusalem, and from this renowned metropolis, where the Kings of Judah had reigned, where the prophets of Jehovah and One greater than all prophets had spoken, he purposed to spread abroad the light among his countrymen. But a new dispensation had commenced, and there must be found for it a new center. In Judaea, Paul would have had only the Synagogue for his audience, and his echoes would have died away on the narrow shore of Palestine. He must speak where his voice would sound throughout the world. He must carry the Gospel of his master through a sphere as wide as that which the Greek philosophy had occupied, and subjugate by the power of the Cross tribes as remote as those Rome had vanquished by the force of her arms.

And so, too, was it with one who has been styled the second Paul of the Christian dispensation. The plan which Calvin had formed to himself of his life's labours, after his conversion, had Paris and France as its center. Nearest his heart, and occupying the foreground in all his visions of the future, was his native land. It needed but the Gospel to make France the first of the nations, and its throne the mightiest in Europe.

And the footing the Gospel had already obtained in that land seemed to warrant these great expectations. Had not the Gospel

found martyrs in France, and was not this a pledge that it would yet triumph, on the soil which their blood had watered? Had not the palace opened its gates to welcome it? More wonderful still, it was forcing its way, despite the prejudice and pride of ages, into the halls of the Sorbonne. The many men of letters which France now contained were, with scarce an exception, favorable to the Reformation. The monarch, it is true, had not yet decided; but Margaret, so sweet in disposition, so sincere in her Protestant faith, would not be wanting in her influence with her brother, and thus there was ground to hope that when Francis did decide his choice would be given in behalf of Protestantism. So stood the matter then. Was it wonderful that Calvin should so linger around Paris, and believe that he saw in it the field of his future labours? But ever and anon, as he came back to it, and grasping the seed-basket, had begun again to sow, the sky would darken, the winds would begin to howl, and he was forced to flee before a new outburst of the tempest. At last he began to understand that it was not the great kingdom of France, with its chivalrous monarch and its powerful armies, that God had chosen to sustain the battle of the Reformation. A handful only of the French people had the Reformation called to follow it, whose destined work was to glorify it on their own soil by the heroism of the stake, and to help to sow it in others by the privations and sacrifices of exile. But before speaking of Calvin's third and last flight from Paris, let us turn to an incident big with the gravest consequences to France and Christendom.

The Pope, Spain, and France, the three visible puissances of the age, were by turns the allies and the adversaries of one another. The King of France, who was constantly scheming to recover by the arts of diplomacy those fair Italian provinces which he had lost upon the battle-field, was now plotting against Charles of Spain. The emperor, on his way to Augsburg, was at this moment closeted, as we have already related, with the Pope at Bologna. ¹ Francis, who was not ignorant of these things, would frequently ask himself, "Who can tell what evil may be brewing against France? I shall out-manoeuvre the crafty Charles; I shall detach the Pope from the side of Spain, and secure him for ever to France;" - for in those days

¹Pallavicino, *Istoria*, etc., lib. 3., cap. 12, p. 224; Napoli, 1757.

the Pontiff, as a dynastic power, counted for more than he afterwards did. Francis thought that he had hit on a capital device for dealing a blow to his rival. What was it? The Pope, Clement VII., of the House of Medici, had a niece, a little fairy girl of fourteen; he would propose marriage between this girl and his second son, Henry, Duke of Orleans. The Pope, he did not doubt, would grasp at the brilliant offer; for Clement, he knew, was set on the aggrandisement of his family, and this marriage would place it among the royal houses of Europe. But was Francis I. in earnest? Would the King of France stoop to marry his son to the descendant of a merchant? Yes, Francis would digest the mortification which this match might cause him for the sake of the solid advantages, as he believed them to be, which it would bring with it. He would turn the flank of Charles, and take his revenge for Pavia. Had Francis feared the God of hosts as much as he did the emperor, and been willing to stoop as low for the Gospel as for the favor of the Pope, happy had it been for both himself and his kingdom.

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Clement, when the offer was made to him, could scarce believe it.² He was in doubt this moment; he was in ecstasy the next. The emperor soon discovered the affair, and foreseeing its consequences to himself, endeavored to persuade the Pope that the King of France was insincere, and counselled him to beware of the snake in the grass. The ambassadors of the French King, the Duke of Albany and the Cardinals Tournon and Gramont, protested that their master was in earnest, and pushed on the business till at last they had finished it. It was concluded that this girl, Catherine de Medici by name, should be linked with the throne of France, and that the blood of the Valois and the Medici should henceforth be mixed. The Pope strode through his palace halls, elate at the honour which had so unexpectedly come to his house, and refused to enter the league which the emperor was pressing him to form with him against Francis, and would have nothing to do with calling a Council for which Charles was importuning him.³ And the King of France, on his part, thought that if he had stooped it had been to make a good bargain. He had stipulated that Catherine should bring with her as her dowry, Parma,

²Sleidan, *Hist. Reform.*, bk. 9., p. 169.

³Pallavicino, *Istoria*, etc., lib. 3., cap. 12. Ranke, *Hist. of the Popes*, bk. 1., chap. 3.

Florence, Pisa, Leghorn, Modena, Urbino, and Reggio, besides the Duchy of Milan, and the Lordship of Genoa. This would leave little unrecovered of what had been lost on the field of Pavia. The Pope promised all without the least hesitation. To Clement it was all the same - much or little - for he had not the slightest intention of fulfilling aught of all that he had undertaken. ⁴

Let us visit the birth-place of this woman - the natal lair of this tigress. Her cradle was placed in one of the most delicious of the Italian vales. Over that vale was hung the balmiest of skies, and around it rose the loveliest of mountains, conspicuous among which is the classic Fiesole.

The Arno, meandering through it in broad pellucid stream, waters it, and the olive and cypress clothe its bosom with a voluptuous luxuriance. In this vale is the city of Florence, and here, in the fifteenth century, lived Cosmo, the merchant. Cosmo was the founder of that house from which was sprung the little bright-eyed girl who bore the name of Catherine de Medici - a name then innocent and sweet as any other, but destined to gather a most unenviable notoriety around it, till it has become one of the most terrific in history, the mention of which evokes only images of tragedies and horrors.

With regard to her famous ancestor, Cosmo, he was a merchant, we have said, and his ships visited the shores of Greece, the harbors of Egypt, and the towns on the sea-coast of Syria. It was the morning of the Renaissance, and this Florentine merchant had caught its spirit. He gave instructions to his sailing-masters, when they touched at the ports of the Levant and Egypt, to make diligent inquiry after any ancient manuscripts that might still survive, whether of the ancient pagan literature, or of the early Christian theology. His wishes were carefully attended to; and when his ships returned to Pisa, the port of Tuscany, they were laden with a double freight - the produce and fabrics of the countries they had visited, and the works of learned men which had slumbered for ages in the monasteries of Mount Athos, the convents of Lebanon, and in the cities and tombs of the Nile. Thus it was that Cosmo prosecuted, with equal assiduity and success, commerce and letters. By the first he laid the foundations of

⁴Du Bellay, *Memoires*, p. 278; quoted by D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, vol. 2., pp. 198, 199. The secret articles of this treaty are in the *Bibliothèque Imperiale* at Paris (MSS., Bethune, No. 8,541, fol. 36. D'Aubigne).

that princely house that long reigned over the Florentine Republic; and by the second he contributed powerfully to the recovery of the Greek and Hebrew languages, as they in their turn contributed to the outbreak of evangelical light which so gloriously distinguished the century that followed that in which Cosmo flourished. The sacred languages restored, and the Book of Heaven again opened, the pale, chilly dawn of the Renaissance warmed and brightened into the day of Christianity.

Another event contributed to this happy turn of affairs. Constantinople had just fallen, and the scholars of the metropolis of the East, fleeing from the arms of the Turk, and carrying with them their literary treasures, came to Italy, where they were warmly welcomed by Cosmo, and entertained with princely hospitality in his villa on Fiesole. The remains of that villa are still to be seen half-way between the base of the hill and the Franciscan monastery that crowns its summit, looking down on the unrivalled dome of Brunelleschi, which even in Cosmo's days adorned the beautiful city of Florence. The terrace is still pointed out, bordered by stately cypresses, where Cosmo daily walked, conversing with the illustrious exiles whom the triumph of barbarian arms had chased from their native East, the delicious vale of the Arno spread out at their feet, with the clustering towers of the city and the bounding hills in the nearer view, while the remoter mountains, rising peak on peak in the azure distance, lent grandeur to the scene. ⁵ "In gardens," says Hallam, "which Tully might have envied, with Ficino, Laudino, and Politian at his side, he delighted his hours of leisure with the beautiful visions of the Platonic philosophy, for which the summer stillness of an Italian sky appears the most congenial accompaniment."

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His talents, his probity, and his great wealth placed Cosmo at the head of Florence, and gave him the government of the Duchy of Tuscany. His grandson Lorenzo - better known as Lorenzo the Magnificent - succeeded him in his vast fortune, his literary and aesthetic tastes, and his government of the duchy. Under Lorenzo the Medician family may be said to have fully blossomed. Lorenzo had three sons - Giuliano, Pietro, and Giovanni. The last (John)

⁵The author describes the landscape around Fiesole as he himself has noted it on repeated visits.

became Pope under the title of Leo X. He inherited his father's taste for magnificence, and the Tuscan's love of pleasure. Under him the Vatican became the gayest court in all Christendom, and Rome a scene of revelry and delights not surpassed, if equalled, by any of the capitals of Europe. Leo's career has already come before us. He was far from "seeing the day of Peter," but he lived to see Luther's day, and went to the tomb as the morning-light of the Reformation was breaking over the world, closing with his last breath the halcyon era of the Papacy. He was succeeded in the chair of St. Peter, after the short Pontificate of Adrian of Utrecht, by another member of the same family of Medici, Giulio, a son of the brother of Leo X., who ascended the Papal throne under the title of Clement VII.

When Clement took possession of the Papal chair, he found a storm gathering round it. To whatever quarter of the sky his eye was turned, there he saw lowering clouds portending furious tempests in the future. Luther was thundering in Germany; the Turk was marshalling his hordes and unfurling his standards on the borders of Christendom; nearer home, at his own gates almost, Francis and Charles were settling with the sword the question which of the two should be master of that fair land which both meanwhile were laying waste. The infuriated Germans, now scarcely amenable to discipline, were hanging like tempest on the brow of Alp, and threatening to descend on Rome and make a spoil of all the wealth and art with which the lavish Pontificate of Leo X. had enriched and beautified it. To complete the unhappiness of the time the plague had broken out at Rome, and with pomps, festivities, and wassail, which went on all the same, were mingled corpses, funerals, and other gloomy insignia of the tomb. The disorders of Christendom had come to a head; all men demanded a remedy, but no remedy was found, and mainly for this reason, that no one understood that a cure to be effectual must begin with one's self. Men thought of reforming the world, but leaving the men that composed it as they were.

The new Pope saw very plainly that the air was thick and the sky lowering, but having vast confidence in his own consummate craft and knowledge of business, he set about, the task of replacing the world upon its foundations. This onerous work resolved itself into four divisions. First, he had the abuses of his court and capital to correct; secondly, he had the poise to maintain between Spain and

France, taking care that neither Power became too strong for him; thirdly, he had the Turk to drive out of Christendom; and fourthly, and mainly, he had the Reformation to extinguish; and this last gave him more concern than all the rest. His attention to business was unwearied; but labor as he might it would not all do. The mischiefs of ages could not be cured in a day, even granting that Clement had known how to cure them. But the storm did not come just yet; and Clement continued to toil and intrigue, to threaten the Turk, cajole the kings, and anathematise Lutheranism to no other effect than to have the advantage gained by the little triumph of to-day swept away by the terrible disaster of the morrow.

That woman who was just stepping upon a scene where she was destined long and conspicuously to figure, and where she was to leave as her memorials a throne dishonored and a nation demoralised, here demands a brief notice. Catherine was the daughter of Lorenzo II.,⁶ the grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who, as we have said, was the grandson of Cosmo I., or Cosmo il Vecchio, as he is styled at Florence, the founder of the greatness of the family, and so honourably remembered as the patron of letters and the friend of scholars. Her mother was Magdeleine de Boulogne, of the Royal House of France.⁷ Her father survived her birth only a few days; her mother, too, died while she was still a child, and thus the girl, left an orphan, was taken under the care of her relative, Clement

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VII. An astrologer was said to have foretold at her birth that the child would be the ruin of her house; and the vaticination, as may well be believed, wrought her no good. She was but little cared for, or rather she was put, on purpose, in the way of receiving harm. She is said to have been placed in a basket, and hung outside the wall of a castle that was being besieged, in the hope that a chance arrow might rid them of her, and along with her the calamity which her continued existence was believed to portend. The missiles struck right and left, leaving their indentations on the wall, but the basket

⁶Those of our readers who have visited Florence, and seen the statue of this Lorenzo, the father of Catherine, in the gorgeous mausoleum of the Medici in the Church of San Lorenzo, cannot but have been struck with the air of meditation and thought which it wears.

⁷Sleidan, *Hist. Reform.*, bk. 9., pp. 163, 169.

was not hit, and the child it enclosed lived on to occupy at a future day the throne of France.

When she comes before us, in connection with this marriage-scheme, Catherine de Medici was a girl of fourteen, of diminutive stature, of sylph-like form, with a fiery light streaming from her eyes. Bright, voluble, and passionate, she bounded from sport to sport, filling the halls where she played with the chatter of her talk, and the peals of her merriment. There was about her the power of a strange fascination, which all felt who came near her, but the higher faculties which she displayed in after-life had not yet been developed. These needed a wider stage and a loftier position for their display.

As she grew up it was seen that she possessed not a few of the good as well as the evil qualities of the race from which she was sprung. She had a princely heart, and a large understanding. To say that she was crafty, and astute, and greedy of power, and prudent, patient, and plodding in her efforts to grasp it, is simply to say that she was a Medici. She possessed, in no small degree, the literary and aesthetic tastes of her illustrious ancestor, Cosmo I. She loved splendor as did her great-grandfather, Lorenzo the Magnificent. She was as prodigal and lavish in her habits as Leo X.; and withal, as great a lover of pleasure. She filled the Louvre with scandals, even as Leo had done the Vatican, and from the court diffused a taint through the city, from which Paris has not been cleansed to this day. The penetration and business habits of her uncle - we style him so, but his birth being suspicious, it is impossible to define his exact relationship

- Clement VII., she inherited, and the pleasures in which she so freely indulged do not appear to have dulled the one or interrupted the other. Above all, she was noted for the truly Medician feature of an inordinate love of power. Whoever occupied the throne, Catherine was the real ruler of France. Most of the occurrences which made the reigns of her husband and sons so tragical, and blackened so dismally that era of history, had their birth in her scheming brain. Not that she loved blood for its own sake, as did some of the Roman Emperors, but her will must be done, and whatever cause or person stood in her way must take the consequences by the dungeon or the stake, by the poignard or the poison-cup.

Chapter 15 : Marriage of Henry of France to Catherine De Medici

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The Pope sets Sail—Coasts along to France—Meets Francis I. at Marseilles—The Second Son of the King of France Married to Catherine de Medici—Her Promised Dowry—The Marriage Festivities—Auguries—Clement’s Return Voyage—His Reflections—His Dream of a New Era—His Dream to be Read Backwards—His Troubles—His Death—Catherine Enters France as Calvin is Driven Out—Retrogression of Protestantism—Death and Catherine de Medici—Death’s Five Visits to the Palace—Each Visit Assists Catherine in her Ascent to Power—Her Crimes—She Gains no Real Success

Picture: Cosmo I. Receiving his Friends and Clients.

The marriage is to take place, and accordingly the Pope embarks at Leghorn, and sets out for the port of Marseilles, where he is to meet the King of France, and conclude the transaction. Popes have never loved ships, unless it were the bark of St. Peter, nor cared to sail in any sea save the sea ecclesiastic; but Clement’s anxiety about the marriage overcame his revulsion to the waves. He sails along the coast of Italy; he passes the Gulf of Spezzia; he rounds the bold headland of Monte Fino; Genoa is passed; and now the shore of Nice, where the ridge of Apennine divides Italy from France, is under his lee, and thus, wafted along over these classic waters by soft breezes, he enters, in the beginning of October, 1533, the harbor of Marseilles. Catherine did not accompany him. She tarried at Nice meanwhile, to be at hand when she should be wanted. The interview between the Pontiff and the king terminated to the satisfaction of both parties. Francis again stipulated that the bride should bring as outfit “three rings,” the Duchies of Urbino, Milan, and Genoa; and Clement had no difficulty in promising everything, seeing he meant to perform nothing. All being arranged, the little Tuscan beauty was now sent for; and amid the benedictions of the Pope,

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the congratulations of the courtiers, the firing of cannon, ringing of bells, and rejoicings of the populace, Catherine de Medici, all radiant with joy and sparkling with jewels, became the daughter-in-law of Francis I., and wife of the Duke of Orleans, the future Henry II.

In the banquet-chamber in which sat Catherine de Medici as the bride of the future Henry II. of France, well might there have been set a seat for the skeleton which the Egyptians in ancient times were wont to introduce into their festal halls. Had that guest sat amid the courtiers at Marseilles, glaring on them with empty sockets, and mingling his ghastly grin with their gay merriment, all must have confessed that never had his presence been more fitting, nor his augury more truly prophetic. Or if this was not clearly seen at the moment, how plain did it become in after-years, when the bridal torches were exchanged for martyr-fires, and the marriage-songs were turned into wailings, which ever and anon rung through France, and each time with the emphasis of a deeper woe! But before that day should fully come Clement was to sleep in marble; Francis too was to be borne to the royal vaults of St. Denis, leaving as the curse of his house and kingdom the once lively laughing little girl whose arrival he signalled with these vast rejoicings, and who was yet too young to take much interest in court intrigue, or to feel that thirst for power which was to awaken in her breast with such terrible strength in years to come.

The marriage festivities were at an end, and Pope Clement VII. turned his face toward his own land. He had come as far as to see the utmost borders of the children of the Reformation, and, like another Balaam, he had essayed to curse them. He had come doubly armed: he grasped Catherine in the one hand, he held a bull of anathema in the other; the first he engrafted on France, the second he hurled against the Lutherans, and having shot this bolt, he betook him again to his galleys. A second time the winds were propitious. As he sailed along over the blue sea, he could indulge his reveries undistracted by those influences to which Popes, like other men, are liable on shipboard. He had taken a new pledge of France that it should not play the part England was now playing. France was now more than ever the eldest daughter of the Papacy. Clement, moreover, had fortified himself on the side of Spain. To the greatness of that Power he himself, above most men, had contributed, when he acted as

the secretary and adviser of his uncle Leo X.,¹ but its sovereigns becoming less the champions and more the masters of the Papacy, Spain caused the Pope considerable uneasiness. Now, however, it was less likely that the emperor would press for a Council, the very idea of which was so terrible to the Pope, that he could scarce eat by day or sleep by night. And so, as the coast of France sunk behind him and the headlands of Italy rose on his prow, he thought of the new splendor with which he had invested his house and name, and the happier days he was now likely to see in the Vatican.

Nevertheless, the horizon did not clear up: the storm still lowered above Rome. The last year of Clement's life - for he was now drawing toward the grave - was the unhappiest he had yet seen. Not one of all his fond anticipations was there that did not misgive him. If the dreams of ordinary mortals are to be read backwards, much more - as Clement and even Pontiffs in our own time have experienced - are the dreams of Popes. The emperor became more pressing for a Council than ever. The Protestants of Germany, having formed a powerful league, had now a voice at the political council-table of Christendom. Nay, with his own hands Clement had been rearing a rampart round them, inasmuch as his alliance with Francis made Charles draw towards the Protestants, whose friendship was now more necessary to him. Even the French king, now his ally, could not be depended upon. Catherine's "three rings" the Pope had not made forthcoming, and Francis threatened, if they were not speedily sent, to come and fetch them. To fill up Clement's cup, already bitter enough and brimming over, as one would think, his two nephews quarrelled about the sovereignty of Florence, and were fighting savagely with one another. To whatever quarter Clement turned, he saw only present trouble and portents of worse to come. It was hard to say whether he had most to dread from his enemies or from his friends, from the heretical princes of Germany or front the most Christian King of France and the most Catholic King of Spain.

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Last of all, the Pope fell sick. It soon became apparent that his sickness was unto death, and though but newly returned from a wedding, Clement had to set about the melancholy task of preparing

¹"Cardinal Medici was always on the side of the emperor," says Ranke. (Hist. of the Popes, vol. 1., p. 76.)

the ring and robe which are used at the funeral of a Pope. "Having created thirty cardinals," says Platina, "and set his house in order, he died the 25th September, 1534, between the eighteenth and nineteenth hour,² having lived sixty-six years and three months, and held the Papacy ten years, ten months, and seven days. He was buried," adds the historian, "in St. Peter's; but, in the Pontificate of Paul III. (his successor), his body was transferred, along with the remains of Leo X., to the Church of Minerva, and laid in a tomb of marble."³ "Sorrow and secret anguish," says Soriano, brought him to the grave. Ranke pronounces him "without doubt, the most ill-fated Pope that ever sat on the Papal throne."⁴

Clement now reposed in marble in the Minerva, but the evil he had done was not "interred with his bones;" his niece lived after him, and to her for a moment we turn. There are beings whose presence seems to darken the light, and taint the very soil, on which they tread. Of the number of these was Catherine de Medici. She was sunny as her own Italy: but there lurked a curse beneath her gaieties and smiles. Wherever she had passed, there was a blight. Around her all that was fair and virtuous and manly, as if smitten by some mysterious and deadly influence, began to pine and die. And, moreover, it is instructive to mark how nearly contemporaneous were the departure of Calvin from France and the entrance into that country of Catherine de Medici. Scarcely had the gates of Paris shut out the Reformer, when they were opened to admit the crafty Italian woman. He who would have been the restorer and savior of his country was chased from it, while she who was to inoculate it with vice, which first corrupted, and at last sunk it into ruin, was welcomed to it with demonstrations of unbounded joy.

We trace a marked change in the destinies of France from the day that Catherine entered it. Up till this time events seemed to favor the progress of Protestantism in that country; but the admission of this woman was the virtual banishment of the Reformation, for how could it, ever mount the throne with Catherine de Medici sitting

²The Romans, in the time of Clement and even to our own age, reckoned their day from one of the afternoon to the same hour next day, and, of course, went on numbering up to the twenty-fourth hour.

³Platina, *Hist. Sommi Pontifici*, p. 269; Venetia, 1500.

⁴Ranke, *Hist. of the Popes*, vol. 1., p. 97; Bohn's ed.

upon its steps? and unless the throne were won there was hardly a hope, in a country where the government was so powerful, of the triumph of the Reformation in the conversion of the great body of the nation.

True, the marriage of the king's second son with this orphan of the House of Medici did not seem an event of the first consequence. Had it been the Dauphin whom she espoused, she would have been on the fair way to the throne; but as the wife of Henry the likelihood was that she never would be more than the Duchess of Orleans. Nor had Catherine yet given unmistakable indication of those imperious passions inclining and fitting her for rule that were lodged in her. No one could have foretold at that hour that the girl of fifteen all radiant with smiles would become the woman of fifty dripping all over with blood. But from the day that she put her hand into Henry's, all things wrought for her. Even Death, as D'Aubigne has strikingly observed, seemed to be in covenant with this woman. To others the "King of Terrors," to Catherine de Medici he was but the obsequious attendant, who waited only till she should signify her pleasure, that he might strike whomsoever she wished to have taken out of her path. How many a visit, during her long occupancy, did the grim messenger pay to the Louvre! but not a visit did he make which did not assist her in her ascent to power. He came a first time, and, lo! the Dauphin lay a corpse, and Henry, Catherine's husband, became the immediate heir to the throne. He came a second time, and now Francis I. breathes his last. Henry reigns in his father's stead, and by his side sits the Florentine girl, now Queen of France. Death came a third time to the Louvre, and now it is Henry II. that is struck down; but the blow, so far from diminishing, enlarged the power of Catherine, for from this time she became, with a few brief and exceptional intervals, the real ruler of France. Her imbecile progeny sat upon the throne, but the astute mother governed the country. Death came a fourth time to the palace, and now it is the weak-minded Francis II. who is carried out a corpse, leaving his throne to his yet weaker-minded brother, Charles IX. If her son, a mere puppet, wore the crown, Catherine with easy superiority directed the government. Casting off the Guises, with whom till now she had been compelled to divide her power, she stood up alone, the ruler of the land. Even when Death shifted the scenes for the

last time by the demise of Charles IX., it was not to abridge this woman's influence. Under Henry III., as under all her other sons, it was the figure of Catherine de Medici that was by far the most conspicuous and terrible in France. Possessing one of those rare minds which reach maturity at an age when those of others begin to decay, it was only now, during the reigns of her last two sons, that she showed all that was in her. She discovered at this period of her career a shrewder penetration, a greater fertility of resource, and a higher genius for governing men than she had yet exhibited, and accordingly it was now that she adventured on her boldest schemes of policy, and that she perpetrated the greatest of her crimes. But, notwithstanding all her talent and wickedness,

326 she gained no real success. The cause she espoused did not triumph eventually, and that which she opposed she was not able to crush.

Chapter 16 : Melancthon's Plan for Uniting Wittemberg and Rome

The Laborers Scattered—The Cause Advances—The Dread it Inspires—Calvin and Catherine—A Contrast—The Keys and the Fleur-de-Lis—The Doublings of Francis—Agreement between Francis and Philip of Hesse at Bar-le-Duc—Campaign—Wurtemberg Restored to Christopher—Francis I's Project for Uniting Lutheranism and Romanism—Du Bellay's Negotiations with Bucer—Melancthon Sketches a Basis of Union—Bucer and Hedio add their Opinion—The Messenger Returns with the Paper to Paris—Sensation—Council at the Louvre—Plan Discussed—An Evangelical Pope

Picture: View in the Gulf of Spezzia.

Picture: General View of Old Paris.

Of the evangelists who, but a dozen years before the period at which we are now arrived, had proclaimed the truth in France, hardly one now survived, or was laboring in that country. Some, like Lefevre, had gone to the grave by "the way of all men." Others, like Berquin and Pavane, had passed to it by the cruel road of the stake. Some there were, like Farel, who had been chased to foreign lands, there to diffuse the light of which France was showing itself unworthy. Others, whose lot was unhappier still, had apostatised from the Gospel, seduced by love of the world, or repelled by the terrors of the stake. But if the earlier and lesser lights had nearly all disappeared, their place was occupied by a greater; and, despite the swords that were being unsheathed and the stakes that were being planted, it was becoming evident to all men that the sun of truth was mounting into the horizon, and soon the whole firmament would be filled with his light.

The movement caused much chagrin and torment to the great ones of the earth. They trembled before a power which had neither

war-horse nor battle-axe, but against which all their force could avail nothing. They saw that mysterious power advancing from victory to victory; they beheld it scattering the armies that stood up to oppose it, and recruiting its adherents faster than the fire could consume them; and they could hardly help seeing in this an augury of a day when that power would “possess the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven.” This power was none other than the CHRISTIANITY of the first ages, smitten by the sword of the pagan emperors, wounded in yet more deadly fashion by the superstition of Rome, but now risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works did show forth themselves in it.

The two chiefs of the great drama which was now opening in France had just stepped upon the stage - Calvin and Catherine de Medici. The one was taken from an obscure town in the north of France; the other came from a city already glorified by the renown of its men of letters, and the state and power of its princes. The former was the grandson of a cooper; the latter was of the lineage of the princely House of Tuscany. Catherine was placed in the Louvre, with the resources of a kingdom at her command; Calvin was removed outside of France altogether, where, in a small town hidden among the hills of the Swiss, he might stand and fight his great battle. But as yet Catherine had not reached the throne, nor was Calvin at Geneva. Death had to open the way that the first might ascend to power, and years of wandering and peril had yet to be gone through before the latter should enter the friendly gates of the capital of the Genevese.

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We return for a moment to Marseilles. Catherine de Medici had placed her cold hand in that of Henry of Valois, and by the act a new link had been forged which was to bind together, more firmly than ever, the two countries of Italy and France. The Keys and the Fleur-de-lis were united for better for worse. The rejoicings and festivities were now at an end. The crowd of princes and courtiers, of prelates and monks, of liveried attendants and men-at-arms, which for weeks had crowded the streets of Marseilles, and kept it night and day in a stir, had dispersed; and Francis and Clement, mutually satisfied, were on their way back, each to his own land. The winds slept, the uneasy Gulf of Lyons was still till the Pontiff's galley had passed; and as he sailed away over that glassy sea, Clement felt that now the tiara sat firmer on his head than before, and that he might

reckon on happier days in the Vatican. Alas, how little could he forecast the actual future! What awaited him at Rome was a shroud and a grave.

Francis I., equally overjoyed, but equally mistaken, amused himself, on his journey to Paris, with visions of the future, arrayed in colors of equal brilliancy. He had not patience till he should arrive at the Louvre before making a beginning with these grand projects. He halted at Avignon, that old city on the banks of the Rhone, which had so often opened its gates to receive the Popes when Rome had cast them out. Here he assembled his council, and startled its members by breaking to them his purpose of forming a league with the Protestants of Germany.¹ Fresh from the embraces of Clement, this was the last thing his courtiers had expected to hear from their master. Yet Francis I. was in earnest. One hand had he given to Rome, the other would he give to the Reformation: he would be on both sides at once.² This was very characteristic of this monarch; - divided in his heart - unstable in all his ways - continually oscillating - but sure to settle on the wrong side in the end, and to reap, as the fruit of all his doublings, only disgrace to himself and destruction to his kingdom.

The King of France was, in sooth, at this moment playing a double game - a political league and a religious reform. Of the two projects the last was the more chimerical, for Francis aimed at nothing less than to unite Rome and the Reformation. What a strange moment to inaugurate these schemes, when Europe was still ringing with the echoes of the bull in which the German heretics had been cursed, and which had been issued by the man with whom Francis had been closeted these many days past! And not less strange the spot chosen for the concoction of these projects, a city which was a second Rome, the very dust of which was redolent of the footprints of the Popes, and whose streets and palaces recalled the memories of the pride, the luxury, and the disorders of the Papal court. The key of the policy of Francis was his desire to humble his dreaded rival, Charles V. Hence his approach to the Pope, on the one hand, and to the Protestant princes, on the other. For the Papacy he did not

¹D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform. In Europe*, 2. 285.

²Du Bellay, *Memoires*, p. 206.

greatly care; for Lutheranism he cared still less: his own ascendancy was the object he sought.

The political project came first and sped best. An excellent opportunity for broaching it presented itself just at this time. Charles V. had carried away by force of arms the young Duke of Wurtemberg. And not only had he stolen the duke; he had stolen his duchy too, and annexed it to the dominions of the House of Austria.³ Francis thought that to strike for the young duke, despoiled of his ancestral dominions, would be dealing a blow at Charles V., while he would appear to be doing only a chivalrous act. It would, moreover, vastly please the German princes, and smooth his approaches to them. If his recent doings at Marseilles had rendered him an object of suspicion, his espousal of the quarrel of the Duke of Wurtemberg would be a counter-stroke which would put him all right with the princes. An incident which had just fallen out was in the line of these reasonings, and helped to decide Francis.

The young Duke Christopher had managed to escape from the emperor in a way which we have narrated in its proper place. He remained for some time in hiding, and was believed to be dead; but in November, 1532, he issued a manifesto claiming restoration of his ancestral dominions. The claim was joyfully responded to by the Protestants of Germany, as well as by his own subjects of Wurtemberg. This was the opening which now presented itself to the King of France, ever ready to ride post from Rome to Germany, and back again with even greater speed and heartier good-will from Germany to Rome.

A Diet was assembling at Augsburg, to discuss the question of the restoration of the States of Wurtemberg to their rightful sovereign. The representatives of Ferdinand were to appear before that Diet, to uphold the cause of Austria. Francis I. sent Du Bellay as his ambassador, with instructions quietly, yet decidedly, to throw the influence of France into the opposite scale.⁴ Du Bellay zealously carried out the instructions of his master. He pleaded the cause of Duke Christopher so powerfully before the Diet, that it decided in favor of his restoration to Wurtemberg. But the ambassadors of

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³Robertson, *Hist. Charles V.*, bk., 5., p. 184; Edin., 1829.

⁴Du Bellay, *Memoires*, p. 210.

Austria stood firm; if Wurtemberg was to be reft from their master, and carried over to the Protestant side, it must be by force of arms. Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, met Francis I. at Bar-le-Duc, near the western frontier of Germany, and there arranged the terms for a campaign on behalf of the young Duke Christopher. The landgrave was to supply the soldiers, and the King of France, was to furnish - though secretly, for he did not wish his hand to be seen - the requisite money. ⁵ All three had a different aim, though uniting in a common action. Philip of Hesse hoped to strengthen Protestantism by enlarging its territorial area. Du Bellay hoped to make the coming war the wedge that was to separate Francis from the Pope, and rend the Ultramontane yoke from the neck of his country. Francis was simply pursuing what had been his one policy since the battle of Pavia, the humiliation of Charles V., which he hoped to effect, in this case, by kindling a war between the German princes and the emperor.

There was another party having interest; this party now stepped upon the scene. Luther and Melancthon were the representatives of Protestantism as a religion, as the princes were the representatives of it as a policy. To make war for the Gospel was to them the object of their utmost alarm and abhorrence. They exerted all their rhetoric to dissuade the Protestant princes from drawing the sword. But it was in vain. The war was precipitately entered upon by Philip. A battle was fought. The German Protestants were victorious; the Austrian army was beaten, and Wurtemberg, restored to Duke Christopher, was transferred to the political side of Protestantism. ⁶

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The political project of Francis I. had prospered. He had wrested Wurtemberg from Ferdinand, and through the sides of Austria had hurt the pride of his rival Charles V. This success tempted him to try his hand at the second project, the religious one. To mould opinions might not be so easy as to move armies, but the Lutheran fit was upon Francis just now, and he would try. The Reformation which the French king meditated consisted only in a few changes on the surface; these he thought would bring back the Protestants, and heal the broken unity of Rome. He by no means wished to injure

⁵Robertson, bk. 5., p. 184. D'Aubigne, vol. 2., p. 301.

⁶Sleidan, Hist. Reform., bk. 9., pp. 172, 173; Lond., 1689. Robertson, Hist. Charles V., bk. 5., p. 184.

the Pope, much less to establish a religion that would necessitate a reform of his own life, or that of his courtiers. The first step was to sound Melancthon, and Bucer, and Hedio, as to the amount of change that would satisfy them. It was significant that Luther was not approached. It was Lutheranism with Luther left out that was now entering into negotiations with Rome. It does not seem to have struck those who were active in setting this affair on foot, that the man who had created the first Lutheranism could create a second, provided the first fell back into the old gulf of Romanism.

Meanwhile, however, the project gave promise of prospering. Du Bellay, in his way back from Augsburg, had an interview with Bucer at Strasburg; and, with true diplomatic tact, hinted to the pacific theologian that really it was not worth his while to labor at uniting the Zwinglians and the Lutherans. Here was something more worthy of him, a reconcilment of Protestantism and Romanism. The moment this great affair was mentioned to Bucer, other unions seemed little in his eyes. Though he should reconcile Luther and Zwingle, the great rent would still remain; but Rome and the Reformation reconciled, all would be healed, and the source closed of innumerable, strifes and wars in Christendom. Bucer, being one of those who have more faith in the potency of persons than of principles, was overjoyed; if so powerful a monarch as Francis and so able a statesman as Du Bellay had put their shoulders to this work, it must needs, he thought, progress.

A special messenger was dispatched to Melancthon (July, 1534) touching this affair. The deputy found the great doctor bowed to the earth under an apprehension of the evils gathering over Christendom. There, first of all, was the division in the Protestant camp; and there, too, was the cloud of war gathering over Europe, and every hour growing bigger and blacker. The project looked to Melancthon like a reprieve to a world doomed to dissolution. The man from whom it came had been in recent and confidential intercourse with the Pope; and who could tell but that Clement VII. was expressing his wishes and hopes through the King of France? Even if it were not so, were there not here the "grand monarchs," the Kings of France and England, on the side of union? Melancthon took his pen, sat down, and sketched the basis of the one Catholic Church of the future. In this labor he strove to be loyal to his convictions of truth. His plan,

in brief, was to leave untouched the hierarchy of Rome, to preserve all her ceremonies of worship, and to reform her errors of doctrine. This, he admitted, was not all that could be wished, but it was a beginning, and more would follow. ⁷ Finishing the paper, he gave it to the messenger, who set off with it to Francis.

On his way to Paris the courier halted at Strasburg, and requested Bucer also to put on paper what he thought ought to form a basis of union between the two Churches. Bucer's plan agreed in the main with that of Melancthon. The truth was the essential thing; let us restore that at the foundation, and we shall soon see it refashioning the superstructure. So said Bucer. There was another Reformer of name in Strasburg - Hedio, a meek but firm man; him also the messenger of Francis requested to give his master his views in writing. Hedio complied; and with these three documents the messenger resumed his journey to Paris.

On his arrival in the capital the papers were instantly laid before the king. There was no small sensation in Paris; a great event was about to happen. Protestantism had spoken its last word. Its ultimatum lay on the king's table. How anxiously was the opening of these important papers, which were to disclose the complexion of the future, waited for! Were Rome and Wittemberg about to join hands? Was a new Church, neither Romanist nor Protestant, but Reformed and eclectic, about to gather once more within its bosom all the peoples of Christendom, hushing angry controversies, and obliterating the lines of contending sects in one happy concord? Or was the division between the two Churches to be henceforward wider than ever, and were the disputes that could not be adjusted in the conference-hall to be carried to the bloody field, and the blazing stake? Such were the questions that men asked themselves with reference to the three documents which the royal messenger had brought back with him from Germany. In the midst of many fears, hope predominated.

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The king summoned a council at the Louvre to discuss the programme of Melancthon and his two fellow-Reformers. Gathered round the council-table in the palace were men of various professions, ranks, and aims. There sat the Archbishop of Paris and other

⁷D'Aubigne vol. 2., pp. 347 - 350.

prelates; there sat Du Bellay and a few statesmen; and there, too, sat doctors of the Sorbonne and men of letters. Some sincerely wished a Reformation of religion; others, including the king, made the Reform simply a stalking-horse for the advancement of their own interests.

The papers were opened and read. All around the table, were pleased and offended by turns. The color came into the king's face when he found the Reformers commencing by stating that "a true faith in Christ" was a main requisite for such a union as was now sought to be attained. But when, farther on, the Pope's deposing power was thrown overboard, the monarch was appeased. Prominence was given to the "doctrine of the justification of sinners," nor was the council displeased when this was ascribed not to "good works," nor the "rites of priests," but to the "righteousness and blood of Christ;" for had not the schoolmen used similar language? The question of the Sacrament was a crucial one. "There is a real presence of Christ in the Eucharist," said the Reformers, without defining the nature or manner of that presence; but they added, it is "faith," not the "priest," that gives communion with Christ in the Lord's Supper. The bishops frowned; they saw at a glance that if the *opus operatum* were denied, their power was undermined, and the "Church" betrayed. On neither side could there be surrender on this point.

The king had looked forward with some uneasiness to the question of the Church's government. He knew that the Reformers held the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers;" this, he thought, was fatal to order. But, replied the Reformers, the Gospel-church is a "kingdom of priests," and in a kingdom there must be officers and laws; the function of priesthood is inherent in all, but the exercise of it appertains only to those chosen and appointed thereto. The king was reassured; but now it was the turn of the Protestants at the council-board to feel alarm; for Melancthon and his fellow-Reformers were willing to go so far on the point of Church government as to retain the hierarchy. True, its personnel was to undergo a transformation. All its members from its head downwards were to become Reformed. The Pope was to be retained, but how greatly changed from his former self! He was to hold the primacy of rank, but not the primacy of power, and after this he would hardly account his

tiara worth wearing. Here, said the Protestants, is the weak point of the scheme. A Reformed Pope! that indeed will be something new! When Melancthon put this into his scheme of Reform, said they, he must have left the domain of possibilities and strayed into the region of Utopia.

To these greater reforms a few minor ones were appended. Prayers to the saints were to be abolished, although their festivals were still to be observed; priests were to be allowed to marry, but only celibates would be eligible as bishops; the monasteries were to be converted into schools; the cup was to be restored to the laity; private masses were to be abolished; in confession it was not to be obligatory to enumerate all sins; and, in fine, a conference of pious men, including laymen, was to meet and frame a constitution for the Church, according to the Word of God. ⁸

⁸Gerdesius, *Hist. Evang. Renov.*, tom. 4., p. 124.

Chapter 17 : Plan of Francis I. for Combining Lutheranism and Romanism

End of Conference—Francis I, takes the Matter into his own
Hand—Concocts a New Basis of Union—Sends Copies to
Germany, to the Sorbonne and the Vatican—Amazement of the
Protestants—Alarm of the Sorbonnists—They send a Deputation to
the King—What they Say of Lutheranism—Indignation at the
Vatican—These Projects of Union utterly Chimerical—Excuse of
the Protestants of the Sixteenth Century—Their Stand-point
Different from Ours—Storms that have Shaken the World, but
Cleared the Air

Picture: Michael Servetus.

The conference was now over. The king was not displeased; ¹ the Protestants were hopeful; but the bishops were cold. At heart they wished to have done with these negotiations; for their instincts surely told them that if this matter went on it could have but one ending, and that was the subversion of their Church. But the king, for the moment, was on the side of the Reform. He would put himself at its head, and guide it to such a goal as would surround his throne with a new glory. He would heal the schism, preserve Catholicism, curb the fanaticism of Luther, punish the hypocrisy of the monks, repress the assumptions of the Pope, and humble the pride of the emperor. To do all this would be to place himself without a rival in Europe. The King of France now took the matter more than ever into his own hands.

Francis now proceeded to sketch out what virtually was a new basis of union for Christendom. He thought, doubtless, that he knew the spirit of the new times, and the influences stirring in the world at large, better than did the theologians of Wittemberg and Strasburg; that a throne was a better point of observation than a closet, and that

¹Gerdesius, Hist. Evang. Renov., tom. 4., p. 124.

he could produce something broader and more catholic than Melancthon, which would hit the mark. Summoning a commission round him,² he sat down, and making the papers of the three theologians the groundwork, retrenching here, enlarging there, and expunging some articles wholly,³ the king and his councillors produced a new basis of union or fusion, different to some extent from the former.

The king, although not aspiring like Henry of England to the repute of a theologian, was doubtless not a little proud of his handiwork. He sent copies of it to Germany, to the Sorbonne, and even to the Pope,⁴ requesting these several parties to consider the matter, and report their judgment upon it to the king. To the German theologians it caused no small irritation; they recognized in the king's paper little but a caricature of their sentiments.⁵ In the Sorbonne the message of Francis awakened consternation. The doctors saw Lutheranism coming in like a torrent, while the king was holding open the gates of France.⁶ We can imagine the amazement and indignation which would follow the reading of the king's paper in the Vatican. Modified, it yet retained the essential ideas of Melancthon's plan, in that it disowned the saints, denied the opus operatum, and left the Papal tiara shorn of nearly all its authority and grandeur. What a cruel blow would this have been to Clement VII., aggravated, as he would have felt it, by the fact that it was dealt by the same hand which had so lately grasped his in friendship at Marseilles! But before the document reached Rome, Clement had passed from this scene of agitation, and was now resting in the quiet grave. This portentous paper from the eldest son of the Papacy was reserved to greet his successor, Paul III., on his accession to the Papal chair, and to give him betimes a taste of the anxieties and vexations inseparable from a seat which fascinates and dazzles all save the man who occupies it. But we return to the Sorbonnists.

The royal missive had alarmed the doctors beyond measure. They saw France about to commit itself to the same downward road on which England had already entered. This was no time to sit still.

²Ibid.

³"Non integri, verum mutilati," says Gerdesius of the king's edition of the articles.

⁴Gerdesius, tom. 4., p. 124.

⁵Gerdesius, tom. 4., p. 125.

⁶D'Aubigne, vol. 2., p. 379.

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They went to the Louvre and held a theological disputation with the king's ministers. Their position was not improved thereby. If argument had failed them they would try what threats could do. Did not the king know that Lutheranism was the enemy of all law and order? that wherever it came it cast down dignities and powers, and trampled them in the dust? If the altar was overturned, assuredly the throne would not be left standing. They thought that they had found the opening in the king's armor. But Francis had the good sense to look at great facts as seen in contemporaneous history. Had law and order perished in Germany? nay, did not the Protestants of that country reverence and obey their princes more profoundly than ever? Was anarchy triumphant in England? Francis saw no one warring with kings and undermining their authority save the Pope, who had deposed his Brother of England, and was not unlikely to do the same office for himself one of these days. Sorbonnists saw that neither was this the right tack. Must France then be lost to the Papacy? There did seem at the moment some likelihood of such disaster, as they accounted it, taking place. The year 1534 was drawing to a close, with Francis still holding by his purpose, when an unhappy incident occurred, all unexpectedly, which fatally changed the king's course, and turned him from the road on which he seemed about to enter. Of that event, with all the tragic consequences that followed it, we shall have occasion afterwards to speak.

As regards this union, or rather fusion, there is no need to express any sorrow over its failure, and to regret that so fair an opportunity of banishing the iron age of controversy and war, and bringing in the golden age of concord and peace, should have been lost. Had this compromise been accomplished, it would certainly have repressed, for a decade or two, the more flagrant of the abuses and scandals and tyrannies of the Papacy, but it would also have stifled, perhaps extinguished, those mighty renovating forces which had begun to act with such marked and beneficial effect. Christendom would have lost infinitely more than all it could have gained: it would have gained a brief respite; it would have lost a real and permanent Reformation. What was the plan projected? The Reformation was to bring its "doctrine," and Rome was to bring its "hierarchy," to form the Church of the future. But if the new wine had been poured into the old bottle, would not the bottle have burst? or if the wine were

too diluted to rend the bottle, would it not speedily have become as acrid and poisonous as the old wine? "Justification by faith," set in the old glosses, circumscribed by the old definitions, and manipulated by the old hierarchy, would a second time, and at no distant date, have been transformed into "Justification by works," and where then would Protestantism have been? But we are not to judge of the men who advocated this scheme by ourselves. They occupied a very different standpoint from ours. We have the lessons of three most eventful centuries, which were necessarily hidden and veiled from them; and the utter contrariety of these two systems, in their originating principles, and in their whole course since their birth, and by consequence the utter utopianism of attempting their reconciliation, could be seen not otherwise than as the progression of events and of centuries furnished the gradual but convincing demonstration of it. Besides, the Council of Trent had not yet met; the hard and fast line of distinction between the two Churches had not then been drawn; in especial, that double-partition-wall of anathemas and stakes, which has since been set up between them, did not then exist; moreover, the circumstances of the Reformers at that early hour of the movement were wholly unprecedented; no wonder that their vision was distracted and their judgment at fault. The two systems were as yet, but slowly drawing away the one from the other, and beginning to stand apart, and neither had as yet taken up that distinct and separate ground, which presents them to us clearly and sharply as systems that in their first principles - in their roots and fibres - are antagonistic, so that the attempt to harmonise them is simply to try to change the nature and essence of things.

Besides, it required a far greater than the ordinary amount of courage to accept the tremendous responsibility of maintaining Protestantism. The bravery that would have sufficed for ten heroes of the ordinary type would scarcely have made, at that hour, one courageous Protestant. It began now to be seen that the movement, if it was to go forward, would entail on all parties - on those who opposed as well as on those who aided it - tremendous sacrifices and sufferings. It was this prospect that dismayed Melancthon. He saw that every hour the spirits of men were becoming more embittered; that the kingdoms were falling apart; that the cruel sword was about to shed the blood of man; in short, that the world was coming to an

end. In truth, the old world was, and Melancthon, his eye dimmed for the moment by the “smoke and vapor” of that which was perishing, could not clearly see the new world that was rising to take its place. To save the world, Melancthon would have put the Reformation into what would have been its grave. Had Melancthon had his choice, he would have pronounced for the calm - the mephitic stillness in which Christendom was rotting, rather than the hurricane with its noise and overturnings. Happily for us who live in this age, the great scholar had not

339 the matter in his choice. It was the tempest that came: but if it shook the world by its thunders, and swept it by its hurricanes, it has left behind it a purer air, a clearer sky, and a fresher earth.

Chapter 18 : First Disciples of the Gospel in Paris

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Calvin now the Center of the Movement—Shall he enter Priest's Orders?—Hazard of a Wrong Choice—He walks by Faith—Visits Noyon—Renounces all his Preferments in the Romish Church—Sells his Patrimonial Inheritance—Goes to Paris—Meets Servetus—His Opinions—Challenges Calvin to a Controversy—Servetus does not Keep his Challenge—State of things at Paris—Beda—More Ferocious than ever—The Times Uncertain—Disciples in Paris—Bartholemew Millon—His Deformity—Conversion—Zeal for the Gospel—Du Bourg, the Draper—Valeton, of Nantes—Le Compte—Giulio Camillo—Poille, the Bricklayer—Other Disciples—Pantheists—Calvin's Forecastings—Calvin quits Paris and goes to Strasburg

Picture: Millon and the Lutheran.

We return to Calvin, now and henceforward the true center of the Reformation. Wherever he is, whether in the library of Du Tillet, conversing with the mighty dead, and forging, not improbably, the bolts he was to hurl against Rome in future years, or in the limestone cave on the banks of the rivulet of the Clain; dispensing the Lord's Supper to the first Protestants of Poitiers, as its Divine Founder had, fifteen centuries before, dispensed it to the first disciples of Christianity, there it is that the light of the new day is breaking.

Calvin had come to another most eventful epoch of his life. The future Reformer again stood at "the parting of the ways." A wrong decision at this moment would have wrecked all his future prospects, and changed the whole history of the Reformation.

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We left Calvin setting out from Poitiers in the end of April, 1534, attended by the young Canon Du Tillet, whose soul cleaved to the Reformer, and who did not discover till two years afterwards, when he began to come in sight of the stake, that something stronger than even the most devoted love to Calvin was necessary to enable him to cleave to the Gospel which Calvin preached. Calvin would be

twenty-five on the 10th of July. This is the age at which, according to the canons, one who has passed his novitiate in the Church must take the first orders of priesthood. Calvin had not yet done so, he had not formally broken with Rome, but now he must take up his position decidedly within or decidedly without the Church. At an early age the initiatory mark of servitude to the Pope had been impressed upon his person. His head had been shorn. The custom, which is a very ancient one, is borrowed from the temples of paganism. The priests of Isis and Serapis, Jerome informs us, officiated in their sanctuaries with shorn crowns, as do the priests of Rome at this day. Calvin must now renew his vow and consummate the obedience to which he was viewed as having pledged himself was performed upon himself when the rite of tonsure was performed upon him. He must now throw off the fetter entirely, or be bound yet more tightly, and become the servant of the Pope, most probably for ever.

His heart had left the Church of Rome, and any subjection he might now promise could be feigned only, not real. Yet there were not wanting friends who counselled him to remain in outward communion with Rome. Is it not, we can imagine these counsellors saying to the young cure, is it not the Reformation of the Church which is your grand aim? Well, here is the way to compass it. Dissemble the change within; remain in outward conformity with the Church; push on from dignity to dignity, from a curacy to a mitre, from a mitre to the purple, and from the purple to the tiara; what post is it to which your genius may not aspire? and once seated in the Papal chair, who or what can hinder you from reforming the Church?

The reasoning was specious, and thousands in Calvin's circumstances have listened to similar persuasion, and have been undone. So doubtless reasoned Caraffa, who, as a simple priest, was a frequenter of the evangelical re-unions in Chajja at Naples, but who, when he became Paul IV., restored the Inquisition, and kindled, alas! numerous stakes at Rome. Those who, listening to such counsel, have adopted this policy, have either never attained the dignities for which they stifled the convictions of duty, or they found that with loftier position had come stronger entanglements, that honors and gold were even greater hindrances than obscurity and poverty, and

that if they had now the power they had not the heart to set on foot the Reformation they once burned to accomplish.

Calvin, eschewing the path of expediency, and walking by faith, found the right road. He refused to touch the gold or wear the honors of the Church whose creed he no longer believed. "Not one, but a hundred benefices would I give up," he said, "rather than make myself the Pope's vassal."¹ Even the hope of one day becoming generalissimo of the Pope's army, and carrying over his whole force to the camp of the enemy in the day of battle, could not tempt him to remain in the Papal ranks. He arrived in Noyon in the beginning of May. On May 4th, 1534, in presence of the officials, ecclesiastical and legal, he resigned his Chaplaincy of La Gesine, and his Cursoy of Pont l'Eveque, and thus he severed the last link that bound him to the Papacy, and by the sale of his paternal inheritance at the same time,² he broke the last tie to his birth-place.

Calvin, "his bonds loosened," was now more the servant of Christ than ever. In the sale of his patrimony he had "forgotten his father's house," and he was ready to go anywhere - to the stake should his Master order him. He longed to plant the standard of the cross in the capital of a great country, and hard by the gates of a university which for centuries had been a fountain of knowledge. Accordingly, he turned his steps to Paris, where he was about to make a brief but memorable stay, and then leave it nevermore to return.

It was during this visit to Paris that Calvin met, for the first time, a man whom he was destined to meet a second time, of which second meeting we shall have something to say afterwards. The person who now crossed Calvin's path was Servetus. Michael Servetus was a Spaniard, of the same age exactly as Calvin,³ endowed with a penetrating intellect, highly imaginative genius, and a strongly speculative turn of mind. Soaring above both Romanism and Protestantism, he aimed at substituting a system of his own creation, the corner-stone of which was simple Theism. He aimed his stroke at the very heart of Christianity, the doctrine of the Trinity.⁴ Confident

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¹Calvini Opusc., p. 90. D'Aubigne, vol. 3., p. 76.

²Desmay, Vie de Calvini Heresiarque, pp. 48, 49. Le Vasseur, Annal. de Noyon, pp. 1161 - 1168. D'AuBigne, vol. 3., p. 78.

³Henricus Ab. Allwoerden, Historia Michaelis Serveti, pp. 4, 5; Helmstadt, 1727.

⁴Beza, Hist. Eglises Rgf., tom. 1, p. 9.

in his system, and not less in his ability, he had for some years been leading the life of a knight-errant, having wandered into Switzerland, and some parts of Germany, in quest of opposers with whom he might do battle. ⁵ Having heard of the young doctor of Noyon, he came to Paris, and threw down the gage to him. ⁶ Calvin felt that should he decline the challenge of Servetus, the act would be interpreted into a confession that Protestantism rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, and so was corrupt at the core. It concerned the Reformers to show that Protestantism was not a thing that tore up Christianity by the roots under pretense of removing the abuses that had grown up around it. This consideration weighed with Calvin in accepting, as he now did, Servetus' challenge. The day, the hour, the place - a house in the suburb of St. Antoine - were all agreed upon. Calvin was punctual to the engagement; but Servetus - why, was never known - did not appear. ⁷ "We shall not forget," says Bungener, "when the time comes, the position into which the Spanish theologian had just thrust the leaders of the Reformation, and Calvin in particular. By selecting him for his adversary on the question of the Trinity, upon which no variance existed between Romanism and the Reformation, he, in a measure, constituted him the guardian of that doctrine, and rendered him responsible for it before all Christendom. It was this responsibility which nineteen years afterwards kindled the pile of Servetus." ¹⁰

Let us mark the state of Paris at the time of Calvin's visit. We have already had a glimpse into the interior of the palace, and seen what was going on there. Francis I. was trying to act two parts at once, to be "the eldest son of the Church," and the armed knight of the Reformation. He had gone in person to Marseilles to fetch the Pope's niece to the Louvre, he had sent William du Bellay to negotiate with the German Protestants; not that he cared for the doctrines, but that he needed the arms of the Lutherans. And, as if the King of France had really loved the Gospel, there was now a conference sitting in the Louvre concocting a scheme of Reform. Councils not a few had labored to effect a Reformation of the Church

⁵Allwoerden, *Hist. Michaelis Serveti*, pp. 9, 29.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷Beza, *Vita Calvini*, and *Hist. Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1, p. 9.

¹⁰Bungener, *Calvin: his Life, etc.*, p. 34; Edin., 1863.

in its head and members; but not one of them had succeeded. It will indeed be strange, we can hear men saying, if what Pisa, and Constance, and Basle failed to give to the world, should at last proceed from the Louvre. There were persons who really thought that this would happen. But Reformations are not things that have their birth in royal cabinets, or emerge upon the world kern princely gates. It is in closets where, on bended knee, the page of Scripture is searched with tears and groans for the way of life, that these movements have their commencement. From the court let us turn to the people.

We have already narrated the sudden turn of the tide in Paris in the end of 1533. During the king's absence at Marseilles the fiery Beda was recalled from exile. His banishment had but inflamed his wrath against the Protestants, and he set to work more vigorously than ever to effect their suppression, and purge Paris from their defilement. The preachers were forbidden the pulpits, and some three hundred Lutherans were thrown into the Conciergerie. Not content with these violent proceedings, the Parliament, in the beginning of 1534, at the instigation of Beda, passed a law announcing death by burning against those who should be convicted of holding the new opinions on the testimony of two witnesses.⁹ It was hard to say on whom this penalty might fall. It might drag to the stake Margaret's chaplain, Roussel; it might strike down the learned men in the university - the lights of France - whom the king had assembled round him from other lands. But what mattered it if Lutheranism was extinguished? Beda was clamoring for a holocaust. Nevertheless, despite all this violence the evangelisation was not stopped. The disciples held meetings in their own houses, and by-and-by when the king returned, and it was found that he had thrown off the Romish fit with the air of Marseilles, the Protestants became bolder, and invited their neighbors and acquaintances to their reunions. Such was the state in which Calvin found matters when he returned to Paris, most probably in the beginning of June, 1534. There was for the moment a calm. Protestant conferences were proceeding at the Louvre; Beda could not provide a victim for the stake, and

⁹Bucer to Blaarer. Strasburg MS., quoted by D'Aubigne, *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, vol. 2, p. 308.

the Sorbonne was compelled meanwhile to be tolerant. The times, however, were very uncertain; the sky at any moment might become overcast, and grow black with tempest.

[202] Calvin, on entering Paris, turned into the Rue St. Denis, and presented himself at the door of a worthy tradesman, La Forge by name, who was equally marked by his sterling sense and his genuine piety. This was not the first time that Calvin had lived under this roof, and now a warm welcome waited his return. But his host, well knowing what was uppermost in his heart, cautioned him against any open attempt at evangelising. All, indeed, was quiet for the moment, but the enemies of the Gospel were not asleep; there were keen eyes watching the disciples, and if left unmolested it was only on the condition that they kept silence and remained in the background. To Calvin silence was agony, but he must respect the condition, however hard he felt it, for any infraction of it would be tantamount to setting up his own stake. Opportunities of usefulness, however, were not wanting. He exhorted those who assembled at the house of La Forge, and he visited in their own dwellings the persons named to him as the friends of the Gospel in Paris.

The evangelist showed much zeal and diligence in the work of visitation. It was not the mansions of the rich to which he was led; nor was it men of rank and title to whom he was introduced; he met those whose hands were roughened and whose brows were furrowed by hard labor; for it was now as at the beginning of Christianity, “not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the poor of this world.” It is all the better that it is so, for Churches like States must be based upon the people. Not far from the sign of the “Pelican,” at which La Forge lived, in the same Rue St. Denis, is a shoe-maker’s shop, which let us enter. A miserable-looking hunchback greets our eyes. The dwarfed, deformed, paralysed figure excites our compassion. His hands and tongue remain to him; his other limbs are withered, and their power gone. The name of this poor creature is Bartholomew Millon. Bartholomew had not always been the pitiably misshapen object we now behold him. He was formerly one of the most handsome men in all Paris, and with the

gifts of person he possessed also those of the mind.¹⁰ But he had led a youth of boisterous dissipation. No gratification which his senses craved did he deny himself. Gay in disposition and impetuous in temper, he was the ring-leader of his companions, and was at all times equally ready to deal a blow with his powerful arm, or let fly a sarcasm with his sharp tongue.

But a beneficent Hand, in the guise of disaster, arrested Bartholomew in the midst of his mad career. Falling one day, he broke his ribs, and neglecting the needful remedies, his body shrunk into itself, and shrivelled up. The stately form was now bent, the legs became paralysed, and on the face of the cripple grim peevishness took the place of manly beauty. He could no longer mingle in the holiday spirit or the street brawl. He sat enchained, day after day, in his shop, presenting to all who visited it the rueful spectacle of a poor deformed paralytic. His powers of mind, however, had escaped the blight which fell upon his body. His wit was as sharp as ever, and it may be a little sharper, misfortune having soured his temper. The Protestants were especially the butt of his ridicule. One day, a Lutheran happening to pass before his shop, the bile of Millon was excited, and he forthwith let fly at him a volley of insults and scoffs. Turning round to see whence the abuse proceeded, the eye of the passer by lighted on the pitiful object who had assailed him. Touched with compassion, he went up to him and said, "Poor man, don't you see that God has bent your body in this way in order to straighten your soul?"¹¹ and giving him a New Testament, he bade him read it, and tell him at an after-day what he thought of it.

The words of the stranger touched the heart of the paralytic: Millon opened the book, and began to read. Arrested by its beauty and majesty, "he continued at it," says Crespin, "night and day." He now saw that his soul was even more deformed than his body. But the Bible had revealed to him a great Physician, and, believing in his power to heal, the man whose limbs were withered, but whose heart was now smitten, cast himself down before that gracious One. The Savior had pity upon him. His soul was "straightened." The malignity and spite which had blackened and deformed it were cast

¹⁰Crespin, *Martyrol.*, fol. 112. Beza, *Hist. Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1, p. 13. D'Aubigne, vol 3, p. 83.

¹¹Crespln, *Martyrol.*, fol. 113.

out. “The wolf had become a lamb.”¹² He turned his shop into a conventicle, and was never weary of commending to others that Savior who had pardoned sins so great and healed diseases so inveterate as his. The gibe and the scoff were forgotten; only words of loving-kindness and instruction now fell from him. Still chained to his seat he gathered round him the young, and taught them to read. He exerted his skill in art to minister to the poor; and his powers of persuasion he employed day after day to the reclaiming of those whom his former example had corrupted, and the edification of such [203] as he had scoffed at aforesaid. He had a fine voice, and many came from all parts of Paris to hear him sing Marot’s Psalms. “In short,” says Crespin, “his room was a true school of piety, day and night, re-echoing with the glory of the Lord.”

Let us visit another of these disciples, so humble in station, yet so grand in character. Such men are the foundation-stones of a kingdom’s greatness. We have not far to go. At the entrance of the same Rue was a large shop in which John du Bourg carried on, under the sign of the “Black Horse,”¹³ the trade of a draper. Du Bourg, who was a man of substance, was very independent in his opinions, and liked to examine and judge of all things for himself. He had imbibed the Reformed sentiments, although he had not associated much with the Protestants. He had gone, as his habit of mind was, directly to the Scriptures, and drawn thence his knowledge of the truth. That water was all the sweeter to him, that he had drunk it fresh from the fountain. He did not hoard his treasure. He was a merchant, but not one of all his wares did it so delight him to vend as this. “This fire,” said his relations, “will soon go out like a blaze of tow.” They were mistaken. The priests scowled, his customers fell off, but, says the old chronicler, “neither money nor kindred could ever turn him aside from the truth.”¹⁴

It consoled Du Bourg to see others, who had drunk at the same spring, drawing around him. His shop was frequently visited by Peter Valetton, a receiver of Nantes.¹⁵ Valetton came often to Paris, the two chief attractions being the pleasure of conversing with Du

¹²D’Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 85.

¹³Beza, *Hist. Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1, p. 13.

¹⁴Crespin, *Martyrol.*, fol. 113, verso.

¹⁵Beza, *Hist. Eglises Ref.*, tom. 1, p. 13.

Bourg, and the chance of picking up some writing or other of the Reformers. He might be seen in the quarter of the booksellers, searching their collections; and, having found what he wanted, he would eagerly buy it, carry it home under his cloak, and locking the door of his apartment, he would begin eagerly to read. His literary wares were deposited at the bottom of a large chest, the key of which he carried always on his person. ¹⁶ He was timid as yet, but he became more courageous afterwards.

Another member of this little Protestant band was Le Compte, a disciple as well as fellow-townsmen of the doctor of Etaples, Lefevre. He had a knowledge of Hebrew, and to his power of reading the Scriptures in the original, he added a talent for exposition, which made him in no small measure useful in building up the little Church. The membership of that Church was farther diversified by the presence of a dark-visaged man, of considerable fame, but around whom there seemed ever to hover an air of mystery. This was Giulio Camillo, a native of Italy, whom Francis I. had invited to Paris. The Italian made trial of all knowledge, and he had dipped, amongst other studies, into the cabalistic science; and hence, it may be, the look of mystery which he wore, and which struck awe into those who approached him. Hearing of the new opinions, on his arrival in France, he must needs know what they were. He joined himself to the Protestants, and professed to love their doctrine; but it is to be feared that he was drawn to the Gospel as to any other new thing, for when the time came when it was necessary to bear stronger testimony to it than by words, Camillo was not found amongst its confessors.

Humbler in rank than any of the foregoing was Henry Poille, also a member of the infant Church of Paris. Poille was a bricklayer, from the neighborhood of Meaux. Around him there hung no veil, for he had not meddled with the dark sciences; it was enough, he accounted it, to know the Gospel. He could not bring to it what he did not possess, riches and renown; but he brought it something that recommended it even more, an undivided heart, and a steadfast courage; and when the day of trial came, and others fled with their learning and their titles, and left the Gospel to shift for itself, Poille

¹⁶D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 87.

stood firmly by it. He had learned the truth from Briconnet; but, following a Greater as his Captain, when the bishop went back, the bricklayer went forward, though he saw before him in the near distance the lurid gleam of the stake.

[204] Besides these humble men the Gospel had made not a few converts in the ranks above them. Even in the Parliament there were senators who had embraced at heart that very Lutheranism against which that body had now recorded the punishment of death; but the fear of an irate priesthood restrained them from the open confession of it. Nay, even of the priests and monks there were some who had been won by the Gospel, and who loved the Savior. Professors in the university, teachers in the schools, lawyers, merchants, tradesmen - in short, men of every rank, and of all professions - swelled the number of those who had abjured the faith of Rome and ranged themselves, more or less openly, on the side of the Reformation. But the most part now gathered round the Protestant standard were from the humbler classes. Their contemporaries knew them not, at least till they saw them at the stake, and learned, with some little wonder and surprise, what heroic though misguided men, as they thought them, had been living amongst them unknown; and, as regards ourselves, we should never have heard their names, or learned aught of their history, but for the light which the Gospel sheds upon them. It was that alone which brought these humble men into view, and made them the heirs of an immortality of fame even on earth; for so long as the Church shall exist, and her martyr-records continue to be read, their names, and the services they did, will be mentioned with honour.

Living at the house of La Forge, such were the men with whom Calvin came into almost daily contact. But not these only: others of a different stamp, whose inspiration and sentiments were drawn from another source than the Scriptures, did the future Reformer occasionally meet at the table of his host. The avowal of pantheistic and atheistic doctrines would, at times, drop from the mouths of these suspicious-looking strangers, and startle Calvin not a little. It seemed strange that the still dawn of the evangelic day should be deformed by these lurid flashes; yet so it was. ¹⁷ The sure forecast

¹⁷ Calvin makes special mention of Coppin from Lille, and Quentin from Hainault, who brought to the advocacy of their cause an ignorance that did not suffer them to doubt,

of Calvin divined the storms with which the future of Christendom was pregnant, unless the Gospel should anticipate and prevent their outburst. We have already said that from the days of Abelard the seeds of communistic pantheism had begun to be scattered in Europe, and more especially in France. During the cold and darkness of the centuries that followed Abelard's time, these seeds had lain silently in the frozen soil, but now the warm spring-time of the sixteenth century was bringing them above the surface. The tares were springing up as well as the wheat. The quick eye of Calvin detected, at that early stage, the difference between the two growths, and the different fruits that posterity would gather from them. He heard men who had stolen to La Forge's table under color of being favorers of the new age, avow it as their belief that all things were God - themselves, the universe, all was God - and he heard them on that dismal ground claim an equally dismal immunity from all accountability for their actions, however wicked.¹⁸ From that time Calvin set himself to resist these frightful doctrines, not less energetically than the errors of Rome. He felt that there was no salvation for Christendom save by the Gospel; and he toiled yet more earnestly to erect this great and only breakwater. If, unhappily, others would not permit him, and if as a consequence the deluge has broken in, and some countries have been partially overflowed, and others wholly so, it is not Calvin who is to blame.

In the meantime Calvin quitted Paris, probably in the end of July, 1534. It is possible that he felt the air thick with impending tempest. But it was not fear that made him depart; his spirit was weighed down, for almost every door of labor was closed meanwhile; he could not evangelise, save at the risk of a stake, and yet he had no leisure to read and meditate from the numbers of persons who were desirous to see and converse with him. He resolved to leave France and go to Germany, where he hoped to find "some shady nook,"¹⁹

and an impudence that would not permit them to blush. These pioneers of communism liked good living better than hard work; they made their bread by talking, as monks by singing, though that talk had neither, says Calvin, "rhyme nor reason" in it, but was uttered oracularly, and captivated the simple. (Calvini Opp., tom. 8, p. 376; Amstel, 1637.)

¹⁸Inst. Adv. Libertin., cap. 15,16. Calvini Opp., tom. 8, p. 386.

¹⁹"Relicta patria, in Germaniam concessi, ut in obscuro aliquo angulo abditus, quiete diu negata fruerer." (Calvini Opp., tom.3, Praef. ad Psalmos; Amstel. ed.)

in which he might enjoy the quiet denied him in the capital of his native land. Setting out on horseback, accompanied by Du Tillet, the two travelers reached Strasburg in safety. His departure was of God; for hardly was he gone when the sky of France was overcast, and tempest came. Had Calvin been in Paris when the storm burst, he would most certainly have been numbered among its victims. But it was not the will of God that his career should end at this time and in this fashion. Humbler men were taken who could not, even had their lives been spared, have effected great things for the Reformation. Calvin, who was to spread the light over the earth, was left. He served the cause of the Gospel by living, they by dying.

Chapter 19: The Night of the Placards

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Inconstancy of Francis—Two Parties in the young French Church: the Temporisers and the Scripturalists—The Policy advocated by each—Their Differences submitted to Farel—The Judgment of the Swiss Pastors—The Placard—Terrific Denunciation of the Mass—Return of the Messenger—Shall the Placards be Published?—Two Opinions—Majority for Publication—The Kingdom Placarded in One Night—The Morning—Surprise and Horror—Placard on the Door of the Royal Bed-chamber—Wrath of the King

Picture: Mountain Torrent in Switzerland

We stand now on the threshold of an era of martyrdoms. Francis I. had not hitherto been able to come to a decision on the important question of religion. This hour he turned to the Reformation in the hope that, should he put himself at its head, it would raise him to the supremacy of Europe; the next he turned away in disgust, offended by the holiness of the Gospel, or alarmed at the independence of the Reform. But an incident was about to take place, destined to put an end to the royal vacillation.

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There were two parties in the young Church of France; the one was styled the Temporisers, the other the Scripturalists. Both parties were sincerely devoted to the Scriptural Reform of their native land, but in seeking to promote that great end the one party was more disposed to fix its eyes on men in power, and follow as they might lead, than the other thought it either dutiful or safe. The monarch, said the first party, is growing every day more favorable to the Reformation; he is at no pains to conceal the contempt he entertains, on the one hand, for the monks, and the favor he bears, on the other, to men of letters and progress. Is not his minister, Du Bellay, negotiating a league with the Protestants of Germany, and have not these negotiations already borne fruit in the restoration of Duke Christopher to his dominions, and in an accession of political

strength to the Reform? Besides, what do we see in the Louvre? Councils assembling under the presidency of the king to discuss the question of the union of Christendom. Let us leave this great affair in hands so well able to guide it to a prosperous issue. We shall but spoil all by obtruding our counsel, or obstinately insisting on having our own way.

The other party in the young Protestant Church were but little disposed to shape their policy by the wishes and maxims of the court. They did not believe that a monarch so dissolute in his manners, and so inconstant in his humors, would labor sincerely and steadfastly for a Reform of religion. To embrace the Pope this hour and the German Protestants the next, to consign a Romanist to the Conciergerie to-day and burn a Lutheran tomorrow, was no proof of impartiality, but of levity and passion. They built no hopes on the conferences at the Louvre. The attempt to unite the Reformation and the Pope could end only in the destruction of the Gospel. The years were gliding away; the Reformation of France tarried; they would wait no longer on man. A policy bolder in tone, and more thoroughly based on principle, alone could lead, they thought, to the overthrow of the Papacy in France.

Divided among themselves, it was natural that the Protestants should turn their eyes outside of France for counsel that would unite them. Among the Reformers easily accessible, there was no name that carried with it more authority than that of Farel. He was a Frenchman; he understood, it was to be supposed, the situation better than any other, and he could not but feel the deepest interest in a work which he himself, along with Lefevre, had commenced. To Farel they resolved to submit the question that divided them.

They found a humble Christian, Feret by name, willing to be their messenger. ¹ He departed, and arriving in Switzerland, now the scene of Farel's labours, he found himself in a new world. In all the towns and villages the altars were being demolished, the idols cast down, and the Reformed worship was in course of being set up. How different the air, the messenger could not but remark, within the summits of the Jura, from that within the walls of Paris. It required no great forecast to tell what the answer of the Swiss

¹Felice, *Hist. Prot. France*, vol. 1, p. 27.

Reformers would be. They assembled, heard the messenger, and gave their voices that the Protestants of France should halt no longer; that they should boldly advance; and that they should notify their forward movement by a vigorous blow at that which was the citadel of the Papal Empire of bondage - the root of that evil tree that overshadowed Christendom - the mass.

But the bolt had to be forged in Switzerland. It was to take the form of a tract or placard denunciatory of that institution which it was proposed by this one terrible blow to lay in the dust. But who shall write it? Farel has been commonly credited with the authorship; and the trenchant eloquence and burning scorn which breathe in the placard, Farel alone, it has been supposed, could have communicated to it. ² It was no logical thesis, no dogmatic refutation; it was a torrent of scathing fire; a thunderburst, terrific and grand, resembling one of those tempests that gather in awful darkness on the summits of those mountains amid which the document was written, and finally explode in flashes which irradiate the whole heavens, and in volleys of sound which shake the plains over which the awful reverberations are rolled.

The paper was headed, "True Articles on the horrible, great, and intolerable Abuses of the Popish Mass; invented in direct opposition to the Holy Supper of our Lord and only Mediator and Savior Jesus Christ." It begins by taking "heaven and earth to witness against the mass, because the world is and will be by it totally desolated, ruined, lost, and undone, seeing that in it our Lord is outrageously blasphemed, and the people blinded and led astray." After citing the testimony of Scripture, the belief of the Fathers, and the evidence of the senses against the dogma, the author goes on to assail with merciless and, judged by modern taste, coarse sarcasm the ceremonies which accompany its celebration. What mean all these games?" he asks; "you play around your god of dough, toying with him like a cat with a mouse. You break him into three pieces... and then you

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²Crespin, the martyrologist, and Florimond Raemond, the Popish historian, attribute the authorship of the placard to Farel. The latter, however, gives it as the common report: - "Famoso libello a Farelo, ut creditur, composito," are his words. (Hist. Heres., livr. 7, cap. 5, Lat. ed.) Bungener says the author "has never been known." (Calvin, p. 35; Edin., 1863.) Herminjard (Correspondance des Reformateurs, 3, 225) believes him to have been Antoine de Marcourt.

put on a piteous look, as if you were very sorrowful; you beat your breasts... you call him the Lamb of God, and pray to him for peace. St. John showed Jesus Christ ever present, ever living, living all in one - an adorable truth! but you show your wafer divided into pieces, and then you eat it, calling for something to drink." The writer asks "these cope-wearers" where they find "this big word TRANSUBSTANTIATION?" Certainly, he says, not in the Bible. The inspired writers "called the bread and wine, bread and wine." "St. Paul does not say, Eat the body of Jesus Christ; but, Eat this bread." "Yes, kindle your faggots," but let it be for the true profaners of the body of Christ, for those who place it in a bit of dough, "the food it may be of spiders or of mice." And what, the writer asks, has the fruit of the mass been? "By it:" he answers, "the preaching of the Gospel is prevented. The time is occupied with bell-ringing, howling, chanting, empty ceremonies, candles, incense, disguises, and all manner of conjuration. And the poor world, looked upon as a lamb or as a sheep, is miserably deceived, cajoled, led astray - what do I say? - bitten, gnawed, and devoured as if by ravening wolves."

The author winds up with a torrent of invective directed against Popes, cardinals, bishops, and monks, thus: - "Truth is wanting to them, truth terrifies them, and by truth will their reign be destroyed for ever."

Written in Switzerland, where every sight and sound - the snowy peak, the gushing torrent, the majestic lake - speak of liberty and inspire courageous thoughts, and with the crash of the falling altars of an idolatrous faith in the ears of the writer, these words did not seem too bold, nor the denunciations too fierce. But the author who wrote, and the other pastors who approved, did not sufficiently consider that this terrible manifesto was not to be published in Switzerland, but in France, where a powerful court and a haughty priesthood were united to combat the Reformation. It might have been foreseen that a publication breathing a defiance so fierce, and a hatred so mortal, could have but one of two results: it would carry the convictions of men by storm, and make the nation abhor and renounce the abomination it painted in colors so frightful, and stigmatized in words so burning, or if it failed in this - and the likelihood was that it would fail - it must needs evoke such a tempest of wrath as would

go near to sweep the Protestant Church from the soil of France altogether.

The document was printed in two forms, with a view to its being universally circulated. There were placards to be posted up on the walls of towns, and on the posts along the highway, and there were small slips to be scattered in the streets. This light was not to be put under a bushel; it was to flash the same day all over France. The bales of printed matter were ready, and Feret now set out on his return. As he held his quiet way through the lovely mountains of the Jura, which look down with an air so tranquil on the fertile plains of Burgundy, no one could have suspected what a tempest traveled with him. He seemed the dove of peace, not the petrel of storm. He arrived in Paris without question from any one.

Immediately on his arrival the members of the little Church were convened; the paper was opened and read; but the assembly was divided. There were Christians present who were not lacking in courage - nay, were ready to go to the stake - but who, nevertheless, shrunk from the responsibility of publishing a fulmination like this. France was not Switzerland, and what might be listened to with acquiescence beyond the Jura, might, when read at the foot of the throne of Francis I., bring on such a convulsion as would shake the nation, and bury the Reformed Church in its own ruins. Gentler words, they thought, would go deeper.

But the majority were not of this mind. They were impatient of delay. France was lagging behind Germany, Switzerland, and other countries. Moreover, they feared the councils now proceeding at the Louvre. They had as their object, they knew, to unite the Pope and the Reformation, and they were in haste to launch this bolt, "forged on Farel's anvil," before so unhallowed a union should be consummated. In this assembly now met to deliberate about the placard were Du Bourg and Millon, and most of the disciples whom we have mentioned in our former chapter. These gave their voices that the paper should be published, and in this resolution the majority concurred.

The next step was to make arrangements to secure, if possible, that this manifesto should meet the eye of every man in France. The kingdom was divided into districts, and persons were told off who were to undertake the hazardous work of posting up, each in the

quarter assigned him, this placard - the blast, it was hoped, before which the walls of the Papal Jericho in France would fall. A night was selected; for clearly the work could be done only under cover of the darkness, and equally clear was it that it must be done in one and the same night all over France. The night fixed on was that of the 24th October, 1534. ³

The eventful night came. Before the morning should break, this trumpet must be blown all over France. As soon as the dusk had deepened into something like darkness the distributors sallied forth; and gliding noiselessly from street to street, and from lane to lane, they posted up the terrible placards. They displayed them on the walls of the Louvre, at the gates of the Sorbonne, and on the doors of the churches. What was being done in Paris was at the same instant being transacted in all the chief towns - nay, even in the rural parts and highways of the kingdom. France had suddenly become like the roll of the prophet. An invisible finger had, from side to side, covered it with a terrible writing - with prophetic denunciations of woe and ruin unless it repented in sackcloth and turned from the mass.

When morning broke, men awoke in city and village, and came forth at the doors of their houses to see this mysterious placard staring them in the face. Little groups began to gather round each paper. These groups speedily swelled into crowds, comprising every class, lay and cleric. A few read with approbation, the most with amazement, some with horror. The paper appeared to them an outpouring of blasphemous sentiment, and they trembled lest it should draw down upon the people of France some sudden and terrible stroke. Others were transported with rage, seeing in it an open defiance to the Church, and an expression of measureless contempt at all that was held sacred by the nation. Frightful rumors began to circulate among the masses. The Lutherans, it was said, had concocted a terrible conspiracy, they were going to set fire to the churches, and burn and massacre every one. ⁴ The priests, though professing of course horror at the placards, were in reality not greatly displeased at what had occurred. For some time they had

³According to the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 440. Fontaine in his *Histoire Catholique* gives the 18th October. See D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 114.

⁴Felice, *Hist. Prof. France*, vol. 1, p. 28.

been waiting for a pretext to deal a blow at the Protestant cause, and now a weapon such as they wished for had been put into their hands.

The king at the time was living at the Castle of Amboise. At an early hour Montmorency and the Cardinal de Tournon knocked at his closet door to tell him of the dreadful event of the night. As they were about to enter their eye caught sight of a paper posted up on the door of the royal cabinet. It was the placard put there by some indiscreet Protestant, or, as is more generally supposed, by some hostile hand. Montmorency and Tournon tore it down, and carried it in to the king.⁵ The king grasped the paper. Its heading, and the audacity shown in posting it on the door of his private apartment, so agitated Francis that he was unable to read it. He handed it again to his courtiers, who read it to him. He stood pallid and speechless a little while; but at length his wrath found vent in terrible words: “Let all be seized, and let Lutheranism be totally exterminated!”⁶

⁵Corp. Ref., 2, p. 856.

⁶Crespin, Mart. Beza, Hist. Ref. Eglises, tom. 1, p. 10.

Chapter 20 : Martyrs and Exiles

Plan of Morin—The Betrayer—Procession of Corpus Christi—Terror of Paris—Imprisonment of the Protestants—Atrocious Designs attributed to them—Nemesis—Sentence of the Disciples—Execution of Bartholomew Millon—Burning of Du Bourg—Death of Poille—His Tortures—General Terror—Flight of Numbers—Refugees of Rank—Queen of Navarre—Her Preachers—All Ranks Flee—What France might have been, had she retained these Men—Prodigious Folly

Picture: Cardinal De Tournon Reading the Protestant Placard to Francis I.

[209] Now it was that the storm burst. The king wrote summoning the Parliament to meet, and execute strict justice in the affair, he further commanded his lieutenant-criminal, Jean Morin, to use expedition in discovering and bringing to justice all in any way suspected of having been concerned in the business.¹ Morin, a man of profligate life, audacious, a thorough hater of the Protestants, and skilful in laying traps to catch them, needed not the increase of pay which the king promised him to stimulate his zeal. A few moments thought and he saw how the thing was to be done. He knew the man whose office it was to convene the Protestants when a reunion was to be held, and he had this man, who was a sheath-maker by trade, instantly apprehended and brought before him. The lieutenant-criminal told the poor sheath-maker he was perfectly aware that he knew every Lutheran in Paris, and that he must make ready and conduct him to their doors. The man shrunk from the baseness demanded of him. Morin coolly bade an attendant prepare a scaffold, and turning to his prisoner gave him his choice of being burned alive, or of pointing out to him the abodes of his brethren. Terrified by the horrible threat,

¹Laval., Hist. Reform. France, vol 1, p. 30. Beza, Hist. Reform. Eglises, tom. 1, p. 10.

which was about to be put in instant execution, the poor man became the betrayer.² The lieutenant-criminal now hoped at one throw of his net to enclose all the Lutherans in Paris.

Under pretense of doing expiation for the affront which had been put upon the "Holy Sacrament," Morin arranged a procession of the Corpus Christi.³ The houses in the line of the procession were draped in black, and with slow and solemn pace friar and priest passed along bearing the Host, followed by a crowd of incense-bearers and hymning choristers. The excitement thus awakened favored the plans of the lieutenant-criminal. He glided through the streets, attended by his serjeants and officers. The traitor walked before him. When he came opposite the door of any of his former brethren the sheath-maker stopped and, without saying a word, made a sign. The officers entered the house, and the family were dragged forth and led away manacled. Alas, what a cruel as well as infamous task had this man imposed upon himself! Had he been walking to the scaffold, his joy would have grown at every step. As it was, every new door he stopped at, and every fresh victim that swelled the procession which he headed, bowed lower his head in shame, and augmented that pallor of the face which told of the deep remorse preying at his heart.

Onwards went the procession, visiting all the quarters of Paris, the crowd of onlookers continually increasing, as did also the mournful train of victims which Morin and the traitor, as they passed along, gathered up for the stake. The tidings that the lieutenant-criminal was abroad spread over the city like wild-fire. "Morin made all the city quake."⁴ This was the first day of the "Reign of Terror." Anguish of spirit preceded the march of Morin and his agents; for no one could tell at whose door he might stop. Men of letters trembled as well as the Protestants. If fear marched before Morin, lamentation and cries of woe echoed in his rear.

The disciples we have already spoken of - Du Bourg, the merchant; Bartholomew Millon, the paralytic; Valetton, who was ever inquiring after the writings of the Reformers; Poille, the bricklayer - and others of higher rank, among whom were Roussel and Courault

²Beza, *Hist. Reform. Eglises*, tom. 1, p. 10.

³*Journal d'un Bourg.*, p. 44. *D'Aubigne*, vol. 3, p. 129.

⁴Crespin, *Martyrol*, fol. 112.

and Berthaud, the Queen of Navarre's preachers, were all taken in the net of the lieutenant-criminal, and drafted off to prison. Morin made no distinction among those suspected: his rage fell equally on those who had opposed and on those who had favored the posting up of the placards. Persons of both sexes, and of various nationalities, were indeed among the multitude now lodged in prison, to be, as the lieutenant-criminal designed, at no distant day produced on the scaffold, a holocaust to the offended manes of Rome.

The Parliament the Sorbonne, and the priests were resolved to turn the crisis to the utmost advantage. They must put an end to the king's communings with German and English heretics; they must stamp out Lutheranism in Paris; a rare chance had the untoward zeal of the converts thrown into their power for doing so. They must take care that the king's anger did not cool; they must not be sparing in the matter of stakes; every scaffold would be a holy altar, every victim a grateful sacrifice, to purify a land doubly polluted by the blasphemous placard. Above all, they must maintain the popular indignation at a white heat. The most alarming rumors began to circulate through Paris. To the Lutherans were attributed the most atrocious designs. They had conspired, it was said, to fire all the public buildings, and massacre all the Catholics. They were accused of seeking to compass the death of the king, the overthrow of the monarchy, and the destruction of society itself. They meant to leave France a desert. So it was whispered, and these terrible rumors were greedily listened to, and the mob shouted, "Death, death to the heretics!"⁵

[210] With reference to these charges that were now industriously circulated against the Protestants of Paris, there was not a Lutheran who ever meditated such wickedness as this. Not a fragment of proof of such designs has ever been produced. Well; three hundred years pass away, and Protestantism is all but suppressed in France. What happens? Is the nation tranquil, and the throne stable? On the contrary, from out the darkness there stands up a terrible society, which boldly avows it as its mission to inflict on France those same atrocious designs which the disciples of the Gospel had been falsely accused of entertaining. The bugbear of that day, conjured up by

⁵Calvini Opp. Felice, *Hist. Prot. France*, vol. 1, p. 28.

hypocrisy and bigotry, has become the menace of ours. We have seen the throne overturned, the blood of nobles and priests shed like water, the public monuments sinking in ashes, the incendiary's torch and the assassin's sword carrying terror from end to end of France, and society saved only by the assertion of the soberer sense of the people.

The several stages of the awful drama we are narrating followed each other in quick succession. On the 10th November, just a fortnight after their apprehension, were Millon, Du Bourg, Poille, and the rest brought forth and presented before their judges. For them there could be no other sentence than death, and that death could come in no other form than the terrible one of burning. Nor had they long to wait. Three short days and then the executions began! The scaffolds were distributed over all the quarters of Paris, and the burnings followed on successive days, the design being to spread the terror of heresy by spreading the executions. The advantage however, in the end, remained with the Gospel. All Paris was enabled to see what kind of men the new opinions could produce. There is no pulpit like the martyr's pile. The serene joy that lighted up the faces of these men as they passed along, in their wretched tumbril, to the place of execution, their heroism as they stood amid the bitter flames, their meek forgiveness of injuries, transformed, in instances not a few, anger into pity, and hate into love, and pleaded with resistless eloquence in behalf of the Gospel.

Of this little band, the first to tread the road from the prison to the stake, and from the stake to the crown, was Bartholomew Millon. The persecutor, in selecting the poor paralytic for the first victim, hoped perhaps to throw an air of derision over the martyrs and their cause. It was as if he had said, Here is a specimen of the miserable creatures who are disturbing the nation by their new opinions: men as deformed in body as in mind. But he had miscalculated. The dwarfed and distorted form of Millon but brought out in bold relief his magnanimity of soul. The turnkey, when he entered his cell, lifted him up in his arms and placed him in the tumbril. On his way to the place of execution he passed his father's door. He bade adieu with a smile to his earthly abode, as one who felt himself standing at the threshold of his heavenly home. A slow fire awaited him at the Greve, and the officer in command bade the fire be lowered

still more, but he bore the lingering tortures of this mode of death with a courage so admirable that the Gospel had no reason to be ashamed of its martyr. None but words of peace dropped from his lips. Even the enemies who stood around his pile could not withhold their admiration of his constancy.⁶

The following day the wealthy tradesman Du Bourg was brought forth to undergo the same dreadful death. He was known to be a man of decision; and his persecutors set themselves all the more to contrive how they might shake his steadfastness by multiplying the humiliations and tortures to which they doomed him before permitting him to taste of death and depart. The tumbril that bore him was stopped at Notre Dame, and there he was made a gazing-stock to the multitude, as he stood in front of the cathedral, with taper in hand, and a rope round his neck. He was next taken to the Rue St. Denis, in which his own house was situated, and there his hand was cut off - the hand which had been busy on that night of bold but imprudent enterprise. He was finally taken to the Halles and burned alive. Du Bourg in death as in life was still the man of courage; he shrunk from neither the shame nor the suffering, but was "steadfast unto the end."⁷

Three days passed; it was now the 18th November, and on this day Poille, the bricklayer, was to die. His stake was set up in the Faubourg St. Antoine, in front of the Church of St. Catherine; for it was the inhabitants of this quarter of Paris who were next to be taught to what a dreadful end heresy brings men, and yet with what a glorious hope and unconquerable courage it has the power to inspire them. Poille had learned the Gospel from Bishop Briconnet, but while the master had scandalised it by his weakness, the disciple was to glorify it by his steadfastness. He wore an air of triumph as he alighted from his cart at the place of execution. Cruel, very cruel was his treatment at the stake. "My Lord Jesus Christ," he said, "reigns in heaven, and I am ready to fight for him to the last drop of my blood." "This confession of truth at the moment of punishment," says D'Aubigne, quoting Crespin's description of the martyr's last moments, "exasperated the executioners. 'Wait a bit,' they said, 'we

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⁶Crespin, *Martyrol.*, 43.

⁷Journ. d'un Bourg., p. 445, D'Aubigne vol. 4, p. 142.

will stop your prating.’ They sprang upon him, opened his mouth, caught hold of his tongue, and bored a hole through it; they then, with refined cruelty, made a slit in his cheek, through which they drew the tongue, and fastened it with an iron pin. Some cries were heard from the crowd at this most horrible spectacle; they proceeded from the humble Christians who had come to help the poor bricklayer with their compassionate looks, Poille spoke no more, but his eye still announced the peace; he enjoyed. He was burnt alive.”⁸

For some time each succeeding day had its victim. Of these sufferers there were some whose only crime was that they had printed and sold Luther’s writings; it was not clear that they had embraced his sentiments; their persecutors deemed them well deserving of the stake for simply having had a hand in circulating them. This indiscriminate vengeance, which dragged to a common pile the Protestants and all on whom the mere suspicion of Protestantism had fallen, spread a general terror in Paris. Those who had been seen at the Protestant sermons, those who had indulged in a jest at the expense of the monks, but especially those who, in heart, although not confessing it with the mouth, had abandoned Rome and turned to the Gospel, felt as if the eye of the lieutenant-criminal was upon them, and that, at any moment, his step might be heard on their threshold. Paris was no longer a place for them; every day and every hour they tarried there, it was at the peril of being burned alive. Accordingly, they rose up and fled. It was bitter to leave home and country and all the delights of life, and go forth into exile, but it was less bitter than to surrender their hope of an endless life in the better country; for at no less a cost could they escape a stake in France.

A few days made numerous blanks in the society of Paris. Each blank represented a convert to the Gospel. When men began to look around them and count these gaps, they were amazed to think how many of those among whom they had been living, and with whom they had come into daily contact, were Lutherans, but wholly unknown in that character till this affair brought them to light. Merchants vanished suddenly from their places of business; tradesmen disappeared from their workshops; clerks were missing from the

⁸Crespin, *Martyrol.*, fol. 113, verso. D’Aubigne, 3, 143.

countinghouse; students assembled at the usual hour, but the professor's chair was empty; their teacher, not waiting to bid his pupils adieu, had gone forth, and was hastening towards some more friendly land.

The bands of fugitives now hurrying by various routes, and in various disguises, to the frontiers of the kingdom, embraced all ranks and all occupations. The Lords of Roynac and Roberval, of Fleuri, in Briere, were among those who were now fleeing their country and the wrath of their sovereign. Men in government offices, and others high at court and near the person of the king, made the first disclosure, by a hasty flight, that they had embraced the Gospel, and that they preferred it to place and emolument. Among these last was the privy purse-bearer of the king. Every hour brought a new surprise to both the friends and the foes of the Gospel. The latter hated it yet more than ever as a mysterious thing, possessing some extraordinary power over the minds of men. They saw with a sort of terror the numbers it had already captivated, and they had uneasy misgivings as to whereunto this affair would grow.

Margaret wept, but the fear in which she stood of her brother made her conceal her tears. Her three preachers - Roussel, Berthaud, and Courault

- had been thrown into prison. Should she make supplication for them? Her enemies, she knew, were laboring to inflame the king against her, and bring her to the block. The Constable Montmorency, says Brantome, told the king that he "must begin at his court and his nearest relations," pointing at the Queen of Navarre, "if he had a mind to extirpate the heretics out of his kingdom."⁹ Any indiscretion or over-zeal, therefore, might prove fatal to her. Nevertheless, she resolved on braving the king's wrath, if haply she might rescue her friends from the stake. Bigotry had not quite quenched Francis's love for his sister; the lives of her preachers were given her at her request; but, with the exception of one of the three, their services to the Protestant cause ended with the day on which they were let out of prison. Roussel retired to his abbey at Clairac; Berthand resumed his frock and his beads, and died in the cloister; Courault contrived to make his escape, and turning his steps toward Switzerland, he

⁹Laval., *Hist. Reform. France*, vol. 1, p. 31.

reached Basle, became minister at Orbe, and finally was a fellow-laborer with Calvin at Geneva.

Meanwhile another, and yet another, rose up and fled, till the band of selfconfessed and self-expatriated disciples of the Gospel swelled to be between 400 and 500. Goldsmiths, engravers, notably printers and bookbinders, men of all crafts, lawyers, teachers of youth, and even monks and priests were crowding the roads and by-ways of France, fleeing from the persecutor. Some went to Strasburg; some to Basle; and a few placed the Alps between them and their native land. Among these fugitives there is one who deserves special mention - Mathurin Cordier, the venerable schoolmaster, who was the first to detect, and who so largely helped to develop, the wonderful genius of Calvin. Million and Du Bourg and Poille we have seen also depart; but their flight was by another road than that which these fugitives were now treading in weariness and hunger and fear. They had gone whither the persecutor could not follow them.

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The men who were now fleeing from France were the first to tread a path which was to be trodden again and again by hundreds of thousands of their countrymen in years to come. During the following two centuries and a half these scenes were renewed at short intervals. Scarcely was there a generation of Frenchmen during that long period that did not witness the disciples of the Gospel fleeing before the insane fury of the persecutor, and carrying with them the intelligence, the arts, the industry, the order, in which, as a rule, they pre-eminently excelled, to enrich the lands in which they found an asylum. And in proportion as they replenished other countries with these good gifts did they empty their own of them. If all that was now driven away had been retained in France; if, during these 300 years, the industrial skill of the exiles had been cultivating her soil; if, during these 300 years, their artistic bent had been improving her manufactures; if, during these 300 years, their creative genius and analytic power had been enriching her literature and cultivating her science; if their wisdom had been guiding her councils, their bravery fighting her battles, their equity framing her laws, and the religion of the Bible strengthening the intellect and governing the conscience of her people, what a glory would at this

day have encompassed France! What a great, prosperous, and happy country - a pattern to the nations - would she have been!

But a blind and inexorable bigotry chased from her soil every teacher of virtue, every champion of order, every honest defender of the throne; it said to the men who would have made their country a "renown and glory" in the earth, Choose which you will have, a stake or exile? At last the ruin of the State was complete; there remained no more conscience to be proscribed; no more religion to be dragged to the stake; no more patriotism to be chased into banishment; revolution now entered the morally devastated land, bringing in its train scaffolds and massacres, and once more crowding the roads, and flooding the frontiers of France with herds of miserable exiles; only there was a change of victims.

Chapter 21: Other and More Dreadful Martyrdoms

A Great Purgation Resolved on—Preparations—Procession—The Four Mendicants—Relics: the Head of St. Louis; the True Cross, etc—Living Dignitaries—The Host—The King on Foot—His Penitence—Of what Sins does he Repent?—The Queen—Ambassadors, Nobles, etc—Homage of the Citizens—High Mass in Notre Dame—Speech of the King—The Oath of the King—Return of Procession—Apparatus of Torture—Martyrdom of Nicholas Valetton—More Scaffolds and Victims—The King and People's Satisfaction—An Ominous Day in the Calendar of France—The 21st of January

Picture: Maragaret of Valois afterwards Queen of Navare Picture: Portion of the Louvre Paris

As yet we have seen only the beginning of the tragedy; its more awful scenes are to follow. Numerous stakes had already been planted in Paris, but these did not slake the vengeance of the persecutor; more victims must be immolated if expiation was to be done for the affront offered to Heaven in the matter of the placards, and more blood shed if the land was to be cleansed from the frightful pollution it had undergone. Such was the talk which the priests held in presence of the king. ¹ They reminded him that this was a crisis in France, that he was the eldest son of the Church, that this title it became him to preserve unsullied, and transmit with honour to his posterity, and they urged him to proceed with all due rigour in the performance of those bloody rites by which his throne and kingdom were to be purged. Francis I was but too willing to obey. A grand procession, which was to be graced by bloody interludes, was arranged, and the day on which it was to come off was the 21st of January, 1535. The horrors which will make this day famous to all time were not the doings of the king alone; they were not less the

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¹Chronique du Roi Francois I, p. 113, quoted by D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 149.

acts of the nation which by its constituted representatives countenanced the ceremonial and put its hand to its cruel and sanguinary work.

The day fixed on arrived. Great crowds from the country began to pour into Paris. In the city great preparations had been made for the spectacle. The houses along the line of march were hung with mourning drapery, and altars rose at intervals where the Host might repose as it was being borne along to its final resting-place on the high altar of Notre Dame. A throng of sight-seers filled the streets. Not only was every inch of the pavement occupied by human beings, but every door-step had its little group, every window its cluster of faces; even the roofs were black with on-lookers, perched on the beams or hanging on by the chimneys. "There was not," says Simon Fontaine, a chronicler of that day, and a doctor of the Sorbonne, "the smallest piece of wood or stone, jutting out of the walls, on which a spectator was not perched, provided there was but room enough, and one might have fancied the streets were paved with human heads."

² Though it was day, a lighted taper was stuck in the front of every house "to do reverence to the blessed Sacrament and the holy relics.

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At the early hour of six the procession marshalled at the Louvre. First came the banners and crosses of the several parishes; next appeared the citizens, walking two and two, and bearing torches in their hands. The four Mendicant orders followed; the Dominican in his white woollen gown and black cloak; the Franciscan in his gown of coarse brown cloth, half-shod feet, and truncated cowl covering his shorn head; the Capuchin in his funnel-shaped cowl, and patched brown cloak, girded with a white three-knotted rope; and the Augustine with a little round hat on his shaven head, and wide black gown girded on the loins with a broad sash. After the monks walked the priests and canons of the city.

The next part of the procession evoked, in no ordinary degree, the interest and the awe of the spectators. On no former occasion had so many relics been paraded on the streets of Paris. ⁴ In the van of the procession was carried the head of St. Louis, the patron

²Felice, vol. 1, p. 29.

³Chronique du Roi Francois I., p. 114.

⁴Felice, vol. 1, p. 30.

saint of France. There followed a bit of the true cross, the real crown of thorns, one of the nails, the swaddling clothes in which Christ lay, the purple robe in which he was attired, the towel with which he girded himself at the last supper, and the spear-head that pierced his side. Many saints of former times had sent each a bit of himself to grace the procession, and nourish the devotion of the on-lookers - some an arm, some a tooth, some a finger, and others one of the many heads which, as it would seem, each had worn in his lifetime. This goodly array of saintly relics was closed by the shrine of Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris, borne by the corporation of butchers, who had prepared themselves for this holy work by the purification of a three days' fast.⁵

After the dead members of the Church, whose relics were enshrined in silver and gold, came a crowd of living dignitaries, in their robes and the insignia of their ecclesiastical rank. Cardinal and abbot, archbishop and bishop were there, in the glory of scarlet hat and purple gown, of cope and mitre and crozier. Now came the heart of this grand show, the Host; and in it the spectators saw One mightier than any dead saint or living dignitary in all that great procession. The Host was carried by the Bishop of Paris under a magnificent canopy, the four pillars of which were supported by four princes of the blood - the three sons of the king, and the Duke of Vendôme.

After the Host walked the king. The severe plainness of his dress was in marked and studied contrast to the magnificence of the robes in which the ecclesiastics that preceded and the civic functionaries that followed him were arrayed. Francis I. on that day wore no crown, nor robe of state, nor was he borne along in chariot or litter. He appeared walking on foot, his head uncovered, his eyes cast on the ground, and in his hand a lighted taper.⁶ The king was there in the character of a penitent. He was the chief mourner in that great national act of humiliation and repentance. He mourned with head bowed and eyes cast down, but with heart unbroken. For what did Francis I., monarch of France, do penance? For the debaucheries that defiled his palace? for the righteous blood that stained the streets

⁵Felice, vol. 1, p. 30. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, pp. 152-154.

⁶Garnier, *Hist. de France*, 24, p. 556. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 154.

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of his capital? for the violated oaths by which he had attempted to overreach those who trusted him at home, and those who were transacting with him abroad? No; these were venial offenses; they were not worth a thought on the part of the monarch. The King of France did penance for the all but inexpressible crime of his Protestant subjects in daring to attack the mass, and publish in the face of all France their Protest against its blasphemy and idolatry.

The end of the procession was not yet; it still swept on; at slow pace, and in mournful silence, save when some penitential chant rose upon the air. Behind the king walked the queen; she was followed by all the members of the court, by the ambassadors of foreign sovereigns, by the nobles of the realm, by the members of Parliament in their scarlet robes, by judges, officers, and the guilds of the various trades, each with the symbol of penitence in his hand, a lighted candle. The military guard could with difficulty keep open the way for the procession through the dense crowd, which pressed forward to touch some holy relic or kiss some image of saint. They lined the whole route taken by the processionists, and did homage on bended knee to the Host as it passed them. ⁷

The long procession rolled in at the gates of Notre Dame. The Host, which had been carried thither with so much solemnity, was placed on the high altar; and a solemn mass proceeded in the presence of perhaps a more brilliant assemblage than had ever before been gathered into even the great national temple of France. When the ceremony was concluded the king returned to the bishop's palace, where he dined. After dinner he adjourned with the whole assembly to the great hall, where he ascended a throne which had been fitted up for the occasion. It was understood that the king was to pronounce an oration, and the assembly kept silence, eager to hear what so august a speaker, on so great an occasion, would say.

The king presented himself to his subjects with a sorrowful countenance; nor is it necessary to suppose that that sorrow was feigned. The affair of the placards threatened to embroil him with both friend and foe; it had crossed his political projects; and we can believe, moreover, that it had shocked his feelings and beliefs as

⁷This procession has been described by several French chroniclers - among others, Florimond Raemond, *Hist. Heres.*, 2:229; *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*; Fontaine, *Hist. Catholique*; Maimbourg; and the *Chronique du Roi Francois I.*

a Roman Catholic; for there is little ground to think that Francis had begun to love the Gospel, and the looks of sadness in which he showed himself to his subjects were not wholly counterfeited.

The speech which Francis I. delivered on this occasion - and several reports of it have come down to us - was touching and eloquent. He dwelt on the many favors Providence had conferred on France; her enemies had felt the weight of her sword; her friends had had good cause to rejoice in her alliance; even when punished for her faults great mercy had been mingled with the chastisement; above all, what an honour that France should have been enabled to persevere these long centuries in the path of the Holy Catholic faith, and had so nobly worn her glorious title the "Most Christian." But now, continued the king, she that has been preserved hitherto from straying so little, seems on the point of a fatal plunge into heresy; her soil has begun to produce monsters; "God has been attacked in the Holy Sacrament," France has been dishonored in the eyes of other nations, and the cloud of the Divine displeasure is darkening over her. "Oh, the crime, the blasphemy, the day of sorrow and disgrace! Oh, that it had never dawned upon us!"

These moving words drew tears from nearly all present, says the chronicler who reports the scene, and who was probably an eyewitness of it.⁸ Sobs and sighs burst from the assembly. After a pause the king resumed: "What a disgrace it will be if we do not extirpate these wicked creatures! If you know any person infected by this perverse sect, be he your parent, brother, cousin, or connection, give information against him. By concealing his misdeeds you will be partakers of that pestilent faction." The assembly, says the chronicle, gave numerous signs of assent. "I give thanks to God," he resumed, "that the greatest, the most learned, and undoubtedly the majority of my subjects, and especially in this good city of Paris, are full of zeal for the Catholic religion." Then, says the chronicle, you might have seen the faces of the spectators change in appearance, and give signs of joy; acclamations prevented the sighs, and sighs choked the acclamations. "I warn you," continued the king, "that I will have the said errors expelled and driven from my kingdom, and will excuse no one." Then he exclaimed, says our historian, with extreme anger,

⁸Chronique du Roi Francois I.

“As true, Messieurs, as I am your king, if I knew one of my own limbs spotted or infected with this detestable rottenness, I would give it you to cut off.... And farther, if I saw one of my children defiled by it, I would not spare him... I would deliver him up myself, and would sacrifice, him to God.”⁹

[216] The king was so agitated that he was unable to proceed; he burst into tears. The assembly wept with him. The Bishop of Paris and the provost of the merchants now approached the monarch, and kneeling before him swore, the first in the name of the clergy, and the second in that of the citizens, to make war against heresy. “Thereupon all the spectators exclaimed, with voices broken by sobbing, ‘We will live and die for the Catholic religion!’”¹⁰

Having sworn this oath in Notre Dame - the roof under which, nearly three centuries after, the Goddess of Reason sat enthroned - the assembly reformed and set forth to begin the war that very hour. Their zeal for the “faith” was inflamed to the utmost; but they were all the better prepared to witness the dreadful sights that awaited them. A terrible programme had been sketched out; horrors were to mark every step of the way back to the Louvre, but Francis and his courtiers were to gaze with pitiless eye and heart on these horrors.

[217] The procession in returning made a circuit by the Church of Genevieve, where now stands the Pantheon. At short distances scaffolds had been erected on which certain Protestant Christians were to be burned alive, and it was arranged that the faggots should be lighted at the moment the king approached, and that the procession should halt to witness the execution. The men set apart to death were first to undergo prolonged and excruciating tortures, and for this end a most ingenious but cruel apparatus had been devised, which let us describe. First rose an upright beam, firmly planted in the ground; to that another beam was attached crosswise, and worked by a pulley and string. The martyr was fastened to one end of the movable beam by his hands, which were tied behind his back, and then he was raised in the air. He was next let down into the slow fire underneath. After a minute or two’s broiling he was raised again, and a second time let drop into the fire; and thus was he raised and lowered till the ropes

⁹Ibid., p. 125.

¹⁰D’Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 161.

that fastened him to the pole were consumed, and he fell amid the burning coals, where he lay till he gave up the ghost.¹¹ “The custom in France,” says Sleidan,¹² describing these cruel tragedies; “is to put malefactors to death in the afternoon; where first silence is cried, and then the crimes for which they suffer are repeated aloud. But when any one is executed for Lutheranism, as they call it - that is, if any person hath disputed for justification by faith, not by works, that the saints are not to be invocated, that Christ is the only Priest and Intercessor for mankind; or if a man has happened to eat flesh upon forbidden days; not a syllable of all this is published, but in general they cry that he hath renounced God Almighty ...and violated the decrees of our common mother, Holy Church. This aggravating way makes the vulgar believe such persons the most profligate wretches under the cope of heaven; insomuch that when they are broiling in the flame, it is usual for the people to storm at them, cursing them in the height of their torments, as if they were not worthy to tread upon the earth.”

The first to be brought forth was Nicholas Valetton, the Christian whom we have already mentioned as frequently to be seen searching the innermost recesses and nooks of the booksellers' shops in quest of the writings of the Reformers. The priests offered him a pardon provided he would recant. “My faith,” he replied, “has a confidence in God, which will resist all the powers of hell.”¹³ He was dealt with as we have already described; tied to the beam, he was alternately raised in the air and lowered into the flames, till the cords giving way, there came an end to his agonies.

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Other two martyrs were brought forward, and three times, was this cruel sport enacted, the king and all the members of the procession standing by the while, and feasting their eyes on the torments of the sufferers. The King of France, like the Roman tyrant, wished that his victims should feel themselves die.

This was on the road between the Church of Genevieve and the Louvre. The scene of this tragedy, therefore, could not be very far from the spot where, somewhat more than 250 years after, the scaffold was set up for Louis XVI., and 2,800 other victims of the

¹¹Sleidan, bk. 9, p. 175.

¹²Ibid., bk. 9, p. 178

¹³Crespin, Martyrol.

Revolution. The spectacles of the day were not yet closed. On the line of march the lieutenant-criminal had prepared other scaffolds, where the cruel apparatus of death stood waiting its prey; and before the procession reached the Louvre, there were more halts, more victims, more expiations; and when Francis I. re-entered his palace and reviewed his day's work, he was well pleased to think that he had made propitiation for the affront offered to God in the Sacrament, and that the cloud of vengeance which had lowered above his throne and his kingdom was rolled away. The priests declared that the triumph of the Church in France was now for ever secured; and if any there were among the spectators whom these cruel deaths had touched with pity, by neither word nor sign dared they avow it. The populace of the capital were overjoyed; they had tasted of blood and were not soon to forego their relish for it,¹⁴ nor to care much in after-times at whose expense they gratified it.

As there are events so like to one another in their outward guise that they seem to be the same repeated, so there are days that appear to return over again, inasmuch as they come laden with the same good or evil fortune to which they had as it were been consecrated. Every nation has such days. The 21st of January is a noted and ominous day in the calendar of France. Twice has that day summoned up spectacles of horror; twice has it seen deeds enacted which have made France and the world shudder; and twice has it inaugurated an era of woes and tragedies which stand without a parallel in history. The first 21st of January is that whose tragic scenes we have just described, and which opened an era that ran on till the close of the eighteenth century, during which the disciples of the Gospel in France were pining in dungeons and in the galleys, were enduring captivity and famine, were expiring amid the flames or dying on the field of battle.

The second notable 21st of January came round in 1793. This day had, too, its procession through the streets of Paris; again the king was the chief figure; again there were tumult and shouting; again there was heard the cry for more victims; again there were black scaffolds; and again the scenes of the day were closed by horrid executions; Louis XVI., struggling hand to hand with his

¹⁴D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 165.

jailers and executioners was dragged forward to the block, and there held down by main force till the axe had fallen, and his dissevered head rolled on the scaffold.

Have we not witnessed a third dismal 21st of January in France? It is the winter of 1870-71. Four months has Paris suffered siege; the famine is sore in the city; the food of man has disappeared from her luxurious tables; her inhabitants ravenously devour unclean and abominable things - the vermin of the sewers, the putrid carcasses of the streets. Within the city, the inhabitants are pining away with cold and hunger and disease; without, the sword of a victorious foe awaits them. Paris will rouse herself, and break through the circle of fire and steel that hems her in. The attempt is made, but fails. Her soldiers are driven back before the victorious German, and again are cooped up within her miserable walls. On the 21st of January, 1871, it was resolved to capitulate to the conqueror. ¹⁵

¹⁵The German forces shortly afterwards left the land, and with marvellous rapidity, under the skilled guidance of the illustrious Thiers, the gallant nation recovered its position among the countries of Europe.

Chapter 22: Basle and the “Institutes”

Glory of the Sufferers—Francis I. again turns to the German Protestants—They Shrink back—His Doublings—New Persecuting Edicts—Departure of the Queen of Navarre from Paris—New Day to Bearn—Calvin—Strasburg—Calvin arrives there—Bucer, Capito, etc—Calvin Dislikes their Narrowness—Goes on to Basle—Basle—Its Situation and Environs—Soothing Effect on Calvin’s Mind—His Interview with Erasmus—Erasmus “Lays the Egg”—Terrified at what Comes of it—Draws back—Calvin’s Enthusiasm—Erasmus’ Prophecy—Catherine Klein—First Sketch of the Institutes—What led Calvin to undertake the Work—Its Sublimity, but Onerousness

Picture: Gasper Hedio Picture: Interview between Erasmus and Calvin

We described in our last chapter the explosion that followed the publication of the manifesto against the mass. In one and the same night it was placarded over great part of France, and when the morning broke, and men came forth and read it, there were consternation and anger throughout the kingdom. It proclaimed only the truth, but it was truth before its time in France. It was a bolt flung at the mass and its believers, which might silence and crush them, but if it failed to do this it would rouse them into fury, and provoke a terrible retaliation. It did the latter. The throne and the whole kingdom had been polluted; the Holy Sacrament blasphemed; the land was in danger of being smitten with terrible woes, and so a public atonement was decreed for the public offense which had been offered. Not otherwise, it pleased the king, his prelates, and his nobles to think, could France escape the wrath of the Most High.

The terrible rites of the day of expiation we have already chronicled. Was the God that France worshipped some inexorable and remorseless deity, seeing she propitiated him with human sacrifices? The tapers carried that day by the penitents who swept in long pro-

cession through the streets of the capital, blended their lights with the lurid glare of the fires in which the Lutherans were burned; and the loud chant of priest and chorister rose amid no cries and sobs from the victims. These noble men, who were now dragged to the burning pile, uttered no cry; they shed no tear; that were a weakness that would, have stained the glory of their sacrifice. They stood with majestic mien at the stake, and looked with calmness on the tortures their enemies had prepared for them, nor did they blanch when the flames blazed up around them. The sacrifice of old, when led to the altar, was crowned with garlands. So it was with these martyrs. They came to the altar to offer up their lives crowned with the garlands of joy and praise. Their faith, their courage, their reliance on God when suffering in His cause, their vivid anticipations of future glory, were the white robes in which they dressed themselves when they ascended the altar to die. France, let us hope, will not always be ignorant of her true heroes. These have shed around her a renown purer and brighter, a hundred times, than all the glory she has earned on the battle-field from the days of Francis I. to those of the last Napoleon.

Hardly had Francis I. concluded his penitential procession when he again turned to the Protestant princes of Germany, and attempted to resume negotiations with them. They not unnaturally asked of him an explanation of his recent proceedings. Why so anxious to court the favor of the Protestants of Germany when he was burning the Protestants of France? Were there two true faiths in the world, the creed of Rome on the west of the Rhine, and the religion of Wittenberg on the east of that river? But the king was ready with his excuse, and his excuse was that of almost all persecutors of every age. The king had not been burning Lutherans, but executing traitors. If those he had put to death had imbibed Reformed sentiments, it was not for their religion, but for their sedition that they had been punished. Such was the excuse which Francis gave to the German princes in his letter of the 15th of February. "To stop this plague of disloyalty from spreading, he punished its originators severely, as his ancestors had also done in like cases."¹ He even attempted to induce Melancthon to take up his abode in Paris, where he

¹Sleidan, bk. 9, p. 179.

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would have received him with honour, and burned him a few months afterwards. But these untruths and doublings availed Francis little. Luther had no faith in princes, least of all had he faith in Francis I. Melanchthon, anxious as he was to promote conciliation, yet refused to enter a city on the streets of which the ashes of the fires in which the disciples of Christ had been burned were not yet cold. And the Protestant princes, though desirous of strengthening their political defences, nevertheless shrank back from a hand which they saw was red with the blood of their brethren. The situation in France began to be materially altered. The king's disposition had undergone a change for the worse; a gloomy determination to crush heresy had taken possession of him, and was clouding his better qualities. The men of letters who had shed a lustre upon his court and realm were beginning to withdraw. They were terrified by the stakes which they saw around them, not knowing but that their turn might come next. The monks were again looking up, which augured no good for the interests of learning. Not content with the executions of the terrible 21st of January, the king continued to issue edicts against the sect of "Lutherans still swarming in the realm;" he wrote to the provincial parliaments, exhorting them to furnish money and prisons for the extirpation² of heresy; lastly, he indited an ordinance declaring printing abolished all over France, under pain of the gallows.³ That so barbarous a decree should have come from a prince who gloried in being the leader of the literary movements of his age, would not have been credible had it not been narrated by historians of name. It is one among a hundred proofs that literary culture is no security against the spirit of persecution.

Of those who now withdrew from Paris was Margaret of Valois, the king's sister. We have seen the hopes that she long and ardently cherished that her brother would be won to the Reformation; but now that Francis I. had cast the die, and sealed his choice by the awful deeds of blood we have narrated, Margaret, abandoning all hope, quitted Paris, where even the palace could hardly protect her from the stake, and retired to her own kingdom of Bearn. Her departure, and that of the exiles who had preceded her, if it was the beginning

²Bulletin de la Societe de la Histoire du Protestantisme, Francois L, p. 828 - D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 167.

³Sismondi, Hist. des Francois, 16, p. 455.

of that social and industrial decadence which ever since has gone on, amid many deceitful appearances, in France, was the dawn of a new day to Bearn. Her court became the asylum of the persecuted. Many refugee families transported their industry and their fortune to her provinces, and the prosperity which had taken a long adieu of France, began to enrich her little kingdom. Soon a new face appeared upon the state of the Bearnais. The laws were reformed, schools were opened, many branches of industry were imported and very successfully cultivated, and, in short, the foundations were now laid of that remarkable prosperity which made the little kingdom in the Pyrenees resemble an oasis amid the desert which France and Spain were now beginning to become. When Margaret went to her grave, in 1549, she left a greater to succeed her in the government of the little territory which had so rapidly risen from rudeness to wealth and civilisation. Her daughter, Jeanne d'Albret, is one of the most illustrious women in history.

We return to Calvin, in the track of whose footsteps it is that the great movement, set for the rising of one kingdom and the fall of another, is to be sought. He now begins to be by very much the chief figure of his age. Francis I. with his court, Charles V. with his armies, are powers more imposing but less real than Calvin. They pass across the stage with a great noise, but half-a-century afterwards, when we come to examine the traces they have left behind them, it is with difficulty that we can discover them; other kings and other armies are busy effacing them, and imprinting their own in their room. It is Calvin's work that endures and goes forward with the ages. We have seen him, a little before the bursting of the storm, leave Paris, nevermore to enter its gates.

Setting out in the direction of Germany, and travelling on horseback, he arrived in due course at Strasburg. Its name, "the City of the Highways," sufficiently indicates its position, and the part it was expected to play in the then system of Europe. Strongly fortified, it stood like a mailed warrior at the point where the great roads of Northern Europe intersected one another. It was the capital of Alsace, which was an independent territory, thrown in as it were, in the interests of peace, between Eastern and Western Europe, and therefore its fortifications were on purpose of prodigious strength. As kings were rushing at one another, now pushing eastward from

France into Germany, and now rushing across the Rhine from Germany into France, eager to give battle and redden the earth with blood, this man in armor - the City of the Highways, namely - who stood right in their path compelled them to halt, until their anger should somewhat subside, and peace might be maintained.

[221] A yet more friendly office did Strasburg discharge to the persecuted children of the Reformation. Being a free city, it offered asylum to the exiles from surrounding countries. Its magistrates were liberal; its citizens intelligent; its college was already famous; the strong walls and firm gates that would have resisted the tempests of war had yielded to the Gospel, and the Reformation had found entrance into Strasburg at an early period. Bucer, Capito, and Hedio, whom we have already met with, were living here at the time of Calvin's visit, and the pleasure of seeing them, and conversing with them, had no small share in inducing the Reformer to turn his steps in the direction of this city.

In one respect he was not disappointed. He much relished the piety and the learning of these men, and they in turn were much impressed with the seriousness and greatness of character of their young visitor. But in another respect he was disappointed in them. Their views of Divine truth lacked depth and comprehensiveness, and their scheme of Reformation was, in the same proportion, narrow and defective. The path which they loved, a middle way between Wittenberg and Rome, was a path which Calvin did not, or would not, understand. To him there were only two faiths, a true and a false, and to him there could be but two paths, and the attempt to make a third between the two was, in his judgment, to keep open the road back to Rome. All the greater minds of the Reformation were with Calvin on this point. Those only who stood in the second class among the Reformers gave way to the dream of reconciling Rome and the Gospel: a circumstance which we must attribute not to the greater charity of the latter, but to their incapacity to comprehend either the system of Rome or the system of the Gospel in all the amplitude that belongs to each.

Calvin grew weary of hearing, day after day, plans propounded which, at the best, could have but patched and soldered a hopelessly rotten system, but would have accomplished no Reformation, and so, after a sojourn of a few months, he took his departure from

Strasburg, and began his search for the "quiet nook"⁴ where he might give himself to the study of what he felt must, under the Spirit, be his great instructor the Bible. The impression was growing upon him, and his experience at Strasburg had deepened that impression, that it was not from others that he was to learn the Divine plan; he must himself search it out in the Holy Oracles; he must go aside with God, like Moses on the mount, and there he would be shown the fashion of that temple which he was to build in Christendom.

Following the course of the Rhine, Calvin went on to Basle. Basle is the gate of Switzerland as one comes from Germany, and being a frontier town, situated upon one of the then great highways of Europe, it enjoyed a large measure of prosperity. The Huguenot traveller, Misson, who visited it somewhat more than a century after the time of which we speak, says of it: "The largest, fairest, richest city now reckoned to be in Switzerland."⁵ Its situation is pleasant, and may even in some respects be styled romantic. Its chief feature is the Rhine, even here within sight, if one may so speak, of the mountains where it was born: a broad, majestic river, sweeping past the town with rapid flow,⁶ or rather dividing it into two unequal parts, the Little Basle lying on the side towards Germany, and joined to the Great Basle by a long wooden bridge, now changed into one of stone. Crowning the western bank of the Rhine, in the form of a half-moon, are the buildings of the city, conspicuous among which are the fine towers of the Minster. Looking from the esplanade of the Cathedral one's eye lights on the waters of the river, on the fresh and beautiful valleys through which it rolls; on the gentle hills of the Black Forest beyond, sprinkled with dark pines, and agreeably relieved by the sunny glades on which their shadows fall; while a short walk to the south of the town brings the tops of the Jura upon the horizon, telling the traveller that he has reached the threshold of a region of mountainous grandeur. "They have a custom which is become a law," says the traveller to whom we have referred above,

⁴"Ut in obscuro aliquo angulo abditus quiete diu negata fruerer." (Praefatio ad Psalmos-Calvini Opp.)

⁵Misson, *A New Voyage to Italy*, vol. 2, part 2, p. 493.

⁶The watermen when they descended the Rhine weekly sold their boats at Strasburg and returned on foot, the strength of the current not permitting them to row their craft against it. (Fynes Moryson, *Travels*, part 1, bk. 1, ch. 2; fol.; Lond., 1617.)

speaking of Basle, “and which is singular and very commendable; ‘tis that whoever passes through Basle, and declares himself to be poor, they give him victuals - I think, for two or three days; and some other relief, if he speaks Latin.” ⁷

Much as the scene presents itself to the tourist of to-day, would it appear to Calvin more than three centuries ago. There was the stream rolling its “milk-white” floods to the sea, nor was he ignorant of the fact that it had borne on its current the ashes of Huss and Jerome, to bury them grandly in the ocean. There was the long wooden bridge that spans the Rhine, with the crescent-like line of buildings drawn along the brow of the opposite bank. There were the Minster towers, beneath whose shadow Oecolampadius, already dismissed from labor, was resting in the sleep of the tomb. ⁸

[222] There were the emerald valleys, enclosing the town with a carpet of the softest green; there were the sunny glades, and the tall dark pines on the eastern hills; and in the south were the azure tops of the Jura peering over the landscape. A scene like this, so finely blending quietude and sublimity, must have had a soothing influence on a mind like Calvin’s; it must have appeared to him the very retreat he had so long sought for, and fain would he be to turn aside for awhile here and rest. Much troubled was the world around; the passions of men were raising frightful tempests in it; armies and battles and stakes made it by no means a pleasant dwelling-place; but these quiet valleys and those distant peaks spoke of peace, and so the exile, weary of foot, and yet more weary of heart - for his brethren were being led as sheep to the slaughter - very unobtrusively but very thankfully entered within those gates to which Providence had led him, and where he was to compose a work which still keeps its place at the head of the Reformation literature - the Institutes.

⁷Misson, *New Voyage*, vol. 2, part 2, p. 502.

⁸The tomb of (Ecolampadius is to be seen in the Cathedral, with the following epitaph, according to Misson: - “D. Joh. Oecolampadius, professione theologus; trium linguarum peritissimus; auctor Evangelicæ doctrinæ in hac urbe primus; et templi hujus verus episcopus; ut doctrina, sic vitæ sanctimoniâ pollentissimus, sub breve saxum hoc reconditus est. Anno salutis ob. 21 November, 1531. Aet. 49.” (Dr. John (Ecolampadius, by profession a divine; most skillful in three languages; first author of the Reformed religion in this city, and true bishop of this church; as in doctrine so in sanctity of life most excellent, is laid under this short stone. He died in the year of our Lord, 21st November, 1531, aged forty-nine years.)

On his way from Strasburg to Basle, Calvin had an interview with a very remarkable man. The person whom he now met had rendered to the Gospel no small service in the first days of the Reformation, and he might have rendered it ten times more had his courage been equal to his genius, and his piety as profound as his scholarship. We refer to Erasmus, the great scholar of the sixteenth century. He was at this time living at Freiburg, in Brisgau - the progress, or as Erasmus deemed it, the excesses of the Reformed faith having frightened him into leaving Basle, where he had passed so many years, keeping court like a prince, and receiving all the statesmen and scholars who chanced to visit that city. Erasmus' great service to the Reformation was his publication of the New Testament in the year 1516.⁹ The fountain sealed all through the Dark Ages was anew opened, and the impulse even to the cause of pure Christianity thereby was greater than we at this day can well imagine. This was the service of Erasmus. "He laid the egg," it has been said, "of the Reformation."

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The great scholar, in his early and better days, had seen with unfeigned joy the light of letters breaking over Europe. He hated the monks with his whole soul, and lashed their ignorance and vice with the unsparing rigor of his satire; but now he was almost seventy, he had hardly more than another year to live,¹⁰ and the timidity of age was creeping over him. He had never been remarkable for courage; he always took care not to come within wind of a stake, but now he was more careful than ever not to put himself in the way of harm. He had hailed the Reformation less for the spiritual blessings which it brought in its train than for the literary elegances and social ameliorations which it shed around it.

Besides, the Pope had been approaching him on his weak side. Paul III. fully understood the importance of enlisting the pen of Erasmus on behalf of Rome. The battle was waxing hotter every day, and the pen was playing a part in the conflict which was not second to even that of the sword. A cardinal's hat was the brilliant prize which the Pope dangled before the scholar. Erasmus had the good sense

⁹See ante, vol. 1, bk. 8, ch. 5, p. 428.

¹⁰Erasmus died in 1536; he was buried in the Cathedral of Basle, and his epitaph, on a pillar before the choir, indicates his age by the single term *septaegenarius*, about seventy. The exact time of his birth is unknown.

not to accept, but the flattery implied in the offer had so far gained its end that it had left Erasmus not very zealous in the Reformed cause, if indeed he had ever been so. Could the conflict have been confined to the schools, with nothing more precious than ink shed in it, and nothing more weighty than a little literary reputation lost by it, the scholar of Rotterdam would have continued to play the champion on the Protestant side. But when he saw monarchs girding on the sword, nations beginning to be convulsed - things he had not reckoned on when he gave the first touch to the movement by the publication of his New Testament - and especially when he saw confessors treading the bitter path of martyrdom, it needed on the part of Erasmus a deeper sense of the value of the Gospel and a higher faith in God than, we fear, he possessed, to stand courageously on the side of the Reformation.

How unlike the two men who now stood face to face! Both were on the side of progress, but each sought it on a different line, and each had pictured to himself a different future. Erasmus was the embodiment of the Renaissance, the other was the herald of a more glorious day. In the first the light of the Renaissance, which promised so much, had already begun to wane - sprung of the earth, it was returning to the earth; but where Erasmus stopped, there Calvin found his starting-point. While the shadows of the departing day darkened the face of the sage of Rotterdam, Calvin's shone with the brightness of the morning. After a few interrogatories, to which Erasmus replied hesitatingly, Calvin freely gave vent to the convictions that filled his soul.¹¹ Nothing, he believed, but a radical reform could save Christendom. He would have no bolstering up of an edifice rotten to its foundations. He would sweep it away to its last stone, and he would go to the quarry whence were dug the materials wherewith the Christian Church was fashioned in the first age, and he would anew draw forth the stones necessary for its reconstruction. Erasmus shrank back as if he saw the toppling ruin about to fall upon him and crush him. "I see a great tempest about to arise in the Church - against the Church,"¹² exclaimed the scholar, in whose ear Calvin's voice sounded as the first hoarse

¹¹The interview has been related by a chronicler of the same century - Flor. Remond, *Hist. Heres.*, 2, p. 251.

¹²*Ibid.*

notes of the coming storm. How much Erasmus misjudged! The Renaissance - calm, classic, and conservative as it seemed - was in truth the tempest. The pagan principles it scattered in the soft of Christendom, helped largely to unchain those furious winds that broke out two centuries after. The interview now suddenly closed.

Pursuing his journey, with his inseparable companion, the young Canon Du Tillet, the two travelers at length reached Basle. Crossing the long bridge, and climbing the opposite acclivity, they entered the city. It was the seat of a university founded, as we have already said, in 1459, by Pope Pius II., who gave it all the privileges of that of Bologna. It had scholars, divines, and some famous printers. But Calvin did not present himself at their door. The purpose for which he had come to Basle required that he should remain unknown, he wished to have perfect unbroken quietude for study. Accordingly he turned into a back street where, he knew, lived a pious woman in humble condition, Catherine Klein, who received the disciples of the Gospel when forced to seek asylum, and he took up his abode in her lowly dwelling. [225]

The penetration of this good woman very soon discovered the many high qualities of the thin pale-faced stranger whom she had received under her roof. When Calvin had fulfilled his career, and his name and doctrine were spreading over the earth, she was wont to dilate with evident pleasure in his devotion to study, on the beauty of his life, and the charms of his genius. He seldom went out,¹³ and when he did so it was to steal away across the Rhine, and wander among the pines on the eastern hill, whence he could gaze on the city and its environing valleys, and the majestic river whose "eternal" flow formed the link between the everlasting hills of its birth-place, and the great ocean where was its final goal - nay, between the successive generations which had flourished upon its banks, from the first barbarian races which had drunk its waters, to the learned men who were filling the pulpits, occupying the university chairs, or working the printing-presses of the city below him.

Calvin had found at last his "obscure corner," and he jealously preserved his incognito. Oecolampadius, the first Reformed Pastor of Basle, was now, as we have said, in his grave; but Oswald Myconius,

¹³"Cum incognitus Basileae laterem." (Preface to Comment on Psalms.)

the friend of Zwingli, had taken his place as President of the Church. In him Calvin knew he would find a congenial spirit. There was another man living at Basle at that time, whose fame as a scholar had reached the Reformer - Symon Grynaeus. Grynaeus was the schoolfellow of Melancthon, and when Erasmus quitted Basle he was invited to take his place at the university, which he filled with a renown second only to that of his great predecessor. He was as remarkable for his honesty and the sweetness of his disposition as for his learning. Calvin sought and enjoyed the society of these men before leaving Basle, but meanwhile, inflexibly bent on the great ends for which he had come hither, he forbore making their acquaintance. Intercourse with the world and its business sharpens the observing powers, and breeds dexterity; but the soul that is to grow from day to day and from year to year, and at last embody its matured and concentrated strength in some great work, must dwell in solitude. It was here, in this seclusion and retreat, that Calvin sketched the first outline of a work which was to be not merely the basis of his own life-work, but the corner-stone of the Reformed Temple, and which from year to year he was to develop and perfect, according to the measure of the increase of his own knowledge and light, and leave to succeeding generations as the grandest, of his and of his age's achievements.

The Institutes first sprang into form in the following manner: While Calvin was pursuing his studies in his retirement at Basle, dreadful tidings reached the banks of the Rhine. The placard, the outbursts of royal wrath, the cruel torturings and bumblings that followed, were all carried by report to Basle. First came tidings of the individual martyrs; scarcely had the first messenger given in his tale, when another - escaped from prison or from the stake, and who could say, as of old, "I only am left to tell thee" - arrived with yet more dreadful tidings of the wholesale barbarities which had signalled the terrible 21st of January in Paris. The news plunged Calvin into profound sorrow. He could but too vividly realize the awful scenes, the tidings of which so wrung his heart with anguish. It was but yesterday that he had trodden the streets in which they were enacted. He knew the men who had endured these cruel deaths. They were his brethren. He had lived in their houses; he had sat at their tables. How often had he held sweet converse with them on the

things of God! He knew them to be men of whom the world was not worthy; and yet they were accounted as the off-scouring of all things, and as sheep appointed to the slaughter were killed all day long. Could he be silent when his brethren were being condemned and drawn to death? And yet what could he do? The arm of the king he could not stay. He could not go in person and plead their cause, for that would be to set up his own stake. He had a pen, and he would employ it in vindicating his brethren in the face of Christendom. But in what way should he best do this? He could vindicate these martyrs effectually not otherwise than by vindicating their cause. It was the Reformation that was being vilified, condemned, burned in the persons of these men; it was this, therefore, that he must vindicate. It was not merely a few stakes in Paris, but the martyrs of the Gospel in all lands that he would cover with his aegis.

The task that Calvin now set for himself was sublime, but onerous. He would make it plain to all that the, faith which was being branded as heresy, and for professing which men were being burned alive, was no cunningly devised system of man, but the Old Gospel; and that so far from being an enemy of kings, and a subverter of law and order, which it was accused of being, it was the very salt of society - a bulwark to the throne and a protection to law; and being drawn from the Bible, it opened to man the gates of a moral purification in this life, and of a perfect and endless felicity in the next. This was what Calvin accomplished in his

Christianae Religionis Institutio.

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Chapter 23: The “Institutes”

Calvin Discards the Aristotelian Method—How a True Science of Astronomy is Formed—Calvin Proceeds in the same way in Constructing his Theology—Induction—Christ Himself sets the Example of the Inductive Method—Calvin goes to the Field of Scripture—His Pioneers—The Schoolmen—Melanchthon—Zwingle—The Augsburg Confession—Calvin’s System more Complete—Two Tremendous Facts—First Edition of the Institutes—Successive Editions—The Creed its Model—Enumeration of its Principal Themes—God the Sole Fountain of all things—Christ the One Source of Redemption and Salvation—The Spirit the One Agent in the Application of Redemption—The Church—Her Worship and Government

Picture: View of Basle

We shall now proceed to the consideration of that work which has exercised so vast an influence on the great movement we are narrating, and which all will admit, even though they may dissent from some of its’ teachings, to be, in point of logical compactness, and constructive comprehensive genius, truly grand. It is not of a kind that discloses its solidity and gigantic proportions to the casual or passing glance. It must be leisurely contemplated. In the case of some kingly mountain, whose feet are planted in the depths but whose top is lost in the light of heaven, we must remove to a distance, and when the little hills which had seemed to overtop it when we stood at its base have sunk below the horizon, then it is that the true monarch stands out before us in un-approached and unchallenged supremacy. So with the Institutes of the Christian Religion. No such production had emanated from the theological intellect since the times of the great Father of the West - Augustine.

During the four centuries that preceded Calvin, there had been no lack of theories and systems. The schoolmen had toiled to put the world in possession of truth; but their theology was simply

abstraction piled upon abstraction, and the more elaborately they speculated the farther they strayed. Their systems had no basis in fact: they had no root in the revelation of God; they were a speculation, not knowledge.

Luther and Calvin struck out a new path in theological discovery. They discarded the Aristotelian method as a vicious one, though the fashionable and, indeed, the only one until their time, and they adopted the Baconian method, though Bacon had not yet been born to give his name to his system. Calvin saw the folly of retiring into the dark closet of one's own mind, as the schoolmen did, and out of such materials as they were able to create, fashioning a theology. Taking his stand upon the open field of revelation, he essayed to glean those God-created and Heaven-revealed truths which lie there, and he proceeded to build them up into a system of knowledge which should have power to enlighten the intellect and to sanctify the hearts of the men of the sixteenth century. Calvin's first question was not, "Who am I?" but "Who is God?" He looked at God from the stand-point of the human conscience, with the torch of the Bible in his hand. God was to him the beginning of knowledge. The heathen sage said, "Know thyself" But a higher Authority had said, "The fear," that is the knowledge, "of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is in the light that all things are seen. "God is light."

In chemistry, in botany, in astronomy, he is the best philosopher who most carefully studies nature, most industriously collects facts, and most skilfully arranges them into a system or science. Not otherwise can the laws of the material universe, and the mutual relations of the bodies that compose it, be discovered. We must proceed in theology just as we proceed in natural science. He is the best theologian who most carefully studies Scripture, who most accurately brings out the meaning of its individual statements or truths, and who so classifies these as to exhibit that whole scheme of doctrine that is contained in the Bible. Not otherwise than by induction can we arrive at a true science: not otherwise than by induction can we come into possession of a true theology. The botanist, instead of shutting himself up in his closet, goes forth into the field and collects into classes the flora spread profusely, and without apparent order, over plain and mountain, grouping plant with plant, each according to its kind, till not one is left, and then his science of botany is per-

fected. The astronomer, instead of descending into some dark cave, turns his telescope to the heavens, watches the motions of its orbs, and by means of the bodies that are seen, he deduces the laws and forces that are unseen, and thus order springs up before his eye, and the system of the universe unveils itself to him. What the flora of the field are to the botanist, what the stars of the firmament are to the astronomer, the truths scattered over the pages of the Bible are to the theologian. The Master Himself has given us the hint that it is the inductive method which we are to follow in our search after Divine truth; nay, He has herein gone before us and set us the example, for beginning at Moses and the prophets, He expounded to His disciples "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." It was to these pages that Calvin turned. He searched them through and through, he laid all the parts of the Word of God under contribution: its histories and dramas, its Psalms and prophecies, its Gospels and Epistles. With profound submission of mind he accepted whatever he found taught there; and having collected his materials, he proceeded with the severest logic, and in the exercise of a marvellous constructive genius, to frame his system - to erect the temple. To use the beautiful simile of D'Aubigne, "He went to the Gospel springs, and there collecting into a golden cup the pure and living waters of Divine revelation, presented them to the nations to quench their thirst."¹

We have said that Calvin was the first to open this path, but the statement is not to be taken literally and absolutely. He had several pioneers in this road; but none of them had trodden it with so firm a step, or left it so thoroughly open for men to follow, as Calvin did. By far the greatest of his pioneers was Augustine. But even the *City of God*, however splendid as a dissertation, is yet as a system much inferior to the *Institutes*, in completeness as well as in logical power. After Augustine there comes a long and dreary interval, during which no attempt was made to classify and systematize the truths of revelation. The attempt of Johannes Damascenus, in the eighth century, is a very defective performance, Not more successful were the efforts of the schoolmen. The most notable of these were the four books of *Sentences* by Peter Lombard, and the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas, but both are defective and erroneous. In perusing

¹D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 203.

the theological productions of that age, we become painfully sensible of strength wasted owing to the adoption of an entirely false method of interpreting the Word of God - a method which, we ought to say, was a forsaking rather than an interpreting of the Scriptures; for in the schoolmen we have a body of ingenious and laborious men, who have withdrawn themselves from the light of the Bible into the dark chamber of their own minds, and are weaving systems of theology out of their brains and the traditions of their Church, in which errors are much more plentiful than truths, and which possess no power to pacify the conscience, or to purify the life.

When we reach the age of the Reformation the true light again greets our eyes. Luther was no systematiser on a great scale; Melancthon made a more considerable essay in that direction. His *Loci Communes*, or *Common Places*, published in 1521, were a prodigious advance on the systems of the schoolmen. They are quickened by the new life, but yet their mold is essentially mediaeval, and is too rigid and unbending to permit a free display of the piety of the author. The *Commentarius de Vera et Falsa Religione*, or *Commentary on the True and False Religion*, of Zwingli, published in 1525, is freed from the scholastic method of Melancthon's performance, but is still defective as a formal system of theology. The *Confession of Augsburg* (1530) is more systematic and complete than any of the foregoing, but still simply a confession of faith, and not such an exhibition of Divine Truth as the Church required. It remained for Calvin to give it this. The *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was a confession of faith,² a system of exegesis, a body of polemics and apologetics, and an exhibition of the rich practical effects which flow from Christianity - it was all four in one. Calvin takes his reader by the hand and conducts him round the entire territory of truth; he shows him the strength and grandeur of its central citadel - namely, its God-given doctrines; the height and solidity of its ramparts; the gates by which it is approached; the order that reigns within; the glory of the Lamb revealed in the Word that illuminates it with continual day; the River of Life by which it was watered that is, the Holy Spirit; this, he exclaims, is the “City of the

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²*Pro Confessione Fidei offertur*, says the title-page of the first edition of the *Institutes*, now before us, dated Basileae 1536.

Living God,” this is the “Heavenly Jerusalem;” decay or overthrow never can befall it, for it is built upon the foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. Into this city “there entereth nothing that defileth, or maketh a lie,” and the “nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light thereof.”

That Calvin’s survey of the field of supernatural truth as contained in the Bible was complete; that his classification of its individual facts was perfect; that his deductions and conclusions were in all cases sound, and that his system was without error, Calvin himself did not maintain, and it would ill become even the greatest admirer of that guarded, qualified, and balanced Calvinism which the Reformer taught - not that caricature of it which some of his followers have presented, a Calvinism which disjoins the means from the end, which destroys the freedom of man and abolishes his accountability; which is fatalism, in short, and is no more like the Calvinism of Calvin than Mahommedanism is like Christianity - it would ill become any one, we say, to challenge for Calvin’s system an immunity from error which he himself did not challenge for it. He found himself, in pursuing his investigations in the field of Scripture, standing face to face with two tremendous facts - God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom; both he believed to be facts; he maintained the last as firmly as the first; he confessed that he could not reconcile the two, he left this and all other mysteries connected with supernatural truth to be solved by the deeper researches and the growing light of the ages to come, if it were meant that they should ever find their solution on earth.

This work was adopted by the Reformed Church, and after some years published in most of the languages of Christendom. The clearness and strength of its logic; the simplicity and beauty of its exposition; the candour of its conclusions; the fullness of its doctrinal statements, and not less the warm spiritual life that throbbed under its deductions, now bursting out in rich practical exhortation, and now soaring into a vein of lofty speculation, made the Church feel that no book like this had the Reformation given her heretofore; and she accepted it, as at once a confession of her faith, an answer to all charges whether from the Roman camp or from the infidel one, and her justification alike before those now living and the ages to

come, against the violence with which the persecutor was seeking to overwhelm her.

The first edition of the *Institutes* contained only six chapters. During all his life after he continued to elaborate and perfect the work. Edition after edition continued to issue from the press. These were published in Latin, but afterwards rendered into French, and translated into all the tongues of Europe. “During twenty-four years,” says Bungener, “the book increased in every edition, not as an edifice to which additions are made, but as a tree which develops itself naturally, freely, and without the compromise of its unity for a moment.”³ It is noteworthy that the publication of the work fell on the mid-year of the Reformer’s life. Twenty-seven years had he been preparing for writing it, and twenty-seven years did he survive to expand and perfect it; nevertheless, not one of its statements or doctrines did he essentially alter or modify. It came, too, at the right time as regards the Reformation.⁴

We shall briefly examine the order and scope of the book. It proposes two great ends, the knowledge of God and the knowledge of man. It employs the first to attain the second. “The whole sum of wisdom,” said the author at the outset, “is that by knowing God each of us knows himself also.”⁵ If man was made in the image of God, then surely the true way to know what our moral and spiritual powers are, or ought to be, what are the relations in which we stand to God, and what the service of love and obedience we owe him, is not to study the dim and now defaced image, but to turn our eye upon the undimmed and glorious Original - the Being in whose likeness man was created.

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³Calvin: his Life, his Labours, and his Writings, p. 43.

⁴The following valuable note was communicated to the Author by the late Mr. David Laing, LL.D. Than Mr. Laing’s there is no higher authority upon the subject to which it refers, and his note may be regarded as setting finally at rest the hitherto vexed question touching the publication of the *Institutes*: - “It is now a long while ago, when I was asked by Dr. McCrie, senior, to ascertain in what year the first edition appeared of Calvin’s *Institutes*. At the time, although no perfect copy of the 1536 volume was accessible, the conclusion I came to was that the work first appeared in a small volume, pp. 519, with the title *Christianae Religionis Institutio*, etc. Joanne Calvino, Autore. Basileae, MDXXXVI.

⁵“Vera hominis sapientia sita est in cognitione Dei Creatoris et Redemptoris.” (Calvini Opp., vol. 9.)

The image of God, it is argued, imprinted upon our own souls would have sufficed to reveal him to us if we had not fallen. But sin has defaced that image. Nevertheless, we are not left in darkness, for God has graciously given us a second revelation of himself in his Word. Grasping that torch, and holding it aloft, Calvin proceeds on his way, and bids all who would know the eternal mysteries follow that shining light. Thus it was that the all-sufficiency and supreme and sole authority of the Scriptures took a leading place in the system of the Reformer.

The order of the work is simplicity itself. It is borrowed from the Apostles' Creed, whose four cardinal doctrines furnish the Reformer with the argument of the four books in which he finally arranged the Institutes.

I. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."

[230] Such is the argument of the first book. In it Calvin brings God before us in his character of Creator and sovereign Ruler of the world. But we must note that his treatment of this theme is eminently moral. It is no scenic exhibition of omnipotent power and infinite wisdom, as shown in the building of the fabric of the heavens and the earth, that passes before us. From the first line the author places himself and us in the eye of conscience. The question, Can the knowledge of God as Creator conduct to salvation? leads the Reformer to discuss in successive chapters the doctrine of the fall; the necessity of another and clearer revelation; the proofs of the inspiration of the Bible. He winds up with some chapters on Providence, as exercised in the government of all things, and in the superintendence of each particular thing and person in the universe. In these chapters Calvin lays the foundations for that tremendous conclusion at which he arrives in the book touching election, which has been so stumbling to many, and which is solemn and mysterious to all.

II. "And in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son." The knowledge of God as Redeemer is the argument of book second. This ushers the author upon a higher stage, and places him amid grander themes. All that led up to the redemption accomplished on Calvary, as well as the redemption itself, is here discussed. Sin, the ruin of man, and his inability to be his own savior; the moral law; the gracious purpose of God in giving it, namely, to convince man of sin, and make him

feel his need of a Savior; such are the successive and majestic steps by which Calvin advances to the Cross. Arrived there, we have a complete Christology: Jesus very God, very Man, Prophet, Priest, and King; and his death an eternal redemption, inasmuch as it was an actual, full, and complete expiation of the sins of his people. The book closes with the collected light of the Bible concentrated upon the Cross, and revealing it with a noonday clearness, as a fully accomplished redemption, the one impregnable ground of the sinner's hope.

III. "I believe in the Holy Ghost." That part of redemption which it is the office of the Spirit to accomplish, is the argument to which the author now addresses himself. The theme of the second book is a righteousness accomplished without the sinner: in the third book we are shown a righteousness accomplished within him. Calvin insists not less emphatically upon the last as an essential part of redemption than upon the first. The sinner's destruction was within him, his salvation must in like manner be within him; an atonement without him will not save him unless he have a holiness within him. But what, asks the author, is the bond of connection between the sinner and the righteousness accomplished without him? That bond, he answers, is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit works faith in the sinner, and by that faith, as with a hand, he receives a two-fold benefit - a righteousness which is imputed to him, and a regeneration which is wrought within him. By the first he obtains the justification of his person, by the second the sanctification of his soul, and a fitness for that glory everlasting of which he became the heir in the moment of his justification. The one grand corollary from all this is that man's salvation is exclusively, and from first to last, of God's sovereign grace.

Thus do Calvin and Luther meet. They have traveled by different routes; the first has advanced by a long and magnificent demonstration, the second has by a sudden inspiration, as it were, grasped the truth; but here at last the two mighty chiefs stand side by side on the ground of "Salvation of God," and taking each other by the hand, they direct their united assault against the fortress of Rome, "Salvation of man."

The moment in which Calvin arrived at this conclusion formed an epoch in the history of Christianity - that is, of the human race.

It was the full and demonstrated recovery of a truth that lies at the foundation of all progress, inasmuch as it is the channel of those supernatural and celestial influences by which the human soul is quickened, and society advanced. The doctrine of justification by faith, of which St. Paul had been led to put on record so full and clear an exposition, early began to be corrupted. By the times of Augustine even, very erroneous views were held on this most important subject; and that great Father was not exempt from the obscurity of his age. After his day the corruption rapidly increased. The Church of Rome was simply an elaborate and magnificent exhibition of the doctrine of "Salvation by works." The language of all its dogmas, and every one of its rites, was "Man his own savior." Luther placed underneath the stupendous fabric of Rome the doctrine which, driven by his soul-agonies to the Divine page, he had there discovered - "Salvation by grace" - and the edifice fell to the ground. This was the application that Luther made of the doctrine. The use to which Calvin put it was more extensive; he brought out its bearings upon the whole scheme of Christian doctrine, and made it the basis of the Reformation of the Church in the largest and widest sense of the term. In the hands of Luther it is the power of the doctrine which strikes us; in those of Calvin it is its truth, and universality, lying entrenched as it were within its hundred lines of doctrinal circumvallation, and dominating the whole territory of truth in such fashion as to deny to error, of every sort and name, so much as a foot-breadth on which to take root and flourish.

IV. "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." The term Church, in its strict sense, he applied to the children of God; in its looser sense, to all who made profession of the Gospel, for the instruction and government of whom, God had instituted, he held, pastors and teachers. Touching the worship and government of the Church, Calvin laid down the principle of the unlawfulness of introducing anything without positive Scripture sanction. "This, he thought, would go to the root of the matter, and sweep away at once the whole mass of sacramentalism and ceremonialism, of ritualism and hierarchism, which had grown up between the apostolic age and

the Reformation.”⁶ Augustine deplored the prevalence of the rites and ceremonies of his time, but he lacked a definite principle with which to combat and uproot them. These ceremonies and rites had become yet more numerous in Luther’s day; but neither had he any weapon wherewith to grapple effectually with them. He opposed them mainly on two grounds: first, that they were burdensome; and secondly, that they contained more or less the idea of merit, and so tended to undermine the doctrine of justification by faith. Calvin sought for a principle which should clear the ground of that whole noxious growth at once, and he judged that he had found such a principle in the following - namely, that not only were many of these ceremonies contrary to the first and second precepts of the Decalogue, and therefore to be condemned as idolatrous; but that in the mass they were without warrant in the Word of God, and were therefore to be rejected as unlawful.

In regard to Church government, the means which the Reformer adopted for putting an end to all existing corruptions and abuses, and preventing their recurrence, are well summed up by Dr. Cunningham. He sought to attain this end - First, by putting an end to anything like the exercise of monarchical authority in the Church, or independent power vested officially in one man, which was the origin and root of the Papacy.

Second, by falling back upon the combination of aristocracy and democracy, which prevailed for at least the first two centuries of the Christian era, when the Churches were governed by the common council of Presbyters, and these Presbyters were chosen by the Churches themselves, though tried and ordained by those who had been previously admitted to office.

Third, by providing against the formation of a spirit of a mere priestly caste, by associating with the ministers in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, a class of men who, though ordained Presbyters, were usually engaged in the ordinary occupations of society; and fourth, by trying to prevent a repetition of the history of the rise and growth of the prelacy and the Papacy, through the perversion of the one-man power, by fastening the substance of these

⁶Cunningham, *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*, p. 342; Edin., 1862.

great principles upon the conscience of the Church as binding jure divino.”⁷

⁷Cunningham, *Reformers and Theol. of Reform.*, p. 343.

Chapter 24: Calvin on Predestination and Election

Calvin's Views on the Affirmative Side—God as the Author of all things Ordains all that is to come to pass—The Means equally with the End comprehended in the Decree—As Sovereign, God Executes all that comes to pass—Calvin's Views on the Negative Side—Man a Free Agent—Man an Accountable Being—Calvin maintained side by side God's Eternal Ordination and Man's Freedom of Action—Cannot Reconcile the Two—Liberty and Necessity—Tremendous Difficulties confessed to Attach to Both Theories—Explanations—Locke and Sir William Hamilton—Growth of the Institutes

We have reserved till now our brief statement of Calvin's views on the subject of predestination and election - the shroud, in the eyes of some, in which he has wrapped up his theology; the rock, in the view of others, on which he has planted it. Our business as historians is neither to impugn nor to defend, but simply to narrate; to state, with all the clearness, fairness, and brevity possible, what Calvin held and taught on this great point. The absolute sovereignty of God was Calvin's cornerstone. As the Author and Ruler of his own universe, he held that God must proceed in his government of his creatures according to a definite plan; that that plan he had formed unalterably and unchangeably from everlasting; that it embraced not merely the grander issues of Providence, but the whole array of means by which these issues are reached; that this plan God fully carries out in time; and that, though formed according to the good pleasure of his will, it is based on reasons infinitely wise and righteous, although these have not been made known to us. Such was Calvin's first and fundamental position. [232]

This larger and wider form of the question, to which is given the name of predestination, embraces and disposes of the minor one, namely, election. If God from everlasting pre-ordained the whole history and ultimate fate of all his creatures, it follows that

he pre-ordained the destiny of each individual. Calvin taught, as Augustine had done before him, that out of a race all equally guilty and condemned, God had elected some to everlasting life, and that this decree of the election of some to life, implied the reprobation of the rest to death, but that their own sin and not God's decree was the reason of their perishing. The Reformer further was careful to teach that the election of some to life did not proceed on God's foreknowledge of their faith and good works, but that, on the contrary, their election was the efficient cause of their faith and holiness.

These doctrines the Reformer embraced because it appeared to him that they were the doctrines taught in the Scriptures on the point in question; that they were proclaimed in the facts of history; and that they were logically and inevitably deducible from the idea of the supremacy, the omnipotence, and intelligence of God. Any other scheme appeared to him inconsistent with these attributes of the Deity, and, in fact, a dethroning of God as the Sovereign of the universe which he had called into existence, and an abandonment of its affairs to blind chance.

Such was the positive or affirmative side of Calvin's views. We shall now briefly consider the negative side, in order to see his whole mind on the question. The Reformer abhorred and repudiated the idea that God was the Author of sin, and he denied that any such inference could be legitimately drawn from his doctrine of predestination. He denied, too, with the same emphasis, that any constraint or force was put by the decree upon the will of man, or any restraint upon his actions; but that, on the contrary, all men enjoyed that spontaneity of will and freedom of action which are essential to moral accountability. He repudiated, moreover, the charge of fatalism which has sometimes been brought against his doctrine, maintaining that inasmuch as the means were fore-ordained as well as the end, his teaching had just the opposite effect, and instead of relaxing it tended to brace the soul, to give it a more vigorous temper; and certainly the qualities of perseverance and indomitable energy which were so conspicuously shown in Calvin's own life, and which have generally characterised those communities who have embraced his scheme of doctrine, go far to bear out the Reformer in this particular, and to show that the belief in predestination inspires

with courage, prompts to activity and effort, and mightily sustains hope.

The Reformer was of opinion that he saw in the history of the world a proof that the belief in pre-destination - that predestination, namely, which links the means with the end, and arranges that the one shall be reached only through the other - is to make the person feel that he is working alongside a Power that cannot be baffled; that he is pursuing the same ends which that Power is prosecuting, and that, therefore, he must and shall finally be crowned with victory. This had, he thought, been exemplified equally in nations and in individuals.

Calvin was by no means insensible to the tremendous difficulties that environ the whole subject. The depth as well as range of his intellectual and moral vision gave him a fuller and clearer view than perhaps the majority of his opponents have had of these great difficulties. But these attach, not to one side of the question, but to both; and Calvin judged that he could not escape them, nor even diminish them by one iota, by shifting his position. The absolute fore-knowledge of God called up all these difficulties equally with his absolute pre-ordination; nay, they beset the question of God's executing all things in time quite as much as the question of his decreeing all things from eternity. Most of all do these difficulties present themselves in connection with what is but another form of the same question, namely, the existence of moral evil. That is all awful reality. Why should God, all-powerful and all-holy, have created man, foreseeing that he would sin and be lost? why not have created him, if he created him at all, without the possibility of sinning? or why should not God cut short in the cradle that existence which if allowed to develop will, he foresees, issue in wrong and injury to others, and in the ruin of the person himself? Is there any one, whether on the Calvinistic or on the Arminian side, who can give a satisfactory answer to these questions? Calvin freely admitted that he could not reconcile God's absolute sovereignty with man's free will; but he felt himself obliged to admit and believe both; both accordingly he maintained; though it was not in his power, nor, he believed, in the power of any man, to establish a harmony between them. What he aimed at was to proceed in this solemn path as far as the lights of revelation and reason could conduct him; and when

their guidance failed, when he came to the thick darkness, and stood in the presence of mysteries that refused to unveil themselves to him, reverently to bow down and adore. ¹

We judged it essential to give this brief account of the theology of the Institutes. The book was the chest that contained the vital forces of the Reformation. It may be likened to the living spirits that animated the wheels in the prophet's vision. The leagues, battles, and majestic movements of that age all proceeded from this center of power - these arcana of celestial forces. It is emphatically the Reformation. The book, we have said, as it first saw the light in Basle in 1536 was small (pp. 514); it consisted of but six chapters, and was a sketch in outline of the fundamental principles of the Christian faith. The work grew into unity and strength, grandeur and completeness, by the patient and persevering touches of the author, and when completed it consisted of four books and eighty-four chapters. But as in the acorn is wrapped up all that is afterwards evolved in the full-grown oak, so in the first small edition of the Institutes were contained all the great principles which we now possess, fully developed and demonstrated, in the last and completed edition of 1559.

¹This difficulty has been equally felt and acknowledged by writers on the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. For instance, we find Locke (vol. 3, p. 487; fol. ed., 1751) saying, "I cannot have a clearer perception of anything than that I am free, yet I cannot make freedom in man consistent with omniscience and omnipotence in God, though I am as fully persuaded of both as of any truth I most firmly assent to." Locke in philosophy was a necessitarian. Sir William Hamilton, a libertarian, expresses similar views on this question: "How, therefore, I repeat, moral liberty is possible in man or God, we are utterly unable speculatively to understand. But, practically, the fact that we are free is given to us in the consciousness of an uncompromising law of duty, in the consciousness of our moral accountability." "Liberty is thus shown to be inconceivable, but not more than its contradictory necessity; yet, though inconceivable, liberty is shown also not to be impossible." (Discussions, pp. 624, 630.)

Chapter 25: Calvin's Appeal to Francis I.

Enthusiasm evoked by the appearance of the Institutes—Marshals the Reformed into One Host—Beauty of the Style of the Institutes—Opinions expressed on it by Scaliger, Sir William Hamilton, Principal Cunningham, M. Nisard—The Institutes an Apology for the Reformed—In scathing Indignation comparable to Tacitus—Home-thrusts—He Addresses the King of France—Pleads for his Brethren—They Suffer for the Gospel—Cannot Abandon it—Offer themselves to Death—A Warning—Grandeur of the Appeal—Did Francis ever Read this Appeal?

Picture: John Calvin Picture: Cathedral of Strasburg

Thus did a strong arm uplift before the eyes of all Europe, and throw loose upon the winds, a banner round which the children of the Reformation might rally. Its appearance at that hour greatly inspirited them. It showed them that they had a righteous cause, an energetic and courageous leader, and that they were no longer a mere multitude, but a marshalled host, whose appointed march was over a terrible battle-field, but to whom there was also appointed a triumph worthy of their cause and of the kingly spirit who had arisen to lead them. "Spreading," says Felice, "widely in the schools, in the castles of the gentry, the homes of the citizens, and the workshops of the common people, the Institutes became the most powerful of preachers."¹

The style of the work was not less fitted to arrest attention than the contents. It seemed as if produced for the occasion. In flexibility, transparency, and power, it was akin to the beauty of the truths that were entrusted to it, and of which it was made the vehicle. Yet Calvin had not thought of style. The great doctrines he was enunciating engrossed him entirely; and the free and majestic march of his thoughts summoned up words of fitting simplicity and grandeur, and without conscious effort on his part marshalled them in the most

¹Felice, Hist. Prof. France, vol. 1, p. 36.

effective order, and arranged them in the most harmonious periods. In giving France a religion, Calvin at the same time gave France a language.

[234] Men who have had but little sympathy with his theology have been loud in their praises of his genius. Scaliger said of him, three hundred years ago, "Calvin is alone among theologians; there is no ancient to compare with him." Sir William Hamilton in our own day has indorsed this judgment. "Looking merely to his learning and ability," said this distinguished metaphysician, "Calvin was superior to all modern, perhaps to all ancient, divines. Succeeding ages have certainly not exhibited his equal." Dr. Cunningham, a most competent judge, says: "The Institutes of Calvin is the most important work in the history of theological science It may be said to occupy, in the science of theology, the place which it requires both the *Novum Organum* of Bacon and the *Principia* of Newton to fill up in physical science."² "Less learned," says Paul Lacroix of his style, "elaborate, and ornate than that of Rabelais, but more ready, flexible, and skillful in expressing all the shades of thought and feeling. Less ingenious, agreeable, and rich than that of Amyot, but keener and more imposing. Less highly coloured and engaging than that of Montaigne, but more concise and serious and more French."³ Another French writer of our day, who does not belong to the Protestant Church, but who is a profound thinker, has characterised the Institutes as "the first work in the French tongue which offers a methodical plan, well-arranged matter, and exact composition. Calvin," he says, "not only perfected the language by enriching it, he created a peculiar form of language, the most conformable to the genius of our country." And of Calvin himself he says: "He treats every question of Christian philosophy as a great writer. He equals the most sublime in his grand thoughts upon God, the expression of which was equalled but not surpassed by Bossuet."⁴

[235] A scheme of doctrine, a code of government, a plan of Church or-
 [236] ganisation, the Institutes was at the same time an apology, a defense of the persecuted, an appeal to the conscience of the persecutor. It

²Cunningham, *Reformers and Theol. of Reform.*, p. 295.

³Paul Lacroix-Bungener, *Calvin*, p. 57.

⁴M. Nisard, *Hist. of French Lit.*

was dedicated to Francis I.⁵ But the dedication did not run in the usual form. Calvin did not approach the monarch to bow and gloze, to recount his virtues and extol his greatness, he spoke as it becomes one to speak who pleads for the innocent condemned at unrighteous tribunals, and for truth overborne by bloody violence. His dedication was a noble, most affecting and thrilling intercession for his brethren in France, many of whom were at that moment languishing in prison or perishing at the stake.

With a nobler indignation than even that which burns on the pages of Tacitus, and in a style scarcely inferior in its rapid and scathing power to that of the renowned historian, does Calvin proceed to refute, rapidly yet conclusively, the leading charges which had been advanced against the disciples of the Reformation, and to denounce the terrible array of banishments, proscriptions, fines, dungeons, torturing, and blazing piles, with which it was sought to root them out.⁶ “Your doctrine is new,” it was said. “Yes,” Calvin makes answer, “for those to whom the Gospel is new.” “By what miracle do you confirm it?” it had been asked. Calvin, glancing contemptuously at the sort of miracles which the priests sometimes employed to confirm the Romish doctrine, replies, “By those miracles which in the early age so abundantly attested the divinity of the Gospel - the holy lives of its disciples.” “You contradict the Fathers,” it had been farther urged. The Reformer twits his accusers with “adoring the slips and errors” of the Fathers; but “when they speak well they either do not hear, or they misinterpret or corrupt what they say.” That is a very extraordinary way of showing respect for the Fathers. “Despise the Fathers!” “Why, the Fathers are our best friends.” He was a Father, Epiphanius, who said that it was an abomination to set up an image in a Christian temple. He was a Father, Pope Gelasius, who maintained that the bread and wine remain unchanged in the Eucharist. He was a Father, Augustine, who affirmed that it was rash to assert any doctrine which did not rest on the clear testimony of Scripture. But the Fathers come faster than Calvin can receive their evidence, and so a crowd of names are thrown into the margin, who

⁵“Potontissimo Illustrissimoque Monarchae, Francisco, Francorum Regi Christianissimo, Principi suo, Joannes Calvinus, pacem ac salutem in Christo precatur.” (Praefatio ad Regem Galliae-Calvini Opp., vol. 9.)

⁶Praefatio ad Regem Galliae.

all with “one heart and one mouth” execrated and condemned “the sophisticated reasonings and scholastic wranglings” with which the Word of God had been made void.⁷

Turning round on his accusers and waxing a little warm, Calvin demands who they are who “make war with such savage cruelty in behalf of the mass, of purgatory, of pilgrimages, and of similar follies,” and why it is that they display a zeal in behalf of these things which they have never shown for the Gospel? “Why?” he replies, “but because their God is their belly, and their religion the kitchen.”⁸ -a rejoinder of which it is easier to condemn the coarseness than to impugn the truth.

If their cause were unjust, or if their lives had been wicked, they refused not to die; but the Reformer complains that the most atrocious calumnies had been poured into the ears of the king to make their tenets appear odious, and their persons hateful. “They plotted,” it was said, “to pluck the scepter from his hand, to overturn his tribunals, to abolish all laws, to make a spoil of lordships and heritages, to remove all the landmarks of order, and to plunge all peoples and states in war, anarchy, and ruin.”⁹ Had the accusation been true, Calvin would have been dumb; he would have been covered with shame and confusion before the king. But raising his head, he says, “I turn to you, Sire . . . Is it possible that we, from whom a seditious word was never heard when we lived under you, should plot the subversion of kingdoms? And, what is more, who now, after being expelled from our houses, cease not nevertheless to pray to God for your prosperity, and that of your kingdom.” As regards their cause, so defamed by enemies, it was simply the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their only crime was that they believed the Gospel. They who were maintaining it were a poor, despicable people - nay, if the king liked it, “the scum of the earth;” but though its confessors were weak, the cause was great; “it is exalted far above all the power and glory of the world; for it is not ours, but that of the living God and his Christ, whom God has made King to rule from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth.” he had not come before the king to beg toleration for that cause - the men of those days could

⁷Praefatio ad Regem Galliae.

⁸“Cur? Nisi quia illis Deus venter est, culina religio.” (Praefatio ad Regem Galliae.)

⁹Praefatio ad Regem Galiae.

no more conceive of a government tolerating two opposing religions than of a judge deciding in favor of two rival claimants - what Calvin demanded was that their cause should receive that submission which is the right of truth; that the king should embrace, not tolerate.

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But if this may not be, Calvin says in effect, if injustice shall still be meted out to us, be it known unto you, O king, that we will not abandon the truth, or bow down to the gods that Rome has set up. As sheep appointed unto the slaughter, we shall take meekly whatever sufferings you are pleased to inflict upon us. We offer our persons to your prisons, our limbs to your racks, our necks to your axes, and our bodies to your fires; but know that there is One in whose sight our blood is precious, and in shedding it you are removing the firmest defenders of your throne and of your laws, and preparing for your house and realm a terrible overthrow. The years will quickly revolve; the cup will be filled up; and then - but let us quote the very words in which the young Reformer closes this appeal to the great monarch: "I have set before you the iniquity of our calumniators. I have desired to soften your heart to the end that you would give our cause a hearing. I hope we shall be able to regain your favor, if you should be pleased to read without anger this confession, which is our defense before your Majesty. But if malevolent persons stop your ears; if the accused have not an opportunity of defending themselves; if impetuous furies, unrestrained by your order, still exercise their cruelty by imprisonments and by scourging, by tortures, mutilation, and the stake verily, as sheep given up to slaughter, we shall be reduced to the last extremity. Yet even then we shall possess our souls in patience, and shall wait for the strong hand of the Lord. Doubtless, it will be stretched forth in due season. It will appear armed to deliver the poor from their afflictions, and to punish the despisers who are now making merry so boldly.

"May the Lord, the King of kings, establish your throne in righteousness and your seat in equity."¹⁰

In penning this appeal Calvin occupied one of the sublimest positions in all history. He stood at a great bar - the throne of France. He pleaded before a vast assembly - all Christendom; nay, all ages; and as regards the cause which he sustained at this august bar, and

¹⁰Praefatio ad Regem Galliae.

in presence of this immense concourse of nations and ages, it was the greatest in the world, inasmuch as it was that of the Gospel and of the rights of conscience. With what feelings, one naturally asks, did Francis I. read this appeal? Or rather did he read it at all? It is commonly thought that he did not. His heart hardened by pleasure, and his ears preoccupied with evil counsellors, this cry of a suffering Church could find no audience; it swept past the throne of France, and mounted to the throne of heaven.

But before the “strong arm” to which Calvin had alluded should be “stretched forth” more than two centuries were to pass away. These martyrs had to wait till “their brethren” also should be slain as they had been. But meanwhile there were given unto them the “white robes” of this triumphant vindication; for scarcely were their ashes cold when this eloquent and touching appeal was pleading for them in many of the tongues of Europe, thrilling every heart with the story of their wrongs, and inspiring thousands and tens of thousands to brave the tyrant’s fury, and at the risk of torture and death to confess the Gospel. This was their “first resurrection.” What they had sown in weakness at the stake rose in power in the Institutes. Calvin, gathering as it were all their martyr-piles into one blazing torch, and holding it aloft, made the splendor of their cause and of their names to shine from the east even unto the west of Christendom.

The publication of the Institutes placed Calvin in the van of the Reformed hosts, he was henceforward the recognised chief of the Reformation. His retreat was now known, and this city on the edge of the Black Forest, on the banks of the Rhine, could no longer afford him the privacy he sought. Men from every country were beginning to seek him out, and gather round him. Rising up, he hastily quitted Basle, and crossing “Italy’s snowy wall” (by what route is not known), and holding on his way across the plain of Lombardy till he reached the banks of the Po, he found an asylum at the court of Renee, daughter of Louis XII. of France, and Duchess of Ferrara, who, like Margaret of Valois, had opened her heart to the doctrines of the Reformation. Calvin disappears for awhile from the scene.

**Book 14: Rise and Establishment of
Protestantism at Geneva**

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Chapter 1: Geneva: The City and its History

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

Picture: Arms of the City of Geneva Picture: Pope Julius II

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

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

to mark its sublimity and power, in the mighty impulses which from this center it is to send abroad, in order to plant piety and nourish liberty in other countries.

In the valley which the Jura on the one side, and the white Alps on the other, enclose within their gigantic arms, lies the mirror-like Lemman. At the point where the Rhone gushes from the lake a bulging rock bristles up, and, framing in the form of a crescent a little space along the shore of the Lemman, forms a pedestal for the city of Geneva. The little town looks down upon the placid waters of the lake spread out at its feet, and beholds its own image mirrored clearly, but not grandly, for architectural magnificence is not one of the characteristic features of the city, especially in the times of which we write. A few miles away, on the other side, another rock shoots up, dark, precipitous, and attaining the dignity of a mountain - lofty it would seem in any other country, but here it has to compete with the gigantic piles of the Alps - and, bending crest-like, leans over Geneva, which it appears to guard. A few acres suffice to give standing-room to the city. Its population in the days of Calvin numbered only some 12,000, and even now does not much exceed 40,000. Its cantonal territory is the smallest in all Switzerland, that of Zug excepted. Its diminutive size provoked the sneer of the philosopher of Ferney, who could survey it all standing at his door. "When I dress my peruke," said Voltaire, "I powder the whole republic." The Emperor Paul sarcastically called the struggles of its citizens "a tempest in a teapot." In days prior to the utterance of these sarcasms and taunts - that is, in the latter part of the sixteenth century - this little town excited other emotions than those of contempt, and was the butt of other assaults than those of sarcasm. It brought pallor into the face of monarchs. It plucked the scepter from the grasp of mighty empires, and showed the world that it knew how to extend and perpetuate its sway by making itself the metropolis of that moral and spiritual movement which, whatever might be the fate of the city itself, even should its site become the bare rock it once was, would continue to spread abroad to all countries, and travel down to all the ages of the future.

Turning from its site to its history, Geneva dates from before the Christian era, and is scarcely, if at all, less ancient than that other city, that takes the proud name of "Eternal," and with which it has

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

But we must glance back, and see what a long preparation the little city had to undergo for its great destiny. The dissolution of the Empire of Charlemagne set Geneva free to consider after what fashion it should govern itself. At this crisis its bishop stepped forward and claimed, in addition to its spiritual oversight, the right to exercise its temporal government. The citizens conceded the claim only within certain limits. Still preserving their liberties, they took the bishop into partnership with them in the civic jurisdiction. The election of the bishop was in the hands of the people, and, before permitting him to mount the episcopal chair, they made him take an oath to preserve their franchises.² In the middle of the thirteenth century the independence of Geneva began to be menaced by the Counts of Savoy. That ambitious house, which was labouring to exalt itself by absorbing its neighbors' territory into its own, had cast covetous eyes upon Geneva. It would round off their dominions; besides, they were sharp-sighted enough to see that there were certain principles at work in this little Alpine town which made them uneasy. But neither intrigues nor arms - and the Princes of Savoy employed both - could prevail to this end. The citizens of Geneva knew how it

¹De Bello Gallico, 1. 6.

²Spon, Hist. de Geneve, 3, p. 108.

fared with them under the staff of their bishop, but they did not know how it might go with them under the sword of the warrior, and so they stubbornly declined the protection of their powerful neighbor.

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

Not so the Pope; he continued to prosecute the intrigue, deeming the little town but a nest of eaglets among crags, which it were wise betimes to pull down. But, more crafty than the duke, he tried another tack. Depriving the citizens of the right of electing their bishop, Martin V. took the nomination into his own hands, and thus opened the way for quietly transferring the municipal rule of Geneva to the House of Savoy. All he had now to do was to appoint a Prince of Savoy as its bishop. By-and-by this was done; and the struggle with the Savoy power was no longer outside the walls only, it was mainly within. The era that now opened to Geneva was a stormy and bloody one. Intrigues and rumors of intrigues kept the citizens in perpetual disquiet. The city saw itself stripped of its privileges and immunities one by one. Its annual fair was transferred to Lyons, and the crowd of merchants and traders which had flocked to it from beyond the Alps, from the towns of France, and from across the Rhine, ceased to be seen. Tales of priestly scandals - for the union of the two offices in their prince-bishop only helped to develop the worst qualities of both - passed from mouth to mouth and polluted the very air. If Geneva was growing weaker, Savoy was growing stronger. The absorption of one petty principality after another was daily enlarging the dominions of the duke, which, sweeping past and around Geneva, enclosed it as in a net, with a hostile land bristling

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with castles and swarming with foes. It was said that there were more Savoyards than Genevese who heard the bells of St. Pierre. Such was the position in which the opening of the sixteenth century found Geneva. This small but ancient municipality was seemingly on the point of being absorbed in the dominions of the House of Savoy. Its history appeared to be closed. The vulture of the Alps, which had hovered above it for centuries, had but to swoop down upon it and transfix it with his talons.

At that moment a new life suddenly sprang up in the devoted city. To preserve the remnant of their franchises was not enough; the citizens resolved to recover what liberties had been lost. In order to this many battles had to be fought, and much blood spilt. Leo X., about the same time that he dispatched Tetzels to Germany to sell indulgences, sent a scion of the House of Savoy to Geneva (1513) as bishop. By the first the Pope drew forth Luther from his convent, by the second he paved the way for Calvin. The newly-appointed bishop, known in history as the "Bastard of Savoy," brought to the episcopal throne of Geneva a body foul with disease, the fruit of his debaucheries, and a soul yet more foul with deceitful and bloody passions; but a fit tool for the purpose in hand. The matter had been nicely arranged between the Pope, the duke, and the Bastard.³ "John of Savoy swore to hand over the temporal jurisdiction of the city to the duke, and the Pope swore he would force the city to submit to the duke, under pain of incurring the thunders of the Vatican."⁴

From that time there was ceaseless and bitter war between the citizens of Geneva on one side, and the duke and the bishop on the other. It is not our business to record the various fortune of that strife. Now it was the bishop who was besieged in his palace, and now it was the citizens who were butchered upon their own streets by the bishop's soldiers. To-day it was the Bastard who was compelled to seek safety in flight, and to-morrow it was some leader of the patriots who was apprehended, tortured, beheaded, and his ghastly remains hung up to the public gaze as a warning to others. But if blood was shed, it was blood that leads to victory. The patriots, who numbered only nine at first, multiplied from year to year, though from year to

³Ruchat, *Hist. Reform. Suisse*, tom. 1, p. 325; Lausanne, 1835.

⁴Bern MS., discovered by D'Aubigne in the Library at Bern - *Hist. Reform. in Europe*, vol. 1, p. 47.

year the struggle grew only the bloodier. The Gospel had not yet entered the gates of Geneva. The struggle so far was for liberty only, a name then denoting that which was man's noblest birthright after the Gospel, and which found as its champions men of pure and lofty soul. Witemberg and Geneva had not yet become fused; the two liberties had not yet united their arms.

Among the names that illustrate this struggle, so important from what was to come after, are the well-known ones of Bonivard, Berthelier, and Levrier

- a distinguished trio, to whom modern liberty owes much, though the stage on which they figured was a narrow one.

Bonivard was a son of the Renaissance. A scholar and a man of wit, he drew his inspiration for liberty from a classic font. From his Priory of St. Victor this accomplished and liberal-minded man assailed Rome with the shafts of satire. If his erudition was less profound and his taste less exquisite than that of Erasmus, his courage was greater. The scholar of Rotterdam flagellated the man in serge, but spared the man in purple: the Prior of St. Victor dealt equal justice to monk and Pope. He lashed the ignorance and low vices of the former, but castigated yet more severely the pride, luxury, and ambition of the latter. He mistrusted the plan Rome had hit on of regenerating men in tribes and clans, and preferred to have it done individually. He thought too that it would be well if his "Holiness" possessed a little holiness, though that was a marvel he did not expect soon to see. "I have lived," he said, "to see three Popes. First, Alexander

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VI. [Borgia] a sharp fellow, a ne'er-do-weel... a man without conscience, and without God. Next came Julius II., proud, choleric, studying his bottle more than his breviary, mad about his Popedom, and having no thought but how he could, subdue not only the earth, but heaven and hell. Last appeared Leo X., the present Pope, learned in Greek and Latin, but especially a good musician, a great glutton, a deep drinker; possessing beautiful pages, whom the Italians style *ragazzi* above all, don't trust Leo X.'s word; he can dispense others, and surely can dispense himself." ⁵ He brusquely allegorised

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⁵ *Advis et Devis de la Source de l'Idolatrie Papale*, p. 34 - quoted by D'Aubigne, *Hist. Ref. in Europe*, vol 1, p. 160.

the German Reformation thus: “Leo X. and his predecessors,” said the prior, “have always taken the Germans for beasts; pecora campi, they were called, and rightly too, for these simple Saxons allowed themselves to be saddled and ridden like asses. The Popes threatened them with cudgelling (excommunications), enticed them with thistles (indulgences), and so made them trot to the mill to bring away the meal for them. But having one day loaded the ass too heavily, Leo made him gib, so that the flour was spilt, and the white bread lost. That ass is called Martin like all asses, and his surname is Luther, which signifies enlightener.”⁶

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

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

⁶Ibid., p. 80 - quoted by D’Aubigne, vol. 1, p. 161.

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

“Non vultus instantis tyranni, Mente quatit solida.”

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

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Marvellous it truly was that so little a city should escape so many snares, and defy so many armed assaults; for the duke again and

again advanced with his army to take it - nay, upon one occasion, was admitted within its walls. There were foes enough around it, one would have thought, to have swept it from off its rock, trod buried it beneath the waves of its lake. And so would it have happened to Geneva but for the bravery of its sons, who were resolved that sooner than see it enslaved they would see it razed to the ground.

Had it been a great empire, its posts, dignities, and titles might have stimulated and sustained their patriotism; but what recompense in point of fame or riches could a little obscure town like Geneva offer for the blood which its citizen-heroes were ready every moment to pour out in defense of its freedom? A higher power than man had kindled this fire in the hearts of its citizens. The combatants were fighting, although they knew it not, for a higher liberty than Geneva had yet tasted. And that liberty was on the road to it. The snowy peaks around it were even now beginning to kindle with a new day. Voices were heard crying to the beleaguered and perplexed town, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings; that publish peace!" It was the purpose of him who putteth down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth the lowly, to lift this city to equality with the ancient capitals of Christendom - nay, to place it above them all. For this end would he make empty the episcopal throne in St. Pierre, that the Gospel might enter and seat itself upon it. Then would Geneva raise its head in the presence of the ancient and historic cities of Europe - Rome, Paris, Milan, Venice - with a halo round it brighter than had ever encircled their brow. It would stand forth a temple of liberty, in the midst of Christendom, its gates open day and night, to welcome within its walls, as within an impregnable fortress, the persecuted of all lands.

Chapter 2: Genevese Martyrs of Liberty

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

Picture: Showing the Island of Rousseau

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

¹Bonivard, Chron., 2, 369 - apud D’Aubigne, 1, 257.

²D’Aubigne, bk. 1, chap. 20.

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

At this stage of the drama, the wretched man who had filled the office of bishop, and had been the duke's co-conspirator in these attempts upon the liberty of Geneva, died (1522) miserably at Pignerol, on the southern side of the Alps, on the very frontier of the territory of the Waldenses. His dying scene was awful and horrible. Around his bed stood only hirelings. Careless of the agonies he was enduring, their eyes roamed round the room in quest of valuables, which they might carry off whenever his breath should depart. The effigies of his victims seemed traced upon the wall of his chamber. They presented to him a crucifix: he thought it was Berthelier, and shrieked out. They brought him the last Sacrament: he fancied they were sprinkling him with blood; his lips, whitened with foam, let fall execrations and blasphemies. Such is the picture which a Romanist writer draws of his last hours. But before the dark scene closed something like a ray of light broke in. He conjured his coadjutor and successor, Pierre de la Baume, not to walk in his footsteps, but to defend the franchises of Geneva. He saw in the sufferings he was enduring the punishment of his misdeeds; he implored forgiveness, and hoped God would pardon him in purgatory.³

But Charles III, Duke of Savoy and Piedmont, still lived, and unwarned by the miserable end of his accomplice, he continued to

³M. Roset, *Chron.*, 103. Ruchat, tom. 1, pp. 330, 331. Gallie, *Materiaux*, etc., vol. 2, p. 303-apud D'Aubigne, vol. 1, p. 289.

prosecute his guilty project.⁴ Another martyr of liberty was now to offer up his life. The man who most embarrassed the duke still lived: he must be swept from his path. Charles did not believe in patriotism, and thought to buy Levrier.⁵ The judge spurned the bribe. Well, the axe will do what gold cannot. He was arrested (Easter, 1524) at the gates of St. Pierre, as he was leaving after hearing morning mass. “He wore a long camlet robe, probably his judicial gown, and a beautiful velvet cassock.”⁶ Mounted hastily upon a wretched nag, his hands tied behind his back, and his feet fastened below the belly of his horse, the judge was carried, in the midst of armed men, who jeered at and called him traitor, to the Castle of Bonne, where the duke was then residing.

The Castle of Bonne, now a ruin, is some two leagues from Geneva. It stands in the midst of scenery such as Switzerland only can show. The panorama presents to the eye an assemblage of valleys, with their carpet-like covering, foaming torrents, the black mouths of gorges, pines massed upon the hill-tops, and beyond, afar off, the magnificence of snowy peaks. The tragedy enacted in this spot we shall leave D’Aubigne to tell, who has here, with his usual graphic power, set in the light of day a deed that was done literally in the darkness. “Shortly,” says the historian, “after Bellegrade’s” (the man who pronounced doom) “departure, the confessor entered, discharged his duty mechanically, uttered the sentence ‘Ego te absolvo,’ and withdrew, showing no more sympathy for his victim than the provost had done. Then appeared a man with a cord: it was the executioner. It was then ten o’clock at night. The inhabitants of the little town and of the adjacent country were sleeping soundly, and no one dreamt of the cruel deed that was about to cut short the life of a man who might have shone in the first rank in a great monarchy. The headsman bound the noble Levrier, armed men surrounded him, and the martyr of law was conducted slowly to the castle-yard. All nature was dumb, nothing broke the silence of that funeral procession; Charles’s agents moved like shadows beneath the ancient walls of the castle. The moon, which had not reached its first quarter, was near setting, and shed only a feeble

⁴Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 331.

⁵D’Aubigne, vol. 1, p. 321.

⁶D’Aubigne, vol. 1, p. 331.

gleam. It was too dark to distinguish the beautiful mountains, in the midst of which stood the towers whence they had dragged their victim; the trees and houses of Bonne were scarcely visible; one or two torches, carried by the provost's men, alone threw light upon this cruel scene. On reaching the middle of the castle-yard the headsman stopped, and the victim also. The ducal satellites silently formed a circle round them, and the executioner prepared to discharge his office. Levrier was calm, the peace of a good conscience supported him in this dread hour.

[245] Alone in the night, in those sublime regions of the Alps, surrounded by the barbarous figures of the Savoyard mercenaries, standing in that feudal courtyard which the torches illumined with a sinister glare, the heroic champion of the law raised his eyes to heaven, and said, 'By God's grace, I die without anxiety for the liberty of my country and the authority of St. Peter!' The grace of God, liberty, authority, these main principles of the greatness of nations, were his last confession. The words had hardly been uttered when the executioner swung round his sword, and the head of the citizen rolled in the castle-yard. Immediately, as if struck with fear, the murderers respectfully gathered up his remains and placed them in a coffin. 'And his body was laid in earth in the parish church of Bonne, with the head separate.' At that moment the moon set, and black darkness hid the stains of blood which Levrier had left on the court-yard."⁷

Charles of Savoy did not reflect that the victories of brute force, such as those he was now winning, but pave the way for moral triumphs. With every head that fell by his executioners, he deemed himself a stage nearer to the success he panted to attain. Some illustrious heads had already fallen; so many more, say twenty, or it might be thirty, and he would be Lord of Geneva; the small but much-coveted principality would be part of Savoy, and the object so intently pursued by himself and his ancestors for long years would be realised. The duke was but practising a deception upon himself. Every head he cut off dug more deeply the gulf which divided him from the sovereignty of Geneva; every drop of blood he spilt but strengthened the resolution in the hearts of the patriots that never should the duke call them his subjects.

⁷D'Aubigne, vol. 1, pp. 338-340.

“They never fail who die.
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls -
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom.”⁸

Nevertheless, what with stratagem this hour and violence the next - treachery within Geneva and soldiers and cannon outside of it - it did seem as if the duke were making way, and the proud little city must, by-and-by, lay its independence at his feet. In fact, for a moment, Geneva did succumb. On the 15th of September, 1525, the duke surprised the city with a numerous host. The patriots had nothing left them but massacre or speedy flight. Fleeing through woods or mountainous defiles, pursued by Savoyard archers, some escaped to Bern, others to Friberg. The duke, having entered the city, summoned a council of such citizens as were still to be found in it, and with the axes of his halberdiers suspended over their heads, these spiritless and lukewarm men promised to accept him as their prince.⁹ But the vow of allegiance given in the “Council of Halberds” today was revoked on the morrow. The duke was at first stunned, and next he was terrified, at this sudden revival of opposition, when he believed it had been trampled out. Influenced by this mysterious fear, he hastily left Geneva, never again to enter it, and let fall, after having seemingly secured it, what he and his ancestors had been struggling for generations to grasp.¹⁰

The duke had but scattered the fire, not extinguished it. The parts of Switzerland to which the patriots had fled were precisely those where the light of the Reformation was breaking. At Bern and Friburg the exiles of Geneva had an opportunity of studying higher models of freedom than any they had aforesaid come in contact with.

⁸Byron, *Marino Faliero*, act 2, scene 2.

⁹Bonivard, *2 Chronicles* 424-427. Galiffe, *Hist. de Geneve*, vol. 2, pp. 318-323. *Journal de Balard*, pp. 28-30 - quoted by D’Aubigne, vol. 1, p. 386.

¹⁰Registres du Conseil, December, 1525.

They had been sent to school, and their hearts softened by adversity, were peculiarly open to the higher teaching now addressed to them. How often in after-years was the same thing repeated which we see realised in the case of these early champions of freedom! Were not the patriotic citizens of Spain and Italy again and again chased to the British shores? And for what end? That there they might study purer models, be instructed in deeper and sounder principles, have their views of liberty rectified and enlarged, and on their return to their own country might temper their zeal with patience, fortify their courage with wisdom, and so speed the better in their efforts for the emancipation of their fellow-subjects. Fruitful, indeed, were the months which the Genevese exiles spent abroad. When they reunited in February, 1526, after the flight of the duke, a new era returned with them. Their sufferings had elicited the sympathy, and their characters had won the admiration, of the noblest among the citizens of the States where they had been sojourning. They recognised the important bearing upon Swiss liberty of the struggle which Geneva had maintained. It was the extreme citadel of the Swiss territory towards the south; it barred the invader's road from the Alps, and it was impossible to withhold from the little town the meed of praise for the chivalry and devotion with which, single-handed, it had taken its stand at this Swiss Thermopylae, and held it at all hazards. But it was not right, they felt, to leave this city longer in its isolation. For their own sakes, as well as for Geneva's, they must extend the hand of friendship to it. An alliance ¹¹ offensive and defensive was formed between the three governments of Bern, Friburg, and Geneva. If the conflicts of the latter city were not yet ended, it no longer stood alone. By its side were now two powerful allies. Whoso touched its independence, touched theirs. If the Gospel had not yet entered Geneva, its gates stood open towards that quarter of the sky which the rising sun of the Reformation was flooding with his beams.

¹¹Registres du Conseil, March 12, 1526. Journal de Balard, p. 54. Spon, Hist. de Geneve, 2. 392. Ruchat, 1. 331.

Chapter 3: The Reform Commenced in Lausanne and Established in Morat and Neuchatel

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

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

But though on the road, Geneva had not yet arrived at the goal. She was not yet crowned with the perfect liberty. A powerful oppressor had her in his grip, namely, Rome. The tyrant, it is true, had been compelled to relax his hold, but he might tighten his grasp unless Geneva should succeed in entirely disengaging herself. But she had not yet got hold of the right weapon for such a battle. Berthelier assailed Rome on the ground of ancient charters; Bonivard hurled

against her the shafts of a revived learning; Levrier maintained the fight with the sword of justice; but it needed that a more powerful sword, even that of the Word of the living God, should be unsheathed, before the tyrant could be wholly discomfited and the victory completely won. That sword had been unsheathed, and the champions who were wielding it, advancing in their victorious path, were every day coming nearer the gates of Geneva. When this new liberty should be enthroned within her, then would her light break forth as the morning, the black clouds which had so long hung about her would be scattered, and the tyrants who had plotted her overthrow would tremble at her name, and stand afar off for fear of that invisible Arm that guarded her. Let us turn to the movements outside the city, which, without concert on the part of their originators, fall in with the efforts of the champions of liberty within it for the complete emancipation of Geneva.

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

It is the second Reformation in Switzerland that we are now briefly to sketch. The commencement and progress of the first we have already traced. Beginning with the preaching of Zwingli in the convent of Einsiedein, the movement in a little time transferred itself to Zurich; and thence it rapidly spread to the neighboring towns and cantons in Eastern Helvetia, extending from Basle on the frontier of Germany on the north, to Choire on the borders of Italy on the south. The Forest Cantons, however, continued obedient to Rome. The adherents of the old faith and the champions of the new met on the bloody field of Kappel. The sword gave the victory to Romanism. The bravest and best of the citizens of Zurich lay stretched upon

the battle-field. Among the slain was Zwingli. With him, so men said and believed at the moment, had fallen the Reformation. In the grave of its most eloquent preacher and its most courageous defender lay inferred the hopes of Swiss Protestantism. But though the calamity of Kappel arrested, it did not extinguish, the movement; on the contrary, it tended eventually to consolidate and quicken it by impressing upon its friends the necessity of union. In after years, when Geneva came to occupy the place in the second Helvetian movement which Zurich had done in the first, the division among the Reformed cantons which had led to the terrible disaster of 1531 was avoided, and there was no second field of Kappel.

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Arriving in Switzerland (1526), Farel took up his abode at Aigle, and there commenced that campaign which had for its object to conquer to Christ a brave and hardy people dwelling amid the glaciers of the eternal mountains, or in fertile and sunny valleys, or on the shores of smiling lakes. The darkness of ages overhung the region, but Farel had brought hither the light. "Taking the name of Ursin," says Ruchat, "and acting the part of schoolmaster, ¹ he mingled, with the elements of secular instruction, the seeds of Divine knowledge. Through the minds of the children he gained access to those of the parents; and when he had gathered a little flock around him, he threw off his disguise, and announced himself as 'William Farel,' the minister." Though he had dropped from the clouds the priests could not have been more affrighted, nor the people more surprised, than they were at the sudden metamorphosis of the schoolmaster. Farel instantly mounted the pulpit. His bold look, his burning eye, his voice of thunder, his words, rapid, eloquent, and stamped with the majesty of truth, reached the conscience, and increased the number of those in the valley of Aigle who were already prepared to take the Word of God for their guide. But not by one sermon can the prejudices of ages be dispelled. The cures were filled with wrath at the bold intruder, who had entered their quiet valley, had shaken their authority, till now so secure, and had disturbed beliefs as ancient, and as firmly founded, the mountaineers believed, as the peaks that overhung their valleys.

¹Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 353. Gerdesius, Hist. Evang. Renov., tom. 2, p. 322. (Ecolampadius to Farel, 27th December, 1526. Neuchâtel MS. - quoted by D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 266; Edin., 1546.

The priests and people raised a great clamor, being supported by the cantonal officials, in particular by Jacob de Roverea, Lord of Cret, and Syndic of Aigle. Hearing of the opposition, the Lords of Bern, whose jurisdiction comprehended Aigle and its neighborhood, sent a commission to Farel empowering him to explain the Scriptures to the people.² The mandate was posted up on the church doors,³ but instead of calming the tempest this intervention of authority only stirred it into fourfold fury. It would seem as if the Gospel would conquer alone, or not at all. The priests burned with zeal for the safety of those flocks to whom before they had hardly ever addressed a word of instruction;⁴ the Syndic took their side, and the placards of the magistrates of Bern were torn down. "That cannot be the Gospel of Christ," said the priests, "seeing the preaching of it does not bring peace, but war." This enlightened logic, of a piece with that which should accuse the singing of the nightingale in a Swiss valley as the cause of the descent of the avalanches, convinced the mountaineers. The inhabitants of the four districts into which the territory of Aigle was divided - namely, Aigle, Bex, Ollon, and the Ormonds - as one man unsheathed the sword.⁵ The shepherds who fed their flocks beneath the glaciers of the Diablerets, hearing that the Church was in danger, rushed like an avalanche to the rescue. The herdsmen of the Savoy mountains, crossing the Rhone, also hastened to do battle in the good old cause. Tumults broke out at Box, at Ollon, and other places. Farel saw the tempest gathering, but remained undismayed. Those who had received the Gospel from him were prepared to defend him; but were it not better to prevent the effusion of blood, to which the matter was fast tending, and go and preach the Gospel in other parts of this lovely but benighted land? This was the course he adopted; but, in retiring, he had the satisfaction of thinking that he had planted the standard of the cross at the foot of the mighty Dent de Morcles, and that he left behind him men whose eyes had been opened, and who would never again bow the knee to the idols their fathers had served,⁶ Soon thereafter,

²Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 353.

³Ibid., tom. 1, p. 356.

⁴J. J. Hottinger, 3. 364. D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 268.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 356.

⁶Gerdesius, Hist. Reform., tom. 2, p. 322.

Aigle and Bex, by majorities, gave their voices for the Reform; but the parishes that lay higher up amid the mountains declared that they would abide in the old faith.

Whither should Farel go next? Looking from the point where the Rhone, rolling under the sublime peaks of the Dent du Midi and the Dent de Morelos, pours its discoloured floods into the crystal Lemane, one espies, on the other side of the lake, the vine-clad hill on which Lausanne is seated. In Popish times this was a city of importance. Its tall cathedral towers soared aloft on their commanding site, while the lovely region held fast in the yoke of the Pope slumbered at their feet. Lausanne had a bishop, a college of rich canons, and a numerous staff of priests. It had besides an annual fair, to which troops of pilgrims resorted, to pray before the image of "Our Lady," and to buy indulgences and other trinkets: a traffic that enriched at once the Church and the towns-people. But though one could hardly stir a step in its streets without meeting a "holy man" or a pious pilgrim, the place was a very sink of corruption. ⁷ There was need, verily, of a purifying stream being turned in upon this filthy place. Farel essayed to do so, but his first attempt was not successful, and he turned away upon another tack. ⁸

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Repulsed from Lausanne, Farel traversed the fertile country which divides the Lemane from the Lake of Neuchâtel, and arrived at Morat. This, in our day, insignificant place, was then a renowned and fortified town. It had sustained three famous sieges, the first in 1032 against the Emperor Conrad, the second in 1292 against the Emperor Rodolph of Hapsburg, and the third in 1476 against Charles, last Duke of Burgundy. Situated between France and Germany, the two languages were spoken equally in it. Farel brought with him an authorisation from the Lords of Bern empowering him to preach, not only throughout the extent of their own territories, but also in that of their allies, provided they gave consent. ⁹ Here his preaching was not without fruit; but the majority of the citizens electing to abide still by Rome, he retraced his steps, and presented himself a second time before that episcopal city that overlooks the

⁷We have already given a picture of the manners, lay and clerical, of Lausanne in the sixteenth century. See ante, vol. 1, bk. 8, ch. 3, p. 419.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 1, p. 357.

⁹Ibid., tom. 2, p. 175.

blue Leman, and which had so recently driven him from its gates. He was ambitious of subduing this stronghold of darkness to the Savior. This time he brought with him a letter from the Lords of Bern, who had jurisdiction in those parts, and naturally wished to see their allies of the same faith with themselves; but even this failed to procure him liberty to evangelist in Lausanne. The Council of Sixty read the letter of their Excellencies of Bern, and civilly replied that "It belonged not to them, but to the bishop and chapter, to admit preachers into the pulpits." The Council of Two Hundred also found that they had no power in the matter. ¹⁰ Farel had again to depart and leave those whom he would have led into the pastures of truth to the care of shepherds who knew so in to feed but were so skillful to fleece their flocks.

Again turning northwards, he made a short halt at Morat. This time the victory of the Gospel was complete, and this important town was placed (1529) in the list of Protestant cities. ¹¹ Farel felt that a mighty unseen power was travelling with him, opening the understandings, melting the hearts of men, and he would press on and win other cities and cantons to the Gospel. He crossed the lovely lake and presented himself in Neuchatel, which had lately returned under the scepter of its former mistress, Jeanne de Hochberg, the only daughter and heiress of Philip, Count of Neuchatel, who died in 1503. ¹² She regained in her widowhood the principality of Neuchatel, which she had lost in the lifetime of her husband, Louis d'Orleans, Duke of Longueville. No one could enter this city without having ocular demonstration that religion was the dominant interest in it - meaning thereby a great cathedral on a conspicuous site, with a full complement of canons, priests, and monks, who furnished the usual store of pomps, dramas, indulgences, banquetings, and scandals. In the midst of a devotion of this sort, Neuchatel was startled by a man of small stature, red beard, glittering eye, and stentorian voice, who stood up in the market-place, and announced that he had brought a religion, not from Rome, but from the Bible.

The men with shaven crowns were struck dumb with astonishment. When at length they found their voices, they said, "Let us

¹⁰Ibid., tom. 2, p. 178.

¹¹Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 176, 182.

¹²Ibid., tom. 2, p. 179.

beat out his brains.” “Duck him, duck him,” cried others. ¹³ They fought with such weapons as they had; their ignorance forbade their opposing doctrine with doctrine. Farel lifted up his voice above their clamor. His preaching was felt to be not an idle tale, nor a piece of incomprehensible mysticism, but words of power - the words of God. Neuchâtel was carried by storm. ¹⁴ It did not as yet formally declare for Reform; but it was soon to do so.

Having kindled the fire, and knowing that all the efforts of the priests would not succeed in extinguishing it, Farel departed to evangelise in the mountains and valleys which lie around the smiling waters of Morat and Neuchâtel. It was winter (January, 1530), and cold, hunger, and weariness were his frequent attendants. Every hour, more-over, he was in peril of his life. The priests perfectly understood that if they did not make away with him he would make away with “religion” - that is, with their tithes and offerings, their processions and orgies. They did all in their power to save “religion.” They suspended their quarrels with one another, they stole some hours from their sleep, they even stole some hours from the table in their zeal to warn their flocks against the “wolf,” and impress them with a salutary dread of what their fate would be, should they become his prey. On one occasion, in the Val de Ruz, in the mountains that overhang the Lake of Neuchâtel, the Reformer was seized and beaten almost to death. ¹⁵

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Nothing, however, could stop him. He would, at times, mount the pulpit while the priest was in the act of celebrating mass at the altar, and drown the chants of the missal by the thunder of his eloquence. This boldness had diverse results. Sometimes the old bigotry would resume its sway, and the audience would pull the preacher violently out of the pulpit; at other times the arrow of conviction would enter. The priest would hastily strip himself of stole and chasuble, and cast the implements of sacrifice from his hands, while the congregation would demolish the altar, remove the images, and give in their adhesion to the new faith. In three weeks' time four villages of the region had embraced the Reformed faith. The first of these was the village of Kertezers, the church of which had been given in the year

¹³Farellus Molano. Neuchâtel MS. - quoted by D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 323.

¹⁴Ruchat, tom. 2, p. 181.

¹⁵Choupard, MS. - quoted by D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 331.

962 to the Abbey of Payerne, by Queen Berthe, wife of Rodolph II., King of Burgundy, foundress of the abbey. Since that time - that is, during 568 years - the religious of Payerne had been the patrons of that church, the cure of which was their vicar. As the Reformed were no longer served by him, they petitioned their superiors at Bern for a Reformed pastor. Their request was granted, and it was arranged that the Popish cure and the Protestant minister should divide the stipend between them. ¹⁶ The cups, pictures, marbles, and other valuables of the churches were sold, and therewith were provided stipends for the pastors, hospitals for the poor and sick, schools for the youth, and if aught remained it was given to the State. ¹⁷ The zeal of the citizens of Meiry outran their discretion. They overturned the altars and images before the Reformation had obtained a majority of votes. This furnished occasion to the Lords of Friburg to complain to those of Bern that their subjects in the Jura were infringing the settlement that regulated the progress of the Protestant faith. A few weeks, however, put all right, by giving a majority of votes in Meiry to the Reformation. Thus did the Gospel cast down the strongholds of error, and its preacher, in the midst of weakness, was triumphant. The spring and summer sufficed to establish the Reformed faith in great part of this region.

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

¹⁶Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 184, 185.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 185.

Protestant religion, both we and our children; and in it will we live and die.”

Having restored the Gospel with its sublime doctrines and its worship in the spirit, the Neuchatelans felt that they had no longer need of those symbols by which Popery sets forth its mysteries, and through which the material worship of its votaries is offered. They proceeded forthwith to purge the church: they dismantled the altars, broke the images, tore down the pictures and crucifixes, and carrying them out, cast them down from the summit of the terrace on which the cathedral stands. At their feet slept the blue lake, beyond was the fertile champaign, and afar, in the south, a chain of glittering peaks, with the snowy crown of Mont Blanc rising grandly over all; but not an eye that day was turned on this glorious panorama. They had broken from their own and their children’s neck an ancient yoke, and were intent only on obliterating all the signs and instruments of their former slavery. In perpetual remembrance of this great day, the Neuchatelans inscribed on a pillar of the cathedral the words - on the 23d October, 1530, idolatry was overthrown and removed from this church by the citizens. ¹⁸

¹⁸Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 276, 277.

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Chapter 4: Tumults - Successes - Toleration

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

Picture: Farel Preaching in the Market-place of Neuchatel Picture: William Farel

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

appropriated to the Protestant worship, and the Reformation was legally established. ¹

Vallangin, the town of next importance in this part of the Jura, followed soon thereafter the example Neuchatel. The issue here was precipitated by a shameful expedient to which the Papists had recourse, and which was of a sort that history refuses to chronicle. It was a fair-day; Antoine Marcourt, the Pastor of Neuchatel, was preaching in the market-place. A large and attentive congregation was listening to him, when a revolting spectacle was exhibited which was contrived to affront the preacher, insult the audience, and drive the Gospel from the place amid jeers and laughter. The trick recoiled upon its authors. It was Popery that had to flee. A sudden gust of indignation shook the crowd. The multitudes rushed toward the cathedral. Who shall now save the saints? The priests have unchained winds which it is beyond their power to control. Altar, image, and monumental statue, all went down before the tempest. The relics were scattered about. Even the rich oriels, which flecked, with their glorious tints, stone floor and massive column, were not spared. The edifice, all aglow but a few moments before with the curious and beautiful picturings of chisel and pencil, was now a wreck. The popular vengeance was not yet appeased. The furious multitude was next seen directing its course towards the residences of the canons. The terrified clerics had already fled to the woods, but if their persons escaped, their houses were sacked.

By-and-by the storm spent itself, and calmer feelings returned to the breasts of the citizens. They ascended the hill on which stood the castle of the Countess of Arberg, who governed Vallangin, under the suzerainty of Bern. The authorities trembled when they saw them approach, and were greatly relieved when they learned that they had come with no more hostile intent than to demand the punishment of the perpetrators of the outrage. The countess gave orders for the punishment of the guilty, though she was suspected of connivance in the affair. As to all beyond, the matter was referred to Bern, and their Excellencies decided that the townspeople should pay for the works of art which they had destroyed, and that the countess in

¹Recess de MM. de Bern, MS. Choupart, MS. Chambrier, Hist. de Neuchâtel. Governor's letter to Princess de Longueville - apud D'Aubigne. Ruchat, tom. 2, pp. 277-280.

return should grant the free profession of the Reformed faith. The sum in which the citizens were amerced we do not know, but it must have been large indeed if it did not leave them immense gainers by the exchange.²

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

[254] There was a short halt in the march of this spiritual conqueror. At St. Blaise, on the northern shore of the Lake of Neuchatel, Farel was set upon by a mob, instigated by the priests, and almost beaten to death. Covered with bruises, spitting blood, and so disfigured as scarcely to be recognized by his friends, he was put into a small boat, carried across the lake, and nursed at Morat. He had barely recovered his strength when he rose from bed, and set out for Orbe to evangelise. Orbe was an ancient town at the foot of the Jura, on the picturesque banks of a stream of the same name. It lay nearer Geneva than Neuchatel. Watered by rivulets from the mountains, the gardens that surrounded it were of more than ordinary beauty and luxuriance, but spiritually Orbe was a wilderness, a "land where no water was." The Reformer would have given it "living water;"

²D'Aubigne, bk. 15, chap. 9.

but, unhappily, Orbe, with its numerous priests, its rich convents, and its famous sisters of St. Claire, some of whom were of royal lineage, did not thirst for such water. Its good Catholics strove to render Farel's journey of no avail. With this view they had recourse to expedients, some of which were tragic, others simply ludicrous. One of them is worth chronicling for its originality. It was agreed to outmanoeuvre the evangelist by staying away - a masterly policy in the case of a preacher so attractive - but in one instance the policy was departed from. One day, when Farel entered the pulpit, a most extraordinary scene presented itself. He beheld three adults only present, while the church was nearly filled with children - "brats." The latter lay perfectly flat as if sound asleep. But the moment Farel began to preach they jumped up, as puppets do when the string is pulled, and began to sing and dance, to laugh and scream. Farel's voice was completely drowned by the noise. This scene continued for some time; at length the little ragamuffins made their exit in an uproar of screaming and howling. Farel was now left in quiet, but with no one to listen to him. "And this," says a Popish chronicler, "was the first sermon preached in the town of Orbe."³

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

On Pentecost, the 28th of May, Farel celebrated the Lord's Supper, for the first time in Orbe, to a little congregation of seven. Having preached in the morning, the bread and wine were placed on the table, and the communicants received them kneeling. Farel demanded of them whether they forgave one another, and receiving an affirmative reply, he distributed the elements to them. In the afternoon the Papists entered the church, and commenced the chanting of mass."⁴

Farel was beginning to think that Orbe was already won, when unhappily these bright prospects were suddenly dashed by the indiscreet zeal of one of the evangelists. Thinking to reform Orbe by a coup de main, this person, with the help of twelve companions, pulled down one day all the images in its seven churches.⁵ The de-

³Memoire du Sire de Pierrefleur, p. 35. vol. 4, p. 258. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 23.

⁴Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 27.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 28.

struction of the idols but prolonged the reign of idolatry. A reaction set in, and it was not till twenty years thereafter that Orbe placed itself in the rank of Reformed cities.

But if Orbe remained Roman it had the honour of giving to the Reformation one of its loveliest spirits and most persuasive preachers. Peter Viret was born in this town in 1511. His father was a wool-dresser. Sweet, studious, and of elevated soul, the son gave himself to the service of the altar. He was educated at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he remained about three years. He attained the peace of the Gospel, like most of the Reformers, by passing through the waters of anguish; but in his case “the floods” were not so deep as in that of Luther and Calvin. When he returned to his native city, he entered the pulpit at the entreaty of Farel, and preached to his townsmen. The sweetness of his voice, the beauty of his ideas, and the modesty of his manner held his hearers captive. It was seen that he who distributes to his servants as he pleases for the edification of his body, the Church, had given to Viret his special gift. He did not possess the glowing imagery and burning ardour of Luther, nor the fiery energy of Farel, nor the thrilling power of Zwingle, nor the calm, towering, and all-mastering genius of Calvin; but his preaching, nevertheless, had a charm which was not found in that of any of those great men. Clear, tender, persuasive aided by the silvery tones of his voice, and the moral glow which lighted up his features, its singular fascination and power were attested, in after-years, by the immense crowds which gathered round him in Switzerland and the south of France, whenever he stood up to preach. He was indeed a polished shaft in the hand of the Almighty. ⁶

[255] Farel had to fall back from before Orbe; but if he retreated it was to wage fresh combats and to win new victories. He next visited Grandson, at the western extremity of the Lake of Neuchatel. The priests, alarmed at his arrival, rose in arms, and drove him away. Bern now interposed its authority for his protection. Their Excellencies would compel no one to become a Protestant, but

⁶Melch. Adam., Vit. Theol., p. 120. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 25. -German Switzerland differs from French Switzerland or the Swiss Romande, in that the former was evangelised almost entirely by native preachers, as Zwingle, (Ecolampadius, Hailer, etc. Viret was, we may say, the only native Reformer that arose in French Switzerland. It was mainly evangelised by men who had been born beyond its frontier.

they were determined to permit the two faiths to be heard, and the citizens to make their choice between the sermon and the mass. Taking with him Viret, Farel returned to Grandson, where he was joined by a third, De Glutinis, an evangelist from the Bernese Jura. They preached Sunday and weekday. The heresy was breaking in like a torrent. The priests strove to rear a bulwark against the devastating flood. They refuted, to the best of their ability, the Protestant sermons. They called to their aid popular preachers from the neighboring towns, and they organised processions and sacred chants to invigorate the zeal and piety of their adherents. The tide, notwithstanding, continued to set in a contrary direction to that in which they wished to force it to flow. Arming themselves, they came to church to refute what they heard spoken there, not with arguments, but with blows. The sacristan threatened Farel with a pistol which he had concealed under his cloak; another attempted to assassinate Glutinis with a poignard. The ministers managed to mount the pulpits, but were pulled from them, thrown down on the floor, trampled upon, beaten, and when their friends rushed forward to defend them, the two parties fought over their prostrate bodies, and a regular battle was seen going forward in the church.⁷

But a great good resulted from these lamentable proceedings. The matter was brought before the Great Conference, which assembled, as we have previously related, at Bern in January, 1532. The Swiss were drifting toward a civil war. It was hopeless to think of conciliating the two parties that divided the nation, but was it necessary therefore that they should cut one another's throats? Might it not be possible rather to bear with one another's opinions? This was the device hit upon. It might appear to Rome, as it still appears to her, an execrable one, but to the Conference it appeared preferable to the crime and horror of internecine strife. Thus out of that necessity which is said to be the mother of invention, came the idea of toleration. We deem the mass idolatry, said Protestant Bern, but we shall prevent no one going to it. We deem the Protestant sermon heresy, rejoined Popish Friburg, but we shall give liberty to all who wish to attend it. Thus on the basis of liberty of worship was the public peace maintained. This dates in Switzerland from January, 1532.

⁷Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 31-33.

⁸ Toleration was adopted as a policy before it had been accepted as a principle. It was practiced as a necessity of the State before it had been promulgated as a right of conscience. It was only when it came to be recognised and claimed in the latter character as a right founded on a Divine charter - namely, the Word of God - and held irrespective of the permission or the interdiction of man, that toleration established inviolably its existence and reign.

In this manner did Farel carry on the campaign. Every hour he encountered new perils; every day there awaited him fresh persecutions; but it more than consoled him to think that he was winning victory after victory. He remembered that similar foes had beset the path of the first preachers of the Gospel in the cities of Asia Minor at the beginning of the Christian dispensation, to those which obstructed his own in the towns and villages of this region. But in the face of that opposition, how marvellous had his success been - not his, but that of the invisible Power that was moving before him! Among the towns won to the Gospel - the beginning of his strength - he could count Neuchatel, and Vallangin, and Morat, and Grandson, and Aigle, and Bex, and partially Orbe. Every day the fields were growing ripe unto the harvest; able and zealous laborers were coming to his aid in the reaping of it. By-and-by he hoped to carry home the last

433 sheaf, in the conversion of the little town which nestled at the southern extremity of the Lemane Lake, to which his longing eyes were so often turned. What joy would be his, could he pluck it from the talons of Savoy and the grasp of Rome, and give it to the Gospel!

⁸Memoire du Sire de Pierrefleur, p. 74. Choupard, MS. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 291.

Chapter 5: Fabel Enters Geneva

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

Picture: Promment School at the Mollard

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

But this fertile and lovely land, at the time we write of, was one of the strongholds of the Papacy. Cathedrals, abbacies, rich convents, and famous shrines, which attracted yearly troops of pilgrims, were thickly planted throughout the valley of the Leman. These were so

many fortresses by which Rome kept the country in subjection. In each of these fortresses was placed a numerous garrison. Priests and monks swarmed like the locusts. The land was fat, yet one wonders how it sustained so numerous and ravenous a host. In Geneva alone there were nine hundred priests. In the other towns and villages around the lake, and at the foot of the Jura, they were not less numerous in proportion. Cowls and shorn crowns, frocks and veils, were seen everywhere. This generation of tonsured men and veiled women formed the "Church;" and the dues they exacted of the lay population, and the processions, chants, exorcisms, and blows which they gave them in return, were styled "religion." The man who would go down into this region of sevenfold blackness, and attack these sons of the Roman Anak, who here tyrannised so mercilessly over their wretched victims, had indeed need of a stout heart and a strong faith. He had need to be clad in the armor of God in going forth to such a battle. This man was William Farel. The spiritual campaigns of the sixteenth century produced few such champions. "His sermons," says D'Aubigne, "were actions quite as much as a battle is." We have already chronicled what he did in these "wars of the Lord" in the Pays de Vaud; we are now to be engaged in the narrative of his work in Geneva.

We have brought down the eventful story of this little city to the time when it formed an alliance with Bern and Friburg. This brought it a little help in the battle which it had maintained hitherto single-handed against tremendous odds. The duke had left it, and placed the Alps between himself and it, but he had not lost sight of it. Despairing of being able to reduce it by his own power, he sent a messenger to Charles V. at Augsburg, entreating him to send his soldiers and put him in possession of Geneva. Most willingly would the emperor have put these haughty citizens under the feet of the duke, but his own hands were at that moment too full to attempt any new enterprise. The Lutheran princes of Germany, as stubborn in their own way as the Genevans were in theirs, were occasioning Charles a world of anxiety, and he could give the duke nothing but promises. The emperor's plan, as communicated to the duke's envoy, was first to "crush the German Protestants, and then bring his mailed

hand down on the Huguenots of Geneva.”¹ Geneva meanwhile had respite. The Treaty of Nuremberg shortly afterwards set Charles V. free on the side of Germany, and left him at liberty to convert the promises he had made the duke into deeds. But the hour to strike had now passed; a mightier power than the emperor had entered Geneva.

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Returning from the Waldensian synod in the valley of Angrogna, in October, 1532, Farel, who was accompanied by Saunter, could not resist his long-cherished desire of visiting Geneva. His arrival was made known to the friends of liberty in that city,² and the very next day the elite of the citizens waited on him at his inn, the Tour Perce, on the left bank of the Rhone. He preached twice, setting forth the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. The topic of his first address was Holy Scripture, the fountain-head of all Divine knowledge, in contradistinction to tradition of Fathers, or decree of Council, and the only authority on earth to which the conscience of man was subject. This opened the gates of a higher liberty than these men had yet understood, or aspired to. They had been shedding their blood for their franchises, but now the Reformer showed them a way by which their souls might escape from the dark dungeon in which tradition and human authority had succeeded in shutting them up. The next day Farel proclaimed to them the great pardon of God - which consisted, according to his exposition, in the absolutely free forgiveness of sinners bestowed on the footing of an absolutely full and perfect expiation of human guilt; and this he placed in studious opposition to the pardon of the Pope, which had to be bought with money or with penances. This was a still wider opening of the gates of a new world to these men. “This,” said Farel, “is the Gospel; and this, and nothing short of this, is liberty, inasmuch as it is the enfranchisement of the whole man, body, conscience, and soul.”³ The words of the Reformer did not fall on dull or indifferent hearts.

¹Memoire de M. de Bellegarde au sujet de l’audience qu’il a eu de S.M. Imperiale touchant les differends que S.A. avait avec ceux de Geneve. This MS. of about 25 pages was discovered by Dr. D’Aubigne in the archives at Turin. (See Hist. Reform. in Europe, bk. 5, chap. 6.)

²Spanheim, Geneva, Restituta, p. 43. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 175.

³Froment, Gestes de Geneve, p. 5. Spon, Hist. de Geneve, tom. 1, p. 467. Choupard, MS. D’Aubigne, tom. 3, pp. 333. 334.

The generous soil, already watered with the blood of the martyrs of liberty, now received into its bosom a yet more precious seed. The Old Geneva passed away, and in its place came a New Geneva, which the wiles of the Pope should not be able to circumvent, nor the arms of the emperor to subdue.

The priests learned, with a dismay bordering on despair, that the man who had passed like a devastating tempest over the Pays de Vand, his track marked by altars overturned, images demolished, and canons, monks, and nuns fleeing before him in terror, had come hither also. What was to be done? Effectual steps must be promptly taken, otherwise all would be lost. The gods of Geneva would perish as those of Neuchatel had done.⁴

Farel and Saunter were summoned before the town council.⁵ The majority of the magistrates received them with angry looks, some of them with bitter words; but happily Farel carried letters from their Excellencies of Bern, with whom Geneva was in alliance, and whom the councillors feared to offend. The Reformers, thus protected, after some conference, left the council-chamber unharmed.

Their acquittal awakened still more the fears of the priests, and as their fear grew so did their anger. Armed clerics were parading the streets; there was a great flutter in the convents. "A shabby little preacher," said one of the sisters of St. Claire, with a toss of the head, "Master William Farel, has just arrived."⁶ The townspeople were breaking out in tumults. What next was thought of? An episcopal council met, and under a pretext of debating the question it summoned the two preachers before them. Two magistrates accompanied them to see that they returned alive. Some of the episcopal council had come with arms under their sacerdotal robes. Such was their notion of a religious discussion. The Reformers were asked by what authority they preached? Farel replied by quoting the Divine injunction, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." The meek majesty of the answer only provoked a sneer. In a few minutes the council became excited; the members started to their feet; they flung themselves upon the two evangelists; they pulled them about; they spat upon them, exclaiming, "Come, Farel, you wicked devil, what

⁴Choupard, MS.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 177.

⁶La Saeur J. de Jussie, *Le Leraïn du Calvinisme*, p. 46.

makes you go up and down thus? Whence comest thou? What business brings you to our city to throw us into trouble?" When the noise had a little subsided, Farel made answer courageously, "I am not a devil; I am sent by God as an ambassador of Jesus Christ; I preach Christ crucified - dead for our sins - risen again for our justification; he that believeth upon him hath eternal life; he that believeth not is condemned." "He blasphemes; he is worthy of death," exclaimed some. "To the Rhone, to the Rhone!" shouted others; "it were better to drown him in the Rhone than permit this wicked Lutheran to trouble all the people." "Speak the words of Christ, not of Caiaphas," replied Farel. This was the signal for a yet more ferocious outbreak. "Kill the Lutheran hound," exclaimed they. Dom Bergeri, proctor to the chaplain, cried, "Strike, strike!" They closed round Farel and Saunier; they took hold of them; they struck at them. One of the Grand Vicar's servants, who carried an arquebus, levelled it at Farel; he pulled the trigger; the priming flashed. ⁷ The clatter of arms under the vestments of the priests foreboded a tragic issue to the affair; and doubtless it would speedily have terminated in this melancholy fashion, but for the vigorous interposition of the two magistrates. ⁸

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Rescued from the perils of the episcopal council-hall, worse dangers, if possible, threatened them outside. A miscellaneous crowd of clerics and laics, armed with clubs and swords, waited in the street to inflict upon the two heretics the vengeance which it was just possible they might escape at the hands of the vicar and canons. ⁹ When the mob saw them appear, they brandished their weapons, and raising a frightful noise of hissing and howling, made ready to rush upon them. It looked as if they were fated to die upon the spot. At the critical moment a band of halberdiers, headed by the syndics, came up, and closing their ranks round the two Reformers escorted them, through the scowling and hooting crowd, to their inn, the Tour Perce. A guard was stationed at the door all night. Next morning, at an early hour, appeared a few friends, who taking Farel and Saunter, and leading them to the shore of the lake, made them embark in a small boat, and, carrying them over the quiet waters, landed them

⁷Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 177-180.

⁸Froment, Gestes de Geneve. pp. 5, 6. Choupard, MS. Spanheim, Geneva Restituta, p. 43.

⁹La Saeur J. de Jussie, Le Levain du Calvinisme, p. 48.

in the Pays de Vand at an unfrequented spot between Merges and Lausanne. Thence Farel and Saunter went on to Grandson. Such was the issue of Farel's first essay in a city on which his eye and heart had so long rested. It did not promise much; but he had accomplished more than he at the moment knew.

In fact, Farel was too powerful, and his name was of too great prestige, to begin the work. The seeds of such a work must be deposited by a gentle hand, they must grow up in a still air, and only when they have taken root may the winds be suffered to blow. Of this Farel seems to have become sensible, for we find him looking around for a humbler and feebler instrument to send to Geneva. He cast eyes on the young and not very courageous Froment, and dispatched him to a city where he himself had almost been torn in pieces.¹⁰ While Froment was on his way another visitor unexpectedly appeared to the Genevans. A comet blazed forth in their sky. What did it portend? War, said some; the rising of a Divine light, said others.¹¹

Froment's appearance was so mean that even the Huguenots, as the friends of liberty and progress in Geneva were styled, turned their backs upon him. What was he to do? Froment recalled Farel's example at Aigle, and resolved to turn schoolmaster. He hired a room at the Croix d'Or, near the Molard, and speedily his fame as a teacher of youth filled Geneva. The lessons Froment taught the children in the school, the children taught the parents when they went home. Gradually, and in a very short while, the class grew into a congregation of adults, the school-room into a church, and the teacher into an evangelist. Reading out a chapter he would explain it with simplicity and impressiveness. Thus did he scatter the seed upon hearts; souls were converted; and the once despised evangelist, who had been, like a greater missionary, "a root out of a dry ground" to the Genevans, now saw crowds pressing around him and drinking in his words.¹²

This was in the end of the year 1532. The work proceeded apace. Among the converts were certain rich and honorable women: we mention specially Paula, the wife of John Lever, and Claudine, her sister-in-law. Their conversion made a great sensation in Geneva.

¹⁰Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 179.

¹¹Badollet MS. in Bern Library - Hist. Helv., quoted by D'Aubigne, vol 3, p. 375.

¹²Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 180, 181,

By their means their husbands and many of their acquaintances were drawn to hear the schoolmaster at the Croix d'Or, and embraced the Gospel. From the Pays de Vaud, arrived New Testaments, tracts, and controversial works; and these, distributed among the citizens, opened the eyes of many who had not courage to go openly to the schoolmaster's sermon. Tradesmen and people of all conditions enrolled themselves among the disciples. The social principle of Christianity began to operate; those who were of one faith drew together into one society, and meeting at stated times in one another's houses, they strove to instruct and strengthen each other. Such were the early days of the Genevan Church.

First came faith - faith in the free forgiveness of the Gospel - next came good works A reformation of manners followed in Geneva. The Reformed ceased to frequent those fashionable amusements in which they had formerly delighted. They banished finery from their dress, and luxury from their banquets. They made no more costly presents to the saints, and the; money thus saved they bestowed on the poor, and especially the Protestant exiles whom the rising storms of persecution in France compelled to flee to the gates of Geneva as to a harbour of refuge. There was hardly a Protestant of note who did not receive into his house one of these expatriated Christians,¹³ and in this way Geneva learned that hospitality for which it is renowned to this day. [259] [260]

The congregation of Froment in a few weeks grew too large for the modest limits of the Croix d'Or. One day a greater concourse than usual assembling at his chapel door, and pressing in vain for admittance, the cry was raised, "To the Molard!" To the Molard the crowd marched, carrying with them the preacher. It was New Year's Day, 1533. The Molard was the market-square, and here, mounted on a fish-stall - the first public pulpit in Geneva - Froment preached to the multitude. It was his "New Year's gift," as it has been called. Having prayed, he began his sermon¹⁴ by announcing that "free pardon"-the ray from the open heavens which leads the eye upward to the throne of a Savior - which all the Reformers, treading in the

¹³Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, pp. 16-18.

¹⁴The prayer and the sermon that followed it have been recorded by Froment himself in his *Gestes de Geneve*. They are given by D'Aubigne in his *History of the Reformation in Europe*, bk. 5, ch. 12.

steps of the apostles, placed in the foreground of their teaching. From this he went on to present to his hearers the lineaments of the “false prophets” and “idolatrous priests” as painted in the Old and New Testaments, pointing out the exact verification of these features in the Romish hierarchy of their own day. Froment’s delineations were so minute, so graphic and fearless, that his hearers saw the prophets of Baal, and the Pharisees of a corrupt Judaism, living over again in the priests of their own city. The preacher had become warm with his theme, and the audience were kindling in sympathy, when a sound of hurrying footsteps was heard behind them. On turning round a band of armed men was seen entering the square. The lieutenant of the city, the procurator-fiscal, the soldiers, and a number of armed priests, exasperated by this public manifestation of the converts, had come to arrest Froment, and disperse the assembly. Had the preacher been captured, it is not doubtful what his fate would have been, but the band returned without their prey. His friends carried him off to a place of hiding. ¹⁵

The agitation of the citizens and the violence of the priests made the farther prosecution of Froment’s ministry in Geneva hopeless. He withdrew quietly from the city, and returned to his former charge in the village of Yvonand, at the foot of the Jura. ¹⁶ The foundations of Protestant Geneva had been laid: greater builders were to rear the edifice.

¹⁵Spanheim, *Geneva Restituta*, p. 52. Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, pp. 43, 44. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 185.

¹⁶Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 186.

Chapter 6: Geneva on the Brink of Civil War

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

Picture: View of Bern From a Meadow

Picture: Peter Viret

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

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¹Froment, Gestes de Geneve, p. 48. Spon, Hist. de Geneve, 1, p. 481.

real though spiritual presence of that Savior of whom it was foretold

-
“His coming like the morn shall be, Like morning songs his voice.”²

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

Bern next appeared upon the stage, and demanded that its ally Geneva should grant liberty to the preaching of the Gospel in it.⁵ The friends of the duke and of Rome - the Mamelukes, as they were called - saw that matters had come to a crisis. They must extirpate Lutheranism from Geneva, otherwise they should never be at rest; but Lutheranism they could hope to extirpate not otherwise than by extirpating all the Lutherans. The council hesitated and procrastinated, for the majority of its members were still Roman Catholic; but the canons, priests, and chief partisans of Romanism neither hesitated nor procrastinated. They met in the Vicar-General's council-hall (Thursday, 27th May, 1533); they came armed to the teeth, and the issue of their deliberations, which were conducted by torch-light, was to kill all the Protestants in Geneva without one exception.⁶ The conspirators, raising their hands, bound themselves by a solemn oath.⁷ They now dispersed for a brief repose, for the plot was to be executed on the day following.

The morrow came, and the conspirators assembled in the cathedral, to the number of 700.⁸ The first to enter was Canon Wernli. He came clad in armor. He was as devoted a Romanist as he was a redoubtable warrior. He was a Samson for strength, and could wield his battle-axe as he might fling about his breviary. In waging war

²Hosea 6:3.

³Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 188. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 432.

⁴D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 433.

⁵MS. Archives of Geneva: Letter from Bern, 20th March, 1533.

⁶Froment, Gestes de Geneve, p. 51.

⁷Spanheim, Geneva Restituta—"solenni sacramento." Ruchat, tom. 3, p.190.

⁸Ibid.

with the hydra of heresy which had broken into the Roman Catholic fold of Geneva he would strike once, and would not strike a second time. This zealous priest and valiant soldier was the real captain of the band, which was ostensibly led by Syndic Baud, in his “great hat and plume of feathers.”

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

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This army, drawn up in order of battle in the Molard, received a singular reinforcement. The wives and mothers of the Romanists appeared on the scene of action, their aprons filled with stones, by their side their little children of from twelve to fourteen, whom they had brought to take part in this holy war and into whose hands they had put such weapons as they were able to wield. So great was the zeal of these Amazons against heresy!

Meanwhile, what were the Protestants doing or thinking? At the first alarm they assembled in the house of Baudichon de la Maisonneuve, one of the most courageous of their leaders. His mansion was situated on the left bank of the Rhone, some 400 paces from the Molard. The converts felt how terrible was the crisis, but their hearts were fixed, trusting on him who holds the tempests and whirlwinds in his hands. He had but to speak, and that storm would dispel as suddenly as it had gathered. The plan of the Romanists was to march to Baudichon’s house, set fire to it, and massacre the heretics one by one as they escaped from the flames. The proposal of burning them came to the ears of the Protestants;

⁹Ruchat, tom, 3, p. 191.

[262] their numbers had now considerably increased; all were well armed and of good courage; they resolved to march out and stand for their lives. Descending into the street, they drew up five deep in presence of the enemy.

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

There chanced at that time to be seven Friburg merchants sojourning in Geneva. ¹⁰ Touched by the lamentable spectacle of the citizens in arms to shed one another's blood, they came forward at the critical moment to mediate. "Blessed are the peace-makers." Going first to the Roman Catholics and then to the Reformed, they represented to the former how foolish it was to shed their blood "to satisfy the appetite of their priests," ¹¹ and pointed out to the latter how tremendous were the odds that stood arrayed against them. With much ado they succeeded in calming the passions of both parties. The priests, however, of whom 160 were in arms, refused to lend an ear to these pacific counsels. But finding that if they persisted they should have to fight it out by themselves, they at last came to terms. ¹² The insane fury of the inhabitants having now given place to the natural affections, tears of joy welcomed fathers and husbands as at night they stepped across the thresholds of their homes. Terms of pacification were afterwards drawn up which left the balance inclining somewhat in favor of liberty of conscience. ¹³

But soon again another storm darkened over that city within which two mighty principles were contending. The magistrates might issue edicts, the leaders of the two parties might sign pacifications, but settled peace there could be none for Geneva till the Gospel should have established its sway in the hearts of a majority of its citizens. On the 4th May, just five weeks after the affair we

¹⁰Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 193.

¹¹Choupard, MS. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 470.

¹²Froment, Gestes de Geneve, pp. 55-57. Roset, MS. Chron. Council Registers, 28th March, 1533. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 472. ¹³Buchat, tom. 3, p. 194.

¹³Buchat, tom. 3, p. 194.

have narrated, another tumult broke out. Its instigator was the same bellicose ecclesiastic who figured so prominently on the 28th March - Canon Wernli. "This good champion of the faith," as Sister Jeanne, who kept a journal of these occurrences, calls him, had that morning celebrated, with unusual pomp, the Feast of "The Holy Winding-sheet," in St. Peter's. "Taking off his sacerdotal robes, he put on his breast-plate and cuishes, belted his sword to his side, seized his heavy halberd,"¹⁴ and issued forth to do battle for the Church. Followed by a party of priests to whose hands the arquebus came quite as readily as the breviary, Wernli strode down the Perton to his old battle-field, the Molard By this time night had fallen; alarming rumors were propagated through the city, and to add to the terror of the inhabitants, the tocsin began to ring out its thundering peals. Many on both sides, Roman Catholics and Reformers, mostly armed, rushed into the street. There Canon Wernli, unable to distinguish friend from foe in the darkness, was shouting out to his assailants to come on; but as no one answered the challenge, he fell to dealing blows right and left among the crowd. Some one slipped behind him, and espying an opening in his iron coat, thrust his poignard into his body. The shouts ceased, the tumult gradually subsided, the night passed, and when the morning broke Canon Wernli was found lying in his armor, on the doorsteps of one of the houses, stark dead.¹⁵

If the death of this Papal champion lessened the dangers of the Reformed within the city, it multiplied their enemies without. Wernli belonged to a powerful family of the Popish Canton of Friburg, and ambassadors from that State now appeared at Geneva demanding the punishment of all concerned in the canon's death - that is, of all the Reformed. The Reformation seemed about to be sacrificed on the tomb of Wernli. Protestant Bern instantly stepped forward in its defense. Bern proved itself the more powerful. Its ambassadors induced the syndics and council, as the only escape from the chaos that encompassed them, to proclaim liberty to all to abide by the

¹⁴La Scour J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 61, 62. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, p. 494,

¹⁵Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, p. 59. La Saeour J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 63. Council Registers, 4th and 23rd May, 1533. D'Aubigne, vol. 3, pp. 500, 501.

mass, or to follow Protestantism, as their conscience might dictate. ¹⁶ This decree, which advanced the landmarks of liberty theoretically, but hardly as yet practically, brought matters to a head in Geneva.

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

He but helped to ruin the cause he had come to uphold, he would give Lutheranism, not an open execution, but a secret burial. Accordingly, inviting the chiefs of the Protestant movement to his palace, no sooner had they entered it than the bishop closed the doors, threw his guests into irons, and proceeded to dispose of them by consigning one to this dungeon, and another to that. In this summary proceeding of their bishop the council saw a flagrant violation of the franchises of Geneva. It was the attack on liberty, not religion - for

¹⁶“Permettre à chacun de suivre les mouvements de sa conscience, en telle sorte que personne ne soit contraint.” (Council. Registers, 27th May, 1533.)

three of the four syndics were still Roman Catholic - that awakened their indignation. The senators produced their ancient charter, which the bishop had sworn to observe, and claimed the constitutional right, in which it vested them, of trying all inculpated citizens. The bishop found himself caught in the trap he had so cunningly set for others. If he should open his dungeons, he would confess to having sustained a most humiliating defeat; if he should retain his prisoners in bonds, he would draw upon his head one of those popular tempests of which he was so greatly afraid. Choosing the former as the less formidable alternative, he gave up his prisoners to their lawful judges. But even this did not restore the bishop's tranquillity. His guilty imagination was continually conjuring up tumults and assassinations; and, fleeing when no man pursued, he secretly quitted Geneva, just fourteen days after he had entered it. ¹⁷ He left the cause of Rome in a worse position than he had found it, and the Pope saw that he had better have left the craven bishop to enjoy his quiet and his wine at Arbois.

When the shepherd of the flock had fled, what so likely to happen as that the "wolf" would return? The "wolf" did return. Froment, with a companion by his side, Alexander Canus, reappeared upon the scene which the bishop had been in such haste to quit. These evangelists preached in private houses, and when these no longer sufficed for the crowds that assembled, they proclaimed the "good news" in the streets. The bishop, who learned what was going on, fulminated a missive from his quiet asylum, in the hope of driving the destroyer out of the fold he had deserted. "Why," said the Genevans, "did he not remain and keep the door closed?" The priests complained to the council, laying the bishop's letter upon the table. Their remonstrance only served to show that the tide was rising. "Preach the Gospel," answered the council, "and say nothing that cannot be proved by Holy Scripture." These words, which are still to be read in the city registers, made Protestantism a *religio licita* (a tolerated faith) in Geneva. ¹⁸ The bishop, in his own way, threw oil upon the fire by a second and more energetic letter, forbidding the preaching in Geneva, secretly or publicly, of "the holy page," of

¹⁷Roset, MS. Chronicles. Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, pp. 62, 63. D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 248.

¹⁸D'Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 253.

“the holy Gospel.”¹⁹ Further, Furbity, a frothy and abusive preacher of the Dominican order, was brought to oppose the Reformed. The violence of his harangues evoked a popular tumult, and the waters of liberty retreating for a moment from the limits which they had reached, Froment and Canus had to retire from Geneva.

[264] But speedily the tide turned, this time to overpass a long way its furthest limits hitherto. On the 21st December, 1533, Farel entered the gates of Geneva, not again to leave it till the Reformation had been consummated in it. The Roman Catholics felt that a life-and-death struggle had commenced. The citizens assembled to the sermons of Farel with helmets on their heads, and arquebuses and halberds in their hands. The priests, divining the true source of the movement, published from all the pulpits on the 1st of January, 1534, an order commanding all copies of the Bible, whether in French or in German, to be burned.²⁰ For three days and nights the city was under arms; the one party arming to defend, the other to expel the Bible. Froment arrived to the help of Farel. There came yet another - Viret, who joined them in a few weeks. Farel, Viret, Froment - the three most powerful preachers in the French tongue - are now in Geneva. These three are an army. Their weapon is the Word of God. Clad in the panoply of light, and wielding the sword of the Spirit, these three warriors will do more to batter down the stronghold of Rome than all that the nine hundred priests in Geneva can do to uphold it. The knell of the Papacy has sounded in this city; low responsive wailings begin to be heard along the foot of the Alps and the crest of the Jura, mourning the approaching fall of an ancient system. The echoes travel to France, to England, and to Germany, and wherever they come the friends of the Gospel and of liberty look up, while the adherents of Rome hang their heads, weighed down by the presentiment of a terrible disaster about to befall their cause.

¹⁹Gaberel. *Lettres Patentes de l’Eveque*. D’Aubigne, vol, 4, p. 255.

²⁰Roset, MS. *Chronicles*, bk. 3, chap. 17.

Chapter 7: Heroism of Geneva

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

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

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The Reformers, now numerous, and taunted sometimes with worshipping in holes and corners, resolved no longer to submit to the stigma of being obliged to celebrate their worship in private houses. They said to the magistrates, "Give us one of the churches of the city." The Council, wishing to hold the balance even between them and the Roman Catholics, excused themselves by saying that

¹Roset, Chron., bk. 3, chap. 21. Registres du Conseil, February 8th and 10th, 1534.

this was a matter that lay outside their jurisdiction; but, added they, “you are strong, and if you are pleased to take one of the churches of your own accord, we cannot prevent you.” The converts did not delay to act upon the hint. The brave Baudichon de la Maisonneuve marching at their head, they proceeded to the Convent of the Rive and appropriated for their use the “Grand Auditory,” or cloister,² which might contain from four to five thousand persons. They rang the bells; the report ran that Farel was to preach; and crowds from every part of the city came streaming to the Rive. The monks could only stare. Rising up in his ordinary dress, Farel preached to the overflowing congregation.

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

²Froment, *Gestes de Geneve*, p. 82. *Registres du Conseil*, March, 1534.

world to the Genevans. These glories were completely hidden by the black cloud of ignorance and superstition that hung between them and the Bible. But the moment that cloud began to be parted by the preaching of the Gospel and the breath of the Spirit, a new world was disclosed, a world of truth. It stood out, distinct, palpable, complete, in an affluence of spiritual glory, and a fullness of moral power, which made the Genevans wonder what blinding influence it was that had hidden from their eye what was all the time so near, and yet so entirely unseen.

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

Geneva was far too important a post for the Romanists to let it slip without another great effort. This was resolved upon. In the middle of May the priests of the surrounding districts organised a great procession of pilgrims, who knew how to handle other things than their rosaries. The pious troop appeared at the gates of Geneva, duly furnished with banners, crosses, and relics; but the citizens, recollecting the story of the Trojan horse, and fearing that if the pilgrims entered their devotions might take a militant turn, and the war-cry be raised for the psalm, refused to admit the devout host. They could pray outside the walls. So this danger passed away.

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

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The night came; the peasants of the surrounding country, having armed themselves, began to move on Geneva, some by land, others by water. The Bailiff of Chablais and the Baron de Rollo alone led 8,000 men. The Papists in the city had armed secretly, and were assembling in one another's houses. ³ The citizens, all save the accomplices of the bishop, were ignorant of the plot, and many of them had already gone to rest as usual. All was progressing as the invaders wished. But that Providence which had been ploughing this field for more than twenty years, was not to abandon it to the enemy at the very moment when the seed which had been sown in it was shooting up, and the harvest at hand. A friend of the Gospel, Jacques Maubuisson, ⁴ from Dauphine, solicited an interview with the premier syndic at an early hour of the evening. He was admitted, and startled the magistrate by telling him that the city was surrounded with armed men. Instantly the citizens were aroused and got under arms.

The host outside the walls were meanwhile straining their eyes to catch through the darkness the first gleam of the torches, which were to be waved on the tops of the houses of their friends as the signal to begin the assault. All suddenly a brilliant light shone forth from the summit of the steeple of St. Peter's. That was the place, the invaders knew, where the city-watch were usually stationed. It was plain the plot had been discovered. "We are betrayed! we are betrayed!" they exclaimed; "we shall never enter Geneva!" ⁵ Fiercer and yet fiercer, as it seemed to the eyes of the Savoyards, glared that beacon-light. Panic seized their ranks, and when the morning broke the citizens of Geneva beheld from their steeples and ramparts the armies of the invaders in full retreat. By the time the sun rose the last foe had disappeared. As a dream, short but terrible, so did the events of that night appear to the Genevans. ⁶

The miscarriage of the plot was followed by an exodus of Romanists from the city. Many of the Mamelukes, as they were termed,

³Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 325, 326.

⁴Ibid., tom. 3, p. 326.

⁵Ibid., tom. 3, p. 327.

⁶Froment, Gestes de Geneve, p. 125. Roset, Chron., bk. 3, chap. 27. Registres du Conseil, July 31st, 1534, and January 25th, 1537. D'Aubigne, Hist. Reform., vol. 4, pp. 400-402.

fled, and thus the priests were left without flocks, the churches without worshippers, and the images without votaries. The Protestants were more than ever masters of the situation. In the final struggles of the Papacy in Geneva we behold what has since been repeated in our own day, on the wider arena of Europe, that every attempt to raise it up has only helped to cast it down.

Yet another effort - that is, as things were going with the Papacy, another plunge, the last and the deepest. The duke and the bishop were but the more enraged by their repeated discomfitures. They resolved that they would extinguish Lutheranism, or sweep the little town in which it had entrenched itself from off its rock, and make it, like old Tyre, a place for the spreading of nets by the shores of its lake. Considering the resources which the duke had at his command, neither he nor any one else could see how he should not be able to do his pleasure upon the audacious little city. Geneva had an enemy, it may be said, in every man outside her walls. The castles that hemmed her in on all sides were filled with armed men ready to march at the first summons. Before beginning the war which was to make the rebellious town put its haughty neck under his feet, Duke Charles III. sent his ultimatum to the citizens. They must send away their preachers - Farel, Viret, and Froment; they must take back their bishop, and return within the bosom of their holy mother the Church. On these terms the duke, good and kind man, would give them his forgiveness.⁷ The Genevans made answer that sooner than do this they would bury themselves beneath the ruins of their city. Even their good ally, Bern, despairing of their success, or else gained by the flatteries of the duke, counselled the Genevans to submit. A Diet of the Swiss cantons met at Lucerne in January, 1535, to determine on the matter. They had no other advice to give Geneva than submission.⁸ This was unspeakably disappointing, but worse was behind. The great Emperor Charles V. came forward and announced that he cast his sword into the scale of the duke. The cause of Geneva, already desperate, was now hopeless apparently. Could this little town of only 12,000 inhabitants resist the Empire? Could the Genevans stand alone against the world? All help has

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⁷Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 337.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 343.

failed them on earth; nevertheless, their resolution is as inflexible as ever. Geneva shall be a sanctuary of the Protestant faith and a citadel of liberty, or its sons will “set fire to its four corners,” and make it their own funeral pile.

It was now that a terrible resolution was taken by its heroic citizens. Outside the walls of Geneva were four large suburbs, with a population of 6,200 souls.⁹ In fact, there were two cities, one within and another without the walls, and the latter, it was obvious, would afford cover to the advancing foe, and prevent the free play upon him of the cannon on the ramparts. On the 23rd of August, 1534, the Council of Two Hundred resolved to demolish these suburbs, and clear the ground all round the city.¹⁰ This was to sacrifice one half of Geneva to save the other half. The stern decree was carried out, although not without many heavy sighs and bitter tears. Rich and poor pulled down their homes with their own hands; although many of the latter knew not where they were to lay their heads at night. Villa and hovel shared an equal fate; convents and temples of a venerable antiquity were razed to the ground. The monastery of St. Victor, of which Bonivard was prior, and which was the oldest edifice in Geneva, having been founded in the beginning of the sixth century, fell by the same sentence, and mingled its ruins with those of fabrics that were but of yesterday. The pleasant gardens, the sparkling fountains, and the overshadowing trees which had graced so many of the dwellings were all swept away. By the middle of January, 1535, the work of demolition was finished; and now a silent and devastated zone begirt the city.¹¹

It was not enough to pull down, the citizens had to build up. The stones of the overturned edifices were taken to repair and strengthen the fortifications. Amid the drifts of winter the men might be seen building on the walls, and the women carrying earth and stones. The bells of the demolished churches and convents were melted and cast into cannon. Though the idols were pulled down, the Roman

⁹Ibid., tom. 3, p. 354.

¹⁰Registres du Conseil, August 23rd, 1534.

¹¹Misson in 1688 found Geneva still without suburbs. The four suburbs demolished were Rive, St. Victor, St. Leger, and Corraterie. (Misson, vol. 2, part 2, p. 410. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 379.)

Catholics were protected in their worship.¹² The Genevans would not stain the glory of the prodigious sacrifices they were making for their own religious liberty by invading that of others. A little band of armed Protestants kept watch at the church door while the few canons who remained in the city sang their matins on Christmas morning.¹³ All was now ready, and the heroic inhabitants, their eyes lifted up to heaven, awaited the hour when the foe should gather round them on all sides, and deliver his assault. Let him strike. Their resolution was immovable. Geneva must be the temple that would enshrine their religion and their liberties, or the mausoleum that would contain their ashes.

¹²“Les Catholiques avaient une pleine liberte de pratiquer publiquement leurs ceremonies, et de faire generalement par toute la ville tous les autres exercices de leur religion.” (Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 342.)

¹³Registres du Conseil, January 24th, 1534.

Chapter 8: Rome Falls and Geneva Rises

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

Picture: The Sham Pilgrims at the Gate of Geneva

Picture: The Genevans Destroying the Suburbs of their City

[269] Much, we may say everything, depended on the battle now raging around the little town on the shores of the Lemman Lake. Unless Geneva were won to Protestantism, the victories already gained by the Reformation would be but of small account; many of them would melt away and be lost. In Germany the spiritual principle of the Reformation was becoming overshadowed by the political. The princes, with their swords, were putting themselves in the van; and the Reformers, with the Bible, were falling into the rear. This was to reverse the right order. It was clear that the German Reformation had passed its prime. It was necessary to seek a new foothold for Protestantism - some spot where the SPIRITUAL, planted anew, might unfold itself, segregated from the political; and where, unfettered and unaided by the temporal power, it would, in virtue of its own heavenly might, continue to wax in stature and spreading wide its boughs cover the nations with its grateful shadow, and solace them with its precious fruits. It was not necessary to select, as its seat, a great empire or a renowned capital; a little town such as this at the foot of the Alps would serve the purpose better than a more conspicuous and more expansive stage. The territory selected must be separated from the other countries of Christendom, Popish and Reformed, and yet it must be near to them; and not near only, but in the midst of them. Moreover, it must in some way be

protected from external violence while working out its great problem. If around it there rises no massy bulwark frowning defiance on the foe; if there musters at its gates no powerful army to do battle with the invader; if the great mountains are too remote to serve as walls and ramparts to it; if earthly defense it has none, all the more evident will it be that it owes its safety to an Invisible Arm that is stretched out in its behalf, and that it is environed by ramparts which the foe is unable to see, and equally unable to scale.

Here will stand the true "Threshold of the Apostles." The doors of this shrine will open to the holy only; it will be visited by enlightened and believing hearts from every land; and its highways will be trodden and its portals thronged, not by dissolute and superstitious crowds, but by the confessors and exiles of Christ. Here Christianity, laid in its grave at Rome a thousand years before, with crowned Pontiffs and lordly hierarchs keeping watch around its corpse, shall have its resurrection. Rising from the tomb to die no more, it will attest, by the order, the liberty, the intelligence, and the virtue with which it will glorify its seat, that it has lost none of its power during its long entombment, but that, on the contrary, it returns with invigorated force for the execution of its glorious mission, which is that of making all things new. Will such a spot be found in Geneva? Shall the bishop and the duke be chased from it, that it may be given to the men in whom are found the embodiment of the highest ideal, intellectual and spiritual, of Protestantism? This is the question which is to receive its answer from the conflict now waging on the shores of the Lemman. The issue of that conflict is at hand.

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

While its allies are drawing off from the little town on the one side, its enemies are approaching it on the other. Every day they

are redoubling their efforts to take it, and it would seem as if, left to fight its great battle alone, its fall were inevitable.

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

The same cause which had repelled the Popish Friburg from Geneva, as narrated above, will draw the Protestant Bern closer to its side; so one would think. Yet no! the threatening attitude of the Popish powers, and its own complications, made Bern shy of giving open aid to Geneva in its fight for liberty and the Reformed faith.

[270] ² Some Bernese ambassadors, won by the gracious manners of the duke, and forgetting in the lighter matters of courtesy the greater matters of liberty, went to Geneva, and counselled the citizens to send away their preachers, and take back their bishop. Astounded at such a proposal from the men of Bern, the Council of Geneva replied, “You ask us to abandon our liberties and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” At its sorest need the little State was forsaken of every earthly aid. But this only serves to show how rapidly the tide of devotion to the Reformed faith was rising within its walls. It was its religion that saved it. But for it, Geneva never would have won its liberty.

¹Ruchat, tom 3, p. 330. Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Geneve*, vol. I., p. 115.

²Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 348.

“We are resolved,” said the Council to the Bernese ambassadors, “to sacrifice our property, our honors, our very children, and our own lives for the Word of God. Tell the duke we will rather with our own hands set fire to the four corners of our city, than part with the Gospel.”

Meanwhile, the number of the Reformed within the city was daily increasing, partly from conversions from Popery, and partly from the numerous disciples chased from France by the storms of persecution, and now daily arriving at the gates of Geneva. On the other hand, those Romanists who disliked or feared to dwell in a place cursed by the Church, and hourly sinking deeper in the gulf of heresy, quitted Geneva in considerable numbers. Thus the proportion between the two parties was growing every day more unequal, and the quiet of the city more assured. The bishop, moreover, by way of visiting the Protestants with a special mark of his displeasure, did them a signal favor. He removed his episcopal council and his judicial court from Geneva to Gex, in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy. ³ Thereupon the Council of Geneva met and resolved, “That, as the bishop had abandoned the city to unite himself with its most deadly foe, and had undertaken divers enterprises against it, even to the length of levying war, they could no longer regard him as the pastor of the people.” They declared the see vacant. ⁴ Before taking this step, however, they invited the canons to elect a new bishop; this the canons declined to do. They next lodged an appeal at Rome; but the Pope gave them no answer. This observance of forms greatly strengthened the legal position of the Council. The Vatican would not interfere, the canons would neither elect a new bishop nor bring back the old one; the city was without a ruler, and the Council was by no means sorry to step into the vacant office. To the last the Council followed rather than preceded the people and the preachers. The political situation, so full of dangers, made it imperative that they should weigh every step, and especially that they should be satisfied that the Reformation had established itself in the hearts of the people before establishing it by edict.

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³Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 335.

⁴Ibid., tom. 3, pp. 336-337.

If the number of malcontents who were leaving the city lessened the difficulties within the walls, it greatly increased the dangers without. The Castle of Peney, on the precipitous banks of the Rhone, about two leagues from Geneva, belonged to the bishop. It was a strong and roomy place, and now it swarmed with men breathing vengeance against the city they had left. From this nest of brigands there issued every day ferocious bands, who laid waste the country around Geneva, cut off the supplies coming to its markets, waylaid its citizens, and, carrying them to their stronghold, tortured them in its dungeons, and then beheaded or otherwise dispatched them. A former Knight of Malta, Peter Goudet, a Frenchman, who, having embraced Protestantism, had found refuge in Geneva, was entrapped by these bandits, carried to their den, and, after a mock trial, burned alive.⁵ Nor were these ruffians alone in their barbarities and cruelties. The gentry of Savoy and of the Pays de Vaud, following their worshipful example, armed their retainers, and, scouring the country around, showed that they equalled in zeal, by equalling in atrocity, the free-booters of Peney.⁶

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

⁵Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 352.

⁶Ibid., tom. 3, pp. 338, 339, 341,

him to the end of his days. The wretched woman confessed the crime, but accused a canon and a priest of having instigated her to it. The two ecclesiastics were permitted to clear themselves by oath, but the woman was condemned to death on the 14th April, and executed.⁷

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

Accordingly Bernard offered to maintain the following propositions against all who chose publicly to impugn them:⁸ -

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

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

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

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

⁷Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 346, 347. Roset Chron., bk. 3, chap. 31. Gaberel, Hist. Eglise de Geneve, vol. 1, pp. 125-128; Geneve, 1853.

⁸Gaberel, vol. 1, p. 156,

5th. That Jesus Christ is the one and only Mediator between God and ⁹ man.

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

The Town Council made the arrangements for the discussion. They had the theses printed and published. Copies of them were affixed to the doors of the churches of the city, and of all the churches of the neighborhood. They were, moreover, posted up in the towns of Savoy that were under the jurisdiction of Bern, and messengers were dispatched to placard them in the distant cities of Grenoble and Lyons. Men of learning, generally, whether lay or clerical, were invited; all were assured of safety of person and liberty of speech; eight members of Council were appointed to preside; and four secretaries were to take down all that was said on both sides.

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

“As fair Aurora, in her purple pall,
Out of the east the dawning day doth call,
So forth she comes: her brightness broad doth blaze.
The heaps of people, thronging in the hall,
Do ride each other, upon her to gaze:
Her glorious glittering light doth all men’s eyes amaze.” ¹⁰

⁹Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 357, 358. Roset, Chron., 3. 35.

¹⁰Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, bk. 1, cant. 4, st. 16.

In the end, both Caroli and Chapuis acknowledged themselves vanquished, and declared, in presence of the vast assembly, their conversion to the Reformed faith. ¹¹

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

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It is a doctrine of the Church of Rome that infants dying unbaptised are consigned to limbo, a sort of faubourg of hell. To redeem such wretched babes from so dreary an abode, what would not their unhappy mothers be willing to give! But was such a thing possible? Outside the gates stood the Church of Our Lady of Grace. To this Virgin was ascribed, among other marvellous prerogatives, the power of resuscitating infants for so long as would suffice for their receiving the Sacrament. The corpse was brought to the statue of Our Lady, and being laid at its feet, its head would be seen to move, or a feather placed on its mouth would be blown away. On this the monks, to whom an offering had previously been made, would shout out, "A miracle! a miracle!" and ring the great bell of the church, and salt, chrism, and holy water would instantly be brought and the child baptised. The Council ordered an investigation into the miracle, and the verdict returned was the plain one, that it was "a trick of the priests." ¹² The syndics forbade all such miracles in time to come.

There came yet another edifying discovery. It was an immemorial belief at Geneva that the bodies of St. Nazaire, St. Celsus, and

¹¹Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 359, 360. Spanheim, p. 79. Roset, Chron., bk. 3, chap. 35. Gaberel, vol. 1, pp. 156-158.

¹²Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 355, 356, Roset, Chron., 3, 35.

St. Pantaleon reposed beneath the high altar of St. Gervais. Indeed, the fact could not be doubted, for had not the worthy saints been heard singing and talking together on Christmas Eve and similar occasions? But in an evil hour for this belief the altar was overturned, and the too curious eyes of Protestants peered beneath its foundation-stones. They found not Nazaire and his two venerable companions; they saw, instead, a curious mechanism in the rock, not unlike the pipes of an organ, with several vessels of water, so placed that their contents could be forced through the narrow tubes, making a hollow sound, not unlike the voices of men singing or conversing in the bowels of the earth. The Genevans were hardly in circumstances to make merry; nevertheless, the idea that the saints should amuse themselves below ground by playing upon musical glasses seemed so very odd, that it raised a laugh among the citizens, in which, however, the monks did not join. ¹³

This little town on the shores of the Lemman had the distinction of possessing the brain of St. Peter, which lay usually upon the high altar. It was examined and pronounced to be a piece of pumice-stone. Again the monks looked grave, while smiles mantled every face around them. The spiritual treasury of the little town was further enriched with the arm of St. Anthony. The living arm had done valorous deeds, but the dead arm seemed to possess even greater power; but, alas! for the relic and for those who had kissed and worshipped it, and especially those who had profited so largely by the homage paid it, it was found, when taken from its shrine, to be not a human arm at all, but part of a stag. Again there were curling lips and mocking eyes. ¹⁴ Nor did this exhaust the list of discoveries.

Curious little creatures, with livid points of fire glowing on their bodies, would be seen moving about, at “dewy eve,” in the churchyards or in the cathedral aisles. What could they be? These, said the priests, are souls from purgatory. They have been permitted to revisit “the pale glimpses of the moon” to excite in their behalf the compassion of the living. Hasten with your alms, that your mothers, fathers, husbands may not have to return to the torments from which they have just made their escape. The appearance of

¹³Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 375, 376. Roset, Chron., bk. 3, chap. 50. Spanheim, pp. 25, 26.

¹⁴Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 375. - “Cervi veretrum, pro Antonii brachio repertum est. O sacrum non ridicuhm modo, sed detestabile et vere pudendum!” (Spanheim, pp. 24, 25.)

these mysterious creatures was the unfailing signal of another golden shower which was about to descend on the priests. But, said the Genevans, before bestowing more masses, let us look a little more closely at these visitors. We never saw anything that more nearly resembled crabs with candles attached to them than these souls from purgatory. Ah, yes! the purgatory from which they have come, we shrewdly suspect, is not the blazing furnace below the earth, but the cool lake beside the city; we shall restore them to their former abode, said they, casting them into the water. There came no more souls with flambeaux to solicit the charity of the Genevans.¹⁵

¹⁵Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 378, 379. Gabere1, 1. 128-131.

Chapter 9: Establishment of Protestantism in Geneva

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

Picture: View of Friburg Picture: Interior of the Cathedral of Geneva

There came discoveries of another kind to crown with confusion the falling system. In the Convent of the Cordeliers de la Rive a tablet was discovered on which St., Francis of Assisi, the patriarch of the order, was represented under the figure of a great vine, with numerous boughs running out from it in the form of Cordeliers, and having underneath the inscription, “[John 15:1](#): I am the vine, ye are the branches.”¹ This showed a faculty for exegesis of a very extraordinary kind. The schoolmen might have relished it as ingenious: the Genevans, who had begun to love the simplicity of the Scriptures, condemned it as blasphemous.

It was not a little curious that at that same hour, when the Papacy was tottering to its fall in Geneva, another tablet, also highly suggestive, should have been drawn from the darkness in the Convent of the Dominicans. It represented a monster, with seven heads and ten horns, in the act of being delivered of a horrible brood of Popes, cardinals, and monks, which were being dropped into a huge cauldron, round which flames circled and devils danced. Underneath was a

¹Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 378.

prophecy in Latin rhyme, to the effect that the hour was approaching when God would destroy the power and glory of Rome and cause its name to perish. The picture was in all likelihood made by Jacques Jaqueri, of the city of Turin, in the year 1401. He is supposed to have been a Waldensian, who probably had had to do penance in the Inquisition for this exercise of his art, and hence the fact that the picture was found in one of the convents of the Dominicans, the order to which, as is well known, this department of the Church's work had been assigne. ²

The hour was now fully come. The enormities of the Genevan priesthood had first awakened indignation against the Papacy; subsequent revelations of the cheats to which the system had stooped to uphold itself, had intensified that indignation; but it was the preaching of Farel and his companions that planted the Reformation - that is, converted the movement from one of destruction to one of restitution. On the 10th of August, 1535, the Council of Two Hundred assembled to take into consideration the matter of religion. ³ Farel, Viret, and many of the citizens appeared before it. With characteristic eloquence Farel addressed the Council, urging it no longer to delay, but to proclaim as the religion of Geneva that same system of truth which so great a majority of the Genevans already professed. He offered, for himself and his colleagues, to submit to death, provided the priests could show that in the public disputation, or in their sermons, he and his brethren had advanced anything contrary to the Word of God. ³

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

²Ibid., tom. 3, p. 378.

³Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 371. Gaberel, Hist. Eglise de Geneve, vol. 1, p. 161.

³Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 371. Gaberel, Hist. Eglise de Geneve, vol. 1, p. 161.

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Two days after, the Council summoned before them the Cordeliers, the Dominicans, and the Augustines, and having read to them a summary of the disputation held in the city a few days previously, they asked them what they had to say to it. They answered, one after the other, that they had nothing to object. The Council next offered that, provided they made good the truth of their dogmas and the lawfulness of their worship from the Word of God, their Church should be re-established in its former glory. They declined the challenge, and submitted themselves to the Council, praying to be permitted to live as their ancestors in times past had lived.⁴

The same day after dinner three syndics and two councillors, by appointment of the Senate, waited on the grand-vicar of the bishop, the canons, and the parochial cures. Briefly recounting the religious conflicts which had disturbed the city these ten years past, they made the same offer to them which they had made to the monks in the morning. But the prospect of rendering Romanism once more supreme in Geneva, could not tempt them to do battle for their faith; they had no desire, they said, to hear any more sermons from Farel; nor, indeed, could they dispute on religious matters without leave from their bishop. They craved only to be permitted to exercise their religion without restraint. The deputation announced to them the order of Council that they should cease to say mass, and then retired.⁵

From that day mass ceased to be said in the churches and convents, and on the 27th of August a general edict was issued, enjoining public worship to be conducted according to the rules of the Gospel, and prohibiting all “acts of Popish idolatry.” From that day forward Farel and his two colleagues preached, dispensed the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, celebrated marriages, and performed all other religious acts freely.⁶ The monastery of La Rive was converted into a public school, and the convent of St. Claire into an hospital. The goods of the Church, and of the religious houses, due provision having been made for existing incumbents, were applied

⁴Ruchat tom. 3, pp. 372, 373.

⁵Ibid., tom. 3, p. 375.

⁶Ibid., tom. 3, pp. 375, 376.

to the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, of schools, and of the ⁷ poor.

The priests, monks, and nuns were very courteously treated. It was entirely in their own choice to remain within the city or to leave it. The nuns of St. Claire, whom Sister Jussie's narrative has made famous, chose to withdraw to Anneci. They had been haunted by the terrible idea of being compelled to marry, and thought it better to "flee temptation" than remain in Geneva. Some of the sisters had not been outside the walls of their convent for thirty years. To them, every sight and sound of the country was strange; and it is impossible to withhold a smile in perusing Ruchat's account of their journey, and thinking of the terrors into which the good sisters were thrown at the sight of the sheep and oxen in the fields, which they mistook for lions and bears. ⁸

From the 27th of August, 1535, the Popish faith ceased to be the religion of Geneva. But the victory, though great, did not terminate the war, or justify the Genevans in thinking that they had placed their liberties on an impregnable basis. On the contrary, never, apparently, had they been in greater danger than now, for the step of proclaiming themselves Protestant had filled up their cup in the eyes of their enemies. The duke, roused to fury by this daring affront on the part of a city that had scarcely a soldier to defend it, and that was without an ally in Europe, resolved to make this handful of burghers repent of their madness. He would concentrate all his power in one terrible blow, and crush a heresy that was so full of insolence and rebellion in the ruins of the city in which it had found a seat. He blockaded Geneva on the land side by his army, and on the side of the lake by his galleys. The gates that would not open to his soldiers must open to famine, and he would see how long these haughty burghers would hold fast their heresy and rebellion when they had not bread to eat. And, in sooth, the prospects of the little city seemed desperate. The blockade was so strict that it was hardly possible to bring in any provisions, and no one could go or come but at the risk of being waylaid and killed. The bare and blackened zone outside

⁷So ran the decree. Calvin had afterwards to complain of the misappropriation of these funds to private uses.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 381, 382, Roset, Hist. de Geneve, tom. 1, pp. 371, 372. Roset, Chron., bk. 3, chap. 37.

the city walls, so recently a rich girdle of stately villa and flourishing garden, was but too exact an emblem of its political nakedness, now entirely without allies. Even Bern, in this, the hour of Geneva's sorest need, stood afar off. Every day the stock of provisions in the beleaguered city was growing less. The citizens could count the hours when gaunt famine would sit at every board, and one by one they would drop and die. Well, so be it! They would leave the duke to vanquish Geneva when, from a city of patriots, it had become a city of corpses. This was the illustrious triumph they would prepare for him. Their resolve was as unalterable as ever. Be it a nation or be it an individual, every truly great and noble career must have its commencement in an act of self-sacrifice. It was out of this dark night that the glorious day of Geneva sprang.

[276] The Genevans found a messenger expert enough to escape detection and carry tidings to Bern. The powerful Bern, at ease as regarded its own safety, listened in philosophic calmness to the tale of Geneva's perils,⁹ but after some days it thought right to interfere so far in behalf of its former companion in the battles of liberty and religion as to open negotiations with the duke. The duke was willing to receive any number of protocols, provided only the Bernese did not send soldiers. While their Lordships of Bern were negotiating, famine and the duke were steadily advancing upon the doomed city. But now it happened that the Bernese were themselves touched, and their eyes opened somewhat roughly to the duke's treachery and the folly of longer indulging in the pastime of negotiation. The Lord of Savoy had taken the Chatelain of Muss, a titled freebooter, into his service. The Chatelain, with his band of desperadoes, made an irruption into the districts of Orbe, Grandson, and Echelous, which were the common property of Bern and Friburg, and spoiled them in the duke's name. Bern hesitated no longer. She declared war against the Duke of Savoy, thinking it better to fight him at Geneva than wait till he had come nearer to her own gates.¹⁰

Having at length resolved to act, Bern, it must be confessed, did so with vigor. On the 13th of January, 1536, the Council came to the resolution of declaring war. The following day they sent notice of

⁹Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 6.

¹⁰Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 7.

their determination to the Swiss cantons, praying them to unite their arms with theirs in what, beyond question, was the common cause of the Confederacy, the repulsion of a foreign tyranny. On the 16th they issued their proclamation of war; on the 22nd their army of 6,000 began their march. They gave its command to Jean Franqois Naeguli, who had served with honour in the wars in Italy. On the 2nd of February the Bernese army arrived at the gates of Geneva.¹¹ The joy their appearance caused and the welcome accorded them may be easily imagined.

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

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The Savoyard army had resolved to attempt scaling the walls, the same night, at three points. The assault was made between nine and ten. One party advanced on the side of St. Gervais, where the city was defended only by a palisade and ditch; the others made their attempt on that of the Rive and St. Victor. The latter, having crossed the ditch, were now at the foot of the wall with their ladders, but the Genevans, appearing on the top, courageously repelled them, and forced them to retire. On the 16th of January came the good news, by two heralds, that Bern had declared war in their behalf, this re-activated the Genevans; though weakened by famine they made four sorties on the besiegers. In one of these, 300 Genevans engaged double that number of Savoyards. The duke's soldiers were beaten. First the duke's cavalry galloped off the field, then the infantry lost courage and fled. Of the Savoyards 120 were slain and four taken prisoners. The Genevans did not lose a man; one of their number only was hurt by the falling of his horse, which was killed under him.¹²

This was only the beginning of disasters to the duke's army. A few days thereafter, the Bernese warriors, who had continued

¹¹Ibid., tom. 4, pp. 9-24.

¹²Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 15.

[278] their march, despite that the five Popish Cantons had by deputy commanded them to stop, appeared before Geneva. They rested not more than a single day, when they set out in search of the enemy. The Savoyard army was already in full retreat upon Chambéry. The Bernese pushed on, but the foe fled faster than they could pursue. And now came tidings that convinced the men of Bern that the farther prosecution of the expedition was needless. Enemies had started up on every side of the duke, and a whole Iliad of woes suddenly overtook him. Among others, the King of France chose this moment to declare war against him. Francis I. had many grudges to satisfy, but what mainly moved him at this time against the duke was his desire to have a road to Milan and Italy. Accordingly, he moved his army into Savoy, wrested from the duke Chambéry, the cradle of his house, chased him across the Alps, and, not permitting him to rest even at Turin, took possession of his capital. Thinking to seize the little territory of Geneva, the duke had lost his kingdoms of Savoy and Piedmont. He retired to Vercelli, where, after seventeen years of humiliation and exile, he died.¹³ How many tragedies are wrapped up in the great tragedy of the sixteenth century!

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

This great labor was undertaken jointly by Farel and by the Council. The temporal and spiritual powers, yoked together, drew lovingly the car of the Reform, and both having one aim - the highest

¹³Ruchat, tom. 4, pp. 24-33.

well-being of the people- neither raised those questions of jurisdiction, or felt those rivalries and jealousies, which subsequent times so plentifully produced. There is a time to set landmarks, and there is a time to remove them.

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

Not only was the standard of Protestantism displayed in the August preceding again raised aloft, but the moral and social regulations which had accompanied it, in order to render it a life as well as a creed, were brought into the foreground. There never was a class of men who showed themselves more anxious to join a moral with a doctrinal Reformation than the Reformers of the sixteenth century. The separation which at times has been seen between the two is the error of a later age. Re-entering this path, the first labor of the Council and Farel was to establish a perfect concord and unity among the citizens. Of those even who were with the Reform, and had fought side by side against the duke, there were two parties - the zealous and the lukewarm. Hates and mutual reproaches divided them. On the 6th of February, 1536, the Council-General - that is, the whole body of the citizens - assembled, and passed an edict, promising by oath to forget all past injuries, to cease from mutual recriminations,

to live henceforward in good brotherhood, and submit themselves to the Syndics and Council. ¹⁴

[279] Next came the matter of public worship, The number, place, and time of the sermons were fixed. Four ministers and two deacons were selected to preach on the appointed days. Moderate stipends were assigned them from the ecclesiastical property. The Sunday was to be religiously observed, and all the shops strictly closed. On that day, besides the other services, there was to be sermon at four in the morning, for the convenience of servants. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be dispensed four times in the year. Baptisms were to take place only in the church at the hours of public worship. Marriage might be celebrated any day, but the ceremony must be in public, and after three several notifications of it. ¹⁵

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

The education of the youth of the State was an object of special care to the magistrates, who desired that they should be early grounded in the principles of virtue and piety, as well as in a knowledge of the classical tongues, and the belles lettres. For this end they erected a school or academy, with competent professors, to whom they gave suitable salaries. There was a school in Geneva in Popish times, but it was so badly managed that it accomplished nothing for the interests of education. The Council-General, by a decree

¹⁴MS. Chouet, p. 40. Roset, bk. 3, chap. 62. Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 108.

¹⁵MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. 4, p. 109.

of May 21st, 1536, established a new seminary in the convent of the Cordeliers on the Rive, and appointed as headmaster Antony Saunier, the countryman and friend of Farel. The latter sought, in divers places, for learned men willing to be teachers in this school.
¹⁶

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

Soon after this Farel composed, in conjunction with Calvin, who by this time had joined him, a brief and simple Confession of Faith, in twenty-one articles, ¹⁷ which was sworn to by all the citizens of the State, who appeared before the Council in relays of tens, and had the oath administered to them. This was in the November following.
¹⁸

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

¹⁶Roset, bk. 3, chap. 68. MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. 3, pp. 110, 111.

¹⁷A summary of this Confession will be found in the following chapter.

¹⁸MS. Chouet, p. 41. Ruchat, tom. 3, p. 111. A copy of this first Helvetic Confession from the original document, communicated to M. Ruchat by M. Jacob Bordier, Pastor of the Church of Geneva, and Librarian, is to be found in Ruchat's History, tom. 4, pp. 111-122.

of the State, as if to intimate that the light they looked for was now come. ¹⁹

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

Quum Anno M. D. Xxxv. Profligata Romani Antichristi Tyrannide, Abrogatisque Ejus Superstitionibus Sacrosancta Christi Religio Hic In Suam Puritatem Ecclesia In Meliorem Ordinem Singularem Dei Beneficio Reposita; Et Simul Pulsis Fugatisque Hostibus, Urbs Ipsa In Suam Libertatem Non Sine Insigni Miraculo Restituta Fuerit: Senatus Populusque Genevensis Monumentum Hoc Perpetue Memoriae Fieri, Atque Hoc Loco Erigi Curavit: Quo Suam Erga Deum Gritudinem Ad Posterum Testatam Faceret. ²⁰

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

But, in truth, when the Genevans placed their memorial-stone in the front of their Senate-house, they did not know half the worth of the victory

they had won. No man, at that day, could even guess at the many brilliant triumphs which lay folded up in this one triumph. It

¹⁹Ruchat, 3, 591, 592. Misson, Travel, 11, 417.

²⁰“When in the year 1535 the tyranny of the Roman Antichrist had been overthrown and his superstitions abolished, the most holy religion of Christ in its purity, and the Church in its good order, were, by the singular mercy of God, here re-established. And at the same time its enemies having been beaten and put to flight, the city itself, not without the most manifest Divine interposition, was restored to its liberty. The Senate and People of Geneva decreed that this monument, in eternal memory of the event, should be prepared and set up in this place. By this they desire to testify their gratitude to God to all posterity.” - Michael Roset says that a similar tablet was placed above the gate of the Corratierie; and the historical calendar, which is placed before the greater part of the old edition of the French Psalms, translated into verse by Marot and Beza, gives the date of the edict of the Reformation as the 27th of August, 1535.

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

Chapter 10: Calvin Enters Geneva -its Civil and Ecclesiastical Constitution

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

Picture: The Genevans Swearing their Renunciation of Romanism

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

[281] When, nearly a year ago, we parted with Calvin, he was on his way across the Alps to visit Renee, the daughter of Louis XII. of France, and wife of Hercules d’Este, Duke of Ferrara. “He entered Italy,” as he himself said, “only to leave it,”¹ though not till he had confirmed the illustrious princess, at whose court he sojourned, in her attachment to the Protestant faith, in which, despite the many and peculiar trials to which her constancy exposed her, she steadfastly continued to her life’s end. His eldest brother dying, Calvin recrossed

¹Beza, *Vita Calvinii*; Geneva, 1575.

the mountains, on a hasty journey to his birthplace, most probably to arrange the family affairs,² and leave Noyon for ever. Where shall he next go? The remembrance of the studious days he had passed at Basle returned to him with irresistibly attractive force, and now, accompanied by his brother Antoine, and his sister Maria,³ he was on his way to his former retreat; but the direct road through Lorraine was blocked up by the armies of Charles V., and this compelled him to make a detour by Switzerland, which brought him to the gates of Geneva.

With startled but thankful surprise Farel received the news that the author of the Christian Institutes was in the city. God, he thought, had sent, at a critical moment, the man of all others whom he most wished to associate with himself in the work of reforming Geneva.

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

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

²Ruchat, 4, 133.

³Beza, Vita Calvinii.

it. Come, he said to the young Reformer, and be my comrade in the campaign.

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

But Farel would not stand aside. Putting on something of the authority of an ancient prophet, he commanded the young traveller to remain and labor in Geneva, and he imprecated upon his studies the curse of God, should he make them the pretext for declining the call now addressed to him.⁴ It was the voice not of Farel, but of God, that now spoke to Calvin; so he felt; and instantly he obeyed. He loved, in after-life, to recall that, "fearful adjuration," which was, he would say, "as if God from on high had stretched out his hand to stop me."⁵

Calvin's journey was now at an end. He had reached the spot where his life's work was to be done. Here, in this grey city, clinging to its narrow rocky site, the calm lake at its feet, and the glories of the distant mountains in its sky, was he for twenty-eight years to toil and wage battle, and endure defeat, but to keep marching on through toil and defeat, to more glorious victory in the end than warrior ever won with his sword, and then he would fall on sleep, and rest by the banks of that river whose "arrowy" stream he had crossed but a few minutes before, he gave his hand to Farel, and in doing so he gave himself to Geneva.

If the destiny of Calvin was from that moment changed; if from a student he became a legislator and leader; if from being a soldier in the ranks he became generalissimo of the armies of Protestantism, not less was the destiny of Geneva from that moment changed. Calvin had already written a book that constituted an epoch in Protestantism, but he was to write it a second time; though not with pen

⁴Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁵*Praefatio ad Psalmos-Opp. Calvini*.

and ink. He would display before all Christendom the Institutes, not as a volume of doctrines, but as a system of realised facts - a State rescued from the charnel-house of corruption, and raised to the glorious heritage of liberty and virtue - glorious in art, in letters, and in riches, because resplendent with every Christian virtue. To write Protestantism upon their banners, to proclaim it in their edicts, to install it as a worship in their Churches, Calvin and all the Reformers held to be but a small affair; what they strove above all things to achieve was to plant it as an operative moral force in the hearts of men, and at the foundations of States.

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Calvin was now at the age of twenty-seven. The magistrates of Geneva welcomed him, but with a cautious reserve, if we may judge from the first mention of his name in the registers of the city, about a fortnight after his arrival, as “that Frenchman!” He was appointed to give lectures on the Scriptures, and to preach.⁶ Beza styles him “doctor or professor of sacred letters,” but as yet no academy existed, and his prelections were delivered in the cathedral. As regards the latter function, that of preacher, it was some time before Calvin would assume it. When at length he appeared in the pulpit as pastor, he spoke with an eloquence so simple and clear, yet so majestic and luminous, that his audiences continued daily to grow. He had already done a winter’s work, but had received scarcely any wages, for we read in the Council Registers, under date February 13th, 1537: “Six gold crowns are given to Cauvin or Calvin, seeing that he has hitherto scarcely received anything.”⁷

It was not long till Calvin’s rare genius for system and organisation began to display itself. Within three months from the commencement of his labours in Geneva, he had, in conjunction with Farel, compiled a brief but comprehensive creed, setting forth the leading doctrines of the Christian faith. To this he added a Catechism,⁸ not that, in question and answer, for children, which we now possess, but one adapted to adults. The Genevans, with uplifted hands, had embraced Protestantism: Calvin would show them what that Protestantism was which they had professed, and what were the moral duties which it demanded of all its adherents. The Genevans

⁶Ruchat, tom. 4, 133. Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁷Bungener, *Calvin: his Life, his Labours, and his Writings*, p. 102; Edin., 1863.

⁸Beza, *Vita Calvini*,

had lifted up their hands: had they bowed their hearts? This was the main question with him. He had no trust in blind obedience. Knowledge must be the corner-stone of the new State, the foundations of which he was now laying.

We can give here only the briefest outline of this Confession of Faith. Placing the Word of God in the foreground, as the one infallible authority, and the one and sole rule, it proceeds, in twenty-one articles, to declare what Scripture teaches, touching God, and the plan of redemption which he has provided for man fallen and helpless. It proclaims Christ the one channel of all blessing; the Spirit, the one Author of all good works; faith, “the entrance to all these riches;” and then goes on to speak of the apparatus set up for offering redemption to men, the Sacraments and ministers. Then follow articles on the Church, “comprehending the whole body of true believers;” on excommunication, or the exclusion from the Church of all manifestly unholy and vicious persons, till they shall have repented; and, in fine, on magistracy, “an ordinance of God,” and to be respected “in all ordinances that do not contravene the commandments of God.” On the 10th of November, 1536, this Confession was received and approved of by the Council of Two Hundred.⁹

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

⁹Ruchat, tom. 4, pp. 111-122. Bungener, Calvin, pp. 104-108.

this power the Church in Geneva would have been a city without walls and bulwarks; it would have been dissolved the moment it was formed.

It is necessary at this stage to refer to the Constitution - civil and ecclesiastical - of Geneva, in order that the course of affairs may be clearly intelligible. The fundamental principle of the State was, that the people are the source of power. In accordance therewith came, first, a Convention of all the citizens, termed the Council-General.

This was the supreme authority. To obviate the confusion and turbulence incident to so large an assembly, a Council of Two Hundred was chosen, termed the Great Council. ¹⁰ Next came the Little, or ordinary Council, consisting of twenty-five members, including the four Syndics of the city.

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This last, the Council of Twenty-five, was the executive, and possessed moreover a large share of the judicial and legislative power. The constitutional machinery we have described in detail was popularly summed up thus - the PEOPLE, the COUNCIL, and SENATE of Geneva.

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

With Protestantism there arrived a new power in Geneva - the religious, namely - and we complete our picture of the government of the little State when we describe the provision made for the exercise of the ecclesiastical authority. The court or tribunal which took cognisance of Church scandals was the Consistory. The Consistory

¹⁰The Council-General-that is, the People - elected the Council of Two hundred. In 1542 this was changed, and the election given to the Council of Twenty-five. Calvin saw the danger of the step, and conjured the magistrates to allow the Two Hundred to be named at all times by the Council-General. He foretold conflicts in the future, for the people would be sure some time or other to retake the power of which they had been deprived. "It was," says M. Gaberel, in his *History of the Church of Geneva*, "perhaps the only time in which Calvin was not listened to. If the election of Two Hundred had been left to the Council-General, the revolutions of the eighteenth century would never have caused blood to flow on the Genevese territory." (Tom. 1, p. 522.)

was composed of the five ministers of the city and twelve laymen.

¹¹ It met every Thursday, and the highest penalty it had power to inflict was excommunication, by which is meant expulsion from the Church. If this failed to reclaim the offender, the Consistory had the right to report the case to the Council, and require it to proceed therein according to the laws.

In judging of this arrangement time and circumstances are to be taken into account. The course of affairs at Geneva inevitably tended to graft the ecclesiastical upon the civil government, and to some extent to build up the two in one. It was Protestantism that had called Geneva into existence as a free State. Protestantism was its soul, the center and citadel of its liberties, and whatever tended to weaken or overthrow that principle tended equally to the ruin of the republic. Encompassed on all sides by powerful enemies, this one principle was the bond of their union and the shield of their freedom; and this went far to impart, in many cases, a two-fold character to the same action, and to justify the Church in regarding certain acts as sins, and visiting them with her censures, while the State viewed the same acts as crimes, and meted out to them its punishments.

Calvin took the Jewish theocracy as his model when he set to work to frame, or rather to complete, the General Republic. What we see on the banks of the Leman is a theocracy; Jehovah was its head, the Bible was its supreme code, and the government exercised a presiding and paternal guardianship over all interests and causes, civil and spiritual. Geneva, in this respect, was a reproduction of the Old Testament state of society. We of the nineteenth century regard this as a grave error. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that Calvin grasped the essential distinction between things civil and things ecclesiastical, and the necessity of placing the two under distinct jurisdictions or powers. But his theocratic views produced a dimness and confusion in his ideas on that head, and he was more successful in settling the just limits of the ecclesiastical authority, than he was in defining those of the civil jurisdiction. He would not allow a particle of civil power to the Consistory, but he was not equally careful to withhold ecclesiastical power from the Council.

¹¹Two Syndics, four members of the Council of Twenty-five, and six of the Council of Two Hundred. (Ruchat, Tom. 5, p. 158.)

This error arose from his making the Old Testament a model on a point which, we believe, was temporary and local, not permanent and universal. Nevertheless, the Reformer of Geneva stood ahead in this great question of all his predecessors. We may quote here the words of a great statesman, and a countryman of Calvin's, who has done justice to the Reformer on this point. "A principle," says Guizot, "we should rather say a passion, held sway in Calvin's heart, and was his guiding star in the permanent organisation of the Church which he founded, as well as in his personal conduct during his life. That principle is the profound distinction between the civil and the religious community. Distinction, we say, and by no means separation. Calvin, on the contrary, desired alliance between the two communities and the two powers, but each to be independent in its own domain, combining their action, showing mutual respect, and lending mutual support In this principle and this fundamental labor," continues the historian, "there are two new and bold reforms attempted in the very heart of the great Reformation of Europe, and over and above the work of its first promoters." in proof, Guizot goes on to instance England, where the "royal supremacy" was accepted; Switzerland, where the Council of State held the sovereign authority in matters of religion; and Germany, where the magistrate was the chief bishop; and continues: "In this great question as to the relations between Church and State, Calvin desired and did more, than his predecessors in spite of the resistance often showed him by the civil magistrates, in spite of the concessions he was sometimes obliged to make to them, he firmly maintained this principle, and he secured to the Reformed Church of Geneva, in purely religious questions and affairs, the right of self-government, according to the faith and the law as they stand written in the Holy Books." ¹²

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In this statement of facts, Guizot is undoubtedly correct. Only we think that he is mistaken in believing that it was the Church of Rome, and the "independence of its head," which taught the Reformer the "strength and dignity" conferred on the Church by having "an existence distinct from the civil community." Calvin learned the idea from a Diviner source. Nor was he quite so successful in extricating the spiritual from the civil jurisdiction, either in idea or in reality, as

¹²Guizot, *Hist. France*, vol. 3, pp. 236, 237; Lond., 1874.

Guizot appears to think. As regarded the idea, he was embarrassed by the Old Testament theocracy, which he took to be a Divine model for all times; and as regarded the actuality, the opposition which he encountered from the civil authority at Geneva made it impossible for him to realize his idea so fully as he wished to do. But it is only justice to bear in mind that his ideal was far in advance of his age, as Guizot has said.

Chapter 11: Sumptuary Laws - Calvin and Farel Banished

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

Picture: Theodore Beza Picture: Calvin Threatened in the Church of Rive

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

This introduces the subject of the sumptuary laws, which were sketched at this time, though not finished till an after-period. The rules now framed forbade games of chance, oaths and blasphemies, dances, ¹ lascivious songs, farces, and masquerades. The hours of

¹Those who condemn Calvin for having forbidden dances, little dream of what sort these dances were. Ruchat, the historian of the Swiss Reformation (tom. 5, p. 244),

[286] taverners were shortened; every one was to be at home by nine at night, and hotel-keepers were to see that these rules were observed by their guests. To these were added certain regulations with a view of restraining excess in dress and profusion at meals. All were enjoined to attend sermon and the other religious exercises. ²

Even before the time of Calvin, under the Roman Church, most of these practices, and especially dances, had been forbidden under severe penalties. Forty years after his death, under Henry IV. of France, similar edicts were promulgated. ³ The British Government at this day adopts the principle of the Genevan regulations, when it forbids gambling, indecent pictures and plays, and similar immoralities; and if such laws are justifiable now, how much more so in Calvin's time, when there were scarcely any amusements that were innocent!

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

tells us that there was in Lausanne a society of youths who at certain seasons "paraded the streets entirely naked, or in masques, representing the god Bacchus, dancing and singing lewd songs." Of a similar kind were the dances in Geneva. These laws, as we have seen in the previous chapter, were already enacted by the Council. Calvin found them in operation when he entered Geneva.

²Ruchat, tom.4, p. 110.

³Bungener, Calvin, p. 110.

Loud and indignant cries were raised against Calvin for neglecting his office. Appointed to be an expositor of Scripture, who made him, asked his calumniators, a censor of morals and a reprover of the citizens? Religion, in the age gone by, had been too completely dissociated from morality to make the absurdity of this accusation palpable. The Libertines, as the oppositionists began now to be called, demanded the abolition of the new code; they complained especially of the “excommunication.” “What!” said they, “have we put down the Popish confessional only to set up a Protestant one?” and mounting party badges, they wore green flowers in mockery of the other citizens, calling them “brothers in Christ.”⁴ The Government began to be intimidated by these clamours. The majority of the citizens being still on the side of the ministers, the Council ventured on issuing an edict, commanding the Libertines to leave the city. But it had not the courage to enforce its own order; and the Libertines, seeing its weakness, grew every day more insolent. At length the elections in February, 1538, gave a majority in their favor in the Council; three out of the four Syndics were on the side of the Libertines.⁵ This turn of affairs placed the pastors in a position of extreme difficulty. They stood in front of a hostile Council, pushed on from behind by a hostile population. Calvin remained firm. His resolution was taken unalterably to save his principle, come what might to himself. He was determined at all hazards not to give holy things to unholy men; for he saw that with that principle must stand or fall the Reformation in Geneva.

While these intestine convulsions shook the city within, invasion threatened it without. The strifes of the citizens were the signal to their old enemies to renew their attempts to recover Geneva. The inhabitants fortified the walls, cast the superfluous bells into cannon, and placed them upon the ramparts.⁶ Alas! this would avail but little, seeing they were all the while pulling down that which was their true defense. With their morality was bound up their Protestantism, and should it depart, not all their stone walls would prevent their becoming once more the prey of Rome.

⁴Roset, MS. Chron.

⁵Ibid. Ruchat, tom. 5, p. 57.

⁶Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 57, 58.

At this stage the matter was still further embroiled by the interference of Bern. The government of that powerful canton, ambitious of assuming the direction of affairs at Geneva, counselled the Genevese to restore certain ceremonies which had been retained in the Bernese Reformation, but cast off in the Genevan one; among others, holidays, and the use of unleavened bread in the Communion. ⁷ Calvin and Farel demurred to the course recommended.

[287] The moment the sentiments of the pastors became known, a vehement zeal seized the Libertines to have the Lord's Supper dispensed with unleavened bread. The Government decided that it should be as the Libertines desired. With Calvin a much greater question was whether the Communion should be given to these persons at all. As Easter approached, the fury of the party increased. They ran through the streets at night vociferating and yelling. They would stop before the pastors' houses, calling out, "To the Rhone! to the Rhone!" and would then fire off their arquebuses. They got up a masquerade in which they parodied that very ordinance which their scrupulous consciences would not permit them to receive save with unleavened bread. Frightful confusion prevailed in Geneva. This is attested by eye-witnesses, and by those who had the best opportunities of knowing the truth of what they have narrated. "Popery had indeed been forsworn," says Beza, "but many had not cast away with it those numerous and disgraceful disorders which had for a long time flourished in the city, given up as it was for so many years to canons and impure priests." ⁸ "Nothing was to be heard," says Roset, "but informations and quarrels between the former and present lords (the old and new members of Council), some being the ringleaders, and others following in their steps, the whole mingled with reproaches about the booty taken in the war, or the spoils carried off from the churches." ⁹ "I have lived here," says Calvin himself, describing those agitations, "engaged in strange contests. I have been saluted in mockery of an evening before my own door, with fifty or sixty shots of arquebuses. You may imagine how that must asteroid a poor scholar, timid as I am, and as I confess I always was." ¹⁰ It was

⁷Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁸Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

⁹M. Roset, *Chron. de Geneva*, bk. 4, chap. 15.

¹⁰Bonnet, *Lettres Francaises*, tom. 2, p. 575.

amid these shameful scenes that the day arrived which was to show whether the Libertines backed by the Council, or Calvin supported by his own great principle, would give way.

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

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

These two were men of the same spirit, as of the same office, and yet they were unlike, and the Genevans saw the difference. Farel was the man of oratory, Calvin was the man of power. In what attribute or faculty, or combination of faculties, his power lay, they would have had great difficulty in saying. Certainly it was not in his gestures, nor in his airs, nor in the pomp of his rhetoric, for no one could more sedulously eschew these things; but that he did possess power - calm, inflexible, resistless power - they all knew, for they all felt it. Farel's invectives and denunciations were terrible; his passion was grand, like the thunderstorms of their own Alps; but there was something in the noise that tempered his severity, and softened his accusations. Calvin never thundered and lightened. Had he done so it would have been a relief; the Genevans would have felt him to be more human and genial - a man of like passions with themselves; at least, of like passions with Farel, whom they regarded with a mixture of love and fear, and whom they could not help half-forgiving, even when he was rousing their anger by his reproaches. But in his terrible calmness, in his passionless reason, Calvin stood apart from, and rose above, all around him - above [288] Farel - even above the Council, whose authority was dwarfed before the moral majesty that seemed to clothe this man. He was among them like an incarnate conscience; his utterances were decrees, just and inflexible, like the laws of heaven themselves. Whence had he come, this mysterious and terrible man? Noyon was his birth-place, but what influences had moulded such a spirit? and what chance was it which had thrown him into their city to hold them in his spell, and rule them as neither bishop, nor duke, nor Pope had been able to rule them? They would try whether they could not break his yoke. For this end they had brought their swords with them.

The historians who were eye-witnesses of the scene that followed are discreet in their accounts of it. It did not end so tragically as it threatened, and instead of facts that would not redound to the honour of their city, they treat us to felicitations that the affair had no worse a termination. What the words were that evoked the tempest we do not know. It was not necessary that they should be strong, seeing the more violent the more welcome would they be. While Calvin is preaching we see a dark frown pass suddenly over the faces of the assembly. Instantly there come shouts and outcries; a moment after,

the clatter of weapons being hastily unsheathed salutes our ears; the next, we are dazzled by the gleam of naked swords. The tempest has burst with tropical suddenness and violence. The infuriated men, waving their weapons in the face of the preacher, press forward to the pulpit. One single stroke and Calvin's career would have been ended, and not his only - with him would have ended the career of Geneva as the new foothold of the Reformation. Farel had felt the burden too heavy for him; and had Calvin fallen, we know of no one who could have taken his place. What a triumph for Rome, who would have re-entered Geneva over the mangled corpse of the Reformer! But what a disaster to Europe, the young day of which would have been quenched in the blackness of a two-fold night - that of a rising atheism, and that of a returning superstition!

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But the movement was not fated so to end. He who had scattered the power of emperors and armies when they stood in battle array against the Reformation, stilled the clamours of furious mobs when they rose to extinguish it. The same buckler that covered Luther in the Diet of Worms, was extended over the head of Calvin amid the glittering swords in the Church of Rive. In that assembly were some who were the friends of the Reformer; they hastily threw themselves between the pulpit and the furious men who were pressing forward to strike. This check gave time to the less hostile among Calvin's foes to recover their senses, and they now remonstrated with the more violent on the crime they were about to commit, and the scandal they would cause if they succeeded in their object. Their anger began to cool; first one and then another put back his sword into its sheath; and after some time calm was restored. Michael Roset, the chronicler and magistrate, who appears to have been present, says, with an evident sense of relief, "The affair passed off without bloodshed;" and the words of the syndic Guatier, who reckoned its peaceable ending a sort of miracle, show how near it had been to having a very different termination,¹¹ The Reformer's friends did not think it prudent to leave him undefended, though the storm seemed to have spent itself. Forming an escort round him, they conducted him to his home.

¹¹Roset, MS., Chron, bk. 4, chap. 18. Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 65, 66

On the morrow the Council of Two Hundred met, and pronounced sentence of banishment upon the two ministers. This sentence was ratified on the following day by the Council-General or assembly of the people. On the decision being intimated to Calvin, he replied with dignity, "Had I been the servant of man, I should have received but poor wages; but happy for me it is that I am the servant of him who never fails to give his servants that which he has promised them." The Council rested its sentence of banishment upon the question of "unleavened bread." Herein it acted disingenuously. The pastors had protested that the question of leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist was with them an open one. The real ground of banishment is one on which the magistrates of Geneva, for obvious reasons, are silent - namely, the refusal of Farel and Calvin to celebrate the Lord's Supper, on account of the blasphemies and immoralities indulged in by many of those who demanded admission to the Communion-table. Before being condemned, Calvin asked to be heard in his defense before the Council-General, but his request was refused. ¹²

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

¹²Roset, MS. Chron. Beza Vita Calvini. Reqistrae, 23rd April, 1538.

Chapter 12: Calvin at Strasburg - Rome Draws Near to Geneva

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

Picture: View in the Alps: the Splugen Picture: Cardinal Gaspar Contrini

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

furnish, for only through Calvin was Geneva to become learned. The love of Strasburg was as balm to the smitten and wounded heart of the exile. ¹

The expulsion of the two ministers did not calm the tempest that raged in the little State on the banks of the Leman. The Council, perhaps to show that they could govern without Calvin, published some new edicts for the reformation of manners; but, alas! moral power had departed with the ministers, and the commands of the magistrates were unheeded. The more distant the retreating steps of Farel and Calvin, the louder grew the disorders in the city they had left. The preachers, Marcourt and Morand, who now occupied the vacated pulpits, were simply objects of contempt. ² They soon quitted the city in disgust. The Council thought to make the two rectors of the school which Farel had opened for though there were 900 priests there was not a schoolmaster in Geneva - supply their place. The two teachers rose up and shook the dust from their feet, and the school was closed. The dominant faction had demanded "liberty," and now, left without either religious guide or secular instructor, they were in a fair way of being as free as their hearts could wish, and eminently pious to boot, if there be truth in the maxim that "ignorance is the mother of devotion." ³

Calvin, in his new sphere at Strasburg, preached four times a week, and discharged all the other duties, private and public, of a faithful pastor. He lectured every day on theological science to the students of the Academy, taking as his text-book the Gospel of St. John and the Epistle to the Romans, which he expounded. The fame of his lectures drew students from other countries, and Strasburg promised to rival Wittemberg as a school of theology. ⁴ The Reformer had asked no salary from the magistrates, and they were in no haste to assign him one, and now he was in deep poverty.

¹Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 84-86.

²Morand was minister at Cully, on the shores of Lake Leman. Marcourt was minister at Neuchâtel. Some have said that Marcourt was the writer of the famous Placards, which Florimond Raemond attributes to Farel. These violent manifestoes first thoroughly awoke that spirit of bloody persecution from which the Protestants suffered so long in France. It has never been certainly proved whose work they were, but they are more likely to have emanated from Marcourt than from Farel.

³Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 100,101.

⁴Ibid., tom. 5, pp. 123,124.

He appears to have been still in receipt of a small sum from his paternal inheritance, which he strove to supplement by the sale of his books. Painful it must have been to him to part with these, but he had no alternative, for we find him writing to Farel at this time that he “did not possess a farthing.” The Senate of Strasburg afterwards appointed him a stipend, but so small that it did not suffice for his wants. But we return to Geneva. [292]

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

His letter “to the Senate and People of Geneva” was such as might have been expected from such a man. He began by protesting his ancient affection for them; he praised their many noble qualities; and he “drowned his page” with his poignant grief at their misfortunes. Alas! that they had suffered themselves to be seduced into Protestantism, which, however, he was good enough to say contained a modicum of truth. And so, tasking the elegance of his pen to the utmost, he coined some glowing compliments in praise of Holy Writ, of Christ as the sole Author of salvation, and of the doctrine of justification by faith. In thus expressing himself, Sadoletto had not the remotest intention of becoming a disciple of the Protestant faith; he was only beckoning back the Genevans to repose beneath the tiara. In an infallible Church only could they find escape from such storms as the exercise of private judgment had let loose upon them.

The letter had the very opposite effect from that which it was expected to produce. It helped to show the men of Geneva the brink to which they were drawing nigh. Are we then, they said to themselves on reading the cardinal's letter, so near to Rome that the Pontiff believes he has only to open the gates in order that we may come in? Moreover it made them feel the loss they had sustained in the banishment of Calvin; they looked around for a man to reply to Sadoletto, for they felt that his letter must not remain unanswered, but they looked in vain. One name was on every lip as that of the man who alone was adequate to the task of replying, but with the ink not yet dry in which the banishment of the man who bore that name was written, they dared not utter it. This showed, however, that the tide had begun to turn. Calvin meanwhile got a copy of the cardinal's letter at Strasburg, and without waiting to be asked by the Genevans he answered it forthwith, and in such fashion that Sadoletto made no second attempt of the sort. ⁵ Calvin's reply to Sadoletto was the work of six days, and it remains a monument of his genius. He begins by paying a fine compliment to the cardinal's learning and eloquence, and goes on to express his wonder at the "singular love and goodwill" which Sadoletto, an entire stranger to the people of Geneva, had so suddenly conceived for them, "of which nevertheless no fruit ever appeared." "If," continues Calvin, "it was ambition and avarice," as Sadoletto had hinted, which moved him in separating from Rome, what a blunder had he fallen into! "Certain it is," said he, "if I had paid regard to my personal advantage, I should never have separated from your faction." "Was not," he asks, "our shortest way of attaining to wealth and honours to accept from the first the conditions which you have offered us?" Apostates you call us, says Calvin. "The men of Geneva, extricating themselves from the slough of error in which they were sunk, have returned to the doctrine of the Gospel, and this thou callest abandoning the truth of God. They have withdrawn from Papal tyranny, and this thou sayest is to separate from the Church!" "We contradict the Fathers!" exclaims the Reformer, adverting to another charge the cardinal had brought against the Protestants, "we are more nearly in agreement with antiquity than you our opponents, as thou knowest, Sadoletto,

⁵Beza, *Vita Calvini*. Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 115,116. Bungener, pp. 136-145.

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

With a few strokes Calvin next draws a picture of the state in which the Reformers found the schools and the pulpits: nothing taught in the first but “pure sophistries,” “tangled and twisted scholastic theology,” “a kind of secret magic.” And as for the pulpits, [293] “there were no sermons from which foolish old women did not learn more dreams than they could relate in a month by their own fireside.” Was it a crime to have replaced that rubbish by a theology drawn from the Word of God, and to have silenced the monks by filling the pulpits with preachers of the ancient Gospel?

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

cruelty?" They have given us in default of other consecration that of tribulation and of blood. We know what we have done, and in whom we have believed, and "heaven grant, Sadoleto, that thou and thine may one day be able to say as much sincerely."⁶

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

Calvin has now become, or is very soon to become, the center of the movement, whose present position in Christendom is somewhat perilous. A crisis had arrived in the great conflict between Romanism and Protestantism. It was clear to both parties that the breach that divided them must be healed now, and that if a settlement was much longer delayed the controversy would grow into an embittered and sanguinary war, prolonged from decade to decade, and it might be for a still longer period. During the years that Calvin resided at Strasburg, the Popish and Protestant worlds assembled in not fewer than four successive conventions, to try whether it was not possible to frame a basis on which the two Churches might come together, and peace be restored to Christendom. The initiative of these conferences was taken by the emperor on the part of the Romanists; and indeed of the two parties it was the latter that had the stronger reasons for holding out the olive-branch. Twenty-five years had now passed away in their efforts to put down Protestantism, and instead of being able to recount a series of victories, they had little to show save a list of defeats. All things worked contrariwise for them. If they held a disputation, it was only to expose the weakness of their champions; if they convoked a synod, it was only to hear a Protestant Confession; if they held a conference, it was to have some new concession wrung from them; if they planted stakes, they found they were but sowing the seed of new martyrs; if they leagued among themselves in order to strike a combined blow, some untoward event fell out, some ally betrayed them, or the ominous figure of the Turk started up, and so

⁶Ad J. Sadoletum Responsio-Opp. Jo. Calvini, vol. 8, pp. 105-115; Amstel., 1667.

their plans came to nothing. The bow broke just as the arrow was about to be let fly.

And, then, what at this hour was the attitude of the several nations as regarded their obedience to the Papal chair? One half of the European States had placed themselves, or were hastening to do so, beneath the banner on which was inscribed: "An open Bible and a free conscience." The two Saxonys, Prussia, Hesse-Cassel, Wurtemberg, with some smaller States, and a multitude of free cities, were now ranged round the great PROTEST. The better half of Switzerland was lost to Rome. Few, save the herdsmen of the mountains, now received her pardons and sent their money in return. Denmark and Sweden had revolted. The powerful kingdoms of England and France were at that hour trembling in the balance. Everywhere men were kicking against Rome's ancient and sacred sway, and soon, on the north of the Alps, few subjects would remain to her. Parliaments were passing laws to check her usurpations; her bulls were dishonoured; palls were at a discount; tithes, annats, reservations, and expectatives were but as the gleanings after the harvest; palmers and anchorets were disappearing from her highways; men were burying her relics instead of worshipping them; the cowl and frock were being abandoned for the garb of honest labor; schools and hospitals were replacing monasteries and convents; the reading of the Scriptures was supplanting the counting of beads, and the preaching of the Gospel the chanting of litanies and masses.

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And then, in addition to all these losses, when the Romanists looked at the other side they could not conceal from themselves the strength of the Protestant position. Not only did the Reformation divide Christendom - not only did it receive the support of States, princes, and free cities - but, further, it had created a multitude of agencies, which were continually at work multiplying its adherents, and extending still farther its area. Foremost among these were the Sacred Oracles in the mother-tongue of the nations. In the rear of this Divine instrumentality came nearly all the men of thought, of letters, and of eloquence which the age could boast. Ever and anon Luther's pen was darting flashes of light over Europe. Recently had come that magnificent demonstration, the Institutes. That work was moving up and down in Christendom, an embattled phalanx of argument, compared with which the legions of the emperor were as

weakness. Around the two great chiefs, Luther and Calvin, were a hundred keen and disciplined intellects ready to expose a sophism, to confront a falsehood, to laugh at folly, and to castigate hypocrisy and arrogance. Moreover, the habit of free inquiry, and the art of combining - of which the Schmalkald League furnished an example, which was not lost upon its opponents - had come to the aid of that cause which had given them birth. In fine, among the forces on the side of Protestantism, not the least was the spirit of its disciples. They could face the dungeon and the rack, the scaffold and the stake, and not quail; and in the room of those who were burned to ashes to-day, hundreds would start up to-morrow to grasp the falling standard, and bear it onward to victory. These considerations could not but force themselves upon the minds of the Romanists, and weigh with them in the overtures they now made to the Protestants. From the far-off banks of the Tagus came a letter full of not unfriendly professions. Writing in the Alcazar at Toledo, the 25th of November, 1539, the emperor invited the Protestant princes of Germany to meet and try whether they could not devise measures of conciliation. ⁷ Charles intimated at the same time that the King of France, with whom he was then at peace, was equally solicitous on this point with himself.

In pursuance of this letter, the princes assembled next February at Frankfort. Eldo, Archbishop of Lunden, represented the emperor at the conference. Calvin, accompanied by Sturm, went thither, at the urgent solicitations of his brethren, mainly with the view of watching over the interests of the Swiss Churches, and of having the pleasure of meeting and conferring with Melancthon. The debates were long, but the conclusions reached were of no great moment. All resulted in a truce, which was to last for fifteen months, to permit a convention of theologians and learned men to meet and discuss the steps necessary for quieting the religious troubles. Without the truce the members would not have been sure of their heads. Meanwhile, prosecutions against the Protestants in the imperial chamber were to be dropped, and no one on either side was to be disturbed on account of his religion. The Protestants thought they saw the cloven foot in the attempts to confine this agreement to those of the Augsburg Confession. The emperor had the best reasons for excluding the

⁷Sleidan, *Hist. Reform.*, bk. 12, p. 245.

Swiss from its benefits. He knew that should the German and Swiss Reformers combine, and form one Protestant camp, extending from the Baltic to the banks of the Rhone, and the foot of the Pennine mountains, the cause of Rome would be lost north of the Alps, and his own dynastic projects along with it.⁸

We turn with a peculiar pleasure from the chamber of conference, to the yet more sacred chamber where the Reformation's greatest scholar, and its greatest theologian, were about to commune together. From the first moment Melancthon and Calvin understood each other. Of Melancthon's inviolable loyalty at heart to the Protestant creed Calvin had not a doubt. The unwise concessions into which his love of peace at times betrayed him, though they drew forth Calvin's rebuke, never shook his confidence in him. A free interchange of sentiments on the nature of the Eucharist took place, and Calvin, as we learn from his letters to Farel, was delighted to find that Melancthon's opinions nearly approximated to his own, although his veneration for Luther kept him from saying so in public. Future discussions, however showed that the unanimity was not quite so great as Calvin had hoped. Their friendship, nevertheless, continued unbroken throughout their lives, and yielded its fruits to the Church of God. How deep and tender Calvin's love for Melancthon was, is shown by the touching words written after the grave had closed over the latter: "O Philip Melancthon - for it is thou whom I address - thou who now livest at the hand of God with Christ, awaiting us on high till we are gathered with thee into blessed repose - a hundred times hast thou said to me when, wearied with toil and vexation, thou didst lean thy head upon my bosom - Would to God, would to God, that I might die upon that bosom! As for me, later, a hundred times have I wished that it had been granted us to be together. Certainly thou wouldst have been bolder to face struggles, more courageous to despise envy and calumny. Then, also, would have been suppressed the malignity of many whose audacity increased in proportion to what they called thy pusillanimity."⁹

There is one other meeting that would have had greater interest for us than even that which we see now taking place. It was intensely

⁸Sleidan, bk. 12, p. 247.

⁹Bungener, p. 152.

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

Chapter 13: Abortive Conferences at Hagenau and Ratisbon

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

The next convention was held at Hagenau, the 25th of June, 1510. The assembly was presided over by King Ferdinand. The Protestant princes were represented by their deputies. A great number of divines were present, and among others Calvin. Melancthon was taken in on the road, and was thus unavoidably absent. Ferdinand, on the ground that the Protestant princes were not present, adjourned the assembly, to meet at Worms on October 28th. ¹ Meanwhile, it was attempted to steal a march on the Protestants by requiring them to restore the buildings, lands, and revenues which they had taken from the Papists, and to promise that no new members should be received into the Schmalkald League. These proposals were indignantly rejected. First, let the religious question be decided, said the Protestants, and then the details will adjust themselves. They had robbed no man: the appropriated Church revenues they had devoted to the religious instruction of the people, to the support of schools, and the relief of the poor. And as to refusing the protection of the League to those who were persecuted for righteousness' sake, they spurned the idea of binding themselves to so dastardly a policy. ² Calvin, who was not readily imposed upon, nor easily satisfied, bears the highest testimony in his letters to the zeal of these men, as

¹Sleidan, bk. 13, p. 268.

²Ibid., bk. 13. pp. 267, 268.

he witnessed it at Frankfort. Sooner than dissolve their League, and abandon defenceless provinces and towns to the will of the emperor and the Pope, they would see their cities ploughed as a field, their castles razed, and themselves led to the scaffold. ³

The conference assembled at Worms, as appointed, but on the third day came letters from the emperor dissolving it, and summoning it to meet, with greater solemnity, at Ratisbon, in January, 1541. ⁴ The members not arriving in time, the Diet of Ratisbon opened only in April. Calvin, deputed by the city of Strasburg, went thither, though he expected little from the conference, mistrusting the sincerity of the Roman managers, and knowing, perhaps better than any other man, that an impossible task had been assigned to them when they were required to reconcile essentially antagonistic creeds. And yet many things seemed to prognosticate a prosperous issue to this the fourth attempt, within the space of two years, to effect the pacification of Christendom. First, the position of the emperor's affairs made it clearly his interest to be on friendly terms with the princes of the Protestant League. He was raising armies, expending vast sums, wasting his years and strength, and taxing his genius in toilsome expeditions and mighty undertakings, and yet the perplexities around his throne were thickening instead of lessening. Verily, he had no need to court new difficulties. Charles spoke truth, doubtless, when, by the mouth of Grenville, he opened the Diet with these words: "When he perceived how religion had torn and rent asunder the Empire, and given occasion to the Turk to pierce almost into the bowels of Germany, it had been a great grief to him, and, therefore, for many years past he had, with their own consents, been essaying ways of pacification." ⁵

The Pope, Paul III., leaned scarcely less than the emperor towards conciliation. In token of his friendly disposition he sent Gaspar Contarini as his legate to the conference. A patrician of Venice by birth, Cardinal Contarini was of pure life, of devout disposition, and of liberal opinions. He had been a member of "The Oratory of Divine Love," an association which sought to promote a large reform of Church abuses, and on the important doctrine of

³ Calvin's Letter to Farel, April, 1589 - Jules Bonnet, vol. 1, p. 114.

⁴ Sleidan, bk. 13., p. 270. Ruchat, tom. 5, p. 151.

⁵ Sleidan, bk. 13, p. 275.

justification approximated very closely to Luther. Not less desirous were the Protestant divines of healing the breach, provided it could be done without burying the Reformation. When they thought of the sacrifices which the continuance of the struggle implied the desolations of war, and the blood that must flow on field and scaffold - they shrank from the responsibility of hastily closing the door against any really well-meant attempt at union. At no former moment had peace seemed so near.

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The proceedings began by Grenville presenting to the conference a book, which he said had received the emperor's approval, and which he wished them to adopt as the basis of their discussions. The book consisted of a series of chapters or treatises on the doctrines, the rites, the Sacraments, the orders, and the constitution and powers of the Church. The members were to say what in it they agreed with, and what in it they dissented from.⁶ The Pope naturally wished the weighty point of his supremacy to be first taken in hand and settled; but Contarini, departing from his instructions in this matter, postponed the question of the Pope's powers to the end, and gave precedence to the doctrines of the Christian system. For some time all went smoothly enough. A very tolerable unanimity was found to exist between the two sides of the assembly on the doctrines of original sin, free-will, and justification. Calvin was astonished to find the Romanists conceding so much. "We have retained," says he, writing to Farel, "all the substance of the true doctrine. If you consider with what kind of men we have had to agree, you will acknowledge that much has been accomplished."⁷ As yet, no cloud appeared in the sky of the conference.

Next came the subject of the Church. The conference was agreed on the constitution of the Church; as regards its authority it began to be seen that there were two parties in the assembly. To obviate immediate danger, it was proposed to pass on to other questions, and leave this one for future settlement.⁸

The Sacraments followed. The Diet was nearing the more critical questions. There was here some jarring, but the Protestants conceded the ceremonies as things indifferent, and the conference was able

⁶Sleidan, bk. xiii., pp. 276, 277.

⁷Letters of Calvin - Jules Bonnet, vol. i., p. 236.

⁸Letter to Farel, 11th May, 1541 - Jules Bonnet.

to proceed. At last came the consideration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "There," said Calvin, "stood the impassable rock which barred the way to farther progress."⁹ "I had," continues Calvin, "to explain in Latin what were my sentiments. Without fear of offense, I condemned that peculiar local presence; the act of adoration I declared to be altogether insufferable."¹⁰

We now behold the representatives of the Popish and Protestant worlds gathered in presence of the Roman sphinx - the stupendous mystery of transubstantiation. If they shall solve the riddle - reconcile the dogma to Scripture, to reason, and to sense - all will be well; they will have united the two Churches and pacified Europe; but if they shall fail, there awaits Christendom a continuance of divisions, of strifes, of wars. One after another comes forward with his solution, in the hope that, like another Oedipus, he will read the riddle, disarm the monster, and avert from Christendom the untold calamities with which it is threatened. First come the Protestants. "Philip and Bucer," says Calvin, "have drawn up ambiguous and insincere formulas, to try whether they could satisfy the opposite party by yielding nothing."¹¹ He bears his testimony to their "best intentions," but expects nothing of their "equivocation." Next come the Romanists. They enveloped the whole in a cloud of mystification. The riddle is still unread; the mystery still stands unsolved, despite the learning, the wit, and the sophistry which have been expended upon it to make it comprehensible; it is as defiant of Scripture, of reason, and of¹² sense as ever.

At this stage an incident partly tragic and partly grotesque came to diversify the proceedings of the convention. One day, the veteran controversialist, Dr. Eck, being worsted by Melancthon in an argument on the Eucharist, went home in a rage, and drank so deep at supper as to drown his sense of discomfiture and contract a fever at the same time. His gruff stentorian voice was heard no more in the

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Letter to Farel, 11th May, 1541-Jules Bonnet.

¹²Sleidan, bk. xiv., pp. 278-282. Calvin, Letters, Nos. 63, 65, 67, 70. Paul Henry, *Life and Times of Calvin*, vol. i., pp. 230-237.

debates, nor his tall, broad-shouldered and burly form seen in the conference hall. ¹³

Afterwards the questions of private masses, invocation of saints, and the Pope's supremacy received a languid discussion, but with no satisfactory re-suits. The skies, so fair when the conference assembled, were now overcast with heavy clouds. The promise of peace had failed. The emperor dissolved the Diet, with the promise, always forthcoming when affairs had got into a dead-lock, that a General Council would speedily convene, and that should the Pope refuse to call such, he himself would convoke a Diet of the Empire for the settlement of all the religious differences of Christendom. ¹⁴

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

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¹³M. Adamus, *Vita Melanthonis*, p. 340. Calvin, however, calls it apoplexy (Ep. 32). Eck died two years later, of a second attack of apoplexy. (Seckendorf, iii. parag. 112.)

¹⁴Sleidan, bk. xiv., p. 283.

of atheism, with its attendant crimes, revolutions and woes, such as Castellio and Servetus. Unhappily the Roman Church mistook her friends for her foes. We would ask, how has it fared with her in those countries which remained Popish? Is it in lands where the Reformation established itself, or in those where it was suppressed, that the "Church" has been most exempt from spoliation, and her priests from violence? and to what shore is it that they flee in those oft-recurring tempests of revolution that sweep across the Popish world?

The Reformation in its Lutheran form had now culminated. It had planted in the mind of Christendom the great radical principle of renovation, "salvation through grace;" but, instead of building upon it an organised Church, to act as a moral breakwater against the godless principles ready to rush in and fill the void caused by the partial demolition of Romanism, the Reformation in Germany was passing into political action; it was running to seed. What was needed was a vigorous Church, what was formed was a political league. A new center had to be found for the principle of Protestantism, where, disentangling itself from political alliances, it might grow into a great purifying and restraining power, and be

505 seen by the world, not simply as a body of doctrines, but as a new and holy society. While a number of cunning artificers at Ratisbon are trying to repair the old fabric and keep it from falling, a new building is rising elsewhere.

Chapter 14: Calvin Returns to Geneva

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

Picture: The Gothic Well in Hatisbon Cathedral

Picture: Side Door of Strasburg Cathedral

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

While living honoured in Strasburg, each day occupied in fruitful labours, interrupted only by attendances at imperial Diets, the public feeling respecting the Reformer had been undergoing a great change on the banks of the Lemman. The faction of the Libertines, reinforced by Anabaptists and Papists, grew every day more ungovernable; Licentiousness and tumult ran riot now that Calvin was gone. ¹ The year 1539 passed in the most outrageous saturnalia. ² The Council, helpless in the face of these disorders, began to repent of what they had done. The four syndics who had been mainly active in the

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¹Ruchat, tom. v., p. 96.

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

banishment of Calvin were now out of the way. One had perished on the scaffold, charged with the crime of surrendering Genevese territory; another, accused of sedition, had attempted to escape by his window, but, falling headlong, broke his neck.

[301] His fellow-citizens, on learning his tragic end, called to mind that he had said tauntingly to Calvin, "Surely the city-gate was wide enough to let him go out."³ The two remaining syndics, implicated in the same charges, had betaken themselves to flight. All this happened in the same year and the same month.

It was now 1540. The city registers show the daily rise in the tide of popular feeling for Calvin's recall. September 21st: the Council charged Amy Perrin, one of its members, "to find means, if he could, to bring back Master Calvin." October 13th: it was resolved to write a letter "to Monsieur Calvin that he would assist us." October 19th: the Council of Two Hundred resolved, "in order that the honour and glory of God may be promoted," to seek all possible means to have "Master Caulvin as preacher." October 20th: it was ordered in the General Council, or Assembly of the People, "to send to Strasburg to fetch Master Jean Calvinus, who is very learned, to be minister in this city."⁴ The enthusiasm of the citizens is thus described by an eye-witness, Jacques Bernard: "They all cried out, 'Calvin, Calvin! we wish Calvin, the good and learned man, and true minister of Jesus Christ!'"⁵

Three several deputations did Geneva send to entreat the return of the man whom, two years before, it had chased from its gates with contumely and threats. The same two cantons, Bern and Zurich, whose approaches in the way of mediation it then repulsed, were now asked to use their good offices with the magistrates of Strasburg, in order to overcome their unwillingness to forego Calvin's services. In addition to the Senate's advances, numerous private citizens wrote to the Reformer in urgent terms soliciting his return. These letters found Calvin already on his way to the Diet at Worms, whither the deputy of Geneva followed him.⁶ The repentant city opens its gates. Shall he go back?

³M. Roset, MS. Chron. Beza, Vita Calvini.

⁴Bungener, pp. 147, 148.

⁵Ruchat, tom. v., p. 155.

⁶Ruchat, tom. v., p. 152.

It was a critical moment, not in Calvin's history only, but in that of Christendom; though neither Calvin nor any other man could then estimate the momentous issues that hung upon his decision. The question of going back threw him into great perplexity. The two years he had already passed in Geneva, with the contradictions, perils, and insults with which they were filled up, rose vividly before him. If he returns, shall he not have to endure it all over again? Going back was like lying down on a bed of torture. The thought, he tells us, filled him with horror. "Who will not pardon me," he writes, "if I do not again willingly throw myself into a whirlpool which I have found so dangerous?"⁷ He appeared to himself of all men the most unfit for a career so stormy as that which awaited him at Geneva. In a sense he judged correctly. He was naturally shy. His organisation was exquisitely strung. Sensitive and tender, he recoiled from the low arts and the coarse abuse of rough and unprincipled opponents. It was sympathy and love that he sought for. But it is exactly on a constitution like this that it is possible to graft the finest and loftiest courage. Qualities like these, when found in combination with high conscientiousness and lofty aims, as they were in Calvin's case, become changed under discipline, and in fitting circumstances develop into their opposites. The shrinking delicacy or timidity which quails before a laugh or a sneer disappears, and a chivalrous boldness comes in its room, which finds only delight in facing danger and confronting opposition. The sense of pain is absorbed in the conscious grandeur of the aim, and the sensitive man stands up in a courage which the whole world can neither bend nor break.

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Calvin disburdened his mind to his brethren, telling them with what apprehensions this call to his former field of labor had filled him, yet that he would obey, should they deem it his duty to go. They knew his worth, and were reluctant indeed to part with him; but when they thought on Geneva, situated on the borders of Italy and France, and offering so many facilities for carrying the light into these countries, they at once said, "This is your post of service." Not yet, however, could Calvin conquer his aversion. The city on the banks of the Lemman was to him a "chamber of torture;" he shuddered to enter it. Bucer stood forward, and with an adjuration similar to

⁷Calvin to Farel, 27th October, 1540 - Jules Bonnet, No. 54.

that which Farel had formerly employed to constrain him to abide in Geneva, he constrained Calvin to return to it. Bucer bade him beware of the punishment of Jonas for refusing to go and preach repentance to the Ninevites.⁸ This was enough; the die was cast: mobs might rage, faction might plot, a hundred deaths might await him in Geneva, he would go nevertheless, since duty called him.

He now began to prepare for his journey. Loaded with many marks of honour by the magistrates of Strasburg, he bade adieu to that city. A mounted herald, sent from Geneva, rode before him. He traveled slowly, halting at Neuchatel to compose some differences which had sprung up in the flock of Farel, and solace himself a little while in the society of the most loved of all his friends, before crossing the territory of the Vaud, and resuming his great task. On the 13th of September we behold him entering the gates of Geneva, his face still pale, but lighted up with his earnest look and eagle eye. He climbs, amid the reverend gaze of the citizens, the steep and narrow Rue des Chanoines, and takes up his abode in a house prepared for him beforehand at the head of that street, with its little garden behind, and a glorious vista of lake and mountains beyond - the broad blue Lemane, with the verdant and woody Jura on this hand, and the great Alps, in all their snowy magnificence, on that. It has been often asked, was Calvin insensible to these glories? And it has been answered, he was, seeing he says not a word about them in his letters. No more does St. Paul in his, though his labours were accomplished amid scenes of classic fame, and physical beauty. The general, in the heat of action, has no time to note the scenery that may lie around the battle-field. What to Calvin was Geneva but a battle-field? it was the center of a great conflict, which enlarged year after year till it came to be coextensive with Christendom, and every movement in which Calvin had to superintend and direct. The grandeur of the natural objects that surrounded him, at times, doubtless fixed his eye and tranquillised his soul, but with the alternations of hope and fear, sorrow and triumph, filling his mind as the battle around him flowed or ebbed, he may well be excused if he refused to sink the Reformer in the painter.

⁸Beza, *Vita Calvini*. Ruchat, tom. v. p. 157. Letter to James Bernard, 1st March, 1541 - Jules Bonnet, No. 62.

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

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

[U+009C] cumenical and eternal remains. Here at Strasburg he will associate not with scholars and burghers only, but with practical Reformers, with princes, and with the leading minds of many various nationalities; and thus we find that when a second time he presents himself at the gates of Geneva, he is no longer the Frenchman simply, he is of no nation because of all nations. To the clear, sharp-cut, beautiful genius of France he now adds the robustness of the Teuton. He feels as deeply as ever the necessity of guarding the purity of the Communion-table, for it is the point from which he is to work outward for the regeneration of the Church in the first place, and the State in the second, and accordingly his aims are no longer bounded by the limits of Geneva; they stretch wide around, and the little city becomes the pedestal simply on which he places that spiritual apparatus by which he is to regenerate Christendom.

Calvin, the stern, the severe, insensible alike to Alpine grandeurs and to female loveliness, had married while at Strasburg.⁹ Idelette de Bure, the woman who had given her hand to the Reformer, came from Liege, one of the earliest among the cities of the Netherlands which embraced the Gospel. She was a widow. Her modest yet courageous deportment as evinced in facing the perils to which the profession of the Gospel exposed her, her devoted affections and deep-seated piety as shown in ministering to the sick, and watching tenderly over the two children whom she had borne to her former husband, Jean Storder, had won the esteem of Calvin. Many friends from a distance testified their sympathy and joy by attending his

⁹Had this been a biography, we should have dwelt at some length on Calvin's matrimonial negotiations; but in a history such details would press out graver matters. The Reformer devolved on his friends the task of providing a wife for him, They nominated and he exercised a veto. First a lady of noble birth and rich dower was found for him. He did not choose to mate with one above his own degree. He proposed that the lady should learn the French tongue; and, as Calvin had foreseen, she refused. Another lady was named, and Calvin had made advances, but, happily, he discovered in time sufficient reasons for not going farther. At last Bucer proposed one who had lately become a widow, Idelette de Bure, or Van Buren. She was a lady of deep piety, elevation of soul, and Christian courage, "a most choice woman," says Beza. These were the qualities that suited Calvin. The nuptials took place in the end of August, 1540. She was a girle of strength to her husband. The reader cannot but remark the similarity of the name, Catherine de Bora and Idelette de Bure. They were noble women, but as the wives, the first of Luther and the second of Calvin, truth stand in a sort of twilight.

nuptials. But why is not his Idelette de Bure by his side when he re-enters Geneva? She is to follow, and to be the modest, loving, and noble-minded companion of the Reformer, during nine of the most laborious and stormy years of his life. Three horses, a carriage, and a sum of money are sent her by the Senate, to bring her to Geneva. A piece of cloth was presented to Calvin for a gown,¹⁰ and the pulpit in St. Peter's was prepared for the preacher: it was fixed against a massive pillar, and placed low, that the speaker might be distinctly audible to all.

¹⁰“Pour la robe de Maistre Calvin.” His salary was fixed at 500 Genevese florins, about £120 sterling of our day. He had besides twelve measures of corn, and two casks of wine. For a dwelling the mansion Freyneville was purchased at 260 crowns.

Chapter 15: The Ecclesiastical Ordinances

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

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

¹Paul Henry, *Life and Times of Calvin*, vol. i., p. 331. Sleidian, bk. xiv, pp. 284-286.

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

Accordingly, on his first appearance before the Council, and before he had been many hours within their walls, he demanded the erection of a court of morals, or ecclesiastical discipline. "Immediately after I had offered my services to the Senate," says he, writing to Farel, "I declared that a Church could not hold together unless a settled government should be agreed on, such as is prescribed to us in the Word of God, and such as was in use in the ancient Church. I requested that they would appoint certain of their number who might confer with us on the subject. Six were then appointed."² The Senate's consent had, in fact, been given when it supplicated him to return, for it well knew that he could return not otherwise than as a Reformer.

Such dispatch did Calvin and his colleagues use in this matter, that the draft of the ecclesiastical discipline was presented to the Council on the 28th of September. Its examination was begun and continued till the 27th of October. The project, as definitely amended, was, on the 9th of November, adopted by the Council of Two Hundred; and on the 20th by the Council-General, or As-

²Calvin to Farel; Geneva, 16th Sept., 1541 - Jules Bonnet, No. 76.

sembly of the People. These ecclesiastical ordinances were farther remodelled, and the final vote of the people took place on the 2nd of January, 1542. "It is," says Bungener, "from that day that the Calvinistic Republic legally dates."³

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

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

³Calvin: his Life, Labour, and Writings, bk. iii, chap. 1, p. 180.

people, and the clergy in the election was a sufficient guarantee against intrigue and favor ⁴

The ecclesiastical authority was wielded by the Consistory, or tribunal of morals. The Consistory was composed of the ministers of the city and twelve laymen. These twelve laymen were elected by the Little Council, confirmed by the Great Council, and finally approved by the people with whom remained the power of objecting to any or all of them if they saw cause. The Consistory met every Thursday. It summoned before it those reported as guilty of immoralities. It admonished them, and, unless they promised amendment, excommunicated them - that is, deposed them from membership in the Church - and in consequence thereof withheld from them the Sacraments. The Consistory had no power to compel attendance before it, and no power to inflict a civil punishment. "It was," says Ruchat, "a purely ecclesiastical chamber, possessing no civil jurisdiction whatever, which it left entirely to the magistrate." ⁵ It "gives notice" to the Council, and the Council "sees to it." In the infliction of its censures it exercised a rigorous impartiality. It knew nothing of rank or friendship, "punishing," says M. Gaberel, "with equal severity the highest magistrate and the meanest burgess, the millionaire and the peasant." ⁶

If the action of the Consistory effected the reformation of the offender, he was straightway restored to his place in the Church; if he remained incorrigible, the case came under the cognisance of the civil jurisdiction. The Council summoned him to its bar, and inflicted punishment - it might be imprisonment, or it might be banishment. The Spiritual Court, looking at the act as an offense against the ecclesiastical ordinances, had visited it with an ecclesiastical censure; the Council, looking at it as a breach of the civil laws, awarded against it a temporal punishment. We ask why this double character of the same act? Because in Geneva the nation was the Church, and the ecclesiastical ordinances were also the laws of the State. They had not only been enacted by the Senate, they had been twice solemnly and unanimously voted by the people. "The people could not afterwards allege," says M. Gaberel, "that they were deceived as

⁴Gaberel, vol. i., pp. 255, 256.

⁵Ruchat, v., 158, 159.

⁶Hist. de l'Eglise de Genève; 1862.

to the bearing of the laws they were sanctioning. For several weeks they could meditate at leisure on the articles proposed; they knew the value of their decision, and when twice - on the 20th of November, 1541, and again on the 2nd of January, 1542 - they came to the Cathedral of St. Peter's, and, after each article, raised their hands in acceptance of it, the vote was an affair of conscience between God and themselves, for no human power could impose such an engagement. They were 20,000 citizens, perfectly free, and masters of their own town. The Genevese people were absolutely sovereign; they knew no other limit to their legislative power than their own will, and this people voted the ordinances from the first chapter to the last. They engaged to frequent public worship regularly, to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord, to renounce all debauchery, all immoral amusements, to maintain simplicity in their clothing, frugality and order in their dwellings.”⁷

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

What was established at Geneva was a theocratic republic. The circumstances made any other form of government hardly possible. The necessities of the city made it imperative that in its legislation the moral should predominate; its very existence depended on this. But even the genius of Calvin could not find means, in so small a State, to give free expression to his views touching the distinction between things spiritual and things secular, nor could he prevent

⁷Gaberel, tom. i., pp. 269, 270.

the two jurisdictions at times overlapping and amalgamating. It is strange to us to see blasphemy, unchastity, and similar acts visited with imprisonment or with banishment; but we are to bear in mind that the citizens themselves had made abstinence from these vices a condition of citizenship when they voted the Constitution. They were not only offenses against morality, they were breaches of the social compact which had been freely and unanimously formed. Those who, while the Constitution existed - and it could not exist a moment longer than the majority willed - claimed to be permitted these indulgences, were logically, as well as legally, incurring expatriation. Calvin made this very plain when, on one occasion, he advised the Libertines to withdraw, and build a city for themselves. Such a city, verily, would have had neither a long nor a tranquil career.

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

“Neither absorbing nor degrading the Statue,” adds M. Bungener, “the Church maintained herself at its side, always free, so far as the Reformer had intended her to be so. This was, indeed, an important, an indispensable element of her influence abroad. A Church visibly in the power of the magistrates of so small a State would have been hearkened to by none. But the Church of Geneva had been put into possession of a free and living individuality. Henceforth it mattered little whether she was small or great, or whether she was at home under the shelter of a small or mighty State. She was the Church of Geneva, the heiress of Calvin. None in Europe, friend or foe, thought of asking more.”⁸

⁸Calvin: his Life, Labours, and Writings, pp. 186, 187.

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Chapter 16: The New Geneva

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

Picture: Calvin Reenters Geneva

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

It was a Herculean task which the Reformer had set himself. He could find no one to share it with him. Viret and Farel could not be spared from Lausanne and Neuchatel, and it was on his shoulders alone that the burden rested. The labours which from this time he underwent were enormous. In addition to his Sunday duties as pastor of the parish of St. Peter's, he preached every day of the alternate week. He delivered three theological lectures weekly. Every Thursday he presided in the Consistory. Every Friday he gave a public exposition in St. Peter's. He took his turn with the other ministers in the visitation of the sick, and other pastoral duties. When the plague was in Geneva he offered himself for the service of the hospital, but the Council, deeming his life indispensable to the State, would not hear of his shutting himself up with the pestilence. Day by day he pursued his studies without intermission. He awoke at five o'clock; his books were brought him and, sitting up in bed, he dictated to an amanuensis. When the hour came to mount the pulpit, he was invariably ready; and when he returned home, he resumed, after a short rest, his literary labours. Nor was this all. From every part of Christendom to which the Reformation had penetrated - from Poland, Austria, Germany, and Denmark, and from the nearer lands of Switzerland, France, and England - came letters daily to him. There were Churches to be organised, theological questions to be solved, differences to be composed, and exigencies to be met. The Reformer must maturely weigh all these, and counsel the action to be taken in each. Without diminishing his rate of daily work, he found time for this immense correspondence.

Calvin had pitched his tent at the center of a great battle, and his eye ranged over the whole field. There was not a movement which he did not direct, or a champion for whose safety he did not care. If anywhere he saw a combatant on the point of being overborne, he hastened to his aid; and if he descried signs of faint-heartedness, he strove to stimulate afresh the courage of the desponding warrior, and induce him to resume the battle. The froward he moderated, the timid he emboldened, the unskilful he instructed, and the erring he called back. If it happened that some champion from the Roman or from the pantheistic camp stepped forth to defy the armies of Protestantism, Calvin was ever ready to measure swords with him. The controversy commonly was short but decisive, and the Reformed

Church usually, for some time after, had rest from all similar attacks. To those on their way to the stake, Calvin never failed to send greeting and consolation, and the martyrs in their turn waved their adieus to him from their scaffolds. The words, "We who are about to die, salute thee!" which greeted the emperor in the Roman circus, were again heard, cried by hundreds of voices, but in circumstances which gave them an ineffably greater sublimity.

While he watched all that was passing at the remote boundary, he did not for one moment neglect the center. He knew that so vast a plan of operations must repose on a solid basis. Hence his incessant toil to reform the manners, enlarge the knowledge, and elevate the piety of Geneva. He would make it the dwelling of a righteous nation. All who might enter its gates should see, and those at a distance should hear, what that Christianity was which he was seeking to restore to the world, and what mighty and blessed transformations it was able to work on society. Its enemies branded it as heresy, and cursed it as the mother of all wickedness. Come, then, was in effect Calvin's reply; come and examine for yourselves this heresy at its head-quarters. Mark the dens of profligacy and crime rooted out, the habits of idleness and beggary suppressed, the noise of blasphemy and riot extinguished! And with what have they been replaced? Contemplate those nurseries of art, those schools [309] of letters, those workshops where industry plies its honest calling, those homes which are the abode of love, those men of learning rising up to adorn the State, and those patriots ready to defend it. Blessed heresy that yields such fruits! It was this - a great living proof of the Gospel's transforming power - that Calvin had in view to create in all his labours, whether in his study, or in his chair, or in the pulpit.

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

Though his pen produced much, it sent forth nothing that was not fully ripened. His writings, though composed in answer to the sudden challenge of some adversary, or to meet an emergency that had unexpectedly arisen, or to fulfill the call of daily duty, bear traces neither of haste nor of immaturity; on the contrary, they are solid, terse, ever to the point, and so fraught with great principles, set forth

with lucidity and beauty, that even at this day, after the lapse of three centuries, during which the works of numberless authors have sunk into oblivion, they are still widely read, and are acting powerfully on the mind of Christendom. As an expositor of Scripture, Calvin is still without a rival. His Commentaries embrace the whole of the Old and New Testaments, with the exception of the Apocalypse; but though the track is thus vast which his mind and pen have traversed, what a flood of light has he contrived' to shed throughout it all! How penetrating, yet how simple; how finely exegetical, yet how thoroughly practical; how logical in thought, yet how little systematic in form are his interpretations of the Holy Oracles! Nor is the unction his Commentary breathes its least excellence. Its spirit is that of the Bible itself; its fragrance is of heaven, and the reader's soul is refreshed with the celestial air that he is inhaling.

We now behold Calvin at his post, and we hang with intense interest upon the issue of his experiment. The question is not merely shall he protestantise Geneva, but shall he extricate the Reformation from its dead-lock; restore it to its spiritual path; and, having developed it into new rigor and soundness in Geneva, plant it out in other countries. For five years all went smoothly, nothing occurred to obstruct the regular working of the spiritual and intellectual machinery he had set a-going in this little but wisely-selected territory. The fruits were appearing. "By the blessing of God on the labours of Calvin," says Ruchat, "the Church of Geneva put on a new face."

¹ But the Libertinism of Geneva had been scorched, not killed. In 1546, it again lifted up its head, and the struggle was renewed. There were, in fact, two Genevas: there was the religious and orderly Geneva, composed of the native disciples of the Gospel, the foreign refugees of Protestantism, and the youth of various nationalities here training under Calvin to bear the banner of the Reformation in the face of fire and sword through all parts of Europe; and there was the infidel and the disorderly Geneva, a small but ominous band, the pioneers in their beliefs and in their practices of those bodies which afterwards at various intervals filled Popish Christendom with their swarms, and made themselves a terror by the physical and moral horrors that marked their career.

¹Ruchat, tom. v., p. 159.

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

“Such is the picture of the two Genevas. One of the two must necessarily perish.”²

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

²Bungener, p. 208.

Chapter 17: Calvin's Battles with the Libertines

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

Picture: Calvin Before his Enemies in the Council Picture: View of St. Peters and the Vatican Rome

The battle lasted nine years, and during all that time Calvin “guided Geneva as a vessel on fire, which burns the captain's feet, and yet obeys him.”¹ It began in the following way: - Pierre Ameaux was a maker of playing-cards by trade, and a member of the Council of Two Hundred. In 1546, his wife was cited before the Consistory “for several monstrous propositions.” She had given herself up to the grossest immorality on principle. “It is in this sense,” she said - and in this she spoke the common sentiments of the spiritual Libertines - “we ought to take the communion of saints, spoken of in the Apostles' Creed; for this communion can never be perfect till all things are common among the faithful - goods, houses, and body.” From the Consistory, Madame Ameaux passed to the Council, which sent her to prison. Her husband, from whom she had learned these doctrines, saw himself condemned in his wife's condemnation. Besides, he had a grudge at Calvin, who had injured his trade by forbidding card-playing. One night, when merry at supper, he said to his friends that “his religion was the true religion, whereas Calvin's

¹Bungener, p. 207.

religion was deceit and tyranny, and that the magistrates who supported him were traitors.”² On the words being reported to the Council, Ameaux was compelled to apologise. Calvin deemed this a too lenient sentence for an offense that struck at the fundamental settlement of the State. He demanded that the Council should inflict a more adequate punishment, or put himself and the other ministers on their trial. The Council, who were resolved to uphold the moral discipline, cancelled their first sentence, and pronounced a second and harder one. They adjudged Pierre Ameaux to walk through the streets bareheaded, carrying a lighted candle, and to make confession of his fault on his knees. The anger of the Libertines was great. A few days after, knowing that Calvin was in the pulpit, they rushed into the church and made a disturbance. The Council, feeling that with the Gospel must fall the republic, set up a gibbet in the Place St. Gervais. The hint was understood and respected.

In the following year (1547) events of greater consequence occurred. One day a paper was found affixed to the pulpit of St. Peter's, full of abuse of the ministers, and threatening them with death.³ Suspicion fell on Jacques Gruet, who had been seen loitering about the cathedral. From a canon in the Roman Church, Gruet had passed to the ranks of the Libertines, to whose principles his notorious profligacy did honour. The Council arrested him. A domiciliary visit brought to light another trait of his character, which until then was unknown, save to his more intimate friends. His shorn head had not prevented him becoming an infidel, and an infidel of a very malignant type. Certain writings, his own composition, breathing an envenomed hatred of Christ, were discovered in his house. A clue, moreover, was there found to a correspondence tending to deliver up Geneva to the duke. The billet affixed to the pulpit was forgotten in the graver discoveries to which it led. Gruet confessed his guilt, and was condemned and beheaded.⁴

²Ibid., p. 209.

³Letter to Viret, July 11, 1547. Roset, Chronicle, 1546 (from MS. extracts by John McCrie, son of the biographer of Knox and Melville). Mr. John McCrie, a young man of the greatest promise, resided some time at Geneva, and made copious extracts from the Town Council Registers, and Roset's Chronicle, for the use of Dr. McCrie, his father, who then meditated writing the Life of Calvin. The Author was most obligingly favored with the use of these MS. extracts by his late valued friend, the younger McCrie.

⁴Ruchat, tom. v., pp. 318-320. Bungener, p. 210. Calvin to Viret, July 11, 1547.

The Council maintained its ground in presence of the Libertines. So far from receding in the way of relaxing the moral code, it advanced in the path of practical reformation. It closed the taverns; it placed under surveillance certain places in the city where jovial parties were wont to assemble; it forbade the baptising of infants by the names of Popish saints, a practice which was understood to be a manifesto against the Protestant rule; and it prohibited the performance of the Acts of the Apostles, a comedy designed, its patrons alleged, for the edifying of the people, but which, in the opinion of the Council, profaned the Word of God, and wasted the public money, "which it were better to expend on the necessities of the poor Protestant refugees with which Geneva was now beginning to be filled." These decided measures only inflamed the rage of the Libertines.⁵

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This party now found a leader in an unexpected quarter. We have already mentioned the name of Amy Perrin. Six years before, he had gone all the way to Strasburg to prevail on Calvin to resume his place at Geneva. But he was not to remain always by the side of the Reformer. Perrin was irascible in temper, frivolous in manners, a lover of fetes and magnificent dresses, and as ambitious of power as he was devoid of the talents for exercising it. He aped, in Geneva, the part of Caesar at Rome; but Calvin saw that his vein fitted him for the comic rather than the heroic, and styled him at times "Caesar the Comedian." He had been raised, by the voice of the people, to the chief military command in the republic, he was thus not without the means of aiding his party, and of damaging his opponents.

The wife of Perrin was the daughter of Francois Favre, who was now closing a life that had been not unprofitable to the State, with an old age of shameless immorality. His flagrancies compelled the notice of the Council. His daughter, Madame Perrin, gave a ball, by way of showing how little she regarded either Consistory or Senate. This was a transgression of the ecclesiastical ordinances. All concerned in the affair, including one of the syndics, were summoned before the Consistory. Only two, of whom Perrin was one, acknowledged their fault; the rest set the Ecclesiastical Court at open defiance, and, in accordance with the constitutional law and practice,

⁵Roset, Chronicle (MS. extracts by John McCrie).

were summoned before the Council, and ordered to prison. Madame Perrin was among the incarcerated. Her rage knew no bounds; and what added to it was the circumstance of her father being imprisoned about the same time for “debauchery and adultery.” The humiliation of the family of Favre was now complete, and their indignation was fierce in proportion. They loudly demanded the abolition of the ecclesiastical laws, and denounced Calvin as bringing back, under another name, the tyranny of the Roman Church.⁶ The captain-general, Perrin, took the part of his wife and his father-in-law, and used all his influence both in the Council and in the city against Calvin.

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

Calvin saw how much was at stake, and resolved to continue the battle till he should fall at his post or be driven from it. With him it was no trial of strength between himself and the Favre family, which of the two had the greater influence in Geneva, and which should bow the head before the other. The question to be decided was whether the Reformation, in its reinvigorated spiritual phase, should be propagated over Europe or be trampled underfoot by Genevan Libertinism. If it was to spread to other countries, its purity and vigour must be maintained at all hazards in Geneva, its center. It was from this calm elevation that Calvin surveyed the struggle. Writing to Farel, he says: “I told them that so long as they were in Geneva, they should strive in vain to cast off obedience to the laws; for were there as many diadems in the house of the Favres as frenzied heads, that that would be no barrier-to the Lord being superior.”⁷ As Calvin had foretold, so it happened: the law held its course. The Favres had to digest their humiliation as best they could; the law knew no distinction between them and the lowest citizen.

The battle, however, was not ended; nay, it grew still fiercer. Geneva became yet more divided and demoralised. On the 12th

⁶Ruchat, tom. v., p. 317.

⁷Letter to Farel, No. 163 - Bonnet, vol. ii., p. 39.

December, 1547, we find the pastors going to the H'tel de Ville "to show that a great deal of insolence, debauchery, dissoluteness, and hatred was prevalent, to the ruin of the State." On the 16th December the Council of Two Hundred met to discuss the measures to be taken. The contention was so hot, and the threats uttered against the pastors, and especially against Calvin, were so violent, that their friends ran to beg the ministers not to appear that day before the Council. Calvin proceeded to the H'tel de Ville alone. An excited crowd was gathered at the door of the Council-hall. "I cast myself," says Calvin, "into the thickest of the crowd. I was pulled to and fro by those who wished to save me from harm." But he adds, "The people shrank from harming me as they would from the murder of a father."⁸ Passing through the crowd, Calvin entered the Council-chamber. There fresh combats awaited him. On his entrance the cries grew louder, and swords were unsheathed. He advanced undismayed, stood in the midst of them, and looked round on the scowling faces and naked swords. All were silent. "I know," said Calvin, addressing the members of the Council, "that I am the primary cause of these divisions and disturbances." The silence grew yet more profound, and the Reformer proceeded: "If it is my life you desire, I am ready to die. If it is my banishment you wish, I shall exile myself. If you desire once more to save Geneva without the Gospel, you can try." This challenge brought the Council to their senses. It recalled the memory of the disorders that had made it necessary to implore the interposition of the very man they were now seeking to drive away, to save the republic when on the brink of ruin. The recollection cooled the most irritated spirits present. A republic, of course, could bestow the title of king upon no one; but all felt that the man before them, though he had no crown, was in reality a king. He wore his pastor's cloak right royally, and looked more august than monarch in his robes of state. His magnanimity and wisdom procured him a submission that could not have been more instant or more profound though he had carried scepter and sword. Peace was established between the two parties, and Calvin, in prospect of the Communion at the approaching Christmas, held

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⁸Letter to Viret, No. 211 - Bonnet, vol. ii., p. 135. This scene made so deep an impression on the mind of Calvin that he recalled it seventeen years afterwards, on his death-bed, in his farewell to the ministers of Geneva.

out his hand to Perrin.⁹ The members of Council, holding up their right hands, signified their desire that past feuds should be buried, and in token of reconciliation a banquet took place at the town-hall.¹⁰

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

Again the storm darkened. The house of Favre, which had been compelled to "lower the head" in 1547, once more "lifted up the horn" in 1549. In the end of 1548, Perrin, Favre's son-in-law, was restored to his place in the Council, and to his office of "Captain-General," of both of which he had been deprived. Restored to office and honors, he so ingratiated himself with the citizens that early in 1549 he was elected to the Syndicate, and, contrary to custom, was made First Syndic. This gave fresh courage to his party. It was now that the tide of popular contumely and derision around the Reformer rose to the full. The hero of the Libertine populace - "the pillars of the Tavern," as Farel called them when addressing the Council during a visit which he made about this time to Geneva - was, of course, Captain Perrin, the First Syndic. To ingratiate themselves

⁹Ruchat, tom. v., p. 327. Bungener, p. 215.

¹⁰Roset, Chronicle (MS. of John McCrie).

with Perrin was an easy matter indeed; they had only to do what already they were but too well disposed to do - indulge their spite against the Reformer. They hit upon a method of annoyance which, doubtless, they thought very clever, but which was only very coarse. They called their dogs by the name of Calvin. At times, to make the insult more stinging, they pronounced the word as Cain.¹¹ Those who could not indulge themselves in this ingenious and pleasant pastime, not being the owners of a mastiff, could nevertheless as they passed the Reformer hiss or put out the tongue. Such were the affronts to which Calvin at this time was daily subjected, and that too from men who owed to him the very liberty which they abused: men whose city he was making illustrious all over Europe, and the streets of which, the moment he should cease to tread them, would become the scene of internecine carnage. Verily, it was no easy matter for Calvin to endure all this, and preserve his consciousness of greatness. To pass from the sublime labours of his study to such revilings as awaited him out-of-doors was like passing into another sphere of being. This was a depth of persecution into which Luther had never been called to descend. Opposition Luther had encountered, peril he had known, death he had confronted, but respect had ever waited upon his person, and his sufferings had ever in them an element of greatness that alleviated their pain. But Calvin, while equally with Luther an object of hatred to the great, was also the scoff of the base. But he bore all the fierce threats of men who occupied thrones or stood at the head of armies, and the ribald jest and hiss of the poor Libertine by his side - with equal equanimity. He remembered that a Greater had been "the song of the drunkard," and that he was but treading a path which Blessed feet had trodden before him. With a sublime grandeur of soul, which laudation could not enhance, and which the basest contumely could not degrade, he purged off these foul accretions, maintained the lofty mood of his mind, and went on in the performance of his mighty task.

It was not possible, one would think, that the sky could grow darker above Calvin; and yet darker it did become. He whom we see already so sorely stricken is to be yet more deeply wounded. All these years Idelette de Bure had been by his side. Tender of heart,

¹¹ Bezat Calv. Vita, an. 1548. Roset (MS. of John McCrie).

magnanimous of soul, loving, confiding, constant, she soothed her husband in his trials, watched by his sick-bed, exercised hospitality to his friends and numerous visitors, or in her closet prayed, while Calvin was being assailed by the ribald insults and outrages of the street. The love and entire devotion of his wife was among his chief joys. But, alas! her frail and delicate health gave way under the pressure of a protracted illness, and early in 1549, Idelette de Bure died. "Oh, glorious resurrection!" were her last words. "God of Abraham and of all our fathers, not one of the faithful who have hoped in thee, for so many ages, has been disappointed; I also will hope."¹² These short sentences were rather ejaculated than distinctly spoken. "Truly mine is no common source of grief," said her husband writing to Viret; "I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life, of one who, had it been so ordered, would have been not only the willing sharer of my indigence, but even of my death. During her life she was the faithful helper of my ministry." But we drop the curtain, as Calvin himself did, on his great sorrow.

¹²Ruchat, tom. v., p. 380.

Chapter 18 : Calvin's Labours for Union

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

Picture: The Lord Protector Somerset.

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

exacting from the cities of the Low Countries an oath of allegiance to Philip. ¹

In Italy, Paul III., the worthy successor of Borgia, had just died (1549), and his feet, extended through an iron grating, had been duly kissed by the Roman populace. All Rome was yet ringing with a terrible book which had just been published, containing the life of the defunct Pope, when the cardinals assembled in that city to elect his successor, the ceremony usual on such occasions being carefully observed. Duly morning by morning each cardinal came from his darkened chamber, with its solitary taper, and after mass and prayer, wrote the name of the person for whom he gave his vote upon a bit of paper, and folding it up, dropped it into the silver chalice upon the crimson-covered table before the altar of the chapel. This was repeated day by day, till a majority of two-thirds of the votes were recorded in favor of one candidate. Our own Cardinal Pole was just on the point of being elected, but the suspicion of Lutheranism which attached to him, caused him the misfortune or the happiness of missing the tiara. On the 7th of February, 1550, ² John Maria de Monte, who had presided in the Council at Trent, and afterwards at Bologna, when the cardinals crossed the mountains, was elected, and ascended the Papal chair under the title of Julius III. It was the year of Jubilee, for although, when first instituted by Boniface VIII., A.D. 1300, that great festival was ordained to be held only on the first year of each century, the period had since been shortened, and the Jubilee came round once every half-century. Paul III. had earnestly desired to see that great day of grace, but the grave closed over him before it came. That festival was reserved to signalize the opening of his successor's Pontificate. Rome was full of pilgrims from all countries, who had come to share in the inestimable benefits which the year of Jubilee brings with it to the faithful. Two days after his election, Julius III., with the golden hammer in his hand, proceeded to the golden gate, and broke it open, that the imprisoned flood of celestial virtues and blessings might freely flow forth and regale the expectant and rejoicing pilgrims.

¹Sleidan, bk. 21, p. 485.

²Sleidan, bk. 21, pp. 491, 492.

The golden hammer, with which the new Pope had broken open the gate- ever a much-coveted treasure-was this year bestowed on the Bishop of Augsburg. On being jocularly interrogated by some of his friends what use he meant to make of the gift, the bishop replied "that he intended to knock the Lutherans on the head with that hammer."³ The other pilgrims carried back to their distant homes, as the record of the cost and toil of their journey, besides the forgiveness of their sins, "bits of the lime and rubbish" of the demolished gate, to be kept as "precious jewels."⁴

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Francis I. of France had gone to the grave. Literature, war, gallantry, had engaged him by turns. Today he snubbed the monks, tomorrow he burned the Lutherans. The last years of his reign were disgraced by the horrible massacre of the Vaudois of Provence, and embittered by the painful disease, the result of his vices, which carried him to the grave in his fifty-fifth year. His son, Henry II., brought to the throne, which he now filled, all the evil qualities of his father, and only some of the good ones. He was the husband of Catherine de Medici, Pope Clement VII.'s niece, but the wife was the real sovereign. The Protestant princes of Germany, with Maurice of Saxony at their head, besought his aid in the war they were then waging with the emperor, Charles V. He entered into alliance with them, but before setting out for the campaign he lighted up his capital with the lurid blaze of Lutheran martyr-piles. This was his way of notifying to the world that if he was the enemy of the emperor, he was nevertheless the friend of the Pope; and that if he was the confederate of the German Protestants in arms, he was not a partaker with them in heresy.⁵ In the direction of France, then, there was no clearing of the sky. The air was thick with tempest, which in coming years was to strew the soil of that land with more terrible wrecks than any that had as yet disfigured it.

The only quarter of the heaven to which the eye of Calvin could turn with any pleasure was England. There, during the years we speak of, there was a gleam of sunshine. Henry VIII. now slept in "dull cold marble." His "sweet and gracious" son, Edward VI., succeeded him. The clouds that had overhung the realm during all

³Ibid., p. 492.

⁴Sleidan, bk. 21, p. 492.

⁵Ibid p.484

the reign of the father, and which let fall, at times, their tempests, and ever and anon threatened to burst in more furious storms, were dispersed by the benign rule of the son. With Edward

VI. on the throne, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector of the Kingdom, in the Cabinet, and Archbishop Cranmer in the Church, the Reformation of England was advancing at a rate that promised to give it precedence of both France and Germany, and make its Church one of the bright stars in the heavens of Protestantism. The counsel of Calvin was sought by the Protector and the Primate, and the frankness, as well as fidelity, with which it was given, shows the interest the Reformer took in the Church of England, and the hopes he rested on its Reformation. In his letter to Somerset, June, 1548, he expounds his views on the transformation needed to be wrought on England. First, it must adopt the principle, the only fruitful one, of justification by faith; secondly, this principle, in order to become fruitful, must thoroughly permeate the people, which could only be by living and powerful preaching; thirdly, the Word of God must be the rule as regards what is to be retained and what abolished, otherwise the Reformation is not the work of God, but the work of man, and would come to nothing; and fourthly, means must be taken for reducing morals into harmony with faith. After the fall of the Protector, Calvin corresponded with the young monarch, who, notwithstanding the loss of his able and faithful adviser, continued to prosecute vigorously the Reformation of his kingdom. The seed sown by Wicliffe two centuries before was springing rapidly up, and promised an abundant harvest. But the clouds were to return after the rain.

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

Scotland was awakening. The stakes of Hamilton and Wishart had already lighted up its skies. But its Reformation was too little advanced, and the country too remote, to fix the eye of the great Reformer. John Knox had not yet crossed the sea, or entered the gates of Geneva, to sit at Calvin's feet, and on his return continue in his native land the work which Calvin had begun in Geneva. But Scotland was not to be veiled for ever in the northern mist,

and the yet denser shadow of Papal superstition. The Gospel, that mighty mother of civilization, was to enter it, and lead thither her fair daughters, letters, science, arts, and liberty. The culture which Rome failed to give it, Scotland was to receive from Geneva.

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

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

In the great and blessed work of union Calvin began at home. His first aim was to unite the Churches of Geneva and Zurich. In prosecuting this endeavor, however, he studied to frame such a basis of agreement as might afterwards serve as a platform for a greater union. His aims reached forth to the Lutherans of Germany, whom

he wished to comprehend in visible fellowship with the Churches of France and England, and so draw together into one body all the Churches of Protestantism. His hopes of ultimately reaching this grand result were strengthened when he reflected that the Churches were divided mainly by one point—a misunderstanding touching the Lord's Supper. There is a real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, said they all; but they differed in their answer to the question, In what manner is he present? He is present bodily, said Luther, who attributed ubiquity or indefinite extension to our Lord's humanity. So far from a bodily presence, said Zwingli, the Eucharist is only a memorial and sign of Christ. No said Calvin, it is more; it is a seal as well as a sign.

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

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

bestowal of these benefits upon us: and in so doing we have real communion with Christ, and a real participation in all the blessings of his death. "Christ," said Calvin, "unites us with himself in one life."

These were substantially the explanations put before the Pastors of Zurich by Calvin. The conference, which was held in the presence of the Civic Council, continued several days. A formulary was drawn up, known as the *Consensus Tigurinis*, or Zurich Confession,⁶ on which the Churches of Geneva and Zurich united. This Confession was afterwards subscribed by all the Churches of Helvetia and of the Grisons. It was communicated to the Reformed in France, and to Bucer in England, and in both countries was hailed with joy. The faithful in Switzerland, France, and England had now been brought to be of one mind on the doctrine of the Eucharist; their union had been virtually established, and Calvin was comforted after his great sorrow.⁷

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But the greater union Calvin was not to see. The Lutherans of Germany still held aloof, and the Protestant world still continued to present the appearance as of two armies. Melancthon, as the result of his interview with the Reformer at Worms (1540), had come into somewhat close agreement with Calvin on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The *Consensus of Zurich*, he acknowledged, shed a yet clearer light on the question, and had brought him still nearer to the Genevan Reformer.⁸

But the more zealous spirits of the party, such as Flaccius, Osiander, and especially Westphal, clung to the consubstantiation of

⁶Formulaire de consentemen dans la doctrine de la Sainte Cene entre les Eglises de Zurich et de Geneve." (Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 370-378.)

⁷Ruchat, tom. 5, p. 379. Beza, *Calvini Vita*, ann. 1549. Bungener, p. 297.

⁸Some of the Lutherans accused Calvin of having changed sides, and become a convert to Zwingli. To show that the charge is without foundation, Ruchat quotes Calvin's statements of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, first in 1535, in the *Institutes*, and secondly in 1537, in the *Formulary of Union* presented to Bern. These are to the following effect:- First: "In the Lord's Supper there is neither transubstantiation, nor con-substantiation, nor impanation, nor any other change physical or corporeal." Second: "The Sacrament is not an empty sign, but in it we truly partake of the body and blood of Christ by faith." (Ruchat, tom. 5, pp. 379, 380.) Similar is his statement to Bullinger: "We are thereby made partakers of the body and blood of Christ, so that he dwells in us and we in him, and thus enjoy his universal benefits." (P. Henry, vol. 2, pp. 78, 79.)

Luther with even greater tenacity than when its great expounder was alive, and both Melancthon and Calvin saw with sorrow a union, which would have closed a source of weakness in the Protestant ranks, and made patent to the whole world the real Catholicism of the Reformation, postponed to a day that has not even yet fully come.

[319] We have seen one companion fall by the side of the Reformer, we are now to see another raised up to fill the vacant place. Within a month after the death of Idelette de Bure, eight French gentlemen, whom persecution had driven from their native land, arrived at the gates of Geneva. One of them, in particular, was distinguished by his noble mien and polished manners. Calvin recognised in him an acquaintance of his youthful years. This was Theodore Beza, of Vezelay, in Burgundy. Beza had enjoyed the instructions of Melchior Wolmar, first at Orleans, and next at Bourges, and he had acquired from him, not only a knowledge of Greek, but some taste for the Reformed doctrine, which, however, was overlaid for the time by a gay and worldly spirit. Not unlike to Calvin's had been his course of study. His first devotion was law; but his genius inclined him more to the belles lettres. He was a great admirer of the Latin poets, he read them much, and composed verses in imitation of them. After the manner of the times he followed his models somewhat too freely, and his Popish chroniclers have taken occasion, from the lascivious phrases of his verse, to assail his life, which, however, they have never been able to prove to have been other than pure. His uncle procured him a living in the Church, and to preserve himself from the vices into which others had fallen, he contracted a private marriage, in the presence of Laurence de Normandie and Jean Crespin. An illness, which brought him to the brink of the grave, awoke his conscience, and now it was that the religious impressions which his early preceptor had made upon him revived.

Brought back from the grave, Beza renounced Popery, openly avowed his marriage, quitted France, and setting out for Geneva, presented himself, as we have seen, before Calvin. He discharged for a short time the office of Greek professor and theological lecturer at Lausanne. Returning to Geneva, he became from 1552 the right hand of Calvin, for which his talents, his eloquence, his energy, and his courage admirably fitted him; and when the great chief of the

Reformation was laid in the grave, no worthier than Beza could be found to succeed him.

Beza did not stand alone by the side of Calvin. A brilliant group was now gathering round the Reformer, composed of men some of whom were of illustrious birth, others of distinguished scholarship, or of great talent, or of venerable piety. Among them may be mentioned Galeaceo Caracciolo, Marquis of Vico, who had forsaken house and lands, wife and children, for the Gospel's sake; and Peter Martyr Vermili, whom Calvin called the "Miracle of Italy."⁹ But the exiles are to be counted, not in hundreds only, but in thousands, of whom there scarce was one but contributed to brighten, by his rank, or genius, or learning, that galaxy of glory which was gathering round Geneva. Each brought his stone to that intellectual and spiritual edifice which was rising on the shores of the Leman.

Others there were, nearer or farther off, who acknowledged in Calvin their center, and who, though parted from him and from one another by mountains and oceans, formed one society, of which this sublime spirit was the center. There was Melancthon, and the group of which he was the chief, and who, although they bore the name of Lutheran, felt that they were in spirit one with those who were styled Reformed, and especially with the Catholic-hearted man who stood at their head. There was Bullinger in Zurich, and the group around him, which embraced, among many others, Pellicanus, and the fervent, loving Musculus. There was the peace-loving Bucer in England, and John 'a Lasco, the learned and accomplished Pole.¹⁰ And among the men of those days, who looked up to Calvin and sought his counsel, we must likewise rank the young monarch and

⁹"Miraculum Italiae."

¹⁰"John a Lasco was a member of a Polish family which had given many distinguished names to the State, the camp, and the Church. He was the intimate friend of Erasmus and other scholars, a correspondent of the Queen of Navarre and other royal persons. Zwingli first sowed the seeds of the Protestant truth in his mind. He became the founder of the Reformed Church of Friesland, but his views on the Lord's Supper corresponding with those of the Swiss Church, he was persecuted by the Lutherans. He was invited to England by the Protector Somerset and Archbishop Cranmer. He left England on the accession of Queen Mary, and ultimately settled in Poland, where he labored, not without success, in the Reformation of the Polish Church. (See Strype, Memorials of Cranmer; McCrie, Italy; Krasinski, Slavonia.)

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the venerable Primate of England. There were the Turretinis of Italy, and the Colignys of France, representative men. There were Margaret, Queen of Navarre, her great daughter Jeanne d'Albret, and Renee, Duchess of Ferrara. ¹¹ There were thousands and thousands, humble in station but elevated in character, spread over all countries and speaking many tongues, but forgetting diversity of country, of rank, and of speech, in the cause that made them all of one heart and one mind. We behold in this great multitude a refined, an intellectual, a holy fellowship, than which there never perhaps existed sublimer on earth. Verily, the man who formed the center of this brilliant assemblage, who kept his place in the presence of so many men so dignified in rank and so powerful in intellect; whom all confessed to be first, and whom all loved and revered as a father, must have been, whatever his enemies may affirm to the contrary, a man of many sides. He must have possessed varied as well as great qualities; he must have been large of heart, and catholic in sentiment and sympathy; he must have been rich in deep, tender, and loving sensibilities, though these may often have been repressed by labor or veiled by sorrow, and could be seen only by those who stood near to him; while those who were farther off could but mark the splendor of those gifts that shone in him as the Reformer, and of which the world was continually receiving new proofs, in the expositions and defences of Protestant truth, which he was almost daily sending forth. But whether near or afar off, all who stood around the Reformer, from the inner-most to the most distant circle, were ever ready to confess that he was as inflexible in principle as he was colossal in intellect, that he was as unselfish in aim as he was grand in conception, and as untiring in patience as he was unconquerable in energy and courage.

¹¹Daughter of Louis XII., and who but for the Salic law, or as she herself expressed it, the circumstance that nature had denied her a beard, would have been sovereign of France.

Chapter 19 : Servetus Comes to Geneva and is Arrested

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

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

It is the melancholy and tragic story of Servetus which we are now to record. Michael Servetus ¹ was a Spaniard, born in the same year as Calvin, 1509. Nature had endowed him with a lively but fantastic genius, an active but illogical mind, an inordinate ambition, and a defective judgment. ² He studied with characteristic versatility law, divinity, physic, and some have said astrology. After a short but distinguished career as a lecturer on the physical sciences in Paris, ³ he ultimately established himself at Vienne, in Dauphine, as

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

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

³Allwoerden, p. 33.

a medical practitioner. ⁴ In this profession he discovered superior skill, and in his first work, *On the Errors of the Trinity* (1531), he anticipated the great discovery of our own Harvey of the circulation of the blood. ⁵ His mind, speculative, daring, lawless, of the scholastic rather than the Reformation type, followed its bent, which was ethical, not physical. He spent fully twenty years of his life in wandering up and down in Christendom, visiting Germany, Italy, Switzerland, venting his fancies and reveries, unsettling the minds of men, and offending every one he came in contact with by his pride, self-sufficiency, and dissimulation. ⁶ He believed that he possessed the power, and had received a commission, to remodel all knowledge, and establish the world on a new basis. The more fundamental [321] doctrines of Christianity became the object of his settled dislike, and his most virulent attack. But it was against the doctrine of the Trinity mainly that his shafts were levelled. Romanism he had renounced in his youth, but neither did the Reformation satisfy his grand ideal. Christianity, he held, had been lost at an early age, if indeed it ever had been fully promulgated to the world. Servetus undertook to restore and re-institute it. ⁷ About the year 1546 he wrote to Calvin from Vienne, to the effect that the Reformer had stopped too soon, that he had preached as yet only a half-Reformation; and modestly offered to initiate him into his new system, and assign him the post of leader in that great movement by which mankind were to be led into a grander domain of truth. He accompanied his letter with a volume in MS., in which Calvin should see, he said, “stupendous and unheard-of things.” ⁸ The unhappy man had virtually arrived at pantheism, the final goal of all who in these high matters forsake the path of Divine revelation.

Calvin saw in the “stupendous things” of Servetus only stupendous follies. Writing to Farel, 13th February, 1546, the Reformer said: “Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long

⁴Ibid., p.39.

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

⁶Allwoerden, pp. 23-26. P. Henry, 2, pp. 167-176.

⁷De Trin. Error., lib. 7, fol. 3, 6-apud P. Henry, vol. 2, pp. 167-169.

⁸Allwoerden, p. 42.

volume of his delirious fancies, with the thrasonic boast that I should see something astonishing and unheard-of. He takes it upon him to come hither, if it is agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his safety, for if he shall come, I will never permit him to depart alive, provided my authority be of any avail.”⁹

The eye of Calvin saw that the creed of Servetus was essential pantheism. He knew too that such a creed struck at the whole settlement of Church and State in Geneva, and would sweep away the basis on which had been placed the republic. Further, the Reformer foresaw that if Servetus should come to Geneva, and attempt propagating his doctrine, he would be placed under the painful necessity of choosing between a pantheistic and a theocratic republic, between Servetus and the Reformation. Sharing in the universal opinion of his age, that heresy is to be punished with the sword of the magistrate, and deeming this heresy to be, as indeed it was, subversive not only of the religious belief, but also the civil order of Geneva, Calvin did not hesitate to avow his preference for the Protestant over the pantheistic republic, and declared that should Servetus come to Geneva, he would use his influence that he should “not depart alive.” These words from any pen would fill us with horror, but coming, as they do, from the pen of Calvin, they inspire us with a double horror. And yet the truth is that we know of no Reformer of that age, not even Melancthon himself, who would not, in Calvin’s position, most probably have written them.¹⁰ Again we must repeat, they caused no horror to the age in which they were written; nay, they were the verdict of that age on the case of Servetus; and if it is impossible that

⁹Letters of Calvin-Jules Bonnet, vol. 2, No. 154: “Sed nolo fidera meam interponere, nam si venerit, modo valeat mea autoritas, vivum exire non paitar.” The original letter is in the Bibliotheque du Rot at Paris. The author was told by his late friend, the younger McCrie, that he examined the letter, and was sorrowfully convinced of its authenticity. Bolsec quotes a letter of Calvin’s to Viret to the same effect, but its authenticity is doubtful.

¹⁰The doom which the Reformers awarded to others for false dogmas, they accepted for themselves, should they teach what was contrary to the faith. “When I read Paul’s statement,” says Farel, writing to Calvin, “that he did not refuse to suffer death if he had in any way deserved it, I saw clearly that I must be prepared to suffer death if I should teach anything contrary to the doctrine of piety. And I added that I should be most worthy of any punishment whatever if I should seduce any one from the faith and doctrine of Christ.” (8th September, 1553- *Calvini Op.*, tom. 9, p. 71.) If we condemn the Reformers for their intolerance, we surely cannot but admire their devotion.

ours could utter such a verdict, or the Protestant world of our day repeat the crime of the Protestant world of the sixteenth century, we see in this one of the proudest of the triumphs of that Protestantism which was then struggling into existence against the mighty opposing forces of Romanism on the one hand and of pantheism on the other.

In 1552, Servetus published clandestinely at Vienne the MS. volume which he had sent to Calvin in 1546. It bore the title of *Restitutio Christianismi*, or “Christianity Restored.” This led to his apprehension by the authorities of Vienne, where he was tried by the Inquisition. He managed to give his judges the slip, however, and was condemned in absence to be “burned alive, at a slow fire, till his body be reduced to a cinder.” The award of the court was carried out by the substitution of the effigy of Servetus for Servetus himself.¹¹ Escaping from Vienne he came, of all places, to Geneva! “If ever poor fanatic thrust himself into the flames,” says Coleridge, “it was Servetus.”

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

Calvin had not induced Servetus to come to Geneva; he had in fact, by refusing him a safe-conduct, warned him off the territory of the republic; nevertheless, now that he was come, he did what the constitutional laws of Geneva required of him;—he reported his presence in the city to the Council, and demanded his apprehension.¹² Servetus was committed to prison on the 13th of August. The law required the accuser to go to prison with the accused till the charge should be so far substantiated as to warrant its being taken up by the public prosecutor. Nicholas de la Fontaine, a young student, and secretary to the Reformer, entered himself as accuser.¹³ The articles

¹¹Allwoerden, p. 54.

¹²“One of the syndics, at my instigation, committed him to prison.” (To Sultzer, 9th September, 1553.) Spon, in his *History of Geneva*, says that Servetus had begun to dogmatise in the city. Bolsec says that he was arrested on the day of his arrival. It is now generally admitted that he remained a month in Geneva.

¹³Registers of the Council, 14th August, 1553.

of accusation, extracted from the writings of Servetus, were drawn up by Calvin, and presented next day to the tribunal.

Fontaine was unequal to the task of confronting so subtle and eloquent an opponent as Servetus. The Council saw this, and at its second meeting all the ministers were requested to appear. Calvin now at length stood face to face with his adversary. The Reformer's severe logic soon unmasked the real opinions of the man, and forced him to admit the frightful conclusions to which they led; but if he put forth all his power in arguing with Servetus, it was not to procure a conviction, but a recantation, and save the unhappy man from the flames. "No great danger hung over him," he declared, "if he could possibly have been brought to his senses."¹⁴ "Would," he sorrowfully exclaimed at a later period—"Would that we could have obtained a recantation from Servetus, as we did from Gentilis!"¹⁵

It must be acknowledged that Servetus on his trial, both at Vienne and Geneva, showed neither courage nor truthfulness. At the former place he behaved badly indeed. He disowned his books, denied his handwriting, uttered repeatedly falsehoods on oath, and professed himself a son of his "holy mother the Church." Swollen with insolence and venting defiance while at liberty, he proved a very craven before the Inquisition. How different from the noble sincerity and courage of the martyrs of Protestantism, who at that very time were expiring amid the flames at Lyons! His behavior before the Council at Geneva was characterised by alternate insolence and cowardice. When confronted only with Nicholas de la Fontaine, he professed that he had not intended to blaspheme, and that he was ready to recant.¹⁶ When Calvin was introduced, he broke into a tempest of rage, denounced the Reformer as his personal enemy, again and again called him a liar, and styled him a corrupter of the Word of God, a foe to Christ, a sorcerer, "Simon Magus." This coming after twenty years' vituperation and abuse, to which Calvin's reply had been a dignified silence, was more than the Reformer could bear, and he became heated in his turn and, as he himself said to Farel, "answered him as he deserved."

¹⁴Calvin, *Refut. Err. Servet.*, p. 517.

¹⁵P. Henry, vol. 2, p. 194.

¹⁶P. Henry, vol. 2, p. 195.

The scene revealed the man to his judges. The blasphemies which he avowed, and not less the haughtiness with which he defended himself, shocked and revolted them. The Trinity he styled “a three-headed Cerberus,”¹⁷ a hell-hound.” Some of the suppositions he made to discredit the Incarnation were simply indecent, and we pass them by. “If the angels,” he said, “were to take the body of asses, you must allow they would be asses, and would die in their asses’ skins. So too you must allow that, on your supposition being right, God himself might become an ass, and the Holy Spirit a mule. Can we be surprised if the Turks think us more ridiculous than mules and asses?” Calvin truly divined the deeper error beneath these—the denial of a personal God—that is, of God. “His frenzy was such,” says the Reformer, writing to Farel,¹⁸ “that he did not hesitate to say that the Divinity dwells even in devils. The Godhead is essentially communicated to them as it is to wood and to stones.” “What, unhappy man,” replied Calvin, “if any one treading upon this floor should say to you that he was treading your God under his feet, would you not be scandalised at such an assertion?” He answered, “I, on the contrary, do not doubt but that this footstool, or anything else which you may point out, is the substance of God.” When it was again objected to him, “Then will the devil actually be God,” he answered with a peal of laughter, “And can you doubt it?”¹⁹

[323] We have narrated in former chapters the war now waging between Calvin and the Council of Geneva. The First Syndic, Perrin, was the Reformer’s mortal enemy. Other members of the Council, less influential, were equally the determined opponents of the Reformer, and were laboring for his overthrow. It was, in a word, the crisis of Calvin’s power in Geneva—that is, of all the Reformed laws and institutions of the republic. M. Rilliet of Geneva, in his *Life and Trial of Servetus*,²⁰ has conjectured that what tempted Servetus to enter Geneva at that time was his knowledge of the state of Parties there, and the hope of replacing Calvin, then in daily danger of banishment from the city. Be this as it may, the fact is undoubted that

¹⁷Allwoerden, p. 71.

¹⁸August 20th, 1553.

¹⁹Calvin, *Refut. Err. Servet.*, p. 522.

²⁰*Relation du Proces Criminel Intente a Geneve en 1553, contra Michael Servet, redigee d’apres les documents originaux, par Albert Rilliet; Geneve, 1844.*

the Libertines perceived the advantage they might derive by playing Servetus off against the Reformer; and Servetus, on the other hand, was aware of the advantage that might accrue to him from strengthening the Libertines against Calvin. As the battle went with Calvin, as the Libertines seemed now to prevail against him, and now to fall before him, Servetus was contemptuous and defiant, or timid and craven. But the tacit union of the two helped to bring on the ruin of both. The patronage of the pantheist by the Libertines wrought ill for Servetus in the end, by opening the eyes of the Council to the real issues at stake in the trial. The acquittal of Servetus, they saw, meant the expulsion of Calvin, and the triumph of the Libertines. This put the personal interference of the Reformer in the matter out of court, even if his influence had not at that moment been at zero. The magistrates felt that it was a question of life and death for the republic, and that they must decide it irrespective altogether of the wishes of Calvin, and on the high grounds of the interests of the State. ²¹

²¹Such is the conclusion at which Rilliet has arrived from a careful study of the records of the trial.

Chapter 20 : Calvin's Victory over the Libertines

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

Picture: Calvin and Servetus before the Council.

Picture: View of Geneva from the Lake.

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

in dances like those in which the pagans of old honoured the god Bacchus.

About a year and a half before this, Philip Bertheliot had been debarred the Communion-table by the Consistory. Philip was the son of that Berthelier who, in 1521, had spilt his blood for the liberty of the Fatherland. As the father had ennobled the State by his virtues, the son thought he had a right to disgrace it with his vices. “He was,” [325] says Bayle, “a bad liver.” He submitted quietly to the excommunication of the Consistory for a year and a half; but now, deeming the moment opportune, inasmuch as the tide was running against the Reformer and his policy, he appeared before the Council and demanded that it should annul the sentence of the Spiritual Court, and so restore him to communion with the Church. The Reformer hastened to the Council, and warned it of the fatal consequences of complying with Berthelier’s request, he urged strongly that the edicts of the republic gave the Council no power concerning excommunication, and that to bind and loose ecclesiastically was to effect a revolution. The Reformer’s remonstrance was disregarded. The Council released Berthelier from the spiritual sentence, and opened his way to the Communion-table. The axe was laid at the root of the ecclesiastical discipline, and the days of the Genevan Republic were, to all appearance, numbered.

From the council-chamber, where the fatal measure in which the Libertines saw the approaching downfall of the spiritual authority had been passed, Calvin hurried to the prison, where he and his colleagues were to be confronted with Servetus. This day (1st [326] September, 1553) it was resolved by the Council that the oral debates between the prisoner and the pastors should be dropped, and that the discussion should henceforward be carried on in writing. This change was supported by Perrin and Berthelier, who were there, flushed with the victory of the morning. The proposal made in the interests of Servetus,¹ who was supposed to be more eloquent with his pen than with his voice, was adopted, and it brought with it a marked change in his demeanor, which Rilliet thus describes: “What demonstrates with the clearest evidence the hope which the prisoner placed in the power of his protectors, is the language which from that

¹Rilliet, *Relation du Proces Criminel*, etc., p. 160.

time he adopted, and the open, furious, mortal war which he waged against the Reformer, now become the object of his direct attacks. Servetus threw himself, with all the ardour of a man well-nigh sure of victory, into a path where, by his own confession, he wished to pursue his opponent, ‘even till the cause be terminated by the death of him or me.’”

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

Time pressed. The day after the morrow was the first Sunday of September, when, according to a custom universal in the French Reformed churches, the Communion was to be celebrated ³ and, unless the edict were revoked, Berthelier would then present himself at the sacred table with the warrant of the Council in his hand. The Reformer, without a moment’s delay, assembled all the pastors, alike of town and country, and putting himself at their head, proceeded to the Great Council. He showed, with characteristic energy, the brink to which the decision of the Little Council had brought the republic; that that decision was a manifest violation of both the laws of the State and the rules of Scripture; and that if persisted in it would sweep away all that had been done during the past ten years for the reformation of manners, and render hopeless all efforts in the future. In short, it was a revolution. The whole people, he said, had with uplifted hands adopted the edict establishing the spiritual power in the spiritual court, and “he would die rather than tolerate, contrary

²Ibid., p. 162.

³Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 38;

to his conscience, an excommunicated man at the sacred table.”⁴ In this protest the pastors to a man joined, all declaring that rather than suffer the contemplated profanation they would “lay down their offices and leave their churches.”⁵ The Council answered that it “changed nothing in its decree.”⁶ In taking into its own hands the spiritual authority, the Council, it might be unwittingly, assumed the right of trying and adjudging Servetus. It said to the Consistory, Stand aside; you are dissolved as a court having jurisdiction; we assume the function and responsibility of giving judgment on all persons and causes, civil and spiritual.

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

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

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⁴Rilliet, p. 164. Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 38.

⁵Ibid, p. 165.

⁶Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 38.

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

The customary hour of public worship was now come. The great bell Clemence had tolled out its summons. The throng of worshippers on their way to the cathedral had rolled past, and now the streets, which had resounded with their tread, were empty and silent. Over city, plain, and lake there brooded a deep stillness. It was around the pulpit of St. Peter's, and the man with pale face, commanding eye, and kingly brow who occupied it, that the heart of Geneva palpitated. The church was filled with an uneasy crowd. On the benches of the Consistory sat, unmoved, the pastors and elders, resolved to bear the greatest violence rather than not do their duty. A confused noise was heard within the temple. The congregation opened with difficulty, and a numerous band of men, of all ranks, their hands upon their sword-hilts, forced their way in presence of the holy table. The elite of the Libertines had decided to communicate. Berthelier did not appear as yet. He reserved himself till the last moment. ⁷ Calvin, calm as ever, rose to begin the service. He could not but see the group of Libertines in the vast congregation before

⁷Gaberel, *Hist. de l'Eglise de Geneve*, tom. 1, p. 311.

him, but he seemed as if he saw them not. He preached on the state of mind with which the Lord's Supper ought to be received. At the close, raising his voice, he said.⁸ "As for me, so long as God shall leave me here, since he hath given me fortitude, and I have received it from him, I will employ it, whatever betide; and I will guide myself by my Master's rule, which is to me clear and well known. As we are now about to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, if any one who has been debarred by the Consistory shall approach this table, though it should cost my life, I will show myself such as I ought to be."⁹

When the liturgies were concluded, Calvin came down from the pulpit and took his stand before the table. Lifting up the white napkin he displayed the symbols of Christ's body and blood, the food destined for believing souls. Having blessed the bread and wine, he was about to distribute them to the congregation. At that moment there was seen a movement among the Libertines as if they would seize the bread and the cup. The Reformer, covering the sacred symbols with his hands, exclaimed in a voice that rang through the edifice, "These hands you may crush; these arms you may lop off; my life you may take; my blood is yours, you may shed it; but you shall never force me to give holy things to the profane, and dishonor the table of my God."¹⁰ These words broke like a thunder-peal over the Libertines. As if an invisible power had flung back the ungodly host, they slunk away abashed, the congregation opening a passage for their retreat.¹¹ A deep calm succeeded; and "the sacred ordinance," says Beza, "was celebrated with a profound silence, and under a solemn awe in all present, as if the Deity himself had been visible among them."¹²

Than the transaction we have just narrated, we know nothing more truly sublime in the whole history of the Reformation, that epoch of heroic men and of grand events. The only thing we can compare with it is Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms. If we abstract the dramatic accompaniments of the latter scene—the gorgeous hall; the majesty of the emperor; the blaze of princely and knightly rank gathered round him; the glitter of stars and decorations;

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⁸Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 39.

⁹Rilliet, pp. 166, 167. Rilliet quotes the passage from the unpublished History of Geneva by Gautier. The sermon was taken down by a notary, translated by Beza, and sent

the men-at-arms; the lackeys and other attendants-and look only at the principle at stake, and the wide and lasting good achieved by the prompt vindication of that principle, the act of Calvin in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, in 1553, stands side by side, its equal in spiritual sublimity and heroism, with the act of Luther in the Hall of Worms, in 1521. "I cannot," said Luther. "I will not," said Calvin. The one repelled the tyrant, the other flung back the mob; the one stemmed the haughtiness of power, the other bridled the raging fury of ungodliness; in both the danger was equal, in both the faith and fortitude were equal, and each saved the Reformation at a great crisis.

These two acts, Luther's at Worms and Calvin's in St. Peter's, were in fact two beacon-lights kindled by providence for the instruction of Europe. They were hung out at the opening of a new epoch, to enable Christendom to pilot itself past two tremendous dangers that lay right in its course. The one of these dangers was only beginning to be visible. The conflict waged in St. Peter's on Sunday, the 3rd of September, 1553, showed how that danger was to be avoided. A Protestant Church, scripturally constituted, and faithfully governed, was the only possible breakwater against that lawless pantheism which was even then lifting up its head and threatening society with ruin. Such was the lesson taught by the heroic act in St. Peter's. Calvin was the first man against whom the foul and furious tide of communism dashed itself; it broke against the pulpit of St. Peter's before it precipitated itself upon the throne of France. It has since with swelling and triumphant crest overwhelmed parliaments and dynasties, laid prostrate thrones and devastated kingdoms; but in contemplating these dismal tragedies it becomes us to call to mind that the Reformer of Geneva confronted this communism 300 years ago, that he confronted it single-handed, and conquered it. Had the principles of Protestantism been rooted and grounded in every parish of France, yielding the same spiritual fruits as they did at Geneva, how different would have been the history of a people to whom na-

to Bullinger, at Zurich. The sermon, says Rilliet, "is not in the MS. collection at Geneva, where the discourses of the year 1553 are wanting."

¹⁰Gaberel, tom. 1, p. 312; Geneve, 1853.

¹¹Bungener, p. 220.

¹²Beza, ann. 1553.

ture has given a genius so manifold that it would have shone equally in the beauty of their arts and in the grace and brilliancy of their literature; in the valor of their arms, and the equity of their jurisprudence; in the purity of their homes, and in the freedom and stability of their public institutions. But continuing under the malign power of a corrupted and a corrupting faith, this race, so richly endowed, has had its great qualities transformed into headlong passions which have entailed upon country and throne three centuries of calamities and woes.

Chapter 21 : Apprehension and Trial of Servetus

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

Picture: Calvin Preaching his Farewell Sermon in Expectation of Banishment.

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

The Reformer had escaped the greater danger, even death, which the Libertines hinted would be the penalty of refusal, but exile still hung over him. In the evening of the same Sunday he ascended the pulpit, to take farewell of the flock from which he expected the coming day would see him parted probably for ever. He chose as the subject of his discourse Paul’s farewell address to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, and the scene witnessed that night on the

banks of the Leman was almost as touching as that enacted fifteen centuries before on the shores of the Aegean.¹ Closing his sermon and spreading out his hands over his loving flock, for the last time as he believed, he said, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace." The words were mingled with the sobs and tears of those to whom they were spoken.

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

In order to an accurate idea of the trial, and of the various interests that combined to guide it to its deplorable issue, we must briefly review the steps already taken. On the 13th of August, Calvin, having learned that Servetus was in Geneva, demanded his arrest. But Genevese law required the accuser to go to prison along with the accused till he had shown reasonable grounds for his accusation. Nicholas de la Fontaine, the secretary of Calvin, gave himself up in the stead of the Reformer. Next day a complaint in thirty-eight articles, drawn up, as we have said, by Calvin, was presented against Servetus. On the morrow the Council assembled in the Criminal Audience Chamber in the prison, and Servetus, having been interrogated on the articles, demanded a public disputation, promising to confute Calvin from Scripture and the Fathers. The prisoner further urged that it did not become a civil court to adjudicate on such matters. Here was a door opened for the Council to escape responsibility, had it chosen. "But" says Rilliet, "the magistrates refused to entertain the proposal, though Calvin for his part agreed, and protested that, as far as regarded him, 'there was nothing that he more desired than to plead such a cause in the temple before all the people.'" Why, we ask, this refusal on the part of the magistrates? Rilliet answers, "The Council feared, no doubt, that it would thus dispossess itself of the cognisance of an affair which stood connected with the prerogatives of which it had recently appeared so jealous;"

¹Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 39.

² that is, the Council was then struggling to shut out the Consistory, and to secure to itself the spiritual as well as the civil government of Geneva.

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

Tomorrow (16th August) when the Council assembled to prosecute the affair, two new parties appeared on the arena. These were Philibert Berthelier, the Libertine opponent of Calvin, and M. Germain Colladon, a Protestant refugee, and a man learned in the law. Colladon was associated with Fontaine in the defense and prosecution. These two—Berthelier and Colladon, were representatives of the two parties into which Geneva was divided, and their appearance indicated that the affair was tending to wider issues than any personal to Servetus; in short, it was becoming the battle-ground on which the question was to be determined whether Libertine Pantheism or the Protestant faith should hold possession of Geneva. Such is the inference of Rilliet, who says: “Each of the antagonists saw behind the proceedings carried on in the bishop’s palace, the interest of the parties who disputed for Geneva.” ³

It appears from the minutes that, at this meeting of Council, Berthelier undertook the defense of Servetus, and strongly argued in favor of his peculiar doctrines as well as of himself; Colladon attacked with equal ardour both the errors and their author; the violence of the debate extended itself to the Council, and the sitting, which was a stormy one, was abruptly terminated. ⁴

[330] This scene brought forward a more powerful man than any who

²Rilliet (Tweedie’s translation), p. 107.

³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴Berthelier’s defense of Servetus is mentioned also by Roset (lib. 5, chap. 50, 51), and Beza (ann. 1553).

had hitherto appeared in the prosecution. Berthelier was at that moment under excommunication by the Consistory, and he had a petition lying on the table of the Council to have the sentence of the spiritual court cancelled. It was thus tolerably plain that his championship of Servetus was inspired not so much by the wish to defend the prisoner, as by his desire to overthrow the Consistory. "Calvin felt," says Rilliet, "that the moment had arrived for him to appear, and boldly to resist the hostilities against himself, of which Servetus was about to become the occasion,"⁵ if he would not see his whole work in Geneva swept away; accordingly the very next day he declared that he would appear as accuser. "The Reformer was now invited by the Council to assist, 'in order that his errors might be better demonstrated,' and to have 'whomsoever he chose with him' at the examinations of the prisoner.'" ⁶ At the first meeting after this, at which Calvin was present, a sharp debate took place between him and Servetus. The issue was that the Council found that the charges contained in the indictment were proven from the books given in, in evidence, and the prisoner's own confessions. ⁷ Fontaine had previously been discharged from prison; now he was released from his obligation to prosecute, and the affair was taken entirely into the hands of the Attorney-General. ⁸

The second act of the trial opened on the 21st of August. Their Excellencies in Council assembled resolved as follows: - "Inasmuch as the case of heresy of M. Servetus vitally affects the welfare of Christendom, it is resolved to proceed with his trial." ⁹ At this sitting, Calvin and the ministers, his colleagues, were introduced by the Attorney-General. They were wanted to give their evidence as to the meaning of the word person, as used in certain passages of the Fathers. Servetus taught that the person of the Son of God had no existence prior to the Incarnation. He held that Christ existed from all eternity only as an idea, not as a person, in the essence or

⁵Rilliet, p. 113.

⁶Ibid., p. 114.

⁷The nature of these errors we have already stated, but it does not concern us to go at large into their truth or atrocity, seeing either way we condemn the burning of Servetus. Our duty is to show, as fairly and clearly as we can, the exact connection which the Reformer and the Reformation had with this sad affair.

⁸Rilliet, pp. 120, 121.

⁹Ibid., p. 122.

bosom of God, and that the term Son of God is applied in Scripture to Christ Jesus as a man. ¹⁰ He cited passages from Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Clement, favorable as he thought to this opinion; and it was to give judgment on Servetus' interpretation of these passages that the pastors were now summoned. The service asked of them they rendered. At the meeting on the 23rd, the Attorney-General produced a new indictment against Servetus. It differed considerably from that which Fontaine had given in when the prisoner was first arrested, and which had been drawn up by Calvin. This new indictment dropped the theological errors of Servetus out of view altogether, well-nigh, and gave marked prominence to his offenses against society. Its title ran thus: - "These are the interrogations and articles upon which the Attorney-General of this city desires to question Michael Servetus, a prisoner, guilty of blasphemies, of heresies, and of disturbing Christendom." "If Servetus had had, in the eyes of Genevese justice," says Rilliet, "no other fault than that of which De la Fontaine had declared him guilty in regard to Calvin, his acquittal had been sure." "If Calvin alone," he continues, "had been concerned in the affair of Servetus, all his efforts would have been unavailing to secure the condemnation of his adversary." "Servetus was tried," says he again, "and, as we shall mention below, condemned by the majority of his judges, not at all as the opponent of Calvin-scarcely as a heretic-but essentially as seditious. Politics acted a much more important part than theology, towards the close of this trial-they came on the stage with the Attorney-General." ¹¹ Servetus saw the new position in which he stood, and strove to defend himself against the charges of the Attorney-General, not by denying that his opinions were theologically false, but by trying to show that they were not socially dangerous. This defense he followed up with a petition to the magistrates, in which he labored to convince them that his opinions at the worst were only speculative errors, and not practical seditions; and, adds Rilliet, had he been able

¹⁰Allwoerden, *Hist. M. Serveti*, p. 109.

¹¹Rilliet, p. 131. Such is the dispassionate judgment of one who has thoroughly weighed the documentary and historical evidence of this melancholy affair, and who has suffered himself to be blinded by no veneration for Calvin, or sympathy with his work.

to make it appear that they were “divested of all practical results, the issue of his trial would not have been fatal.”¹²

There came, at this stage of the business, a series of discussions on points which we cannot help thinking were irrelevant. Servetus was interrogated respecting his persistency in publishing his opinions, seeing he knew they were condemned by ancient Councils and imperial decrees, and the evil he had done or wished to do society by maintaining them. He replied, with ability and apparent frankness, that believing it to be the truth which he held, he would have offended God if he had not published it; that the ecclesiastical edicts and imperial decrees, which menaced him with death for these opinions, dated from a period when the Church had become more or less corrupt, and that the Church in apostolic times knew no such edicts, nor approved the doctrine of repelling opinion by force. These were truths, and the only mistake about them—to Servetus a very serious one—was that they came three centuries too soon, and were addressed to judges who were incapable of feeling their force. But when the prisoner affirmed that he had hardly ever spoken to any one on his peculiar opinions, he stated what it was impossible to reconcile with the known fact of his twenty years’ active diffusion of his sentiments in Germany and France.

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This was the very week in which the struggle between Calvin and the Libertines came to a crisis.¹³ The authority, and it might be the life of the Reformer, hung upon the issue of that contest. Servetus from his prison watched the ebb and flow of the battle, and was humble and bold by turns, as victory appeared to incline now to Calvin and now to the Libertines. The approaching Sunday was that of the September Communion, and Berthelier, as we have seen, held an order from the Council, authorising him to appear at the holy table.

This seemed the death-warrant of Calvin’s power. We can trace the influence of this turn of affairs upon Servetus. The Council had ordered Calvin to extract from his works, and to present without note or comment, those propositions in them which he deemed false. In obedience to the order, the Reformer drew up thirty-eight

¹²Rilliet, p. 140.

¹³See previous chapter.

articles,¹⁴ which were given to the prisoner to be answered by him. But Servetus' reply bore the character of a bitter attack upon the Reformer, rather than that of a defense of himself. "Wretch," said he, apostrophising Calvin, "do you think to stun the ears of the judges by your barking? You have a confused intellect, so that you cannot understand the truth. Perverted by Simon Magus, you are ignorant of the first principles of things—you make men only blocks and stones, by establishing the slavery of the will."¹⁵ To write thus within the walls of a prison, was to be very sure of victory!

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

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

The scene that took place in the Cathedral of St. Peter's the very next day we have already narrated. But the Reformer did not

¹⁴Rilliet, p. 163.

¹⁵Rilliet, p. 171.

account it enough that he refused to obey in a matter which the laws of the State gave no right to the Council to command; he resolved, although at the risk of life, to maintain the battle, and reconquer the lost prerogative, without which he would not remain in Geneva.

On the 7th September, Calvin and his colleagues went to the Little Council, with the text of the Ecclesiastical Ordinances, and appealing to the letter of the law he showed the Council that the Ordinances gave it no power concerning excommunication, and that what it had done was a subversion of the Constitution of Geneva. He further craved the Council to make known its final determination upon the point, that he and his colleagues might be able to regulate their conduct as regarded resigning or retaining their functions in Geneva. The Council took three days to consider the matter, and, adds the Register, it “commanded that meanwhile

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M. Calvin must preach and do his duty.” On the 18th September, the Council passed a resolution declaring that “it would adhere to the edicts as it had hitherto done.”¹⁶ This reply, in point of ambiguity, was almost Delphic. Interpreted by recent edicts, it meant that the Council saw nothing inconsistent with the edicts in what they had done, and would still retain in their own hands the ecclesiastical government. Still the Reformer did not view it as justifying him in abandoning his work in Geneva, and Farel and other friends wrote at this crisis earnestly beseeching him not to quit his post.

Meanwhile Servetus was busy in his prison with his annotations on Calvin’s reply. The unhappy man, believing that his friends, the Libertines, who communicated with him through the jailer, were on the eve of triumphing, and that the Reformer was as good as fallen, was no longer at pains to conceal his intense hatred of the latter. Writing between the lines and on the margin of Calvin’s document, he expressed himself in the following melancholy terms—“You howl like a blind man in desert places, because the spirit of vengeance burns in your heart. You lie, you lie, you lie, you ignorant calumniator.”¹⁷ There followed a good deal more in the same vein. The Reformer was shown the writing, but leaving to Servetus the last word, he deigned no reply.

¹⁶Rilliet, pp. 179-181.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 184, 185. Ruchat, tom. 6, p.41.

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

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

Chapter 22 : Condemnation and Death of Servetus

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

Picture: Servetus on his Way to Execution.

Picture: View in Geneva.

In the resolution to which the magistrates of Geneva had come, to lay the affair of Servetus before the Swiss Reformed Churches, we see the Churches of Helvetia formed into a jury. Pending the verdict, which it would seem Servetus did not for a moment doubt would be entirely in his favor, the accused took another step against Calvin. From his prison, on the 22nd of September, he sent to the Council a list of "articles on which

M. Servetus wishes J. Calvin to be interrogated." He there accuses Calvin of having falsely imputed to him the opinion that the soul is mortal. "If I have said that-not merely said it, but publicly written it-to infect the world, I would condemn myself to death. Wherefore, my lords, I demand that my false accuser be punished, poena talionis, and that he be detained a prisoner like me, till the cause be decided for his death or mine, or other punishment." ¹ Servetus had formerly declined the civil jurisdiction in matters theological; he now, in the hope of placing the Reformer in the same hazard as himself, accepts that jurisdiction in those very matters in which he had before declined it. And further, he makes it plain that

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¹Rilliet, p. 189.

he was not more liberal than his age, in holding that a conviction for heresy ought to draw after it the punishment of death.

Meanwhile the State messenger was making his circuit of the four cities, sojourning long enough in each to permit the magistrates and pastors to consider the documents, and make up their minds. At the end of nearly a month, the messenger returned. The answers of the cities and pastors were given in to the Council on the 18th of October: they were eight in all, there being a deliverance from the Government and a deliverance from the Church in each case. The verdict eight times pronounced, with awful unanimity, was death. Thus, outside the territory of Geneva, was the fate of Servetus decided.² About the same time that the suffrages of the Swiss Churches were given in, an officer arrived at Geneva from the tribunal of Vienne. This man carried an order from his masters empowering him to demand the surrender of the prisoner, and bring him to Vienne, that he might undergo the sentence that had been passed upon him. Their Lordships of Geneva replied that it was not their custom to give up one charged with a crime till he had been either acquitted or condemned. However, confronting Servetus with the Viennese officer, they asked him whether he would remain with them or go back with the person who had come to fetch him. The unhappy man with tears in his eyes replied, "Messieurs of Geneva, judge me according to your good pleasure, but do not send me back with the hangman." This interference of the Roman Catholic authorities of Vienne hastened the fate of the prisoner.³

The Council of Geneva assembled on the 26th of October to give judgment. The discussion was a stormy one. Perrin, with the Libertines, fought hard to save the accused; but the preponderating majority felt that the case could have but one issue. Servetus had already been condemned by the Popish tribunal of Vienne; the tribunal of the Swiss Reform had unanimously condemned him; the codes of Theodosius and Justinian, which still formed the basis of the criminal jurisprudence of Geneva, condemned him; and the universal opinion of Christendom, Popish and Protestant, held him

²The replies of the magistrates and pastors of the four cities will be found in Ruchat, tom. 6, pp. 43-48; and Dr. Tweedie's translation of Rilliet, *Relation du Procès Criminel*, Etc. (Appendix).

³Gaberel, tom. 2, p. 256.

to be worthy of death. To these considerations was added the horror his sentiments had inspired in all minds. Not only did his opinions outrage the fundamental doctrines of the then common creed of Christendom; they assailed with atrocious blasphemy the persons of the Trinity; and they tore up, in their last consequences, the roots of society, by striking down conscience within man, and the power of law without him. What day the Council acquitted Servetus, it pronounced the dissolution of the State, political and religious, and opened the flood-gates on Christendom of those horrible impieties and massacring crusades which had already inflicted fearful havoc in many of the provinces of Germany. Europe, they believed, would not hold them guiltless if they let loose this plague a second time. Therefore, without consulting Calvin, without even thinking of him, and viewing the question as a social rather than a theological one, and dealing with it as sedition rather than heresy for, says Rilliet, “the principles of order, as then understood, did not permit them longer to hesitate as to whether or not they should see in them [i.e., the opinions of Servetus] the crime of treason against society”⁴ -the magistrates of Geneva closed their Diet of the 26th of October with a decree condemning Servetus to death. “Let him,” so ran the decree of the Council, as described in the Register, “be condemned to be led to Champel, and there burned alive, and let him be executed tomorrow, and his books consumed.”⁵

We record with horror the sentence, but it is the sentence not of the magistrates of Geneva only, nor of the magistrates and pastors of Reformed Switzerland only: it is the sentence of the Christendom of that age, for the Inquisition on one side, and Melancthon on the other, are heard expressing their concurrence in it. At this supreme hour one man alone comes forward to attempt a mitigation of the punishment of Servetus. Who is that man? He is John Calvin. He earnestly interceded with the Council, not that the unfortunate victim might be spared, but that the sword might be substituted for the fire; but he interceded in vain. “It is to him, notwithstanding,” says Rilliet,

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⁴Rilliet, p. 205.

⁵Ibid., p. 208.

“that men have always imputed the guilt of that funeral pile, which he wished had never been reared.”⁶

We must pursue this affair to its appalling and scandalous termination. Farel, who had been watching from Neuchatel the progress of the trial, came suddenly to Geneva at its close. He was present with the unhappy man when the message of death was brought him. Up till that moment Servetus had clung to the hope of acquittal. He was horror-struck when the dreadful reality disclosed itself to him. “He was at intervals,” says Calvin, “like one mad-then he uttered groans, which resounded through his chamber-anon he began to howl like one out of his senses. In brief, he had all the appearance of a demoniac. At last his outcry was so great that he without intermission exclaimed in Spanish, striking his breast, ‘Mercy!

mercy!’” A terrible picture! and one cannot but wish that, with its graphic touches, there had mingled a little more of that pity which it needs must awaken for the sufferer in the heart of every one who reads it. When his first paroxysm had subsided, Farel, addressing Servetus, besought him “to repent of his sins, and confess the God who had thrice revealed himself.”⁷ This appeal but rekindled the polemical pride of the unhappy man. Turning to the aged evangelist, he asked him to produce a single passage from Scripture where Christ was called the Son of God previous to his coming in the flesh. Farel quoted several such passages; but Servetus, though he had nothing to reply, remained unconvinced, and continued to mingle cries for mercy, and appeals to Christ as his Savior, with his disputation with Farel, in which he maintained that Christ was not eternal, nor otherwise the Son of God except as regards his humanity.⁸

After this he requested, or at least consented, to see Calvin. The Reformer was accompanied to the prison by two members of Council, for it was just possible that the condemned would make a retraction, and the terrible necessity of his death be avoided. Being asked by one of the councillors what he had to say to Calvin,

⁶We have followed chiefly in this narration the authority of Rilliet, because he has examined all the existing documents, and speaks throughout with the dispassionateness of a judge. Any bias he indicates is in favor of Servetus, and against Calvin.

⁷Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 51. Henry, *Life of Calvin*, vol. 2, p. 218; Lond., 1849.

⁸tom. 2, p. 262.

Servetus answered that he desired to ask his pardon. "I protest," replied the Reformer, "that I have never pursued against you any private quarrel." Mildly, yet with the utmost fidelity, Calvin went on to remind Servetus of the pains he had been at to prevent him plunging into these destructive errors; and he counselled him, even now, to turn to God, and cast himself by repentance and faith on his Son for pardon.⁹ But Calvin had no better success than Farel; and, finding that he could effect nothing, he withdrew.

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

As yet Servetus was ignorant, that he was to die by fire. Calvin had earnestly besought the Council that the miserable man might be spared this terrible surprise, but he had pleaded in vain. The magistrates would not permit him to influence their proceedings in the matter, even to the extent of substituting the sword for the stake. It was the morning of the 27th of October, the day named for execution; Farel and some country ministers were with Serve-

⁹Rilliet, p. 212. Ruchat, tom. 5, p. 51. Henry, vol. 2, pp. 218, 219.

[336] tus as early as seven o'clock. The precious hours would seem to have passed in wretched polemical discussions on the part of the condemned, who seemed more intent on triumphing in the argument with the pastors, than prevailing in his suit at the gates of the Eternal Mercy. It was now eleven o'clock in the forenoon. The Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by the Secretary of Justice, entered the prison, and addressed Servetus in the customary words, "Come with me and hear the good pleasure of my lords."¹⁰ He was led before the court. "The staff was broken over his head,"¹¹ as was the wont with criminals adjudged to death, and the sentence was then read by the presiding syndic. Scarcely had the last words, which doomed him "to be fastened to a stake, and burned alive, till his body be reduced to ashes," fallen on his ears, when he cast himself at the feet of his judges, entreating that he might be permitted to die by the sword,"¹² saying that if he had erred, he had erred through ignorance, and that his opinions were conformable to the Word of God. The syndics remained inexorable. Turning to the prisoner, Farel said that he must first disavow his errors, and then ask forgiveness. Again Servetus obstetted his innocence, saying that he was being led to death as a sacrifice, and that he prayed God to forgive his accusers. Farel, with a sternness which is at least remarkable, threatened, should Servetus persist in these protestations of innocence, to leave him, and not go with him to the stake. The wretched man, feeling that in parting with Farel he was parting with the last poor renant of human sympathy and comfort left him, held his peace.¹³

[337] Doom has been spoken, and now the procession is marshalled and descends the steps of the town-hall. The Lord Lieutenant and

¹⁰Rilliet, p. 213.

¹¹Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 51.

¹²Allwoerden, p. 113.

¹³Gaberel, tom. 2, p. 264.-On both sides we see a resoluteness, a tenacity, and a depth of conviction which many in this age will have great difficulty in understanding. On the one side there is not a word of yielding; on the other not a word of consolation. It does not seem to have occurred to Servetus, to his credit be it said, to save himself by a false retractation; nor does Farel believe it possible to utter one word of comfort or hope till Servetus has been brought to renounce those doctrines which he held to be fatal. This imparts to the one side the air of obstinacy, to the other the aspect of severity. The earnestness of the sixteenth century is, we believe, the key to a scene that appears to us extraordinary.

the Herald, in the insignia of their office, head the way on horseback. Aghast, trembling, and pallid with terror, the white-haired Farel by his side, Servetus appears in the midst of the archers that form his escort. A crowd, smaller than usually assists at such sights, brings up the rear. The executioners had gone on before to prepare the funeral pile. The procession issued from the city by the gate of St. Anthony. They leave on the left the spot, now bare, where stood the celebrated Faubourg and Church of St. Victor, razed in 1534 for the defense of the city; on the right are the downs of Plain Palais, the Campus Martius of Geneva. The one recalled the sacrifices of the citizens for liberty, the other their gala-days of civic festival and military pomp. In the south, about a mile from the city gates, rose the little eminence of Champel, on the summit of which the stake had been fixed ¹⁴ Sobs and ejaculatory prayers burst from Servetus as he pursued his brief and bitter pilgrimage to the fire. “O God!” [338] he cried, “deliver my soul. Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father, have mercy on me.” Farel has no word of solace to offer; he moves along by the side of Servetus, half in sorrow, half in anger; this to us looks heartless-nay, cruel; but Farel doubtless felt that consolation he could not offer without being insincere, and doing violence to his own convictions. It was his uprightness that made him look so stern, for the more earnest he was for the true welfare of the unhappy man he was accompanying to the stake, all the more did he strive to bring him to place his eternal hopes, not upon the man-God, but upon the God-man. ¹⁵

The melancholy procession had now arrived at Champel. The stake that rose on its summit was the one dark object in a scene otherwise full of light and beauty. The vast plain, which lay outspread around the spot, wore a carpet of the richest foliage, now beginning to be chequered with the autumnal tints. The far-off mountains were tipped with the first silver of winter. In the center of the immense picture gleamed the blue Lemane, a mirror of polished steel. On the

¹⁴On the level or summit of Champel, says Rilliet, and not at the spot called Champ du Bourreau, should be placed the theater of executions. The latter place was the cemetery of the executed. (*Relation*, etc., p. 222, foot-note.)

¹⁵Servetus supplicated Christ as the “Son of the Eternal Father,” but he would not acknowledge him as the “Eternal Son of the Father.” In short, he saw in the Incarnation, not “God in the likeness of flesh,” but flesh in the likeness of God.

south of it were seen, rushing along in their winding course, the snow-grey waters of the Arve. On the north was the mighty amphitheatre of the woody Jura, which, entering France and sweeping down towards Savoy, showed its massy rampart cleft in the south-west to give passage to the Rhone. In this assemblage of riches one object alone appeared in naked desolation. At some distance rose the steep, barren, rocky Saleve, its blackness typical of the tragedy transpiring on the summit of the little Champel, on which it looked down.

Farel asks him whether he has wife or child, and would wish to make his will? Servetus makes him no answer.¹⁶ He asks again whether he has anything else to say, hoping till the last moment to hear him confess a Divine Redeemer. Sighing deeply, Servetus exclaims, "O God! O God!" Farel bids him ask the prayers of the people. He does so; Farel uniting his own exhortations to the same effect to the bystanders.¹⁷ While these supplications are being offered in silence, Servetus mounts the pile and seats himself on the log of wood which had been placed there for that purpose. He was fastened to the stake by an iron chain put round his body, and a rope twisted round his neck. The executioner now kindled the torch, and, approaching the pile, set fire to the wood. At the first glare of the flames Servetus gave a shriek so terrible that it made the crowd fall back.¹⁸ On his head was a wreath, woven of straw and leaves, sprinkled with brimstone, the sooner to suffocate him. His book, *Restitutio Christianismi*, was bound to his side, to be consumed with him.¹⁹ The fire burned but slowly, and he lived for half-an-hour at the stake.²⁰ Some narrators say that a little before expiring he cried aloud, "Jesus, Thou Son of the Eternal God, have mercy upon me!" Farel says, on the other hand, that he protested "in the midst of the flames, and in defiance of the whole Christian world, against the doctrine of the Trinity."

¹⁶Allwoerden, p. 123.

¹⁷See extract from Farel's letter to Hottinger-Ruchat, tom. 6, pp. 51, 52. *Calvini Opp.-Refut. Error. Serveti.*

¹⁸Allwoerden, p. 124.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 123.

²⁰*Ibid.*

A great historian exclaims that the stake of Servetus caused him greater horror than all the autos-da-fe of Rome. A signal inconsistency-as the burning of Servetus in a Protestant republic was-may no doubt strike one more than does a course of crime steadily and persistently pursued; but surely that mind is strangely constituted which is less moved to commiseration by thousands of victims than by one victim. The same century which witnessed the pile of Servetus saw some thirty or forty thousand fires kindled by the Church of Rome²¹ for the burning of Protestants. But we by no means plead the latter fact as a vindication of the former. We deplore-we condemn-this one pile. It was a violation of the first principles of Protestantism. To say more on this head, writing as we do in the nineteenth century, would be simply to declaim.

But let us not commit the injustice of Gibbon and those who have followed him. Let us not select one of the actors, and make him the scapegoat of his age. We have striven to give an impartial statement of facts, that the reader may know the precise share which Calvin had in this transaction, and the exact amount of condemnation to mete out to him. Calvin informed the Council of Servetus' arrival in Geneva; he drew up the articles of indictment from the writings of Servetus, the first time at his own instance, and the second time at the Council's order; and he maintained these when face to face with Servetus before the syndics. All this he could not decline to do without neglect of duty as president of the Consistory. All this he was bound to do by the law of the State. If we are to be discriminating in our censure, we must go farther back than the denunciation given in to the Council, and come to the order of things established at Geneva, which rendered this form of procedure in such cases imperative. It was a vicious jurisprudence; but it was the jurisprudence of former ages, and of that age, and the jurisprudence freely adopted by the citizens of Geneva. Those who condemn Calvin for conforming

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²¹“Everywhere else but in a Reformed city,” says Rilliet, “he [Servetus] might have perished without his memory recalling anything but a funeral pile and a victim” (p. 223). And we may add that, but for the “fierce light that burns” on Calvin, and the fact that his official duty connected him with the trial, his name would have been scarcely more associated with the death of Servetus than is that of Melancthon or Viret, or any other Reformer who was then alive, and who shared the responsibility of the affair equally with him.

to it in a matter of public duty, are in reality condemning him for not being wiser in judicial matters than all previous ages, his own included, and for not doing what there is no proof he had power to do, namely, changing the law of the State, and the opinions of the age in which he lived. Beyond what we have stated Calvin had no influence, and tried to exert none.

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

But further, it is only Protestants who are entitled to find fault with Calvin. No Romanist can utter a word of condemnation. No Romanist of Calvin's own age did condemn him,²² and no more can any Romanist of ours. The law of the Romish world to this day awards death by burning to heresy; and the Romanist who condemns the affair of Servetus, condemns what his Church then accounted, and still accounts, a righteous and holy deed; and so condemns his Church, and himself not less, as a member of it. He virtually declares that he ought to be a Protestant.

To Calvin, above all men, we owe it that we are able to rise above the error that misled his age. And when we think, with profound regret, of this one stake planted by Protestant hands, surely we are bound to reflect, with a gratitude not less profound, on the thousands

²²Bolsec, the bitterest of all Calvin's enemies, speaking of Servetus, says that he experienced "no regret at the death of so monstrous a heretic," and adds that "he was unworthy to converse with men." (Bungener, p. 239.)

of stakes which the teaching of Calvin has prevented ever being set up.²³

²³We are precluded from hearing Calvin in his own defense, because the death of Servetus was not brought as a charge against him during his lifetime. Still he refers twice to this affair in rebutting general accusations, and it is only fair to hear what he has to say. In his Declaration upon the Errors of Servetus, published a few months after his execution, Calvin says: "I made no entreaties that he might be punished with death, and to what I say, not only will all good people bear witness, but I defy even the wicked to say the contrary." In 1558 he published his Defence of the Secret Providence of God. The book was translated into English by the Reverend Henry Cole, D.D., of Clare Hall, Cambridge. In that work, pp. 128, 129 (English translation), is the following passage, in which Calvin is appealing to his opponents: - "For what particular act of mine you accuse me of cruelty I am anxious to know. I myself know not, unless it be with reference to the death of your great master, Servetus. But that I myself earnestly entreated that he might not be put to death his judges themselves are witnesses, in the number of whom at that time two were his staunch favorers and defenders." This would be decisive, did the original fully bear out the English rendering. Calvin's words are- "*Saevitiam meam in quo accuses, audire cupio: nisi forte in magistri tui Serveti morte, pro quo tamen me fuisse deprecatum testes sunt ipsi iudices, ex quorum numero tunc duo erant strenui ejus patroni.*" (Opp. Calvini, vol. 8, p. 646.) The construction of the words, we think, requires that the important clause should be read thus-I myself know not that act, unless it be with reference to your master, Servetus, for whom I myself earnestly interceded, as his judges themselves are witnesses, etc. If Calvin had said that he earnestly entreated that Servetus should not be put to death, we should have been compelled to believe he had changed his mind at the last moment. But we do not think his words imply this. As we read them they perfectly agree with all the facts. Now that M. Rilliet de Candolle has published the whole process, the following propositions are undeniable:-1. That Calvin wished for a capital sentence: he had intimated this as early as 1546 in his letter to Farel. 2. That when the time came the Council of Geneva had taken both the ecclesiastical and civil power into their own hands. 3. That the part Calvin acted was simply his statutory duty. 4. That he had no power either to condemn or save Servetus. 5. That the only party in Christendom that wished an acquittal were the Libertines. 6. That their object was the overthrow of the Reformation in Geneva. 7. That the sentence of the Council was grounded mainly on the political and social consequences of Servetus' teaching. 8. That Calvin labored to substitute decapitation for burning.

Chapter 23 : Calvin's Correspondence with Martyrs, Reformers

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

Picture: View of the Cathedral of Geneva.

Picture: King Edward VI.

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

There sat the man whom the death of Luther had left the one great chief of the movement. With undaunted brow and steadfast eye, he surveys the vast field around him, on which so many dangers gather and so many conflicts are being waged. Assailed by all passions and by every party, by the democracy below and by the kings above, the Reformer, nevertheless, pursued his Herculean task, and saw his work year by year taking deeper root and extending wider on all sides. Luther's energies declined as his years advanced, and he had the mortification, before he went to his grave, of seeing the Reformation in Germany beginning to lose the purity to which it owed the splendor of its early morning, and the power that made it in its noon the ruler of the Teutonic nations. But Calvin's latter years were his most triumphant, for neither did his powers decay nor his work stand still; on the contrary, the one continued to strengthen, and the other to advance, till his last hour on earth. His first years had been spent in elaborating the scheme of Christian doctrine:

his next were passed in constructing a spiritual machinery, through which the influence of his doctrine might go forth in order to the purifying and elevating of society; hence his efforts to hold Geneva, and to quell the infidel democracy, whose instincts taught it that its greatest enemy was Calvin's Gospel, and that it must crush it or be crushed by it. Having made good Geneva as a basis of Protestant operations, Calvin's third period was passed in planting his system abroad, and guiding, by his writings and letters, the Reformation in France, England, Switzerland, Poland, and other countries. There was no land where Calvin was not present.

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

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

¹Bonnet, Letters of Calvin, vol. 2, No. 327, and footnote, p. 414.

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Whilst there was one stake in the Place Champel, surrounding countries were lit up with a multitude of blazing stakes. But there was not one of these piles at which Calvin was not present, nor was there one of these sufferers who was not refreshed by his words amid the flames. In the July of 1553 two confessors were expecting death in the prisons of Lyons. Calvin received the tidings during the trial of Servetus, and when he was in the thick of his contest with the Libertines. He hastened to their dungeon, as it were, and by words from his own courageous yet tender heart comforted theirs. "That God," he told them, "who had called them to the honour of maintaining His truth, would lead them to martyrdom as by the hand." He bade them think of the "heavenly immortality" to which the "cross and shame and death" conducted, and of Him who waited, the moment these were ended, to wipe away all tears. One of these sufferers, who had been reached by the words of Calvin, thus thanked him: - "I could not tell you, sir and brother," wrote Louis Marsac, "the great comfort I received from the letters which you sent to my brother, Denis Peloquin, who found means of passing them to one of our brethren who was in an underground cell above me, and read them to me, because I could not read them, inasmuch as I can see nothing in my dungeon. I pray you, therefore, to persevere in aiding us always with like consolation, which invites us to weep and pray." When the little company of martyrs, of which Louis Marsac was one, were led forth to be burned, all appeared with halters round their necks except Louis. His enemies had spared him this indignity on the ground of his being nobly born. But so far from reckoning this as a favor, he even deemed the denial of it a dishonor, and asked why he was refused the collar of that "excellent order" of martyrs. ²

Of all the martyrdoms of the period, the most touching perhaps is that of "the five martyrs of Lyons." Natives of France, and desirous of taking part in the Reformation of their own country, they repaired to Lausanne to study theology and qualify themselves for the ministry. Having completed their course, they received licence to preach, and set out to begin their labours in France. They rested a few days in Geneva, and then passed on to their destined field, their spirits invigorated, we can well believe, by their brief stay in the capital of

²Laval., *Hist. of Reformation in France*, vol. 1, p. 82; Lond., 1737.

Protestantism, and especially by their converse with its great chief. Light they were destined to impart to their native France, but not in the way they had fondly hoped. On their journey to Lyons they met at the Bourg de Colonges, nigh to L'Ecluse, a stranger who offered himself as their fellow-traveller. They harbored no suspicion, and maintained no disguise in the company of their new acquaintance. Soon after their arrival at Lyons, they were arrested and thrown into prison. Their companion had betrayed them. Their fate having awakened great interest, powerful influence was used in their behalf³ at the court of France. The Bernese Government interceded for "their scholars" with the king. Some among the Romanists even, touched by their pure lives and their lovely characters, interested themselves for their safety. Meanwhile their trial proceeded at Lyons. The brutality of the judges was as conspicuous as the constancy of the prisoners. From the sentence of the Lyonnese court, which adjudged them to death, they appealed to the Parliament of Paris.

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

"We have been, for some days past, in deeper anxiety and sadness than ever," writes Calvin to them, when he had learned the final decision of their persecutors. Turning away from the throne of Henry II., "We shall," says he, "do our duty herein by praying to Him that He may glorify Himself more and more in your constancy, and that He may by the consolation of His Spirit sweeten and endear all that is bitter to the flesh, and so absorb your spirits in Himself, that in contemplating that heavenly crown you may be ready without regret to leave all that belongs to this world. If He has promised to strengthen with patience those who suffer chastisement for their

³The names of these five students were Martial Alba, of Montauban; Peter Ecrivain, of Gascony; Charles Favre, of Blanzac in Angoumois; Peter Navihères, of Limousin; and Bernard Seguin, of La Reole.

sins, how much less will He be found wanting to those who maintain his quarrel! He who dwells in you is stronger than the world.”⁴

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

On the 16th of May the five young students were led to the fire. They died with a heroism worthy of their age. “Being come to the place of execution,” says Crespin, “they ascended with a joyful heart the pile of wood, the two youngest first. The last who ascended was Martial Alba, the eldest of the five, who had a long time been on both his knees praying to the Lord. He asked Lieutenant Tignac to grant him a gift. The lieutenant said to him, ‘What willest thou?’ He said to him, ‘That I may kiss my brethren before I die.’ The lieutenant granted it to him. Then the said Martial kissed the four who were already bound, saying to each of them, ‘Adieu, adieu, my brother.’ The fire was kindled. The voices of the five confessors were heard still exhorting one another: ‘Courage, my brethren, courage!’ And these,” continues Crespin, “were the last words heard from the said five valiant champions and martyrs of the Lord.”⁵

What, one cannot refrain from asking, were the thoughts of Calvin, as he was told that another and another had fallen in the conflict? The feelings of a Caesar or of a Napoleon, as he surveys

⁴Bonnet, vol. 2, p. 374, No. 308.

⁵Crespin, *hist. des Mart.* 3, 228-236; Geneva, 1570.

the red field of his ambition, we can imagine. Every corpse stretched out upon it, every drop of blood that moistens its soil, is a silent accusation, and cries aloud against him. Far other were the feelings of Calvin as he cast his eye over the field around him, where so many, and these the noblest and purest of their age, languished in dungeons, or quivered on the rack, or were expiring amid flames. These were not soldiers who had been dragged into battle, and who had died to place a crown upon the brow of another. They were men who had been fighting the battles of their Savior, and who in dying had won for themselves the crown of life. Nor did the Reformer for one moment despair of a cause that was suffering these repeated tremendous losses. Losses, did we say? Where and to whom was there loss? Not to the martyr, who received an eternal life in place of the mortal one which he had laid down; nor to the cause, which waxed stronger with each new martyr, and received another and another pledge of final victory with every stake that was planted and every drop of blood that was spilt. That such was the effect of these martyrdoms, we quote the testimony of one who was no friend to Protestantism. "The fires were lighted everywhere," says Florimond de Raemond, "and as, on the one hand, the just severity of the law restrained the people within their duty, on the other, the obstinate resolution of those who were dragged to the gibbet astonished many. For they saw weak and delicate women seeking for torment in order to prove their faith, and on their way to death exclaiming, 'Only Christ, the Savior,' and singing some psalm; young maidens walking more gaily to execution than to the bridal-chamber; men rejoicing to behold the terrible preparations and instruments of death, and, half-burned and roasted, remaining like rocks against the waves of pain. These sad and constant sights excited some perturbation, not only in the souls of the simple but of the great, who were not able to persuade themselves that truth was not on the side of such as maintained it with so much resolution at the cost of their life." ⁶

The same Calvin who was by the side of the martyr on the scaffold was also with the statesman in his cabinet, and at times at the foot of the throne giving counsel to princes. Henry VIII. had died in 1547, and with him expired that peculiar scheme of Reform by which

⁶Bungener, p. 38.

[343] he aimed at abolishing the jurisdiction of the Pope, yet preserving the religion of Popery. His son, Edward VI., mounted the throne in his tenth year. The Duke of Somerset, now Lord Protector, had educated the young prince in the principles of the Protestant faith. The fine talents and noble character of the youthful monarch excited the highest hopes in Calvin, and he strove to win him more and more for the Gospel. Nor were the hopes which the Reformer cherished disappointed. It was during the reign of this pious prince, and the regency of Edward Seymour, Lord Protector, that the Reformation was established in England. Hence the correspondence of Calvin with Somerset, to whom he dedicated, June, 1548, his Commentary on the First Epistle to Timothy And hence, too, his remarkable letter to the same statesman in October of the same year, in which he states fully his sentiments touching what was necessary to complete the Reformation in England.

[344] This matter will come before us in its proper place. Meanwhile we note that the Reformer, in his letter to Lord Protector Somerset, insists on three things as necessary to the moral transformation of England: first, the preaching of the pure Word of God; second, the rooting out of abuses; and, third, the correction of vices and scandalous offenses. As regarded the first, the preaching of the Gospel, Calvin laid stress upon the manner as well as the doctrine—upon the life as well as the purity of the pulpit. “The people,” says he, “are to be so taught as to be touched to the quick, and feel that the Word of God is a ‘two-edged sword.’ I speak this, Monseigneur,” continues the Reformer, “because it appears to me that there is very little preaching of a lively kind in the kingdom, but that the greater part deliver it by way of reading from a written discourse...This preaching ought not to be lifeless but lively. Now you know, my Lord,” Calvin goes on to say, “how St. Paul speaks of the liveliness which ought to be in the mouth of good ministers of God, who ought not to make a parade of rhetoric in order to show themselves off, but the Spirit of God must resound in their voice.” In short, Calvin desiderated two things—“a good trumpet” and “a certain sound”—if the Lord Protector would reap fruit of his labours, and the Reformation be permanent in England. ⁷

⁷Bonnet, vol. 2, pp. 168-184, No. 229. Bungener, (Calvin, pp. 272, 273.

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

The bearer of these two books, the pastor Nicolas des Gallars, was received with marked respect at the court of England. The books were accompanied by a letter to the king, in which Calvin spoke with the plainness and honesty of the Reformer, yet, mindful that he was addressing a king, he adopted the tone not of a master but of a father. Holding up to him the example of Josiah, he exhorted the young monarch to “follow up the good work so happily begun;” he cautioned him against viewing it as achieved, and that it was “not in a day that such an abyss of superstition as the Papacy is to be purged.” “True it is, sire,” said he, “that there are things indifferent which we may allowably tolerate, but then we must always insist that simplicity and order be observed in the use of ceremonies, so that the clear light of the Gospel be not obscured by them, as if we were still under the shadows of the law, and then that there may be nothing allowed that is not in agreement and conformity to the order established by the Son of God. For God does not allow his name to be trifled with, mixing up silly frivolities with his holy and sacred ordinances.” “There is another point, sire, of which you ought to take a special charge, namely, that the poor flocks may not be destitute of pastors.” In fine, he exhorted the king to have a care for the efficiency and purity of the schools and universities, for he had been informed that “there are many young people supported on the college bursaries, who, instead of giving good hope of service in the Church, do not conceal that they are opposed to the true religion.” The Reformer entreated the king to take order therein, “to the effect that property which ought to be held sacred be not converted to profane uses, and far less to nourish venomous reptiles, who would desire nought better than to infect everything for the future. For in

this way the Gospel would always be kept back by these schools, which ought to be the very pillar thereof.”⁸

The pious king had for primate the erudite Cranmer. The archbishop had cowered under the capricious tyranny of Henry VIII., but now, moving no longer in the cold and withering shade of that monarch, Cranmer was himself again; and not only was he laboring zealously to complete the work of Reformation in England, he was also holding out the hand to all the Reformers and Reformed Churches on the Continent. He was at that time revolving a grand Protestant union. He desired that the friends of the Gospel in all lands should come together, and deduce from the Word of God a scheme of Christian doctrine which all might confess and hold, and which might be, to the generation then living and to the ages to come, a standard round which the Church might rally.⁹ At Trent the Church of Rome was massing and marshalling her troops; the Primate of England thought that the Protestant Church ought also to close her ranks, and, presenting an unbroken front to the foe, be ready to repel his attack, or to advance her own triumphs into regions where her banners had not yet been displayed. Cranmer communicated his idea to the Reformer of Geneva. Calvin, in his reply, intimated his approval of his “just and wise design,” and said that for his own part, if he could further thereby the work of union, “he would not grudge to cross even ten seas;” and he went on to indicate the existence of certain principles that lay far down, even at the bottom of society, and which no eye save his own then saw, but which have since come to the surface, and yielded that noxious and bitter crop that he predicted they would if not obviated, “the distemper” even of “a stupid inquisitiveness alternating with that of fearless extravagance.” The Reformer saw that the future of Christendom was menaced by “terrible disorders,” not more by difference in religious sentiments than by that speculative philosophic spirit which contravenes the laws of true science not less than it contemns the authority of the Scriptures. In short, Calvin foresaw, even at that early period, should Protestantism fail, a pantheistic Europe.

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⁸Bonnet, vol. 2, pp. 284-288, No. 273.

⁹See Cranmer's letters to the leading theologians of Switzerland and Germany, reproduced in the collections of his works, published by the Parker Society, as also the collection of Zurich Letters, first series, vol. 1.

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

Chapter 24 : Calvin's Manifold Labours

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

Picture: Calvin Insulted by the Libertines on the Rhone Bridge.

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

Christian I.; and the second half he dedicated in 1554 to the son of that monarch, Frederick.

Amid the crowned heads whom he thus acknowledges, the friends of his youth and the refugees of the Gospel were not forgotten. The first part of his Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians was dedicated, in 1546, to the *Sieur de Bourgoyne*; and, ten years later, another part to an illustrious Neapolitan, the *Marquis Caraccioli*, a refugee in Geneva. These dedications are finely conceived. The writer is forgetful neither of their rank nor of his own greatness. The Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was dedicated to *Melchior Wolmar*, and he accompanied it with an allusion, at once graceful and grateful, to the days he had spent with him in his youth at Bourges. The Commentaries on the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians were dedicated to the young Duke Christopher of Wurtemberg, to encourage him to persevere in the Reformed path, reminding him, as he had said to the youthful Edward of England, that "it was a great matter to be a Christian king, but a yet greater to be a Christian." The Commentary on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians was dedicated, in 1551, to the aged *Mathurin Cordier*, his early revered teacher, now principal of the Gymnasium at Lausanne. This was his public acknowledgment of what he owed to the man who had first opened to him the gate of knowledge, and guided him in the path with so much skill and pains. What a deeply affectionate and truthful nature do we discover in all this! ¹

Letters and evangelists was Calvin daily sending to the Church of France. The "Shepherd of Christendom," he was specially the apostle of the French Church. Born in that land, but driven out of it, he was here on its border, in his Alp-environed city, to direct and watch over its Reformation. The Protestants of that great country would have been far happier had they lent a profounder ear to his counsels. Their scaffolds would have had more victims, it may be, but the slain of their battlefields would have been fewer. His messengers also crossed the Alps, with letters to *Renee, Duchess of Ferrara*. Encompassed by the spies of Rome, watched by a bigoted husband, with few near her to succour her efforts, or share her longings for

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¹Henry, *Life and Times of John Calvin*, vol. 2, p. 32; Lond., 1349.

the emancipation of her fair Italy, the words of Calvin must have been to the grief-stricken queen as “cold waters” to one athirst. The Pyrenees no more than the Alps could confine his sympathies. He corresponded with the Queen of Navarre, Margaret of Valois, and with her illustrious daughter, Jeanne d’Albret. We do not wonder that the eye of the Reformer should rest with special delight on the little kingdom governed by these wise and virtuous princesses, for there the Protestant vine, so sorely buffeted by tempests in many other lands, flourished in peace, and yielded abundance of happy fruits in the order, the industry, and the morality of the region. And now, again, his attention was attracted to England. Mary was dead, and Elizabeth was on the throne. To the foot of that throne came the Reformer, to instruct, with a now fully-matured wisdom and prescience, the great English sovereign and her ministers, how that faith, planted in their country by Wicliffe, might be revived, and that goodly Church order set up by Cranmer, but overthrown by the furious tempests that had since swept over the kingdom, might be restored and completed.

It is on a country more to the north, then distinct from England, now happily one with it, that the eye of the great chief of Protestantism rests with the greatest delight of all. He had, perhaps, a presentiment that it was that country, rather than France, in which his grand idea was to be realised. A son of that land had already found his way to Geneva. The keen eye of Calvin quickly discerned what sort of man the stranger was. The leonine lineaments of his soul, the robust powers of his intellect stood out to his view; he was the likeliest to himself of all the men around him, and the two cleaved to each other, and became knit together in the bonds of a holy friendship. Henceforward it was to be Calvin and Knox. Alone, unapproached, towering above even the loftiest of the men around him, stood the Reformer of Geneva; nevertheless the same two qualities that constitute the basis of the character of Calvin constitute also that of Knox. The first is absolute faith in God, the second is absolute submission to his Word. In these two men, these twin principles existed to a degree of strength and intensity which we find in no other of the Reformers, Luther excepted. These two master-principles were the root that nourished all their virtues—their wisdom, their fearless courage, their inflexible adherence to truth, and that

unconquered and unconquerable energy with which they pursued their great task till it was fully achieved.

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

When we think of his letters, written on affairs of the greatest weight, addressed to the first men of position and intellect in Europe—some of them in the graceful and concise Latin of a Cicero or a Seneca, others of them in French that formed the precursor and model of the age of Montaigne—so numerous are they, that it might have been supposed he wrote letters and did nothing besides. When we turn to his Commentaries, so voluminous, so solid, and so impregnated with the spirituality, and fire, and fragrance of the Divine Word;—again it would seem as if we had before us the labours of a life-time. “The Commentaries of Calvin,” says Bungener, “mark a revolution in the study of the Bible, and on that account occupy a distinguished place, not only in the history of theology, but in that of the human mind.”² These immortal productions are above all else that he wrote or did. Calvin—the Calvin that lived and acted on the world of the sixteenth century—lives and acts on that of the nineteenth through these Commentaries. [347]

When, again, we think of him in the pulpit, where he appeared, we may say, every day; when we think of him in the Consistory,

²Bungener, p. 282. “Doubtless, in many passages, better elucidations have since been found, but it is precisely because his method has been followed.”

where he was present every week; in the academy, whither he often went to address the youth; in the council-chamber, to which he was frequently summoned to give advice on affairs of the State; when we think of his combats with the Libertines, whose faction he overthrew; of his hospitalities and attentions to the refugees of all nations; of the foreign Churches which devolved upon him the task of their organization; of the hours spent in meditation and prayer-and all accomplished in a feeble and sickly body-we find once more that we have enough of work to fill a life-time, although it had stood alone; and we stand amazed when we reflect that it was all done in a life which, when closed, did not number fifty-five years complete. ³

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

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

John Calvin held with Innocent that the will of God, as made known in the Scriptures, ought to be the supreme law on earth. But the results that attended this principle as enthroned at Rome were just

³“In sooth,” says Gaberel, “the work killed the workman.” When we think of only one item of that labor-viz., ninety-six works-written too in the midst of sufferings, it is enough, as Gaberel says, “to give one a dizziness of head.” “His health,” remarks the same writer, “when he first arrived in his future country, was such as would have reduced to inaction any ordinary man. But Calvin knew to subdue his sufferings by the strength of his will. He exhibited in himself the phenomenon which is sometimes seen in the case of great commanders whose dangerous maladies have given place to health on the eve of battle; only what was abnormal in their case was Calvin’s normal condition.” (Gaberel, *Hist. Eglise de Geneve*, vol. 1, p. 398.)

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

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Chapter 25 : Final Victory and Glory of Geneva

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

Picture: A Swiss Valley.

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

We have seen the victory which Calvin, at the peril of his life, won over the Libertines in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, on Sunday, the 3rd of September, 1553. The storm lulled for a little while, but in a few months it was renewed. Those who were guilty of scandals, and of course were visited with the censures of the Church, repaired to the Council, and complained of the rigor of the Consistory. The ministers were summoned to justify their proceedings-a hard task before magistrates, some of whom were hostile, and almost all of whom were lukewarm in the cause of the spiritual discipline. Might not Calvin, it may be said, have obviated these complaints by separating the Church from the State, in the way of distinguishing between citizens and Church-members, and holding only the latter amenable to the ecclesiastical discipline? This practically was what

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the Reformer was aiming at doing. By excluding the profane from the Lord's Supper, he was separating the Church from the world; but he was hampered by two circumstances—first, by the theocratic government existing in Geneva, and which he found there in its rudimentary state when he entered it; and secondly, by the Libertines, who resented their exclusion from Church privileges as an affront and wrong.

The Libertine faction, scotched but not killed, became bold in proportion as they saw the Council was timid. “See,” said they, “how we are governed by French edicts and by Calvin.” One of its opponents said of the Consistory that “it was more savage than Satan himself,¹ but he hoped soon to tame it. Beza tells us that the revolutionary party made obscene songs on the Word of God. Sometimes mock processions passed along the street, singing profane parodies of the hymns of the Church.² “The Libertines,” says Roset, “commenced the year 1555 with new manifestations of their old wickedness. Having supped together, to the number of ten, on the night of the 9th January, they took each a candle, and paraded the streets, singing, at the full stretch of their voices, the psalms, interlaced with jeers.”³ One day as Calvin was returning from preaching in the suburb of St. Gervais, he was hustled on the bridge of the Rhone by a knot of miscreants who had gathered there. He very quietly rebuked their insolence by the remark that “the bridge was wide enough for them all.” We find him about this time writing to Bullinger that “his position was become almost unbearable.” We hear him pouring out his deep sighs, and expressing, like Melancthon, his wish to die. This was much from the strong man. The days had come, foreseen by him, and foretold in his own expressive language to Farel, when he should have to “offer his bleeding heart as a sacrifice to God.” But, though his heart bled, his spirit, ever undaunted, maintained the conflict with a patience and fortitude not to be overcome.

The Reformer returned to Geneva from his banishment on the express promise of the Council that the Consistory should be supreme in all ecclesiastical causes. Without this provision Calvin would

¹Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 114.

²City Registers, January 9th, 1555.

³Roset, tom. 3, livr, 5, ch. 58—John McCrie's extracts.

never again have entered the gates of that city. Not that he wished power for himself. "I would rather die a hundred times," said he, "than appropriate that authority which is the common property of the Church."⁴ But unless the sentences of the spiritual court were final, how could order and moral rule be upheld? and without the supremacy of moral law, of what use would his presence in Geneva be to Protestantism? But this essential point was all the more the object of attack by the Libertines.

Amy Perrin, the personal foe of the Reformer, once more led in this second battle.⁵ "It is to us," said Perrin and his troop, "an astonishing thing that a sovereignty should exist within a sovereignty. Good sense seems to us to require that the sovereign authority should be entire, and that all questions and parties should be under the rule of the Seignury. Not otherwise can we preserve that liberty which we have so dearly bought. You are reviving the tyranny of the Pope and the prelates," continued Perrin, "under this new name of spiritual jurisdiction."⁶ "No," replied the pastors, who had assembled in the council-chamber, and were speaking through the mouth of Calvin, "No; we only claim obedience to the rule of the Bible, the law of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. He has given to us the power to bind and loose—in other words, to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments. The magistrates have no more right to forbid us the exercise of this power, than we have to invade the government and civil jurisdiction. To us holy things have been committed, and we shall take care that the Table of the Lord is not dishonored by the presence at it of the profane."⁷

The pastors fortified their position by appealing to the separation between things sacred and things civil, that existed under the Old Testament. To the family of Aaron had all things appertaining to worship been assigned; to the house of David had the civil government been committed. It appertained not to the most powerful of the Jewish monarchs to perform the humblest service at the altar; and those kings who, forgetting this distinction, presumed to bring their authority into the temple, were smitten with judgment. "So far,"

⁴Calv. Epp., 385. Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 115.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 134.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

said Calvin in conclusion, “is the power of the pastors from being a menace to the liberty of the republic, that it is its best protection. Liberty without the Gospel is but a miserable slavery.”⁸

These reasonings were not without their effect on the magistrates. By a majority of suffrages, the Council resolved that its former edict should remain in force—in other words, that the arrangement made with Calvin when he returned to Geneva—namely, that the final decision in all Church offenses be with the Consistory—should be maintained.⁹ Geneva was still secured to the Reformer. The basis on which he rested his great work, both in Geneva itself and throughout Christendom, the Libertines had not yet been able to overturn.

They did not, however, accept of their defeat and desist from the war. Baffled in this front attack, they next assailed the Reformer on the flank. “We have too many ministers,” said they, raising their voices to a loud pitch. “We have too many ministers and too many sermons.” There were then only four pastors in Geneva; but the Libertines thought that they were four too many, and although they did not demand their entire suppression as yet, they modestly proposed that they should be reduced to two. As regarded the Churches, they would not lock their doors outright, but they would at once abolish the sermon, in which their vices were branded with a pointedness and lashed with a severity since transferred from the pulpit to the press and the platform. They were willing that a harmless kind of worship should go on. They would permit the people to be taught the “Creed,” the “Lord’s Prayer,” and the “Ten Commandments.” This amount of instruction, they thought, might be safely tolerated. As to those floods of exposition poured forth upon them weekday and Sunday, they saw no need for such: it was dangerous; and the Council ought to raise legal dykes within which to confine this torrent of pious eloquence.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 135. “Et qu’au reste route liberte hors de Christ estoit servitude miserable.” (Roset, tom. 3, livr. 5, chap. 58—John McCrie’s extracts.)

⁹To the Author it appears a remarkable circumstance that the law giving the spiritual supremacy to the Consistory should have been in abeyance for some time before and some time after the affair of Servetus. This has not had the attention paid to it which it deserves.

¹⁰Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 135.

The Libertines next turned their attention to the correction of another great abuse, as they deemed it. The liberty of the press found no favor in the eyes of these champions of freedom. What is the use, they asked, of so many Commentaries and printed books? We must fetter the pen of this Calvin, for the State of Geneva is not able to bear the many books he is sending forth. We must stop this plethora of writing and publishing. ¹¹

Such was their estimate of that mighty genius, in the light of which kings and statesmen were glad to walk! We may imagine what would have been the fame of Geneva, and what the state of letters and civilization in Europe in the next century, if the Libertines instead of Calvin had triumphed in this controversy.

There arose yet another cause of complaint and quarrel. The refugees who sought asylum in Geneva were at this time increasing from week to week. Weeded out by the hand of persecution, they were the men of the purest morals, of the richest culture, and the noblest souls which the surrounding countries could boast. Not a few were men of the highest rank, and of very large possessions, although in almost every case they arrived penniless. ¹² The little State began to inscribe their names on the registers of its citizens. The proudest kingdom would have done itself an honour by enrolling such men among its subjects. Not so did Perrin and his faction account it. "They are beggars who have come here to eat the bread of the Genevese."-so did they speak of those who had forsaken all for the Gospel-"they are Calvin's allies, who flock hither to support him in tyrannizing over the children of the soil; they are usurping the rights of the ancient burgesses and destroying the liberties of the town; they are the enemies of the republic, and what so likely as that they will purchase their way back into their own country by betraying Geneva to the King of France?" These and similar accusations-the ready invention of coarse and malignant natures-were secretly whispered among the populace, and at last openly

¹¹Ibid., p. 136. Roset, livr. 5, chap. 65.

¹²Whilst the number of refugees was increasing at Geneva and the other towns of Switzerland, their wants were provided for by liberal charitable donations. This was the origin of the Bourse Etrangere, founded at Geneva, the revenues of which are applied, even in our own day, the support of poor students, or the founding of new schools. (Bonnet, Letters of Calvin, vl. 2, p. 430, foot-note.)

preferred before the Council, against the distinguished men of almost every nationality now assembled in Geneva.

Early in the year 1555 the matter came to a head, and we note it more particularly because it brought on the final struggle which overturned the faction of the Libertines, and left the victory wholly with Calvin. At one sitting the Council admitted as many as fifty foreigners, all men of known worth, to the rights of citizenship. Perrin and his followers raised a louder cry than ever. "The scum of Europe," "the supporters of Calvin's despotism," are possessing themselves of our heritage. These were the epithets by which they chose to designate the new burgesses. These men had not, indeed, been born on the soil of the republic, but Geneva had no better citizens than they; certainly none more willing to obey her law, or more ready to shed their blood for her liberty if occasion should require. The Gospel, which they had embraced, made the territory of Geneva more their native land than the country they had left. But the Libertines understood nothing of all this. They went to the Council and complained, but the Council would not listen to them. They carried their appeal to the populace, and at this bar that appeal was more successful. ¹³

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On the 16th May, Perrin returned to the Council with a larger number of followers, chiefly fishermen and boatmen, armed with huge double-handled swords. ¹⁴ This motley host was dismissed with the same answer as before. The malcontents paraded the streets all day, calling on the citizens to bestir themselves, and save the town, which was on the eve of being sacked by the foreigners. The better class of citizens paid no attention to this cry of "The wolf!" and remained quiet in their homes; but the ranks of the rioters were swelled by numbers of the lower orders, whose patriotism had been stimulated by the free rations of wine and food which were served out to them. ¹⁵

On Friday, the 18th May, the heads of the party met in a tavern with a certain number, says Bonivard, of "brawling companions." The more moderate, who may be presumed to have been also the more sober, were for convoking the Council-General; but the more

¹³Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 136. Henry, *Life of Calvin*, vol. 2, p. 315.

¹⁴Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 137. Reset, tom. 3, livr. 5, chap. 64—John McCrie's extracts.

¹⁵Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 137. Henry, vol. 2, p. 316.

violent ¹⁶ would hear of nothing but the massacre of all the refugees of religion, and their supporters. The Sunday following, when the citizens would be all at church, ¹⁷ was fixed on for the execution of this horrible plot.

The eagerness of the Libertines to consummate their crime caused the plot to miscarry. The very next night after their meeting, the fumes of the wine, we may charitably believe, not having as yet exhaled, the mob-patriots rushed into the street with arms in their hands to begin their dreadful work. “The French, the French,” they shouted, “are taking the town! Slay all, slay all!” But not one of the refugees was to be seen. “The Lord,” says Calvin, “had poured a deep sleep upon them.” But the other citizens rushed armed into the street. There was a great uproar, shouts, cries, and clashing of arms; but fortunately the affray passed without bloodshed. “God,” says Ruchat, “who watches over the affairs of men, and who wished to preserve Geneva, did not permit Perrin to accomplish his design.” ¹⁸

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

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

Here, not in state, like a Roman cardinal, but in the lowliness of a simple pastor, dwelt, not the monarch of that empire-for monarch

¹⁶“Estoyent tous grands zelateurs de la liberte publique.” (Roset, tom. 3, livr. 5, chap. 66-John McCrie’s extracts.)

¹⁷Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 138.

¹⁸Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 138.

it has not on earth-but the presiding mind, the directing genius of Protestantism. From this center were propagated those energies and influences which, mightier than armies, were rending the shackles from the human soul, and calling nations from their tomb. Within its walls the elite of Europe was assembling; and as another and yet another illustrious stranger presented himself at its gates, and crossed its threshold, the brilliant intellectual glory of Geneva gathered an additional brightness, and its moral potency waxed stronger day by day. To it all eyes were turned, some in admiration and love, others in hatred and fear. Within it were born those great thoughts which, sent forth in letters, in pamphlets, in great tomes, were as light to roll back the darkness-bolts to discomfit the enemy, and pour confusion upon the champions of error. Protestant troops are continually passing out at its gates, girded only with the sword of the Spirit, to assail the strongholds of darkness, and add new provinces to the kingdom of the Gospel. As realm after realm is won, there goes forth from this same city a rescript for its organization and government; and that rescript meets an obedience more prompt and hearty than was ever accorded to the edicts sent forth from the proud mistress of the ancient world for the molding of those provinces which her arms had subjugated. [353]

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

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

Chapter 26 : Geneva and its Influence in Europe

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

Picture: They resorted to the Bridge of the Arve and mocked and jeered at the Genevese who had occasion to pass that way”.

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

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

Calvin now proceeded to make Geneva fit for the grand purposes for which he had destined her. And Geneva willingly surrendered herself to be fashioned as the Reformer wished; her life she permitted

to be absorbed in his life, feeling that, with him was inseparably bound up her order, her grandeur, nay, her very existence, so far as concerned every good and useful object. Her law, her Council, her citizens, all tacitly consented to be parts of the great Reformer—the ministries through which he operated on Christendom. We have the testimony of a noble eye-witness to the state of Geneva at this period. “In my heart,” says Knox, in a letter to his friend Mr. Locke, “I could have wished, yea, and cannot cease to wish, that it might please God to guide and conduct you to this place, where I neither fear nor eshame to say is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached; but manners and religion to be so sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place beside.

¹ Farel bore similar testimony to the flourishing condition of Geneva after its many perils. “I was lately at Geneva,” he says, “and so delighted was I that I could scarce tear myself away. I would rather be last in Geneva than first in any other place. Were I not prevented by the Lord, and by my love for my congregation, nothing would hinder me from ending my days there.” Drelincourt expressed the same admiration a hundred years after. ²

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If there was peace in the days of Calvin within Geneva, there were ambushes all around. The first trouble was created by the banished Libertines. Bern took the part of these exiles in the quarrel, declaring that they had been guilty of no crime, and demanding of the Council and citizens of Geneva that they should give satisfaction to those they had expelled, and receive them back. It may be conjectured that there was in all this a little jealousy on the part of the powerful Bern of the rising glory of Geneva. The little republic replied to this haughty demand by expelling the families of the Libertines, and forbidding the return of the banished under pain of death. It was now feared that the Libertines, supported by Bern, meditated re-entering Geneva by force of arms. The territory of Bern bordered with that of Geneva, and the Libertines stationed themselves on that part of it which lay nearest the city, and offered daily menaces and petty annoyances. They resorted to the bridge of the Arve, and

¹MS. Letters, p. 377—apud McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. 1. p. 195; Edin., 1831.

²Henry, *Life of Calvin*, vol. 2, p. 318.

mocked and jeered at the Genevese who had occasion to pass that way. ³ The citizens, irritated beyond measure, were often on the point of rushing out and punishing these insolences, but the Council restrained them. ⁴ The matter continued in an uneasy and dangerous condition for some time, but a sudden turn in the politics of Europe, which menaced both cities with a common danger, brought in the issue deliverance to Geneva.

The battle of St. Quentin, in Normandy, was fought about this time. In this fight the arms of Charles of Spain were victorious over those of Henry

II. of France. Philibert Emmanuel, Prince of Piedmont, who commanded the Spanish army, was the heir of the titles and rights of his father Charles, Duke of Savoy; but he inherited the titles only; the estates had gone from his house, and were now partly in the hands of the King of France, and partly in possession of Bern, and other Swiss cantons. The French king being now humbled, the Prince of Piedmont deemed this a favorable moment for reclaiming his hereditary dominions. He issued an edict to that effect, and immediately thereafter dispatched a body of eight thousand lanzknechts, or lancers, to establish his authority over his former subjects. The alarm was great throughout Switzerland, and more especially in Geneva and Bern. The Bernese had now other things to think of than the quarrel into which the banished Libertines had led them. This last matter gradually went to sleep; and thus Geneva, by this shifting in the great European winds, was delivered without the necessity of striking a single blow. ⁵

The affairs of Bolsec and Castalio belong to biography rather than to history. Both of these men opposed Calvin on the doctrine of predestination. Both of them interrupted him publicly when preaching in St. Peter's. The Council had them seized, on the ground of the maintenance of the public peace, rather than on the ground of difference of doctrine. The result was that both were banished from Geneva, never to return. This punishment, which has been laid at the door of the Reformer, has been denounced as harsh. But we ought to keep in mind that Bolsec and Castalio were

³Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 189.

⁴Ibid., p. 190.

⁵Ruchat, tom. 6, pp. 192, 193.

not Genevese, banished from their native land; they were foreigners who had resided in Geneva, the one a few years, the other only a few months. ⁶ “As to those who are indignant that Bolsec should even have been banished,” says Bungener, “we know not what to say to them, unless that they are completely ignorant how the question stood in regard to the Reformation and to Geneva—especially to Geneva. To wish that she had opened her gates to all the variations and daring flights of religious thought, is to wish that that great lever, the Reformation, had without a fulcrum lifted the world.” ⁷

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

The first necessity of Christendom, in the opinion of Calvin, was the Gospel. Accordingly, it was one of his chief labours to prepare, in the school of Geneva, qualified preachers who should go forth, and sow everywhere the seed of the kingdom. Many of these missionaries selected France as their field of labor. Thither were they followed by the instructions and prayers of the great chief from whose feet they had gone forth; and the consciousness that his eye was upon them, helped to make them zealous in labor and courageous in death, which so many of them were called to endure in the discharge of their ministry. We have two proofs that great numbers offered themselves to this most inviting but very hazardous field. The first is the letter which the King of France, Charles IX., in January, 1561, sent to Geneva, complaining of the preachers who had come from thence, and calling upon the Council to recall them. The second is the letter of Calvin to Bullinger, in the May following, which reveals incidentally what a powerful propaganda Geneva had become, and shows us the soldiers of the Cross daily

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⁶Bolsec, to avenge himself on the Reformer, and reconcile himself with Rome, to which communion he returned, wrote a bitter and calumnious book, which he entitled a *Life of Calvin*.

⁷Bungener, *Calvin: his Life, etc.*, p. 237.

setting out from her gates to spread the triumphs of the Gospel. "It is incredible," writes Calvin, "with what ardour our friends devote themselves to the spread of the Gospel. As greedily as men before the Pope solicit him for benefices, do they ask for employment in the Churches beneath the Cross. They besiege my door to obtain a portion of the field to cultivate. Never had monarch courtiers more eager than mine. They dispute about the stations as of the kingdom of Jesus Christ was peaceably established in France. Sometimes I seek to restrain them. I show to them the atrocious edict which orders the destruction of every house in which Divine service shall have been celebrated. I remind them that in more than twenty towns the faithful have been massacred by the populace."⁸ In those happy days- happy although stakes were blazing-it seemed as if the ancient saying was reversed, and that no longer were the laborers few. No wonder that Calvin for once breaks into enthusiasm, and gives vent to his joy. But we do the Reformer only justice when we say that he rejoiced not because he was leader, but because his soldiers were devoted. They were men worthy of their captain.

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

His counsels on this head expressed a lofty wisdom, which was not appreciated at the time, but the three centuries that have since elapsed have set their seal upon it. All his authority and eloquence were put forth to make the Protestants eschew politics, shun the bat-

⁸Bungener, pp. 300, 301.

tle-field, and continue to fight their great war with spiritual weapons only. The Reformer foresaw for the Church of France a glorious future, if only she should persevere in this path. He had no faith in blood shed in battle: no, not in victorious battle; but he had unbounded faith in blood shed at the stake of martyrdom. Give him martyrs-not men in arms-and France was won. Not one letter of Calvin is extant in which he recommends a contrary course. His advice to the Protestants of France was to wait, to have patience, to submit to wrong, to abstain from revenging themselves, and not to be sparing of their blood, for every drop spilt would, he assured them, bring them nearer the goal they wished to reach. Nor were these counsels given to a small and weak party, which by resisting might bring destruction upon itself: they were addressed to a body now approximating in numbers half the population of France. They were given to a body which had in its ranks men of wealth, nobles, and even princes of the blood: a body that could raise soldiers, lead armies, fight battles, and win victories. Well, but, says Calvin, the victories of the battle-field are barren; those of the martyr are always fruitful. One of the latter is worth a score of the former.

Two letters have been forged with intent to convict the Reformer of having prompted to the violent courses which some fiery spirits among the French Protestants were now beginning to pursue. The pretended original manuscripts are in the archives of the family of D'Alisac, but their spuriousness has been abundantly proved.⁹ They are neither in the handwriting of Calvin nor in that of any of his known secretaries; and they are, moreover, disfigured by gross literary errors, by coarse and violent epithets, and by glaring anachronisms. "In the first, M. du Poet is called general of the religion in Dauphine, and this letter is dated 1547, a period in which the Reformed religion had in Dauphine neither a soldier nor an organised Church, and in which M. du Poet was still a Romanist! In the second letter, dated 1561, the same person is called Governor of Montelimart, and High Chamberlain of Navarre, dignities with which he was not invested till long after the death of Calvin."¹⁰

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⁹Bungener, p. 302.

¹⁰Bungener, p. 302.

Attempts have also been made to connect the Reformer with the raid of the notorious Baron des Ardrets. This man signalled his short career as a Protestant by invading the district of Lyons, slaughtering Romanists, sacking churches, making booty of the priestly vestments and the sacred vessels, and appropriating some of the cathedrals for the Protestant worship. Did Calvin account these acquisitions a gain to Protestantism? Better, he said, worship in the open air, in dens of the earth, anywhere, than in edifices so acquired. He wrote to Ardrets, sharply reproving him, and condemning the outrages by which he had disgraced the holy cause, for the sake of which he professed to have wrought them. A similar judgment did the Reformer pronounce on the conspiracy of Areboise, that ill omened commencement of political Protestantism in France. "Better," he said, writing to the head of that conspiracy, La Renaudie, "Better we should all perish a hundred times than be the cause of exposing the Gospel to such a disgrace." ¹¹

But day and night he was intent on marshalling the spiritual host, and leading it to the combat. Evangelists, martyrs, Churches: these were the three arms-to use a military phrase-with which he carried on the war.

Of the skill and pains which he devoted to the preparation of the latter weapon-the organization of Churches-we give but one example.

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

¹¹Ibid., pp. 304, 305.

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

Next came a scheme of discipline. This was meant to develop and conserve that new life which ought to spring from the doctrines confessed. Morality-in other words, holiness-was in Calvin's

opinion the one thing essential in Churches.

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

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

This constitution was essentially democratic. The whole body of the people-that is, the members of the Church-were the primary depositaries of this power; but its exercise was narrowed at each gradation upwards. It began with the local congregation, which, through their pastor and elders, decided on all matters appertaining to themselves. Thence it passed to the Colloquy, which adjudicated on general questions, and on cases of appeal. It proceeded upwards through the Provincial Conference to the National Synod, which was the most select body of all, being constituted of two pastors and two elders from each province. The National Synod passed sentence in the last resort, and from its decision there was of course no appeal.

If the basis of this government was broad, being composed of the whole body of the people, it had for its apex the very elite of the clergy and laity. Liberty was secured, but so too were order, vigor, and justice. For the decision of the most important questions it reserved the highest talents and the maturest wisdom. It combined the advantages of a democracy with those of a monarchy. Its foundations were as wide and popular as the constitution of England, but

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counterpoised by the weight and influence of the National Synod, even as the government of England is by the dignity and power of the Crown.

Calvin did not carry his narrowing process the length of a single overseer or bishop. Not that he held it unlawful to place over the Church a chief pastor, or that he believed that the Bible condemned the office of bishop in itself. He recommended an episcopate to the Church of Poland: ¹² he allowed the office of bishop in the Church of England; ¹³ and he has so expressed himself in his Institutes, as to leave the Church at liberty on this head. But he thought he could more clearly trace in the New Testament such a distribution of power as that which he had now made, and, at all events, this equality of office he deemed much safer at present for the Church of France, for which he foresaw a long period of struggles and martyrdoms. He would not expose that Church to seduction by opening to her ministers the path of official or personal aggrandisement. The fewer the dignities and grandeurs with which they were encompassed, the more easy would they find it to mount the scaffold; and it was martyrs, not mitred chiefs, that were destined, he believed, to lead the Church to victory.

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

¹²Henry, *Life of Calvin*, vol. 1, p. 401. ¹³*Ibid.*, p. 402.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 402.

empire whose limits would far exceed, and whose duration would long out-last, the empire of Charles!

Chapter 27 : The Academy of Geneva

Foundation of the Academy-Subscriptions-Its Opening-Its Literary Equipment-Its Subsequent Renown-Its Library-What it Suggests- Calvin's Simplicity of Life-Sadoleto Visits him-The Cardinal's Surprise-Calvin's Poverty-His Charity-He Declines the Aid of the Council

Picture: Cardinal Sadeleto Visits Calvin.

Picture: A Swiss Cottage.

In the wake of the Gospel, learning and the arts, Calvin held, should ever be found. Geneva had become, in the first place, a fountain of Divine knowledge to the surrounding countries; he would make it, in the second place, a fountain of science and civilization. In Italy, letters came first; but in England, in Bohemia, in Germany, and now in Geneva, the Divine science opened the way, and letters and philosophy followed. It was drawing towards the evening of his life, when Calvin laid the foundations of the Academy of Geneva. Next to the Reformation, this school was the greatest boon that he conferred on the republic which had only lately enrolled his name among its citizens. It continued long after he was dead to send forth distinguished scholars, in every department of science, and to shed a glory on the little State in which it was planted,¹ and where previous to the Reformation scarcely one distinguished man was to be found.

The idea of such an institution had long been before the mind of Calvin, and he wished not to die till he had realised it. Having communicated his design to the Council, it was approved of by their Excellencies, and in 1552 a piece of ground was purchased on which to erect the necessary buildings. But money was lacking. Geneva was then a State of but from 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. Its burdens were numerous. It had to exercise hospitality to from one to two thousand refugees. It had to endure the expenses of war in a time of peace, owing to the continual rumors set on foot that the

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¹Ruchat, tom. 6, p, 307.

city was about to be assaulted. After satisfying these indispensable demands, the citizens had not much money to spare. For six years the ground on which the future college was to stand lay untouched; not a sod was turned, not a stone was laid.

Impatient at this delay, and thinking that he had waited long enough on the Council, Calvin now set on foot a public subscription, and soon he found himself in possession of 10,000 florins. This was little for the object, but much for the times. He immediately laid the foundations of the edifice. He marked with joy the rising walls; tearing himself from his studies, he would descend from the Rue des Chanoines to the scene of operations, and though enfeebled by quartan-ague he might be seen dragging himself over the works, speaking kindly words now and again to the workmen, and stimulating them by expressing his satisfaction at their progress.

Two edifices were rising at the same moment under the eye of the Reformer. The organization of the French Protestant Church and the building of the Academy went on together. On the 5th of June, 1559, just eleven days after the meeting of the National Synod in Paris, the college was ready to receive both masters and pupils. The inauguration was celebrated by a solemn service in St. Peter's, at which the senators, the ministers, and the burgesses attended. After prayer by Calvin, and a Latin address by Beza, the laws and statutes of the college, the confession to be subscribed by the students, and the oath to be taken by the rector and masters were read aloud. Theodore Beza was appointed rector; five masterhips-Calvin had asked seven-one of Hebrew, one of Greek, one of philosophy, and two of theology, were instituted. In 1565, a year after the death of the Reformer, there was added a lectureship in law. With her Academy-which, however, was but the top-stone of a subsidiary system of instruction which was to prepare for the higher-Geneva was fitter than ever for the great spiritual and moral sovereignty which Calvin intended that she should exercise in Europe.²

Bungener's description of this memorial is as touching as his reflections are just. "After their venerable cathedral," says he, "no building is dearer to the Genevese; if you go upstairs to the class-

²Roset, chap. 42-John McCrie's extracts. Ruchat, tom. 6, p. 307. Bungener, pp. 332-335.

rooms, you are in the rooms of the library—full of memorials yet more living and particular. There you will be shown the books of Calvin’s library, the mute witnesses of his vigils, his sufferings, and his death; there you will turn over the leaves of his manuscripts, deciphering, not without difficulty, a few lines of his feverish writing, rapid as his thoughts; and, if your imagination will but lend itself to the breathing appeals of solitude and silence, there he himself is; you will behold him gliding among those ancient walls, pale, but with a sparkling eye—feeble and sickly, but strong in that inner energy, the source of which was in his faith. There also will appear to you, around him, all those of whom he was to be the father—divines, jurists, philosophers, scholars, statesmen, and men of war, all filled with that mighty life which he was to bequeath to the Reformation, after having received it from her. And if you ask the secret of his power, one of the stones of the college will tell it you in a few Hebrew words, which the Reformer had engraved upon it. Come into the court. Enter beneath that old portico which supports the great staircase, and you will read—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And it is neither on the wall nor on one of the pillars that these words are engraved. Mark well: it is on the key-stone. What an emblem! and what a lesson!”³

The position which Calvin now filled was one of greater influence than perhaps any one man had exercised in the Church of Christ since the days of the apostles. He was the counsellor of kings; he was the adviser of princes and statesmen; he corresponded with warriors, scholars, and Reformers; he consoled martyrs, and organised Churches; his admonitions were submitted to, and his letters treasured, as marks of no ordinary distinction. All the while the man who wielded this unexampled influence, was in life and manners in nowise different from an ordinary citizen of Geneva. He was as humbly lodged, he was as simply clothed, and he was served by as few attendants as any burgher of them all. He had been poor all his days, and he continued so to the end. One day a cardinal of the Roman Church, Sadoletto, who happened to be passing through Geneva, would pay him the honour of a visit. He was conducted to No. 122, Rue des Chanoines, and told to his surprise that this

³Bungener, pp. 335, 336.

was the house of the Reformer. A yet greater surprise awaited the cardinal, he knocked for entrance: there was no porter at the gate; no servant in livery gave him admission: it was Calvin himself that opened the door.

His enemies, more just to him than they have been since, [360] acknowledged and admired his indifference to money. “That which made the strength of that heretic,” said Plus IV., when told of his death, “was that money was nothing to him.” The Pontiff was correct in his fact, but at fault in his philosophy. Calvin’s strength was rooted in a far higher principle, and his indifference to riches was but one of the fruits of that principle; but how natural the reflection on the part of one who lived in a city where all men were venal, and all things vendible!

The Reformer’s wants were few. During the last seven years of his life he took only one meal a day, sometimes one in the thirty-six hours. ⁴ His charities were great; the Protestant exiles were ever welcome to his table; kings, sometimes, were borrowers from him, and his small stipend left him often in pecuniary difficulties. But he never asked the Council for an increase of his emoluments; nay, he positively refused such when offered. “Satisfied with my humble condition,” was the witness which he bore to himself, in the place where he lived, and before the eyes of all, a little while before his death, “I have ever delighted in a life of poverty, and am a burden [361] to no one. I remain contented with the office which the Lord has given me.” ⁵ The Registers of the Council of Geneva bear to this day the proofs of his disinterestedness and forgetfulness of self. In January, 1546, the Council is informed of the sickness of M. Calvin, “who hath no resources.” The Council votes him ten crowns, but; M. Calvin sends them back. The councillors buy with the ten crowns a cask of good wine, and convey it to Calvin’s house. Not to give offense, the Reformer accepts their Lordships’ gift, but lays out ten crowns of his salary “for the relief of the poorest ministers.” In the winter of 1556 the Council sent him some firewood. Calvin appeared with the price, but could not induce the Council to accept of it. ⁶ The Registers of 1560 inform us of another cask of wine sent to

⁴Hottinger, p. 890. Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 41.

⁵Henry, Life, vol. 2, p. 416.

⁶Ibid., vol. 1, p. 270.

M. Calvin, “seeing that he has none good.”⁷ The Reformer this time accepts; and yet, because he received these few presents in the course of a ministry of twenty-six years, there have not been wanting men who accused him of coveting such gifts, and of parading his ailments, of which indeed he seldom or never spoke, in order to evoke these benefactions. “If there are any,” said he, in his Preface to the Psalms, “whom, in my lifetime, I cannot persuade that I am not rich and moneyed, my death will show it at last.” In his last illness he refused his quarter’s salary, saying that he had not earned it.⁸ After his death it was found that his whole possessions did not exceed in value 225 dollars,⁹ and if his illness had been prolonged, he would have had to sell his books, or receive the money of the republic. On the 25th of April, about a month before his death, the Reformer made his will. Luther’s will was highly characteristic, Calvin’s is not less so. It exhibits the methodical and business habits that marked his whole life, mingled with the humble, holy hope that filled his heart. Having disposed of the 225 crowns, and of some other small matters pertaining to the world he was leaving, he thus breaks out: -

“I thank God that he has not only had mercy on his poor creature, having delivered me from the abyss of idolatry, but that he has brought me into the clear light of his Gospel, and made me a partaker of the doctrine of salvation, of which I was altogether unworthy; yea, that his mercy and goodness have borne so tenderly with my numerous sins and offenses, for which I deserved to be cast from him and destroyed.”

⁷Bungener, pp. 339, 340.

⁸Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 44.

⁹Ibid.

Chapter 28 : The Social and Family Life of Geneva [362]

The Daily Sermon-Its Attractiveness-Daily Life of the Citizen-His Dress-His Table-Development of Wealth-The Refugees-The Benefits they conferred on their Adopted Country-English Names on the Genevan Registers-The Sabbath in Geneva

Now that Calvin has realised his program, let us look at the social and family life of the Genevise. The "Christian Idea," as Gaberel calls it, had created their State, and religion was the all-pervading and dominant element in it. Calvin, the people, the State-all three were one, the fusion was complete, and the policy of the Senate, and the action of the citizens, were but the results of that great principle which had called into existence this marvellous community. The "Sermon" held a first place among their institutions. Day by day it reinvigorated that spirit which was the "breath" of Geneva. But, besides the need the Genevans felt of the instructions and consolations of religion, there were other influences that acted in drawing them to the temples. Preaching was then a novelty. Like break of day in an Eastern clime, the Gospel, in mid-day effulgence, had all at once burst on these men after the darkness of the Middle Ages. Scarce had the first faint silvery streaks shown themselves, when lo! the full flood of the sun's light was poured upon them. The same generation which had listened to the monks, had now the privilege of listening to the Reformers. From tales, legends, and miracles, which were associated in their minds with the yoke of foreign masters, they passed to the pure and elevating doctrines of the Word of God, which, apart from their own beauty and majesty, were, they knew, the source whence had come their political and civil independence. We at this day can but faintly realize the charm that must then have hung round the pulpit, and which assembled, day after day, the Genevise in crowds, to the preaching of the Gospel.

At Geneva, the magistrate as well as the artisan invariably began the day with an act of worship. At six in the morning the churches

were opened, and crowds might be seen in every quarter of the city on their way to spend an hour in listening to the "Exposition." After this the youth assembled in school or college, and the father and the elder sons repaired to the workshops. The mid-day repast, which was taken in common with the domestics, again re-united the family. After dinner the head of the household paid a short visit to his club ¹ to hear the news. And what were the events on which the Genevan kept his eyes intently fixed, and for which he waited from day to day with no ordinary anxiety to receive tidings? The great drama in progress around him completely occupied his thoughts. How goes the battle, he would ask, between Protestantism and Rome in France, in Italy, in Spain? Has any fresh edict of persecution issued these days past from the Vatican? Has any one been called to yield up his life on the scaffold, and what were his last words? What number of refugees have arrived in our city since yesterday, and through what perils and sufferings have they managed to reach our gates? Such were the topics that furnished matter of daily talk to the Genevese. The narrow limits of their little State were far from forming their horizon. Their thoughts and sympathies were as extensive as Christendom. There was not a prisoner, not a martyr for the Gospel in any of its countries for whom they did not feel and pray; he was their brother. Not a reverse befell the cause of the Reform in any part of the field which they did not mourn, nor a success in which they did not rejoice. They were watching a battle which would bring triumph or overthrow, not to Geneva only, but to the Gospel; hence the gravity and greatness of their characters. "The Genevan of that day," says Gaberel, "took the same interest in the news of the kingdom of God, which he takes today in the discussion of material affairs." ²

The family life of the Genevans at that period was characterised by severe simplicity. Their dress was wholly without ornament. The magistrates wore cloth; the ordinary burgess contented himself with serge. This difference in their attire was not held as marking any distinction of class among the citizens, for the members of the Councils were chosen entirely with reference to their merit, and

¹"A son abbaye (cercle)."-Gaberel.

²Gaberel, tom. 1, p. 389.

in nowise from any consideration of birth or wealth. Nor did this avoidance of superfluities lead to any falling off in the industrial activity or the inventive skill of the citizens. On the contrary, the arts and industries flourished, and both the citizens of Geneva, and the refugees who found asylum within it, became famous for their manufacture of objects of utility and luxury, which they exported to other countries.

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If their dress was marked by plainness, not less were their tables by frugality. The rich and poor alike were obliged to obey the sumptuary laws. "The heads of families," says Gaberel, "seeing the ease, the health, the good order, the morality that now reigned in their dwellings, blessed those rigorous laws, which only gourmands found tyrannical, who remembered with regret the full tables of other days."³ We dare say some of these men would have wished rather that their dinners had been ampler, though their liberty had been less. They are not the first who have thought the blessing of freedom too dearly purchased if bought with the sacrifice of dainties.

When periods of distress came round, occasioned by war or famine, the citizens were especially sensible of the benefit of this simple and frugal manner of life. They felt less the privations they had then to bear, and were able to support with dignity the misfortunes of the State. Moreover, as the result of this economy, the wealth of the citizens was rapidly developed, and the State reached a prosperity it had never known in former days. Each citizen laid by religiously a certain portion of his earnings, and the years of greatest calamity were precisely those that were signalised by the greatest beneficence. Instead of receiving support from other States, Geneva sent its charities to the countries around, becoming a storehouse of earthly as of heavenly bread to the nations. These citizens, who wore plain blouses, and sat down to a meal correspondingly plain, entertained during many years, with liberal Christian hospitality, the refugees of religion-nobles, scholars, statesmen, and men of birth. The Genevan citizen, independent in means, and adding thereto that mental independence which the Gospel gives, could not but be a being of conscious dignity, and of character inherently grand, whom no call of devotion or heroism would find unprepared.

³Gaberel, tom. 1, p. 390.

Geneva profited immensely in another way by the movement, of which it had become the head-quarters. The men who crowded to it, and to whom it so hospitably opened its gates, conferred on it greater advantages than any they received from it. They were of every rank, profession, and trade, and they brought to the city of their adoption, not refinement of birth and elegance of letters only, but also new arts and improved industries. There immediately ensued a great quickening of the energies of labor and skill in Geneva, and these brought in their turn that wealth and conscious dignity which labor and skill never fail to impart. It is a new nation that we behold forming on the soil of the republic, with germs and elements in its bosom, higher and more various than infant State had ever before enjoyed. The fathers of the great Roman people were but a band of outlaws and adventurers! How different the men we now see assembling on the shores of the Lemane to lay the foundations of the Rome of Protestantism, from those who had gathered at the foot of the Capitoline to lay the first stone in the Eternal City! From the strand of Naples to the distant shores of Scotland, we behold Protestantism weeding out of the surrounding countries, and assembling at this great focus, all who were skilful in art, as well as illustrious in virtue, and they communicated to Geneva a refinement of manners and an artistic skill which it continues to retain after the lapse of three centuries.

The most important question raised by the arrival of these exiles was not, Where shall bread be found for them? The hospitality of the Genevese solved this difficulty, for scarce was there citizen who had not one or more of these strangers living under his roof, and sitting at his table. The question which the Genevese had most at heart was, how shall we utilize this great access of intellectual, moral, and industrial power? How shall we draw forth the varied capabilities of these men in the way of strengthening, enriching, and glorifying the State? Let us begin, said they, by enrolling them as citizens. "But," said the Libertines, when the proposal was first mooted, "is it fair that newcomers should lay down the law to the children of the land? These men were not born on the soil of the republic."

True, it was answered, but then the republic is not an affair of acres, it is an affair of faith. The true Geneva is Protestantism, and these men were born into the State in the same hour in which

they became Protestants. This broad view of the question prevailed. Nevertheless, the honour was sparingly distributed. Up till 1555, only eighty had received the freedom of the city; in the early part of that year, other sixty were added ⁴ - a small number truly when we think how numerous the Protestant exiles were. The greatest of all the sons of Geneva, he who was more than a citizen, who was the founder of the State, was not legally enrolled till five years before his death. The name of John Knox was earlier inscribed on the Registers than that of John Calvin. Hardly was there a country in Europe which did not help to swell this truly catholic roll. The list contributed by Italy alone was a long and brilliant one. Lucca sent, among other distinguished names, the Calendrini, the Burlamachi, the Turretini, and the Miceli. ⁵ Of these families many took root in Geneva, and by the services which they rendered the State, and the splendor their genius shed upon it in after-days, they repaid a hundred-fold as citizens the welcome they had received as refugees. Others returned to their native land when persecution had abated. "When the English returned," says Misson, "they left in the Register, which is still preserved, a list of their names and qualities- Stanley, Spencer, Musgrave, Pelham, are among the first in it, as they ought to be. The title of citizen, which several had obtained, was continued to them by an order and compliment of the Seigniori, so that several earls and peers of England may as well boast of being citizens of Geneva as Paul did of being a citizen of Rome."

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One of the most striking characteristics of the Geneva of that day, and for a century after, especially to one coming from a Popish country, was its Sabbath. The day brought a complete cessation of labor to all classes: the field was unwatered by the sweat of the husbandman, the air was unvexed by the hammer of the artisan, and the lake was unploughed by the keel of the fisherman. The great bell of St. Peter's has sounded out its summons, the citizens have assembled in the churches, the city gates have been closed, and no one is allowed to enter or depart while the citizens are occupied in offering their worship.

⁴Bungener, p. 226.

⁵Misson, vol. 2, part 1, p. 275. Besides the names mentioned in the text, Misson gives a list of other Italian families which settled at Geneva- De la Rue, Diodati, Boneti, Franconi, Martini, Rubbati, and many others. (Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 436, 437.)

Everywhere the stillness of the sacred day is sublime, but here that sublimity was enhanced by the grandeur of the region. The Sabbath seemed to shed its own pure and peaceful splendor upon the sublimities of nature, and these sublimities, in their turn, seemed to impart an additional sanctity and majesty to the Sabbath. There was peace on the blue waveless Leman; there was peace on those plains that enclosed it in their vast sweep, and on whose bosom the chalet lay hid amid festooned vines and tall pine-trees. There was peace on the green rampart of the Jura, and peace on the distant Alps, which in the opposite quarter of the horizon lift their snowy piles into the sky, and stand silent and solemn as worshippers. A superb temple, indeed, seems the region, walled in by natural grandeurs, and pervaded throughout with a Sabbatic peace. In the midst of it is the little city of Geneva. No stirs or tumults are heard within it; its bells and its psalms only salute the ear. Beaming faces, the sign of happy hearts, tell what a clay of gladness it is—the most gladsome of all the seven. In every dwelling is heard “the melody of health.” But we must go to St. Peter’s, would we see in its highest manifestation the power of the Sabbath to raise the souls and mould the characters of a people. A crowd of magnanimous, earnest, intelligent faces look up around the pulpit. There are gathered the finest intellects and holiest spirits of all Christendom, for whatever was noble and pure in other countries had been chased thither. The worship of men like these could be no common affair, no mere show or pantomime, like that performed in bespangled vestments amid lighted tapers. The worshippers in St. Peter’s were men whose souls had been attempered in the fire, and who, having forsaken all worldly goods for the sake of the Gospel, stood prepared every hour to sacrifice life itself. Their worship was the worship of the heart, and their prayer the prayer of faith that pierces the heavens.

And as the devotion of the hearers was entire, so the instructions of the pulpit were lofty. The preacher might not be always eloquent, but he was never tame. He forgot himself and remembered only his great theme. Did he discourse on some point of doctrine, his exposition was clear, his words weighty; did he plead the cause of the confessors of other lands, “led as sheep to the slaughter,” it was with a truthfulness and pathos that made his hearers mingle their tears with his, and prepared them to open their doors to such of

the persecuted as might escape the prisons and stakes which their enemies had prepared for them. Such were the scenes that might be witnessed every Sabbath in those days within the walls of St. Peter's, Geneva. If Geneva was the "inner Bureau" of the European Reformation, as Gaberel says, the pulpit was the inner spring of power in that "Bureau." While the pulpit of Geneva stood, Geneva would stand; if the pulpit should fall, Geneva too would fall. It was the bulwark of its liberties, the "horses and chariots" that guarded the independence of the State. It was at the fire, which burned continually on this altar, that the men of Geneva kindled the torch of liberty, and their love of liberty daily recruited that indomitable firmness which so perplexed and mortified Philip II. in the Escorial, and the Pope in the Vatican, and many others besides, who never warred against the little State save to be broken upon it.

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Chapter 29 : Calvin's Last Illness and Death

Calvin's Painful Maladies-Redoubles his Labours-Last Appearance in the Pulpit-Europe Watches his Death-bed-The Plague breaks out-Its Frightful Ravages-Calvin's Last Participation in the Lord's Supper- Goes for the Last Time to the Senate-He Receives the Senators- Receives the Pastors-Farel Visits him-Sits down at Table for the Last Time with his Brethren-His Last Week-One continued Prayer-His Death-His Burial-His Grave

Picture: Fac-simile of Calvins Handwriting. (translation)

Picture: Calvin Addressing the Council for the Last Time.

To the Reformer the close was now near. His body, never robust, had become latterly the seat of numerous maladies, that made life a prolonged torture. The quartan-ague of 1559 he had never recovered from. He was afflicted with pains in his head, and pains in his limbs. Food was often nauseous to him. He suffered from asthma, and spitting of blood. He had to sustain the attacks of the gout, and the yet more excruciating agony of the stone. Amid the ruins of his body, his spirit was fresh, and clear, and vigorous as ever; but as the traveller quickens his steps when the evening begins to fall, and the shadows to lengthen, Calvin redoubled his efforts, if so, before breathing his last, he might make that legacy of wisdom and truth he was to leave to the Church still more complete and perfect. His friends in many lands wrote imploring him to take a little rest. Calvin saw rest-ever-lasting rest coming with the deepening shadows, and continued to work on. Beza tells us that during his last malady he translated from Latin into French his Harmony on Moses, revised the translation of Genesis, wrote upon the Book of Joshua, and finally revised and corrected the greater part of his annotations on the New Testament. He was all the while receiving and answering letters from the Churches. He had but a little before given the last touches to his immortal work, the Institutes.

The last time he appeared in the pulpit was on the 6th of February, 1564. ¹ On that occasion he was seized with so violent a fit of coughing that it brought the blood into his mouth, and stopped his utterance. As he descended the stairs, amid the breathless stillness of his flock, all understood but too well that his last words in the pulpit of St. Peter's had been spoken. There followed weeks of intense suffering. To the martyr when mounting the scaffold the Reformer had said, "Be strong, and play the man:" during four months of suffering, not less severe than that of the scaffold, was Calvin to display the heroism which he had preached to others. The more violent attacks of his malady were indicated only by the greater pallor of his face, the quivering of his lips, the tremulous motion of his clasped hands, and the half-suppressed ejaculation, "O Lord! how long?" It was during these months of suffering that he prosecuted the labours of which Beza, who was daily by his bedside, tells us in the passage referred to above. A little cold water was often his only nourishment for days, and having refreshed himself therewith, he would again resume work.

On this death-bed were riveted the eyes of all Christendom. Rome waited the issue of his sickness with intense excitement, in the hope that it would rid her of her great foe. The Churches of the Reformation asked with sorrowful and most affectionate anxiety if their father was to be taken from their head. Meanwhile, as though to impress the minds of men, and make a great mourning around this

¹Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 41. (translation) "Crato unus ex ealco-graphis nostris Witemberga nuper redfit qui literas attulit a Luthero ad Bucerum in quibus ira scripturn erat: Salute., mihi Sturmium et Calvinum reverenter, quorum libellos singulari cure voluptate legi. (Jam reputa quid illic de eucharistia dicam. Cogira Lutheri ingenuitatem. Facile erit statuere quid causae habeant, qui tam pertinaciter ab eo dissident.) Philippus autem ita scribebat: Lutherus et Pomeranus Calvinum et Sturmium jusserunt salutari. Calvinus magnam gratiam iniit. Hoc vero per nuntium jussit Philippus narrari: Quosdam ut Martinum exasperarent illi indicasse quam odiosum a me una cum suis notaretur. Locum ergo inspexisse, et sensisse sine dubio illic se attingi. Tandem ita fuisse locutum, spero quidem ipsum dim de nobis melius sensurum, sed aequum est a bono ingenio nos aliquid ferre. (Tanta moderatione si non frangimur sumus plane saxci. Ego vero fractus sum. Itaque satisfactionem scripsi quae praefationi in Epistolam ad Romanos inseretur. Si nondum legisti hilippum de autoritate Ecclesiae cupio ut legas. Videbis multo cordatiorem quam apparebat in aliis scriptis.) Salutant to amantissime Capito, Bucerus, Sturmium, Hedio, Bedrottus et alii. Tu etiam velim salutes non vulgarter omnes fratres. Vale, frater optatissime.-Argentorati, 12 Calend Dec. (1539)."

[366] mighty bier, the plague broke in, and inflicted unprecedented ravages on almost all the countries of Europe. It traversed Germany, France, and Switzerland, “and men fell before it,” says Ruchat, “as fall the leaves in autumn when the tempest sweeps through the forest.” This pestilence was equally fatal on the mountain-top and in the low valley. In the Tockenbourg and other parts of Switzerland it entered hamlets and villages, where it left behind it not one living man. In Basle it struck down seven thousand persons, among whom were thirteen councillors, eight ministers, and five professors; among the latter was the learned Cellarius. At Bern, from one to two thousand died. It visited Zurich, and numbered among its victims Theodore Bibliander, the successor of Zwingle. Bullinger was attacked, but recovered, though he had to mourn the loss of his wife and two daughters. At Herisau, in the canton of Appenzell, there were upwards of three thousand deaths. The Protestant congregations, in some cases, assembled in the open air, and when they celebrated the Lord’s Supper, the communicants in order to avoid infection, brought each his own cup, and made use of it at the table.

[367] It was in the midst of the universal gloom created by these terrible
[368] events that men waited from day to day for tidings from the sick-bed at Geneva. Calvin longed to appear yet once again in that church where he had so often preached the Gospel. “On the 2nd of April,” says Beza, “it being Easter-day, he was carried to church in a chair. He remained during the whole sermon, and received the Sacrament from my hand. He even joined, though with a trembling voice, the congregation in the last hymn, ‘Lord, let thy servant depart in peace.’” He was carried out, Beza adds, his face lighted up with a Christian joy.

Six days before (27th March) he had caused himself to be borne to the door of the Council-chamber. Ascending the stairs, supported by two attendants, he entered the hall, and proposed to the Senate a new rector for the school; then, taking off his skullcap, he thanked their Excellencies for the kindness which he had experienced at their hands, especially the friendship they had shown him during his last illness: “For I feel,” he said, “that this is the last time that I shall stand here.” The tones of that voice, now scarcely audible, must have recalled, to those who listened to it for the last time, the many occasions on which it had been lifted up in this same place,

sometimes to approve, sometimes to condemn, but always to attest that he who spoke was the fearless champion of what he believed to be truth, and the unbending and incorruptible patriot. His adieu moved the Council to tears.²

A month after, he sent another message to the Council, intimating his desire to meet its members yet once more before he should die. Having regard to his great weakness, the Council resolved to visit him at his own house. Accordingly, on the 30th April, the twenty-five Lords of Geneva, in all the pomp of a public ceremony, proceeded to his humble dwelling in the Rue des Chanoines. Raising himself on his bed, he exhorted them, amongst other things, to maintain ever inviolate the independence of a city which God had destined to high ends. But he reminded them that it was the Gospel which alone made Geneva worth preserving, and that therefore it behooved them to guard its purity if they would preserve for their city the protection of a stronger arm than their own. Commending them and Geneva to God, and begging them one and all, says Beza, to pardon his faults, he held out his hand to them, which they grasped for the last time, and retired as from the death-bed of a father.³

On the morrow he received the pastors. Most affectionate and touching was his address. He exhorted them to diligence in their office as preachers, to show fidelity to the flock, to cultivate affection for one another, and, above all, maintain the Reformation and discipline which he had established in the Church. He reminded them of the conflict he had had to wage in this matter, and the afflictions that had befallen him, and how at length God had been pleased to crown his labours with success. His many maladies and sicknesses, he said, had at times made him morose and hard to please, and even irascible. For these failings he asked pardon, first of God, and then of his brethren; and, "finally," Beza adds, "he gave his hand to each, one after the other, which was with such anguish and bitterness of heart in every one, that I cannot even recall it to mind without extreme sadness."

The Council he had bidden farewell, his brethren he had bidden farewell, but there was one friend, the oldest of all save Cordier,

²Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 41.

³Spon, Not., pp. 309-311. Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 42.

[369] who had not yet stood at his death-bed and received his last adieus. On the 2nd May, Calvin received a letter from Farel, in which the writer intimated that he was just setting out to visit him. Farel was now nearly eighty. Could he not wait the little while till he had put off “this tabernacle,” and then, with less difficulty to either, the two friends would meet? So it would seem did Calvin think, and hence the letter he immediately dictated: - “Farewell, my best and most faithful brother, since it is God’s will that you should survive me; live in the constant recollection of our union, which, in so far as it was useful to the Church of God, will still bear for us abiding fruit in heaven. I wish you not to fatigue yourself on my account. My breath is weak, and I continually expect it to leave me. It is enough for me that I live and die in Christ, who is gain to his people both in life and death. Once more farewell to thee, and to all the brethren thy colleagues.”

A few days afterwards the Reformer saw the old man, covered all over with dust, having walked from Neuchatel on foot, enter his sick-chamber.⁴ History has not recorded the words that passed between the two. “He had a long interview with him,” says Ruchat, “and on the morrow took his departure for Neuchatel.” It was a long way for one of eighty years, and yet surely it was meet that the man who had met Calvin at the gate of Geneva, when he first entered it nearly thirty years before, should stand beside him when about to depart. This time Farel may not stop him.⁵

Yet a few days more was the Reformer to pass on earth. The 19th of May, or the Friday before Whit-Sunday, brought round the Censures, as they were called. The pastors, on that day, met, and admonished each other fraternally, and afterwards partook together of a modest meal. Calvin requested that the dinner should be prepared at his house; and when the hour came he had himself carried into the room where the repast was to be eaten. Seated amongst his colleagues, he said, “I am come to see you, my brethren, for the last time; for, save this once, I shall never sit again at table.’ Then he offered prayer, but not without difficulty, and ate a little, “en-

⁴Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 43.

⁵Farel made yet one more journey. In the spring of the following year, 1565, he went to Metz, the scene of his earliest labors, where he preached. The effort appears to have been too much for him, for soon after his return to Neufchatel he died of exhaustion.

deavoring,” says Beza. “to enliven us.” “But,” he continues, “before the end of the meal, he requested to be carried back to his chamber, which was close by, saying these words with as cheerful a face as he could-“A partition between us will not prevent me, though absent in body, being present with you in spirit.”” He had spoken truly. From the bed to which he had been carried he was to rise no more.

There remained yet eight days to the Reformer on earth. These were almost one uninterrupted prayer. The fervency of his supplications was indicated not so much by his voice, now scarcely audible, as by his eye, which, says Beza, “retained its brightness to the last,” and testified to the faith and hope with which he was animated. He had not yet left earth, and yet he had left it: for of earthly bread he ate not; with men he had ceased to converse; he halted here, at the portal of the invisible world, to calm, to elevate, and to strengthen his spirit, by converse with the Eternal, before passing its awful but blessed threshold. It was now Saturday, the 27th of May. He seemed to suffer less, and to speak with greater ease. But at eight o’clock of the evening the sure signs of death became apparent. As he was repeating the words of the apostle, “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be... -without being able to finish, he breathed his last. ⁶ Beza, who had been summoned to his bedside, was just in time to see him expire. “And thus,” says he, “on this day, with the setting sun, the brightest light in the Church of God on earth was taken back to heaven.” The event was briefly chronicled in the Consistorial Register thus-“Went to God, Saturday, the 27th.”

Early on the day following, which was Sunday, the remains of the Reformer were wrapped in a shroud and enclosed in a wooden coffin preparatory to interment. At two o’clock the funeral took place. It differed in no respect from that of an ordinary citizen, save in the much greater concourse of mourners. The body was followed to the grave in Plain-palais-about 500 paces outside the city-by the members of the Senate, the body of the clergy, the professors in the college, and by the citizens, and many distinguished strangers; “not,” says Beza, “without many tears.” Over the grave to which they had consigned so much-the Pastor, the Patriot, and the Reformer-they

⁶Gaberel, tom. 1, p. 405.

raised no monument. Not a line did they write on marble or brass to tell the ages to come who reposed in this grave, and what he had been to Christendom. They arranged in reverent silence the dust above him, and departed. In this they but fulfilled Calvin's own wishes. He had enjoined that he should be buried "after the customary fashion;" "and that customary fashion," says Bungener, "which was observed down almost to the present day, was that no monument should be raised upon any grave, however illustrious the deceased might be."⁷ "He was buried," says Ruchat, "with all simplicity, in the common cemetery, as he himself had desired: so simply that no one at this day knows where his grave is." "For more than two centuries," says Bungener, "that grave has been dug over and over again, like the rest, by the sexton's spade; and for less than twenty years a black stone has marked the spot where Calvin perhaps reposed, for it is only a tradition."⁸

But it is well, perhaps, that neither tomb nor monument was raised to Calvin. Forgetting his dust we stand face to face with the living, thinking, deathless spirit, and rise to a truer and sublimer ideal of the man. Death has not caused Calvin to retire; he is still with us: he speaks to us in his works, he lives in the Churches which he organized, and he prosecutes from century to century his vast plans in the continued progress of that moral and spiritual empire which his genius and faith founded, or, to speak more truly, restored. While that empire lives, Calvin will live.

⁷Bungener, p. 348.

⁸When, a few years ago, the Author visited the Plain-palais at Geneva, he found a pine tree, and a stone of about a foot square, with the letters "J. C." inscribed on it, marking the supposed spot of Calvin's interment.

Chapter 30 : Calvin's Work

Impression made by the News of Calvin's Death-Exultation of Rome- Despondency of the Reformed-Both Mis-calculate-The Reformation is Calvin-Geneva grows still Greater-Luther and Calvin Compared- The Two Reformations One-The Culmination of the German Reformation, the Starting-point of the Genevan-Calvin's Special Service to the Reformation-Theories of Church Government-Luther's Views-Melancthon's-Brentius'-Lambert's-Zwingle's-Calvin Builds on the Foundations of his Predecessors-The Key of his Position-The Two Lessons

Picture: Farel's Last Interview with Calvin.

Picture: A Street in Barcelona.

When the tidings sped through Europe that Calvin was dead, the two great parties into which Christendom was divided were very differently affected. The one gave way to unbounded joy, the other was seized with nearly as unbounded sorrow. Rome, hearing in the news the knell of Protestantism, confidently anticipated the immediate return of the revolted countries to their obedience. "The man of Geneva," as she termed the Reformer, was no more. The arm which had so often smitten her legions, and chased them from the field in disastrous rout, would never again be lifted up in battle; and she had nothing more to do, in order to restore her Church to its former glory and dominion, than simply to go forth and summon the Reforming ranks, now left without a leader, to surrender. The Pope went so far as to nominate seven commissioners, who were to proceed to Geneva on this business. ¹ This step was taken with the advice, amongst others, of Cardinal Boromeo and the Bishop of Anagni, who seem to have persuaded the Pope that the Council and citizens of Geneva only waited for some such embassy to abandon Protestantism, and bow as penitents and suppliants at the footstool of

¹Beza, Vita Calvini. Ruchat, tom. 7, p. 46.

the Papal throne. In truth they would have done so during Calvin's life-time, they insinuated, but for the extraordinary influence which that heretic exercised over them. The issue of this affair was very far from answering the expectations of the Pope and his advisors.

If Rome thought, on the one hand, that the death of Calvin was her triumph, there were Protestants, on the other, who viewed it as the almost certain overthrow of the Reformation. There was just as little foundation for this conclusion as for the other. It is principles, not men, that keep the world moving. The Reformer, in his short life of not quite fifty-five years, had embodied all the principles of the movement in his writings; he had enshrined them as in a living model in Geneva; through Geneva he had initiated the great work of impressing them on Christendom. This, not the handful of dust in the Plain-palais, was Calvin. The eye truly enlightened could see him still occupying his chair at Geneva, and legislating and ruling Christendom from it as from a throne. While the Reformation was there, Calvin was there; and if at Geneva, it was in France, and in all Christendom. Both those who triumphed and those who trembled, thinking the last hour was about to strike to Geneva and the Reformation, were alike mistaken. The city rose higher than before, though the man who made it famous was in his grave. The movement spread wider than ever, and if the city was a center and impelling power to the movement, the movement was a bulwark around the city. "The Genevese of the sixteenth century," says an eloquent modern writer, "committed one of those deeds of saintly daring which seem folly in the eyes of men, but which are in reality the safeguard of nations heroic enough to attempt them. Geneva had been the representative of a great right, liberty of conscience; she offered an asylum to all the martyrs of the faith; she had put her hand to the work, and pursued her career without casting a look behind. Politicians and calculators may, if they please, see a sort of madness in a republic, without strength or riches, proclaiming religious and moral liberty in the face of Italy, Spain, and France, united for the triumph of Romish despotism. But the God of the faithful ones who hold fast the truth confounded human prevision, he surrounded our town with that celestial protection, against which the plots and the rage of the mighty broke in vain. Thus Geneva, without arms and without territory, accomplished her perilous mission; and remaining

faithful to the principle of her nationality, the city of Calvin saw herself the object of the Divine favor, and enjoyed a prosperity, a respect, and an outward security which the most powerful States in the world do not often obtain.”²

Now that we have come to the close of Calvin's career, it is necessary that we should pause, and ask wherein lay his distinctive characteristic as a Reformer, and what was it that constituted the specific difference between his Reformation and that of Luther. The answer to this inquiry will help us to understand the unity that belongs to the great drama whose successive developments we are attempting to trace. The work of Luther was needed to prepare for that of Calvin, and Calvin's was necessary to complete and crown that of Luther. The parts which each acted were essential to constitute a whole. Wittenberg and Geneva make between them one Reformation. This can be better seen in our day than when Luther and Calvin were alive, and toiling each at his allotted part of the great task.

Let us first sketch in outline the difference between these two men and their work, and then return and explain it a little more in detail.

By the year 1535, the Reformation in Germany had culminated, and was beginning to decline. The Augsburg Confession (1530) marked the era of greatest prosperity in German Protestantism; the formation of the Schmalkahl League notified the moment of its incipient decline.

That League, in itself, was quite defensible-nay, even dutiful, considering the power of the princes, and the attempts the emperor was making to destroy the political system of Germany. But it exercised, especially after the death of Luther, a depressing and withering effect upon the spiritual energies of the Protestants, which did more to throw back the movement than would any amount of violence that could have been inflicted upon it. With Luther in his grave, with Melancthon and his compromises, with Landgrave Philip and his soldiers, the Reformation in Germany had closed its period of well-doing. Another center had to be found where the movement might have a fresh start. Geneva was selected. There

²Gaberel, tom. 1, p. 466; 1858-1862

the Reformation was extricated from the political entanglements with which it had become mixed up in Germany. It was rescued from the hands of political and military men: it was withdrawn from reliance on armies, and committed to those who could further it only with their prayers and their martyrdoms. True, its second cradle was placed on a spot which, of all others, seemed open to attack on every side, and where it was not sure of a day's life; yet around that spot were invisible ramparts; the poise constantly maintained in the ambitions of its neighboring sovereigns- Charles, Francis, and the Pope-was to it for walls.

As new foothold had to be found for the movement, so too had a new chief. And, accordingly, before Luther had been laid in his tomb at Wittenberg, Calvin was fairly installed at Geneva. He was prosecuting his work in quietness by the shores of the Lemane, while the princes of the Schmalkald League were fighting on the plains of Germany. Under Calvin the Reformation entered upon a new and more spiritual dispensation. All the incidents in Luther's life are sudden, startling, and dramatic: this form was given them to draw attention and fix the minds of men. But the movement, once launched, needed this array of outward drapery no longer. Under Calvin it appeals less to the senses and more to the intellect: less to the imagination and more to the soul. The evolutions in Calvin's career are quiet, gradual, without the stage effect, if we may be permitted the phrase, which marked Luther's more notable appearances, but they are more truly sublime. Henceforward the Reformation proceeds more silently, but with a deeper power, and a higher moral glow.

[372] The leading stages of Luther's history repeat themselves in that of Calvin, but after a different fashion. In the career of each there is a marked point of commencement, and a marked point of culmination. The nailing of the ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg has its analogue, or corresponding act, in the publication of the Institutes at Basle. The one manifesto struck and stirred Christendom even as did the other. Each notified the entrance of its author upon a high career. They were two mighty voices telling the world that great instructors had been sent to it, and bidding it hear them. Again, the appearance of Luther before the Diet at Worms has its corresponding act in the victory of Calvin over the

Libertines of Geneva, when at the risk of life he barred their way to the Communion-table. The first was the more dramatic, the second was the more evangelically grand. Both were needed fully to define the office and place of the Reformation. The first demonstrated the Gospel's power to withstand kings and armies, and triumph over all the power of the sword: the second showed that its energy equally fitted it to cope with Libertine mobs, and to resist their devastating theories. It would not lay its freedom at the feet of the tyrant, and neither would it surrender its purity at the call of the populace.

In fact, we see only the one half of the work which Calvin accomplished, when we confine our attention to the blow he dealt that great system which had so long kept the intellect of the world in darkness and its conscience in bondage. The evil he prevented rising up was as great as that he helped to pull down. It is altogether a mistake to suppose that if the Reformation had not come, the Church of Rome would have continued to exercise the sway she had wielded in the past. The hour of her supremacy had gone by. The scandals and dogmas of the priesthood had destroyed belief: the speculations of the schoolmen had sown the seeds of pantheism, and a great tempest lowered over Europe. Loosened from its old foundations, an upheaval of society was inevitable. But for Protestantism, Servetus would have been the Voltaire of the sixteenth century: the Libertine club, on the shores of the Lemman, would have anticipated the Encyclopaedists who at a later period flourished on the banks of the Seine; Geneva would have filled the post which Paris did two centuries after, by becoming the head-quarters of revolutionary propagandism; and the year 1593 would have been as fatal to the thrones and altars of the Papal world as was the year 1793. Providence postponed the tempest through the agency of Calvin, who grappled with the young giant of pantheistic revolution, and made Geneva the head-quarters of a Protestant propagandism, which by restoring knowledge and faith imparted a new life to the European nations, and laid over again the foundations of a world that was dissolving and about to vanish away. And not only was the storm deferred thereby, its violence was mitigated when at last it came, and its devastations restricted to the one half of Europe. The Roman Church may not see the debt it owes to Calvin; that, however, does not make it less the fact that there is no man who ever lived, to whom its priests owe half what they owe

to him. The inviolability of person which they continued to enjoy for two centuries after his day was due to the Reformer.

Such were the two men who figured so largely in the sixteenth century, and such is the part accomplished by each in the one work assigned to them. But let us explain a little more fully what we have now briefly stated. The special service that Calvin rendered to Protestantism was to codify its laws, and organise its adherents so as to conserve their morality and holiness—in other words, the Reformation itself. His first step in the direction of this great end—in his view the standing or falling of Protestantism—was to exclude the profane from the Communion-table. This power he lodged in the Consistory, or body of pastors and elders. He would allow no other authority on earth to exercise it: and in claiming this power—and we have seen at what risks he exercised it—he separated between the Church and the world, and laid the first stone in that system of polity which he afterwards elaborated, and which was ultimately extended to the Protestant Churches of France, of Holland, of Scotland, and of yet remoter countries.

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In what he did in this matter, the Reformer of Geneva built upon the foundations of his great predecessors. The more eminent of the Reformers who had been before him, had felt the necessity of drawing a distinction between the Church and the world, and of excluding the ungodly and vicious from the Sacraments, and so conserving the Church's purity; but their theories of Church discipline were elementary and crude, and their practical attempts were to a great extent failures. Still it is beyond doubt that these early and immature experiments helped to eliminate the principles and shape the projects which resulted at last in the establishment of the Genevan polity.

Luther saw, and often mournfully felt, that the Church needed a discipline, but he failed to give it such. When Luther enunciated his idea of a Church as “a congregation of saints, a spiritual assembly of souls in one faith,”³ he laid the foundation of a fabric on which Calvin afterwards placed the top-stone. But the German Reformer proceeded no farther on this fundamental idea than to constitute

³Geschichte der Presbyterial-und Synodalverfassung seit der Reformation. Von G. V. Lechler, Knittlingen. Pages 6, 7. Leyden, 1854.

an office of men to preach the Word and dispense the Sacraments. Scattered through his writings are the germs of a more complete and efficient polity; he could distinguish between the temporal and the spiritual jurisdiction,⁴ but how to give these principles effect in the gathering and organising of the Church he knew not. He sorrowfully confesses, in his German Mass and Order of Divine Worship, his inability to furnish what was so much needed—a working plan for the government of the Church. One main obstruction in his path was the low state of practical religion among the mass of the German people. “I have not the people,” said he, “whom it requires. For we Germans are a wild, rude, riotous race, among whom it is not easy to set anything on foot unless necessity compel.”⁵

Melancthon enunciated his views on this head a little more clearly than Luther. He declared his opinion “that a pastor ought not to excommunicate any man without the concurrence of a body of judges, and the cooperation of some worthy members of the Church.”⁶ So also taught the four Saxon Reformers—Pomeranus, Jonas, Luther, and Melancthon. In a joint epistle to the ministers of Nuremberg, in 1540, exhorting them to resume the practice of excommunication, they annex the condition that, in this business, elders be associated with the pastor.⁷ These projects embrace the elements of the Genevan polity. They fell to the ground, it is true, about 1542, when the system under which the Churches of the Lutheran Communion still are, was adopted—namely, a Consistory, chosen by, and responsible to, the civil powers; but they exhibit a notable approximation on the part of the German Reformers to the plan of ecclesiastical rule afterwards elaborated and set working by Calvin.

Next in order is the scheme of John Brentius. Brentius was the Reformer first of the free imperial city of hall, in Swabia, and afterwards of the Duchy of Wurtemberg. He had the merit of proposing to the Council of Hall, in 1526, a better working plan for the regulation of the Church than either Luther's or Melancthon's, although still his plan was defective. Founding on what, according to his view, was

⁴Ibid., p. 8.

⁵For a statement in full of Luther's views on the constitution of the Church, see ante, bk. 9, chap. 12.

⁶Corp. Reform., ed. Bretschneider, vol. 4, p. 542.

⁷Corp. Reform., vol. 3, p. 965. Lechler, *Geschichte der Presbyt.*, etc., pp. 8, 9.

the order followed in the Apostolic Church, he says: "The saints of the primitive Church thought it good to observe the following order in conducting evangelical discipline: - Certain ancient, honorable, and discreet men were elected from the assembly by the Christian people of each locality, to whom charge was given to take the oversight of the congregation; and in particular to admonish such as gave offense by unchristian behavior, and to inflict excommunication, if admonition proved unavailing. Of these chosen men the one who was appointed to preach the Word, and who was authorised to convene the others for business, was styled Bishop-that is, overseer or shepherd; the rest were styled, in allusion to their age, Presbyters-that is, Councillors. The meeting of the Presbyters and Bishop was designated a Synod-that is, an assembly." Such was the scheme of Brentius; it is a well-defined and independent plan of Church rule, lodging the correction of manners solely in the hands of the Church herself-that is, of her office-bearers.

[375] Brentius appeared on the point of anticipating Calvin as regards his Church polity; and yet he missed it. The existence of a Christian magistracy, in his view, modified the whole question. A pagan magistrate could not be expected to correct Church scandals, and therefore it behoved the primitive Church, unaided by the State, to administer her whole discipline; but now, the magistrate being Christian he was fitted, according to Brentius, to share with the Church the task of correcting and punishing evils; although still there were vices and sins which the civil ruler could not or would not correct, and these the Church herself must see to. Thus he inextricably mixed up the Church's discipline with the State's authority, and he added to the confusion by giving to the magistrate the nomination of the lay-assessors who were to take part with the pastor in the exercise of discipline.

Another scheme claims a moment's attention from us. It is that of Francis Lambert, ex-monk of Avignon, and Philip, Landgrave of Hesse. It was laid before the Committee of Hornburg in the same year (1526) that saw the scheme of John Brentius submitted to the Council of Hall. It is the most advanced of all. It lodged the administration of discipline immediately and directly in the members of the Church. First of all, so far as human judgment could effect it, a Church of saints only was to be constituted; these were to

convene from time to time, “for the public punishment and exclusion of scandalous persons... for passing judgment on the doctrine of their pastor, for electing and, in case of need, deposing bishops and deacons (i.e., ministers and helpers) and guardians of the poor, and for whatsoever other functions pertain to the congregation; for these reasons, we ordain that in every parish, after God’s Word shall have been preached for a season, there shall take place a convention of the faithful, wherein all males, who favor the cause of Christ and are reputed saints, shall come together to decide, along with the bishop, on all Church affairs, according to the Word of God. The bishop or minister may by no means excommunicate or absolve by himself, but only in conjunction with the congregation.”⁸

This is not so much the Presbyterian as the Congregational polity. It is, in fact, a scheme that blends the two, for it was made to approximate the first, by the institution of provincial Synods, consisting of the pastors and a deputy from every congregation. It is remarkable, when its age and place are considered. A draft of it was sent to Luther for his approval. He advised that for the present the project should not be attempted, but that every effort be made to fill the pulpits and schools with efficient men. Thereafter the plan might be introduced piece-meal, and if it met with general approval might become law; “for to draw a fine plan and to reduce it to practice are two very different things. Men are not constituted as those people imagine who sit at home and sketch fine plans of how things are to go.” This constitution was hardly set a-working when it was abandoned. The Church of Hesse, surrounded on all sides by laxer schemes of polity, in a year or two forsook that of Lambert, and adopted that under which Luther had placed the Churches of Saxony.

The plan of Zwingle was intermediate between that of Luther and that of Calvin. The Reformer of Zurich framed a code of laws and ordinances covering the entire field of social life, and committed their administration to a series of judges or courts, supreme over which was the State.

Marriage, the Sunday, and the Sacrament were the three centers of his moral scheme, the three points on which his ecclesiastical code hinged. With Luther, he regarded the power of discipline as vested

⁸Lechler, *Geschichte der Presbyt.*, etc., pp. 14-16.

in the whole body of the faithful; and the provisions he made for the exercise of that power were, first, the Kirk-session, or Still-stand, so called for this reason, that at the close of public worship the members remained in church, still-standing, with the pastor, and in that attitude made their communications to the minister, and to one another, and reproved those cited before them for discipline. ⁹ Secondly, the half-yearly Synod, which chiefly occupied itself with the doctrines and morals of the clergy; and thirdly, the Board of Moral Control, to which was added, when the discipline of the Church extended, the magistrates of the district. Excommunication—that is, exclusion from the membership of the Church, with all implied in that sentence in Switzerland—was often pronounced by the Still-stand as a temporary measure; but as a final measure it could be pronounced only by the Council. The supreme ecclesiastical authority was thus in the hands of the State, but it was handed over to it by Zwingli on the express condition that the magistrates were Christian men, and were to take the Word of God as their sole directory in all their proceedings. ¹⁰ The zeal and promptitude with which the Council of Zurich aided Zwingli in his reforming measures, was not without its influence in molding his scheme of polity, and indeed the Swiss magistrates of those days were amongst the more enlightened and pious of the population. But seeing Constitutions are permanent while men change, in order to be wisely framed they ought to be based, not on exceptional cases, but on great and general laws.

[376] Next to the doctrine of the Church, there is nothing that appertains more to her well-being than her discipline. Without this, her life would ebb away, and she would fall back into the world from which she had come out; whereas, with a suitable organization, not only would her life be preserved, but her vigor and efficiency would be increased tenfold. We have therefore sought to trace the successive stages of the growth of the polity of the Protestant Churches. We see the Church's government, like her doctrine, gradually developing and taking shape. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers we find lying at the foundation of all these schemes. On this idea Luther constitutes the office of preacher of the Word. He feels that this is

⁹Christoffel, *Life of Zwingli*, p. 160.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 160-170.

not enough, but does not see how, in the then immature state of the Church, more can be done. Brentius joined lay assessors with the pastor, who were to exclude the unworthy from the privileges of the Church; but the better half of this power he gave to the magistrate, who might in the end-this was of course the questionable part of the scheme-usurp the whole of it. Francis Lambert went to the other extreme. He made all the members of the Church judges-a plan that will work with difficulty in any age, and which certainly was unsuited to the age that saw its birth. The polity constructed by Zwingle was more elaborate, and did much to nourish morality and piety in Switzerland, but its framer seriously endangered it when he surrendered to the magistrate the power, in the last resort, of excluding from the Church and her ordinances.

Calvin, doubtless, had studied all these attempts, and profited by them. There is no reason to think that he reached this scheme of Church polity at a bound; it was rather a reproduction of earlier schemes, avoiding, as far as he could, the rock on which his predecessors had split. His genius detected the one thing which he thought essential in Church discipline; and less concerned about other matters, he tenaciously grasped this, the power namely of admitting to or excluding from the privileges of the Church. It was his strong opinion that he who had this power had the guardianship of the Church's purity, and the control of her government, and that this right must be exercised by the Church herself-that is, by her chosen representatives-to the exclusion of all other authority and power. No one, he considered, can share with the Church, and no one dare interfere with her in the exercise of this right. At great peril and suffering he vindicated this right, against both the Council of Geneva and the Libertine democracy. In this battle he stemmed the rising tide of infidel sentiment and immoral manners which would have been more fatal to Reformation than the arms of the Empire, and he laid the corner-stone of that spiritual dominion which Protestantism was to exercise over the nations.

The Presbyterian of the present day will not admit that Calvin's scheme was faultless. The Reformer's views touching the theocratic character of States prevented him doing full justice to his own idea of the individuality of the Church, and forbade his placing his ecclesiastical polity alongside the State's government, as an independent

and distinct autonomy. In the administration of practical discipline at Geneva the Council was greater than the Consistory. But the essential principle, as Calvin deemed it- namely, the sole power to admit or exclude, which was in his mind the key of the position-he combated for, and vindicated with all the force of his mighty intellect. And when he came to apply his theory of Church power to the French Churches, the completeness and consistency of his ideas on ecclesiastical polity were better seen. In France the government was hostile, and there, even if Calvin had wished, he could not have effected the complication that existed at Geneva. But all the more was the fitness of his scheme demonstrated. It gave a perfect autonomy to the French Protestant Church, which enabled her to maintain her place alongside the throne, and to survive a lengthened succession of terrific tempests, which began from this time to assail her.

It is not difficult to see, now that we look back on the epoch, that God was then teaching a great lesson to the world-that a scripturally constituted and scripturally governed Church would, in days to come, be the only bulwark against the tremendous evils which were beginning to assail Christendom from opposite sides. This lesson, we must repeat, was taught twice over, first in the case of Luther, and secondly in the case of Calvin.

In Luther we see the Reformation, undazzled by the blaze of worldly glory, and unterrified by the threats of worldly power, maintaining its ground despite the insolence of authority. In the case of Calvin, in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, we see the Reformation standing before a licentious and furious infidel mob, who hate it not less than the emperor does, and are just as eager to extinguish it in blood, and we behold that mob recoiling abashed and awe-struck before its moral power. Happy had it been for Italy and Spain had they laid to heart the first lesson! and happy had it been for France had she pondered the second!

Book 15: The Jesuits

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Chapter 1 : Ignatius Loyola

Rome's New Army-Ignatius Loyola-His Birth-His Wars-He is Wounded-Betakes him to the Legends of the Saints-His Fanaticism Kindled-The Knight-Errant of Mary-The Cave at Manressa-His Mortifications-Comparison between Luther and Ignatius Loyola-An Awakening of the Conscience in both-Luther turns to the Bible, Loyola to Visions-His Revelations

Picture: Ignatius Loyola.

Picture: View of the Front Entrance of the Sanctuary of Loyola, Guipuzcoa.

Protestantism had marshalled its spiritual forces a second time, and placing itself at the heart of Christendom-at a point where three great empires met-it was laboring with redoubled vigor to propagate itself on all sides. It was expelling from the air of the world that ancient superstition, horn of Paganism and Judaism, which, like an opaque veil, had darkened the human mind: a new light was breaking on the eyes and a new life stirring in the souls of men: schools of learning, pure Churches, and free nations were springing up in different parts of Europe; while hundreds of thousands of disciples were ready, by their holy lives or heroic deaths, to serve that great cause which, having broken their ancient fetters, had made them the heirs of a new liberty and the citizens of a new world. It was clear that if let alone, for only a few years, Protestantism would achieve a victory so complete that it would be vain for any opposing power to think of renewing the contest. If that power which was seated in Geneva was to be withstood, and the tide of victory which was bearing it to dominion rolled back, there must be no longer delay in the measures necessary for achieving such a result.

It was further clear that armies would never effect the overthrow of Protestantism. The serried strength of Popish Europe had been put forth to crush it, but all in vain: Protestantism had risen only the stronger from the blows which, it was hoped, would overwhelm it.

It was plain that other weapons must be forged, and other arms mustered, than those which Charles and Francis had been accustomed to lead into the field. It was now that the Jesuit corps was embodied. And it must be confessed that these new soldiers did more than all the armies of France and Spain to stem the tide of Protestant success, and bind victory once more to the banners of Rome.

We have seen Protestantism renew its energies: Rome, too, will show what she is capable of doing.

As the tribes of Israel were approaching the frontier of the Promised Land, a Wizard-prophet was summoned from the East to bar their entrance by his divinations and enchantments. As the armies of Protestantism neared their final victory, there started up the Jesuit host, with a subtler casuistry and a darker divination than Balaam's, to dispute with the Reformed the possession of Christendom. We shall consider that host in its rise, its equipments, its discipline, its diffusion, and its successes.

Don Inigo Lopez de Recalde, the Ignatius Loyola of history, was the founder of the Order of Jesus, or the Jesuits. His birth was nearly contemporaneous with that of Luther. He was the youngest son of one of the highest Spanish grandees, and was born in his father's Castle of Loyola, in the province of Guipuzcoa, in 1491. His youth was passed at the splendid and luxurious comfort of Ferdinand the Catholic. Spain at that time was fighting to expel the Moors, whose presence on her soil she accounted at once an insult to her independence and an affront to her faith. She was ending the conflict in Spain, but continuing it in Africa. The naturally ardent soul of Ignatius was set on fire by the religious fervor around him. He grew weary of the gaieties and frivolities of the court; nor could even the dalliances and adventures of knight-errantry satisfy him. He thirsted to earn renown on the field of arms. Embarking in the war which at that time engaged the religious enthusiasm and military chivalry of his countrymen, he soon distinguished himself by his feats of daring. Ignatius was bidding fair to take a high place among warriors, and transmit to posterity a name encompassed with the halo of military glory-but with that halo only. At this stage of his career an incident befell him which cut short his exploits on the battle-field, and transferred his enthusiasm and chivalry to another sphere.

[378] It was the year 1521. Luther was uttering his famous “No!” before the emperor and his princes, and summoning, as with trumpet-peal, Christendom to arms. It is at this moment the young Ignatius, the intrepid soldier of Spain, and about to become the yet more intrepid soldier of Rome, appears before us. He is shut up in the town of Pamplona, which the French are besieging. The garrison are hard pressed: and after some whispered consultations they openly propose to surrender. Ignatius deems the very thought of such a thing dishonor; he denounces the proposed act of his comrades as cowardice, and re-entering the citadel with a few companions as courageous as himself, swears to defend it to the last drop of his blood. By-and-by famine leaves him no alternative save to die within the walls, or to cut his way sword in hand through the host of the besiegers. He goes forth and joins battle with the French. As he is fighting desperately he is struck by a musket-ball, wounded dangerously in both legs, and laid senseless on the field. Ignatius had ended the last campaign he was ever to fight with the sword: his valor he was yet to display on other fields, but he would mingle no more on those which resound with the clash of arms and the roar of artillery.

[379] The bravery of the fallen warrior had won the respect of the foe. Raising him from the ground, where he was fast bleeding to death, they carried him to the hospital of Pamplona, and tended him with care, till he was able to be conveyed in a litter to his father’s castle. Thrice had he to undergo the agony of having his wounds opened. Clenching his teeth and closing his fists he bade defiance to pain. Not a groan escaped him while under the torture of the surgeon’s knife. But the tardy passage of the weeks and months during which he waited the slow healing of his wounds, inflicted on his ardent spirit a keener pain than had the probing-knife on his quivering limbs. Fettered to his couch he chafed at the inactivity to which he was doomed. Romances of chivalry and tales of war were brought him to beguile the hours. These exhausted, other books were produced, but of a somewhat different character. This time it was the legends of the saints that were brought the bed-ridden knight. The tragedy of the early Christian martyrs passed before him as he read. Next came the monks and hermits of the Thebaic deserts and the Sinaitic mountains. With an imagination on fire he

perused the story of the hunger and cold they had braved; of the self-conquests they had achieved; of the battles they had waged with evil spirits; of the glorious visions that had been vouchsafed them; and the brilliant rewards they had gained in the lasting reverence of earth and the felicities and dignities of heaven. He panted to rival these heroes, whose glory was of a kind so bright, and pure, that compared with it the renown of the battle-field was dim and sordid. His enthusiasm and ambition were as boundless as ever, but now they were directed into a new channel. Henceforward the current of his life was changed.

He had lain down “a knight of the burning sword”-to use the words of his biographer, Vieyra-he rose up from it “a saint of the burning torch.”

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The change was a sudden and violent one, and drew after it vast consequences not to Ignatius only, and the men of his own age, but to millions of the human race in all countries of the world, and in all the ages that have elapsed since. He who lay down on his bed the fiery soldier of the emperor, rose from it; the yet more fiery soldier of the Pope. The weakness occasioned by loss of blood, the morbidity produced by long seclusion, the irritation of acute and protracted suffering, joined to a temperament highly excitable, and a mind that had fed on miracles and visions till its enthusiasm had grown into fanaticism, accounts in part for the transformation which Ignatius had undergone. Though the balance of his intellect was now sadly disturbed, his shrewdness, his tenacity, and his daring remained. Set free from the fetters of calm reason, these qualities had freer scope than ever. The wing of his earthly ambition was broken, but he could take his flight heavenward. If earth was forbidden him, the celestial domains stood open, and there worthier exploits and more brilliant rewards awaited his prowess.

The heart of a soldier plucked out, and that of a monk given him, Ignatius vowed, before leaving his sick-chamber, to be the slave, the champion, the knight-errant of Mary. She was the lady of his soul, and after the manner of dutiful knights he immediately repaired to her shrine at Montserrat, hung up his arms before her image, and spent the night in watching them. But reflecting that he was a soldier of Christ, that great Monarch who had gone forth to subjugate all the earth, he resolved to eat no other food, wear no other raiment

than his King had done, and endure the same hardships and vigils. Laying aside his plume, his coat of mail, his shield and sword, he donned the cloak of the mendicant. "Wrapped in sordid rags," says Duller, "an iron chain and prickly girdle pressing on his naked body, covered with filth, with un-combed hair and untrimmed nails," he retired to a dark mountain in the vicinity of Manressa, where was a gloomy cave, in which he made his abode for some time. There he subjected himself to all the penances and mortifications of the early anchorites whose holiness he emulated. He wrestled with the evil spirit, talked to voices audible to no ear but his own, fasted for days on end, till his weakness was such that he fell into a swoon, and one day was found at the entrance of his cave, lying on the ground, half dead.

The cave at Manressa recalls vividly to our memory the cell at Erfurt. The same austerities, vigils, mortifications, and mental efforts and agonies which were undergone by Ignatius Loyola, had but a very few years before this been passed through by Martin Luther. So far the career of the founder of the Jesuits and that of the champion of Protestantism were the same. Both had set before them a high standard of holiness, and both had all but sacrificed life to reach it. But at the point to which we have come the courses of the two men widely diverge. Both hitherto in their pursuit of truth and holiness had traveled by the same road; but now we see Luther turning to the Bible, "the light that shineth in a dark place," "the sure Word of Prophecy." Ignatius Loyola, on the other hand, surrenders himself to visions and revelations. As Luther went onward the light grew only the brighter around him. He had turned his face to the sun. Ignatius had turned his gaze inward upon his own beclouded mind, and verified the saying of the wise man, "He who wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."

Finding him half exanimate at the mouth of his cave, sympathizing friends carried Ignatius to the town of Manressa. Continuing there the same course of penances and self-mortifications which he had pursued in solitude, his bodily weakness greatly increased, but he was more than recompensed by the greater frequency of those heavenly visions with which he now began to be favored. In Manressa he occupied a cell in the Dominican convent, and as he was

then projecting a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he began to qualify himself for this holy journey by a course of the severest penances. "He scourged himself thrice a day," says Ranke, "he rose up to prayer at midnight, and passed seven hours of each day on his knees."¹

It will hardly do to say that this marvellous case is merely an instance of an unstrung bodily condition, and of vicious mental stimulants abundantly supplied, where the thirst for adventure and distinction was still unquenched. A closer study of the case will show that there was in it an awakening of the conscience. There was a sense of sin-its awful demerit, and its fearful award. Loyola, too, would seem to have felt the "terrors of death, and the pains of hell." He had spent three days in Montserrat in confessing the sins of all his past life.² But on a more searching review of his life, finding that he had omitted many sins, he renewed and amplified his confession at Manressa. If he found peace it was only for a short while; again his sense of sin would return, and to such a pitch did his anguish rise, that thoughts of self-destruction, came into his mind. Approaching the window of his cell, he was about to throw himself from it, when it suddenly flashed upon him that the act was abhorrent to the Almighty, and he withdrew, crying out, "Lord, I will not do aught that may offend thee."³

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One day he awakened as from a dream. Now I know, said he to himself, that all these torments are from the assaults of Satan. I am tossed between the promptings of the good Spirit, who would have me be at peace, and the dark suggestions of the evil one, who seeks continually to terrify me. I will have done with this warfare. I will forget my past life; I will open these wounds not again. Luther in the midst of tempests as terrible had come to a similar resolution. Awaking as from a frightful dream, he lifted up his eyes and saw One who had borne his sins upon His cross: and like the mariner who clings amid the surging billows to the rock, Luther was at peace because he had anchored his soul on an Almighty foundation. But says Ranke, speaking of Loyola and the course he had now resolved to pursue, "this was not so much the restoration of his peace as a resolution, it was an engagement entered into by the

¹Ranke, *Hist. of the Popes*, bk. 2, sec. 4, p. 138; Lond., 1874.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 138, 139.

³Ranke, bk. 2, sec. 4, pp. 138, 139.

will rather than a conviction to which the submission of the will is inevitable. It required no aid from Scripture, it was based on the belief he entertained of an immediate connection between himself and the world of spirits. This would never have satisfied Luther. No inspirations-no visions would Luther admit; all were in his opinion alike injurious. He would have the simple, written, indubitable Word of God alone.⁴

From the hour that Ignatius resolved to think no more of his sins his spiritual horizon began, as he believed, to clear up. All his gloomy terrors receded with the past which he had consigned to oblivion. His bitter tears were dried up, and his heavy sighs no longer resounded through the convent halls. He was taken, he felt, into more intimate communion with God. The heavens were opened that he might have a clearer insight into Divine mysteries. True, the Spirit had revealed these things in the morning of the world, through chosen and accredited channels, and inscribed them on the page of inspiration that all might learn them from that infallible source. But Ignatius did not search for these mysteries in the Bible; favored above the sons of men, he received them, as he thought, in revelations made specially to himself. Alas! his hour had come and passed, and the gate that would have ushered him in amid celestial realities and joys was shut, and henceforward he must dwell amid fantasies and dreams.

It was intimated to him one day that he should yet see the Savior in person. He had not long to wait for the promised revelation. At mass his eyes were opened, and he saw the incarnate God in the Host. What farther proof did he need of transubstantiation, seeing the whole process had been shown to him? A short while thereafter the Virgin revealed herself with equal plainness to his bodily eyes. Not fewer than thirty such visits did Loyola receive. One day as he sat on the steps of the Church of St. Dominic at Manressa, singing a hymn to Mary, he suddenly fell into a reverie, and had the symbol of the ineffable mystery of the Trinity shown to him, under the figure of "three keys of a musical instrument." He sobbed for very joy, and entering the church, began publishing the miracle. On another occasion, as he walked along the banks of the Llobregat, that waters

⁴Ibid., p. 140.

Manressa, he sat down, and fixing his eyes intently on the stream, many Divine mysteries became apparent to him, such “as other men,” says his biographer Maffei, “can with great difficulty understand, after much reading, long vigils, and study.”

This narration places us beside the respective springs of Protestantism and Ultramontanism. The source from which the one is seen to issue is the Word of God. To it Luther swore fealty, and before it he hung up his sword, like a true knight, when he received ordination. The other is seen to be the product of a clouded yet proud and ambitious imagination, and a wayward will. And therewith have corresponded the fruits, as the past three centuries bear witness. The one principle has gathered round it a noble host clad in the panoply of purity and truth. In the wake of the other has come the dark army of the Jesuits.

Chapter 2 : Loyola's First Disciples

Vision of Two Camps-Ignatius Visits Jerusalem-Forbidden to
 Proselytise>Returns to Spain-Resolves to make Christendom his
 Field-Puts himself to School-Repairs to Paris-His Two
 Companions-Peter Fabre-Francis Xavier-Loyola subjects them to a
 Severe Regimen-They become his Disciples-Loyola's First Nine
 Followers-Their Vow in the Church of Montmartre-The Book of
 Spiritual Exercises-Its Course of Discipline-Four Weeks of
 Meditation-Topic of each Week-The Spiritual Exercises and the
 Holy Spirit-Visits Venice-Repairs to Rome-Draft of Rules-Bull
 Constituting the Society

Picture: Loyola and his Disciples before Pope Paul III.

Picture: View of the Interior of St. Peters, Rome.

Among the wonderful things shown to Ignatius Loyola by special revelation was a vision of two great camps. The center of the one was placed at Babylon; and over it there floated the gloomy ensign of the prince of darkness. The Heavenly King had erected his standard on Mount Zion, and made Jerusalem his head-quarters. In the war of which these two camps were the symbols, and the issues of which were to be grand beyond all former precedent, Loyola was chosen, he believed, to be one of the chief captains. He longed to place himself at the center of action. The way thither was long. Wide oceans and gloomy deserts had to be traversed, and hostile tribes passed through. But he had an iron will, a boundless enthusiasm, and what was more, a Divine call-for such it seemed to him in his delusion. He set out penniless (1523), and begging his bread by the way, he arrived at Barcelona. There he embarked in a ship which landed him on the shore of Italy. Thence, travelling on foot, after long months, and innumerable hardships, he entered in safety the gates of Jerusalem. But the reception that awaited him in the "Holy City" was not such as he had fondly anticipated. His rags, his uncombed locks, which almost hid his emaciated features, but ill accorded

with the magnificence of the errand which had brought him to that shore. Loyola thought of doing in his single person what the armies of the Crusaders had failed to do by their combined strength. The head of the Romanists in Jerusalem saw in him rather the mendicant than the warrior, and fearing doubtless that should he offer battle to the Crescent, he was more likely to provoke a tempest of Turkish fanaticism than drive back the hordes of the infidel, he commanded him to desist under the threat of excommunication. Thus withstood Loyola returned to Barcelona, which he reached in 1524.

Derision and insults awaited his arrival in his native Spain. His countrymen failed to see the grand aims he cherished beneath his rags; nor could they divine the splendid career, and the immortality of fame, which were to emerge from this present squalor and debasement. But not for one moment did Loyola's own faith falter in his great destiny. He had the art, known only to those fated to act a great part, of converting impediments into helps, and extracting new experience and fresh courage from disappointment. His repulsion from the "holy fields" had taught him that Christendom, and not Asia, was the predestined scene of his warfare, and that he was to do battle, not with the infidels of the East, but with the ever-growing hosts of heretics in Europe. But to meet the Protestant on his own ground, and to fight him with his own weapons, was a still more difficult task than to convert the Saracen. He felt that meanwhile he was destitute of the necessary qualifications, but it was not too late to acquire them.

Though a man of thirty-five, he put himself to school at Barcelona, and there, seated amid the youth of the city, he prosecuted the study of Latin. Having acquired some mastery of this tongue, he removed (1526) to the University of Alcala to commence theology. In a little space he began to preach. Discovering a vast zeal in the propagation of his tenets, and no little success in making disciples, male and female, the Inquisition, deeming both the man and his aims somewhat mysterious, arrested him. The order of the Jesuits was on the point of being nipped in the bud. But finding in Loyola no heretical bias, the Fathers dismissed him on his promise of holding his peace. He repaired to Salamanca, but there too he encountered similar obstacles. It was not agreeable thus to champ the curb of privilege and canonical authority; but it ministered to

him a wholesome discipline. It sharpened his circumspection and shrewdness, without in the least abating his ardour. Holding fast by his grand purpose, he quitted his native land, and repairing in 1528 to Paris, entered himself as a student in the College of St. Barbara.

[383] In the world of Paris he became more practical; but the flame of his enthusiasm still burned on. Through penance, through study, through ecstatic visions, and occasional checks, he pursued with unshaken faith and unquenched resolution his celestial calling as the leader of a mighty spiritual army, of which he was to be the creator, and which was to wage victorious battle with the hosts of Protestantism. Loyola's residence in Paris, which was from 1528 to 1535,¹ coincides with the period of greatest religious excitement in the French capital. Discussions were at that time of hourly occurrence in the streets, in the halls of the Sorbonne, and at the royal table. Loyola must have witnessed all the stirring and tragic scenes we have already described; he may have stood by the stake of Berquin; he had seen with indignation, doubtless, the saloons of the Louvre opened for the Protestant sermon; he had felt the great shock which France received from the Placards, and taken part, it may be, in the bloody rites of her great day of expiation. It is easy to see how, amid excitements like these, Loyola's zeal would burn stronger every hour; but his ardour did not hurry him into action till all was ready. The blow he meditated was great, and time, patience, and skill were necessary to prepare the instruments by whom he was to inflict it.

It chanced that two young students shared with Loyola his rooms, in the College of St. Barbara. The one was Peter Fabre, from Savoy. His youth had been passed amid his father's flocks; the majesty of the silent mountains had sublimed his natural piety into enthusiasm; and one night, on bended knee, under the star-bestudded vault, he devoted himself to God in a life of study. The other companion of Loyola was Francis Xavier, of Pamplona, in Navarre. For 500 years his ancestors had been renowned as warriors, and his ambition was, by becoming a scholar, to enhance the fame of his house by adding to its glory in arms the yet purer glory of learning. These two, the

¹Ranke, bk. 2, sec. 4, p. 143, foot-note.

humble Savoyard and the high-born Navarrese, Loyola had resolved should be his first disciples.

As the artist selects his block, and with skillful eye and plastic hand bestows touch after touch of the chisel, till at last the superfluous parts are cleared away, and the statue stands forth so complete and perfect in its symmetry that the dead stone seems to breathe, so did the future general of the Jesuit army proceed to mold and fashion his two companions, Fabre and Xavier. The former was soft and pliable, and easily took the shape which the master-hand sought to communicate. The other was obdurate, like the rocks of his native mountains, but the patience and genius of Loyola finally triumphed over his pride of family and haughtiness of spirit. He first of all won their affection by certain disinterested services; he next excited their admiration by the loftiness of his own asceticism; he then imparted to them his grand project, and fired them with the ambition of sharing with him in the accomplishment of it. Having brought them thus far he entered them on a course of discipline, the design of which was to give them those hardy qualities of body and soul, which would enable them to fulfill their lofty vocation as leaders in an army, every soldier in which was to be tried and hardened in the fire as he himself had been. He exacted of them frequent confession; he was equally rigid as regarded their participation in the Eucharist; the one exercise trained them in submission, the other fed the flame of their zeal, and thus the two cardinal qualities which Loyola demanded in all his followers were developed side by side. Severe bodily mortifications were also enjoined upon them. "Three days and three nights did he compel them to fast. During the severest winters, when carriages might be seen to traverse the frozen Seine, he would not permit Fabre the slightest relaxation of discipline." Thus it was that he mortified their pride, taught them to despise wealth, schooled them to brave danger and contemn luxury, and inured them to cold, hunger, and toil; in short, he made them dead to every passion save that of the "Holy War," in which they were to bear arms.

A beginning had been made. The first recruits had been enrolled in that army which was speedily to swell into a mighty host, and unfurl its gloomy ensigns and win its dismal triumphs in every land. We can imagine Loyola's joy as he contemplated these two men,

fashioned so perfectly in his own likeness. The same master-artificer who had molded these two could form others-in short, any number. The list was soon enlarged by the addition of four other disciples. Their names-obscure then, but in after-years to shine with a fiery splendor-were Jacob Lainez, Alfonso Salmeron, Nicholas Bobadilla, and Simon Rodriguez. The first three were Spaniards, the fourth was a Portuguese. They were seven in all; but the accession of two others increased them to nine: and now they resolved on taking their first step.

[384] On the 15th of August, 1534, Loyola, followed by his nine companions, entered the subterranean chapel of the Church of Montmartre, at Paris, and mass being said by Fabre, who had received priest's orders, the company, after the usual vow of chastity and poverty, took a solemn oath to dedicate their lives to the conversion of the Saracens, or, should circumstances make that attempt impossible, to lay themselves and their services unreservedly at the feet of the Pope. They sealed their oath by now receiving the Host. The day was chosen because it was the anniversary of the Assumption of the Virgin, and the place because it was consecrated to Mary, the queen of saints and angels, from whom, as Loyola firmly believed, he had received his mission. The army thus enrolled was little, and it was great. It was little when counted, it was great when weighed. In sublimity of aim, and strength of faith-using the term in its mundane sense-it wielded a power before which nothing on earth- one principle excepted-should be able to stand. ²

To foster the growth of this infant Hercules, Loyola had prepared beforehand his book entitled *Spiritual Exercises*. This is a body of rules for teaching men how to conduct the work of their "conversion." It consists of four grand meditations, and the penitent, retiring into solitude, is to occupy absorbingly his mind on each in succession, during the space of the rising and setting of seven suns. It may be fitly styled a journey from the gates of destruction to the gates of Paradise, mapped out in stages so that it might be gone in the short period of four weeks. There are few more remarkable books in the world. It combines the self-denial and mortification of the Brahmin with the asceticism of the anchorite, and the ecstasies of

²Duller, *The Jesuits*, pp. 10, 11. Ranke, bk. 2, sec. 4. pp. 143, 144.

the schoolmen, it professes, like the Koran, to be a revelation. "The Book of Exercises," says a Jesuit, "was truly written by the finger of God, and delivered to Ignatius by the Holy Mother of God."³

The Spiritual Exercises, we have said, was a body of rules by following which one could effect upon himself that great change which in Biblical and theological language is termed "conversion." The book displayed on the part of its author great knowledge of the human heart. The method prescribed was an adroit imitation of that process of conviction, of alarm, of enlightenment, and of peace, through which the Holy Spirit leads the soul -that undergoes that change in very deed. This Divine transformation was at that hour taking place in thousands of instances in the Protestant world. Loyola, like the magicians of old who strove to rival Moses, wrought with his enchantments to produce the same miracle. Let us observe how he proceeded.

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The person was, first of all, to go aside from the world, by entirely isolating himself from all the affairs of life. In the solemn stillness of his chamber he was to engage in four meditations each day, the first at daybreak, the last at midnight. To assist the action of the imagination on the soul, the room was to be artificially darkened, and on its walls were to be suspended pictures of hell and other horrors. Sin, death, and judgment were exclusively to occupy the thoughts of the penitent during the first week of his seclusion. He was to ponder upon them till in a sense "he beheld the vast conflagration of hell; its wailings, shrieks, and blasphemies; felt the worm of conscience; in fine, touched those fires by whose contact the souls of the reprobate are scorched."

The second week he was to withdraw his eye from these dreadful spectacles and fix it upon the Incarnation. It is no longer the wailings of the lost that fill the ear as he sits in his darkened chamber, it is the song of the angel announcing the birth of the Child, and "Mary acquiescing in the work of redemption." At the feet of the Trinity he is directed to pour out the expression of the gratitude and praise with which continued meditation on these themes causes his soul to overflow.

³Homo Orat. a J. Nouet, S.J.

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The third week is to witness the solemn act of the soul's enrollment in the army of that Great Captain, who "bowed the heavens and came down" in his Incarnation. Two cities are before the devotee-Jerusalem and Babylon-in which will he choose to dwell? Two standards are displayed in his sight-under which will he fight? Here a broad and brave pennon floats freely on the wind. Its golden folds bear the motto, "Pride, Honour, Riches." Here is another, but how unlike the motto inscribed upon it, "Poverty, Shame, Humility." On all sides resounds the cry "To arms." He must make his choice, and he must make it now, for the seventh sun of his third week is hastening to the setting. It is under the banner of Poverty that he elects to win the incorruptible crown.

Now comes his fourth and last week, and with it there comes a great change in the subjects of his meditation. He is to dismiss all gloomy ideas, all images of terror; the gates of Hades are to be closed, and those of a new life opened. It is morning with him, it is a spring-time that has come to him, and he is to surround himself with light, and flowers, and odors. It is the Sabbath of a spiritual creation; he is to rest, and to taste in that rest the prelude of the everlasting joys. This mood of mind he is to cultivate while seven suns rise and set upon him. He is now perfected and fit to fight in the army of the Great Captain.

A not unsimilar course of mental discipline, as our history has already shown, did Wicliffe, Luther, and Calvin pass through before they became captains in the army of Christ. They began in a horror of great darkness; through that cloud there broke upon them the revelation of the "Crucified;" throwing the arms of their faith around the Tree of Expiation, and clinging to it, they entered into peace, and tasted the joys to come. How like, yet how unlike, are these two courses! In the one the penitent finds a Savior on whom he leans; in the other he lays hold on a rule by which he works, and works as methodically and regularly as a piece of machinery. Beginning on a certain day, he finishes, like stroke of clock, duly as the seventh sun of the fourth week is sinking below the horizon. We trace in the one the action of the imagination, fostering one overmastering passion into strength, till the person becomes capable of attempting the most daring enterprises, and enduring the most dreadful sufferings. In the

other we behold the intervention of a Divine Agent, who plants in the soul a new principle, and thence educes a new life.

The war in which Loyola and his nine companions enrolled themselves when on the 15th of August, 1534, they made their vow in the church of Montmarte, was to be waged against the Saracens of the East. They acted so far on their original design as to proceed to Venice, where they learned that their project was meanwhile impracticable. The war which had just broken out between the Republic and the Porte had closed the gates of Asia. They took this as an intimation that the field of their operations was to be in the Western world. Returning on their path they now directed their steps towards Rome. In every town through which they passed on their way to the Eternal City, they left behind them an immense reputation for sanctity by their labours in the hospitals, and their earnest addresses to the populace on the streets. As they drew nigh to Rome, and the hearts of some of his companions were beginning to despond, Loyola was cheered by a vision, in which Christ appeared and said to him, "In Rome will I be gracious unto thee."⁴ The hopes this vision inspired were not to be disappointed. Entering the gates of the capital of Christendom, and throwing themselves at the feet of Paul III., they met a most gracious reception. The Pope hailed their offer of assistance as most opportune. Mighty dangers at that hour threatened the Papacy, and with the half of Europe in revolt, and the old monkish orders become incapable, this new and unexpected aid seemed sent by Heaven. The rules and constitution of the new order were drafted, and ultimately approved, by the Pope. Two peculiarities in the constitution of the proposed order specially recommended it in the eyes of Paul III. The first was its vow of unconditional obedience. The society swore to obey the Pope as an army obeys its general. It was not canonicle but military obedience which its members offered him. They would go to whatsoever place, at whatsoever time, and on whatsoever errand he should be pleased to order them. They were, in short, to be not so much monks as soldiers. The second peculiarity was that their services were to be wholly gratuitous; never would they ask so much as a penny from the Papal See.

⁴Duller, p. 12.

It was resolved that the new order should bear the name of The Company of Jesus. Loyola modestly declined the honour of being accounted its founder. Christ himself, he affirmed, had dictated to him its constitution in his cave at Manressa. He was its real Founder: whose name then could it so appropriately bear as His? The bull constituting it was issued on the 27th of September, 1540, and was entitled *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae*,⁵ and bore that the persons it enrolled into an army were to bear “the standard of the Cross, to wield the arms of God, to serve the only Lord, and the Roman Pontiff, His Vicar on earth.”

⁵“Raised to the government of the church Militant.”

Chapter 3 : Organization and Training of the Jesuits [387]

Loyola's Vast Schemes-A General for the Army-Loyola Elected- "Constitutions"-Made Known to only a Select Few-Powers of the General-An Autocrat-He only can make Laws-Appoints all Officers, etc.-Organization-Six Grand Divisions-Thirty-seven Provinces- Houses, Colleges, Missions, etc.-Reports to the General-His Eye Surveys the World-Organization-Preparatory Ordeal-Four Classes-Novitiates-Second Novitiate-Its Rigorous Training-The Indifferents-The Scholars-The Coadjutors-The Professed-Their Oath-Their Obedience

Picture: A Jesuit Missionary Preaching to a Tribe of Indians.

The long-delayed wishes of Loyola had been realised, and his efforts, abortive in the past, had now at length been crowned with success. The Papal bull had given formal existence to the order, what Christ had done in heaven his Vicar had ratified on the earth. But Loyola was too wise to think that all had been accomplished; he knew that he was only at the beginning of his labours. In the little band around him he saw but the nucleus of an army that would multiply and expand till one day it should be as the stars in multitude, and bear the standard of victory to every land on earth. The gates of the East were meanwhile closed against him; but the Western world would not always set limits to the triumphs of his spiritual arms. He would yet subjugate both hemispheres, and extend the dominion of Rome from the rising to the setting sun. Such were the schemes that Loyola, who hid under his mendicant's cloak an ambition vast as Alexander's, was at that moment revolving. Assembling his comrades one day about this time, he addressed them, his biographer Bouhours tells us, in a long speech, saying, "Ought we not to conclude that we are called to win to God, not only a single nation, a single country, but all nations, all the kingdoms of the world?"¹

¹Bouhours, Life of Ignatius, bk. 1, p. 248.

An army to conquer the world, Loyola was forming. But he knew that nothing is stronger than its weakest part, and therefore the soundness of every link, the thorough discipline and tried fidelity of every soldier in this mighty host was with him an essential point. That could be secured only by making each individual, before enrolling himself, pass through an ordeal that should sift, and try, and harden him to the utmost.

But first the Company of Jesus had to elect a head. The dignity was offered to Loyola. He modestly declined the post, as Julius Caesar did the diadem. After four days spent in prayer and penance, his disciples returned and humbly supplicated him to be their chief. Ignatius, viewing this as an intimation of the will of God, consented. He was the first General of the order. Few royal sceptres bring with them such an amount of real power as this election bestowed on Loyola. The day would come when the tiara itself would bow before that yet mightier authority which was represented by the cap of the General of the Jesuits.

The second step was to frame the “Constitutions” of the society. In this labor Loyola accepted the aid of Lainez, the ablest of his converts. Seeing it was at God’s command that Ignatius had planted the tree of Jesuitism in the spiritual vineyard, it was to be expected that the Constitutions of the Company would proceed from the same high source. The Constitutions were declared to be a revelation from God, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.² This gave them absolute authority over the members, and paved the way for the substitution of the Constitution and canons of the Society of Jesus in the room of Christianity itself. These canons and Instructions were not published: they were not communicated to all the members of the society even; they were made known to a few only—in all their extent to a very few. They took care to print them in their own college at Rome, or in their college at Prague; and if it happened that they were printed elsewhere, they secured and destroyed the edition. “I cannot discover,” says M. de la Chalotais, “that the Constitutions of the Jesuits have ever been seen or examined by any tribunal whatsoever, secular or ecclesiastic; by any sovereign—not even by the Court of

²See Mariani, *Life of Loyola*; Rome. 1842—English translation by Card. Wiseman’s authority; Lond., 1847. Bouhours, *Life of Ignatius*, bk. 3, p. 282.

Chancery of Prague, when permission was asked to print them... They have taken all sorts of precautions to keep them a secret.³ For a century they were concealed from the knowledge of the world; and it was an accident which at last dragged them into the light from the darkness in which they had so long been buried.

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It is not easy, perhaps it is not possible, to say what number of volumes the Constitutions of the Jesuits form. M. Louis Rene de la Chalotais, Procurator-General of King Louis XV., in his Report on the Constitutions of the Jesuits', given in to the Parliament of Bretagne, speaks of fifty volumes folio. That was in the year 1761, or 221 years after the founding of the order. This code, then enormous, must be greatly more so now, seeing every bull and brief of the Pope addressed to the society, every edict of its General, is so much more added to a legislation that is continually augmenting. We doubt whether any member of the order is found bold enough to undertake a complete study of them, or ingenious enough to reconcile all their contradictions and inconsistencies. Prudently abstaining from venturing into a labyrinth from which he may never emerge, he simply asks, not what do the Constitutions say, but what does the General command? Practically the will of his chief is the code of the Jesuit.

We shall first consider the powers of the General. The original bull of Paul

III. constituting the Company gave to "Ignatius de Loyola, with nine priests, his companions," the power to make Constitutions and particular rules, and also to alter them. The legislative power thus rested in the hands of the General and his company—that is, in a "Congregation" representing them. But when Loyola died, and Lainez succeeded him as General, one of his first acts was to assemble a Congregation, and cause it to be decided that the General only had the right to make rules.⁴ This crowned the autocracy of the General, for while he has the power of legislating for all others,

³Report on the Constitutions of the Jesuits, delivered by M. Louis Rene de Caraduc de la Chalotais, Procureur-General of the King, to the Parliament of Bretagne; 1761. In obedience to the Court. Translated from the French edition of 1762. Lond., 1868. Pages 16, 17.

⁴"Solus praepositus Generalis autoritatem habet regulas condendi." (Can. 3rd., Congreg. 1, p. 698, tom. 1.)

no one may legislate for him. He acts without control, without responsibility, without law. It is true that in certain cases the society may depose the General. But it cannot exercise its powers unless it be assembled, and the General alone can assemble the Congregation. The whole order, with all its authority, is, in fact, comprised in him.

In virtue of his prerogative the General can command and regulate everything in the society. He may make special Constitutions for the advantage of the society, and he may alter them, abrogate them, and make new ones, dating them at any time he pleases. These new rules must be regarded as confirmed by apostolic authority, not merely from the time they were made, but the time they are dated.

The General assigns to all provincials, superiors, and members of the society, of whatever grade, the powers they are to exercise, the places where they are to labor, the missions they are to discharge, and he may annul or confirm their acts at his pleasure. He has the right to nominate provincials and rectors, to admit or exclude members, to say what proffered dignity they are or are not to accept, to change the destination of legacies, and, though to give money to his relatives exposes him to deposition, "he may yet give alms to any amount that he may deem conducive to the glory of God." He is invested moreover with the entire government and regulation of the colleges of the society. He may institute missions in all parts of the world. When commanding in the name of Jesus Christ, and in virtue of obedience, he commands under the penalty of mortal and venial sin. From his orders there is no appeal to the Pope. He can release from vows; he can examine into the consciences of the members; but it is useless to articularise-the General is the society. ⁵

The General alone, we have said, has power to make laws, ordinances, and declarations. This power is theoretically bounded, though practically absolute. It has been declared that everything essential ("Substantia Institutionis") to the society is immutable, and therefore removed beyond the power of the General. But it has never yet been determined what things belong to the essence of the institute. Many attempts have been made to solve this question, but no solution that is comprehensible has ever been arrived at; and so

⁵Chalotais, Report on the Constitutions of the Jesuits, pp. 19-23.

long as this question remains without an answer, the powers of the General will remain without a limit.

Let us next attend to the organization of the society. The Jesuit monarchy covers the globe. At its head, as we have said, is a sovereign, who rules over all, but is himself ruled over by no one. First come six grand divisions termed *Assistanzen*, satrapies or principedoms. These comprehend the space stretching from the Indus to the Mediterranean; more particularly India, Spain and Portugal, Germany and France, Italy and Sicily, Poland and Lithuania. ⁶ Outside this area the Jesuits have established missions. The heads of these six divisions act as coadjutors to their General; they are staff or cabinet. [389]

These six great divisions are subdivided into thirty-seven Provinces. ⁷ Over each province is placed a chief, termed a Provincial. The provinces are again subdivided into a variety of houses or establishments. First come the houses of the Professed, presided over by their Provost. Next come the colleges, or houses of the novices and scholars, presided over by their Rector or Superior. Where these cannot be established, “residences” are erected, for the accommodation of the priests who perambulate the district, preaching and hearing confessions. And lastly may be mentioned “mission-houses,” in which Jesuits live unnoticed as secular clergy, but seeking, by all possible means, to promote the interests of the society. ⁸

From his chamber in Rome the eye of the General surveys the world of Jesuitism to its farthest bounds; there is nothing done in it which he does not see; there is nothing spoken in it which he does not hear. It becomes us to note the means by which this almost superhuman intelligence is acquired. Every year a list of the houses and members of the society, with the name, talents, virtues, and failings of each, is laid before the General. In addition to the annual report, every one of the thirty-seven provincials must send him a report monthly of the state of his province, he must inform him minutely of its political and ecclesiastical condition. Every superior of a college must report once every three months. The heads of

⁶Duller, p. 54.

⁷Such was their number in 1761, when Chalotais gave in his Report to the Parliament of Bretagne.

⁸Chalotais’ Report. Duller p. 54.

houses of residence, and houses of novitiates, must do the same. In short, from every quarter of his vast dominions come a monthly and a tri-monthly report. If the matter reported on has reference to persons outside the society, the Constitutions direct that the provincials and superiors shall write to the General in cipher. "Such precautions are taken against enemies," says M. de Chalotais. "Is the system of the Jesuits inimical to all governments?"

Thus to the General of the Jesuits the world lies "naked and open." He sees by a thousand eyes, he hears by a thousand ears; and when he has a behest to execute, he can select the fittest agent from an innumerable host, all of whom are ready to do his bidding. The past history, the good and evil qualities of every member of the society, his talents, his dispositions, his inclinations, his tastes, his secret thoughts, have all been strictly examined, minutely chronicled, and laid before the eye of the General. It is the same as if he were present in person, and had seen and conversed with each.

All ranks, from the nobleman to the day-laborer; all trades, from the opulent banker to the shoemaker and porter; all professions, from the stoled dignitary and the learned professor to the cowled mendicant; all grades of literary men, from the philosopher, the mathematician, and the historian, to the schoolmaster and the reporter on the provincial newspaper, are enrolled in the society. Marshalled, and in continual attendance, before their chief, stand this host, so large in numbers, and so various in gifts. At his word they go, and at his word they come, speeding over seas and mountains, across frozen steppes, or burning plains, on his errand. Pestilence, or battle, or death may lie on his path, the Jesuit's obedience is not less prompt. Selecting one, the General sends him to the royal cabinet. Making choice of another, he opens to him the door of Parliament. A third he enrols in a political club; a fourth he places in the pulpit of a church, whose creed he professes that he may betray it; a fifth he commands to mingle in the saloons of the literati; a sixth he sends to act his part in the Evangelical Conference; a seventh he seats beside the domestic hearth; and an eighth he sends afar off to barbarous tribes, where, speaking a strange tongue, and wearing a rough garment, he executes, amidst hardships and perils, the will of his superior. There is no disguise which the Jesuit will not wear, no art he will not employ, no motive he will not feign, no creed he

will not profess, provided only he can acquit himself a true soldier in the Jesuit army, and accomplish the work on which he has been sent forth. "We have men," exclaimed a General exultingly, as he glanced over the long roll of philosophers, orators, statesmen, and scholars who stood before him, ready to serve him in the State or in the Church, in the camp or in the school, at home or abroad- "We have men for martyrdom if they be required."

No one can be enrolled in the Society of Jesus till he has undergone a severe and long-continued course of training. Let us glance at the several grades of that great army, and the preparatory discipline in the case of each. There are four classes of Jesuits. We begin with the lowest. The Novitiates are the first in order of admission, the last in dignity. When one presents himself for admission into the order, a strict scrutiny takes place into his talents, his disposition, his family, his former life; and if it is seen that he is not likely to be of service to the society, he is at once dismissed. If his fitness appears probable, he is received into the House of Primary Probation. ⁹ Here he is forbidden all intercourse with the servants within and his relations outside the house. A Compend of the Institutions is submitted for his consideration; the full body of laws and regulations being withheld from him as yet. If he possesses property he is told that he must give it to the poor-that is, to the society. His tact and address, his sound judgment and business talent, his health and bodily vigor, are all closely watched and noted; above all, his obedience is subjected to severe experiment. If he acquits himself on the trial to the satisfaction of his examiners, he receives the Sacrament, and is advanced to the House of Second Probation. ¹⁰

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Here the discipline is of a yet severer kind. The novitiate first devotes a certain period to confession of sins and meditation. He next fulfils a course of service in the hospitals, learning humility by helping the poor and ministering at the beds of the sick. To further his advance in this grace, he next spends a certain term in begging his bread from door to door. Thus; he learns to live on the coarsest fare and to sleep on the hardest couch. To perfect himself in the virtue of self-abnegation, he next discharges for awhile the most

⁹Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 1, cap. 4, sec. 1, 2.

¹⁰Examen 3 and 4, sec. 1 and 2-Parroisien, Principles of the Jesuits, pp. 16-19; Lond., 1860.

humiliating and repulsive offices in the house in which he lives. And now, this course of service ended, he is invited to show his powers of operating on others, by communicating instruction to boys in Christian doctrine, by hearing confessions, and by preaching in public. This course is to last two years, unless the superior should see fit to shorten it on the ground of greater zeal, or superior talent.

The period of probation at an end, the candidate for admission into the Order of Jesus is to present himself before the superior, furnished with certificates from those under whose eye he has fulfilled the six *experimenta*, or trials, as to the manner in which he has acquitted himself. If the testimonials should prove satisfactory to the superior, the novitiate is enrolled, not as yet in the Company of the Jesuits, but among the Indifferents. He is presumed to have no choice as regards the place he is to occupy in the august corps he aspires to enter; he leaves that entirely to the decision of the superior; he is equally ready to stand at the head or at the foot of the body; to discharge the most menial or the most dignified service; to play his part in the saloons of the great, encompassed by luxury and splendor, or to discharge his mission in the hovels of the poor, in the midst of misery and filth; to remain at home, or to go to the ends of the earth. To have a preference, though unexpressed, is to fall into deadly sin. Obedience is not only the letter of his vow, it is the lesson that his training has written on his heart. ¹¹

This further trial gone through, the approved novitiate may now take the three simple vows-poverty, chastity, and obedience-which, with certain modifications, he must ever after renew twice every year. The novitiate is now admitted into the class of Scholars. The Jesuits have colleges of their own, amply endowed by wealthy devotees, and to one of these the novitiate is sent, to receive instruction in the higher mysteries of the society. His intellectual powers are here more severely tested and trained, and according to the genius and subtlety he may display, and his progress in his studies, so is the post assigned him in due time in the order. "The qualities to be desired and commended in the scholars," say the Constitutions, "are acuteness of talent, brilliancy of example, and soundness of

¹¹Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 3, cap. 2, sec. 1, and pars, 5, cap. 4, sec. 5 Parroisien, p. 22.

body.”¹² They are to be chosen men, picked from the flower of the troop, and the General has absolute power in admitting or dismissing them according to his expectations of their utility in promoting the designs of the institute.¹³ Having finished his course, first as a simple scholar, and secondly as an approved scholar, he renews his three vows, and passes into the third class, or Coadjutors.

The coadjutors are divided into temporal and spiritual. The temporal coadjutor is never admitted into holy orders.¹⁴ Such are retained to minister in the lowest offices. They become college cooks, porters, or purveyors. For these and similar purposes it is held expedient that they should be “lovers of virtue and perfection,” and “content to serve the society in the careful office of a Martha.”¹⁵ The spiritual coadjutor must be a priest of adequate learning, that he may assist the society in hearing confessions, and giving instructions in Christian doctrine. It is from among the spiritual coadjutors that the rectors of colleges are usually selected by the General. It is a further privilege of theirs that they may be assembled in congregation to deliberate with the Professed members in matters of importance,¹⁶ but no vote is granted them in the election of a General. Having passed with approbation the many stringent tests to which he is here subjected, in order to perfect his humility and obedience, and having duly deposited in the exchequer of the society whatever property he may happen to possess, the spiritual coadjutor, if a candidate for the highest grade, is admitted to the oblation of his vows, which are similar in form and substance to those he has already taken, with this exception, that they assign to the General the place of God. “I promise,” so runs the oath, “to the Omnipotent God, in presence of his virgin mother, and of all the heavenly hierarchy, and to thee, Father General of the Society of Jesus, holding the place of God,”¹⁷ etc. With this oath sworn on its threshold, he enters the inner circle of the society, and is enrolled among the Professed.

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¹²Ibid., pars. 4, cap. 3, sec. 2.

¹³Ibid., pars. 8, cap. 1, sec. 2.

¹⁴Examen 6, sec. 1.

¹⁵Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 1, cap. 2, sec. 2.

¹⁶Ibid., pars. 8, cap. 3, A.

¹⁷“Locum Dei teneti.” (Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 5, cap. 4, sec. 2.)

The Professed Members constitute the society par excellence. They alone know its deepest secrets, and they alone wield its highest powers. But perfection in Jesuitism cannot be reached otherwise than by the loss of manhood. Will, judgment, conscience, liberty, all the Jesuit lays down at the feet of his General. It is a tremendous sacrifice, but to him the General is God. He now takes his fourth, or peculiar vow, in which he binds himself to go, without question, delay, or repugnance, to whatever region of the earth, and on whatever errand, the Pope may be pleased to send him. This he promises to the Omnipotent God, and to his General, holding the place of God. The wisdom, justice, righteousness of the command he is not to question; he is not even to permit his mind to dwell upon it for a moment; it is the command of his General, and the command of his General is the precept of the Almighty. His superiors are “over him in the place of the Divine Majesty.”¹⁸ “In not fewer than 500 places in the Constitutions,” says M. de la Chalotais, “are expressions used similar to the following: - “We must always see Jesus Christ in the General; be obedient to him in all his behests, as if they came directly from God himself.”¹⁹ When the command of the superior goes forth, the person to whom it is directed “is not to stay till he has finished the letter his pen is tracing,” say the Constitutions; “he must give instant compliance, so that holy obedience may be perfect in us in every point-in execution, in will, in intellect.”²⁰ Obedience is styled “the tomb of the will,” “a blessed blindness, which causes the soul to see the road to salvation,” and the members of the society are taught to “immolate their will as a sheep is sacrificed.” The Jesuit is to be in the hands of his superior, “as the axe is in the hands of the wood-cutter,” or “as a staff is in the hands of an old man, which serves him wherever and in whatever thing he is pleased to use it.” In fine, the Constitutions enjoin that “they who live under obedience shall permit themselves to be moved and directed under Divine Providence by their superiors just as if they were a corpse, which allows itself to be moved and handled in any way.”²¹ The annals of mankind do not furnish another example of a despotism

¹⁸Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 7, cap. 1, sec. 1.

¹⁹Chalotais, Report Const. Jesuits, p. 62.

²⁰Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 6, cap. 1, sec. 1.

²¹Constit. Societatis Jesu, pars. 6, cap. 1, sec. 1.

so finished. We know of no other instance in which the members of the body are so numerous, or the ramifications so wide, and yet the centralisation and cohesion so perfect.

We have traced at some length the long and severe discipline which every member must undergo before being admitted into the select class that by way of eminence constitute the society. Before arriving on the threshold of the inner circle of Jesuitism, three times has the candidate passed through that terrible ordeal—first as a novice, secondly as a scholar, thirdly as a coadjutor. Is his training held to be complete when he is admitted among the Professed? No: a fourth time must he undergo the same dreadful process. He is thrown back again into the crucible, and kept amid its fires, till pride, and obstinacy, and self-will, and love of ease—till judgment, soul, and conscience have all been purged out of him, and then he comes forth, fully refined, completely attempered and hardened, “a vessel fully fitted” for the use of his General; prepared to execute with a conscience that never remonstrates his most terrible command, and to undertake with a will that never rebels the most difficult and dangerous enterprises he may assign him. In the words of an eloquent writer—“Talk of drilling and discipline! why, the drilling and the discipline which gave to Alexander the men that marched in triumph from Macedon to the Indus; to Caesar, the men that marched in triumph from Rome to the wilds of Caledonia; to Hannibal, the men that marched in triumph from Carthage to Rome; to Napoleon, the men whose achievements surpassed in brilliance the united glories of the soldiers of Macedon, of Carthage, and of Rome; and to Wellington, the men who smote into the dust the very flower of Napoleon’s chivalry—why, the drilling and the discipline of all these combined cannot, in point of stern, rigid, and protracted severity, for a moment be compared to the drilling and discipline which fitted and molded men for becoming full members of the militant institute of the Jesuits.”²²

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Such Loyola saw was the corps that was needed to confront the armies of Protestantism and turn back the advancing tide of light and liberty. Touched with a Divine fire, the disciples of the Gospel attained at once to a complete renunciation of self, and a

²²The Jesuits. By Alexander Duff, D.D., LL.D. Pages 19, 20. Edin., 1869.

magnanimity of soul which enabled them to brave all dangers and endure all sufferings, and to bear the standard of a recovered Gospel over deserts and oceans, in the midst of hunger and pestilence, of dungeons and racks and fiery stakes. It was vain to think of overcoming warriors like these unless by combatants of an equal temper and spirit, and Loyola set himself to fashion such. He could not clothe them with the panoply of light, he could not inspire them with that holy and invincible courage which springs from faith, nor could he so enkindle their souls with the love of the Savior, and the joys of the life eternal, as that they should despise the sufferings of time; but he could give them their counterfeits: he could enkindle them with fanaticism, inspire them with a Luciferian ambition, and so pervert and indurate their souls by evil maxims, and long and rigorous training, that they should be insensible to shame and pain, and would welcome suffering and death. Such were the weapons of the men he sent forth to the battle.

Chapter 4 : Moral Code of the Jesuits-Probabilism, Etc

The Jesuit cut off from Country-from Family-from Property-from the Pope even-The End Sanctifies the Means-The First Great Commandment and Jesuit Morality-When may a Man Love God?—Second Great Commandment-Doctrine of Probabilism-The Jesuit Casuists-Pascal-The Direction of the Intention-Illustrative Cases furnished by Jesuit Doctors-Marvellous Virtue of the Doctrine-A Pious Assassination!

Picture: Blaise Pascal.

Picture: View of Rome showing the Castle of St. Angelo and St. Peter's in the Distance.

We have not yet surveyed the full and perfect equipment of those troops which Loyola sent forth to prosecute the war against Protestantism. Nothing was left unthought of and unprovided for which might assist them in covering their opponents with defeat, and crowning themselves with victory. They were set free from every obligation, whether imposed by the natural or the Divine law. Every stratagem, artifice, and disguise were lawful to men in whose favor all distinction between right and wrong had been abolished. They might assume as many shapes as Proteus, and exhibit as many colors as the chameleon. They stood apart and alone among the human race. First of all, they were cut off from country. Their vow bound them to go to whatever land their General might send them, and to remain there as long as he might appoint. Their country was the society. They were cut off from family and friends. Their vow taught them to forget their father's house, and to esteem themselves holy only when every affection and desire which nature had planted in their breasts had been plucked up by the roots. They were cut off from property and wealth. For although the society was immensely rich, its individual members possessed nothing. Nor could they cherish the hope of ever becoming personally wealthy, seeing they

had taken a vow of perpetual poverty. If it chanced that a rich relative died, and left them as heirs, the General relieved them of their vow, and sent them back into the world, for so long a time as might enable them to take possession of the wealth of which they had been named the heirs; but this done, they returned laden with their booty, and, resuming their vow as Jesuits, laid every penny of their newly-acquired riches at the feet of the General.

[394] They were cut off, moreover, from the State. They were discharged from all civil and national relationships and duties. They were under a higher code than the national one—the Institutions namely, which Loyola had edited, and the Spirit of God had inspired; and they were the subjects of a higher monarch than the sovereign of the nation—their own General. Nay, more, the Jesuits were cut off even from the Pope. For if their General “held the place of the Omnipotent God,” much more did he hold the place of “his Vicar.” And so was it in fact; for soon the members of the Society of Jesus came to recognize no laws but their own, and though at their first formation they professed to have no end but the defense and glory of the Papal See, it came to pass when they grew to be strong that, instead of serving the tiara, they compelled the tiara to serve the society, and made their own wealth, power, and dominion the one grand object of their existence. They were a Papacy within the Papacy—a Papacy whose organization was more perfect, whose instincts were more cruel, whose workings were more mysterious, and whose dominion was more destructive than that of the old Papacy.

So stood the Society of Jesus. A deep and wide gulf separated it from all other communities and interests. Set free from the love of family, from the ties of kindred, from the claims of country, and from the rule of law, careless of the happiness they might destroy, and the misery and pain and woe they might inflict, the members were at liberty, without control or challenge, to pursue their terrible end, which was the dethronement of every other power, the extinction of every other interest but their own, and the reduction of mankind into abject slavery, that on the ruins of the liberty, the virtue, and the happiness of the world they might raise themselves to supreme, unlimited dominion. But we have not yet detailed all the appliances with which the Jesuits were careful to furnish themselves for the execution of their unspeakably audacious and diabolical design. In

the midst of these abysses there opens to our eye a yet profounder abyss. To enjoy exemption from all human authority and from every earthly law was to them a small matter; nothing would satisfy their lust for licence save the entire abrogation of the moral law, and nothing would appease their pride save to trample under foot the majesty of heaven. We now come to speak of the moral code of the Jesuits.

The key-note of their ethical code is the famous maxim that the end sanctifies the means. Before that maxim the eternal distinction of right and wrong vanishes. Not only do the stringency and sanctions of human law dissolve and disappear, but the authority and majesty of the Decalogue are overthrown. There are no conceivable crime, villany, and atrocity which this maxim will not justify. Nay, such become dutiful and holy, provided they be done for “the greater glory of God,” by which the Jesuit means the honour, interest, and advancement of His society. In short, the Jesuit may do whatever he has a mind to do, all human and Divine laws notwithstanding. This is a very grave charge, but the evidence of its truth is, unhappily, too abundant, and the difficulty lies in making a selection.

What the Popes have attempted to do by the plenitude of their power, namely, to make sin to be no sin, the Jesuit doctors have done by their casuistry. “The first and great commandment in the law,” said the same Divine Person who proclaimed it from Sinai, “is to love the Lord thy God.” The Jesuit casuists have set men free from the obligation to love God. Escobar ¹ collects the different sentiments of the famous divines of the Society of Jesus upon the question, When is a man obliged to have actually an affection for God? The following are some of these:-Suarez says, “It is sufficient a man love him before he dies, not assigning any particular time. Vasquez, that it is sufficient even at the point of death. Others, when a man receives his baptism: others, when he is obliged to be contrite:

¹Father Antoine Escobar, of Mendoza. He is said by his friends to have been a good man, and a laborious student. He compiled a work in six volumes, entitled Exposition of Uncontroverted Opinions in Moral Theology. It afforded a rich field for the satire of Pascal. Its characteristic absurdity is that its questions uniformly exhibit two faces-an affirmative and a negative-so that escobarderie became a synonym in France for duplicity.

others, upon holidays. But our Father Castro-Palao ² disputes all these opinions, and that justly. Hurtado de Mendoza pretends that a man is obliged to do it once every year. Our Father Coninck believes a man to be obliged once in three or four years. Henriquez, once in five years. But Filiutius affirms it to be probable that in rigor a man is not obliged every five years. When then? He leaves the point to the wise." "We are not," says Father Sirmond, "so much commanded to love him as not to hate him," ³ Thus do the Jesuit theologians make void "the first; and great commandment in the law."

The second commandment in the law is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This second great commandment meets with no more respect at the hands of the Jesuits than the first. Their morality dashes both tables of the law in pieces; charity to man it makes void equally with the love of God. The methods by which this may be done are innumerable. ⁴

[395] The first of these is termed probabilism. This is a device which enables a man to commit any act, be it ever so manifest a breach of the moral and Divine law, without the least restraint of conscience, remorse of mind, or guilt before God. What is probabilism? By way of answer we shall suppose that a man has a great mind to do a certain act, of the lawfulness of which he is in doubt. He finds that there are two opinions upon the point: the one probably true, to the effect that the act is lawful; the other more probably true, to the effect that the act is sinful. Under the Jesuit regimen the man is at liberty to act upon the probable opinion. The act is probably right, but more probably wrong, nevertheless he is safe in doing it, in virtue of the doctrine of probabilism. It is important to ask, what makes all opinion probable? To make an opinion probable a Jesuit finds easy indeed. If a single doctor has pronounced in its

²Ferdinand de Castro-Palao was a Jesuit of Spain, and author of a work on Virtues and Vices, published in 1621.

³Escobar. tr. 1, ex. 2, n. 21; and tr. 5, ex. 4, n. 8. Sirmond, Def. Virt., tr. 2, sec. 1.

⁴It is of no avail to object that these are the sentiments of individual Jesuits, and that it is not fair to impute them to the society. It was a particular rule in the Company of Jesus, "that nothing should be published by any of its members without the approbation of their superiors." An express order was made obliging them to this in France by Henry III., 1583, confirmed by Henry IV., 1603, and by Louis XIII., 1612. So that the whole fraternity became responsible for all the doctrines taught in the books of its individual members, unless they were expressly condemned.

favor, though a score of doctors may have condemned it, or if the man can imagine in his own mind something like a tolerable reason for doing the act, the opinion that it is lawful becomes probable. It will be hard to name an act for which a Jesuit authority may not be produced, and harder still to find a man whose invention is so poor as not to furnish him with what he deems a good reason for doing what he is inclined to, and therefore it may be pronounced impossible to instance a deed, however manifestly opposed to the light of nature and the law of God, which may not be committed under the shield of the monstrous dogma of probabilism.⁵

We are neither indulging in satire nor incurring the charge of false-witness-bearing in this picture of Jesuit theology. "A person may do what he considers allowable," says Emmanuel Sa, of the Society of Jesus, "according to a probable opinion, although the contrary may be the more probable one. The opinion of a single grave doctor is all that is requisite." A yet greater doctor, Filiutius, of Rome, confirms him in this. "It is allowable," says he, "to follow the less probable opinion, even though it be the less safe one. That is the common judgment of modern authors." "Of two contrary opinions," says Paul Laymann, "touching the legality or illegality of any human action, every one may follow in practice or in action that which he should prefer, although it may appear to the agent himself less probable in theory." he adds: "A learned person may give contrary advice to different persons according to contrary probable opinions, whilst he still preserves discretion and prudence." We may say with Pascal, "These Jesuit casuists give us elbow-room at all events!"⁶

It is and it is not is the motto of this theology. It is the true Lesbian rule which shapes itself according to that which we wish to measure by it. Would we have any action to be sinful, the Jesuit moralist turns this side of the code to us; would we have it to be lawful, he turns the other side. Right and wrong are put thus in our own power; we can make the same action a sin or a duty as we please, or as we deem it expedient. To steal the property, slander the

⁵Probabilism will be denied, but it has not been renounced. In a late publication a member of the society has actually attempted to vindicate it. See *De l'Existence et de l'Institute des Jesuites*. Par le R. P. de Ravignan, de la Compagnie de Jesus. Paris, 1845. Page 83.

⁶Pascal. *Provincial Letters*, p. 70; Edin., 1847.

character, violate the chastity, or spill the blood of a fellow-creature, is most probably wrong, but let us imagine some good to be got by it, and it is probably right. The Jesuit workers, for the sake of those who are dull of understanding and slow to apprehend the freedom they bring them, have gone into particulars and compiled lists of actions, esteemed sinful, unnatural, and abominable by the moral sense of all nations hitherto, but which, in virtue of this new morality, are no longer so, and they have explained how these actions may be safely done, with a minuteness of detail and a luxuriance of illustration, in which it were tedious in some cases, immodest in others, to follow them.

One would think that this was licence enough. What more can the Jesuit need, or what more can he possibly have, seeing by a little effort, of invention he can overleap every human and Divine barrier, and commit the most horrible crimes, on the mightiest possible scale, and neither feel remorse of conscience nor fear of punishment? But this unbounded liberty of wickedness did not content the sons of Loyola. They panted for a liberty, if possible, yet more boundless; they wished to be released from the easy condition of imagining some good end for the wickedness they wished to perpetrate, and to be free to sin without the trouble of assigning even to themselves any end at all. This they have accomplished by the method of directing the intention.

[396] This is a new ethical science, unknown to those ages which were not privileged to bask in the illuminating rays of the Society of Jesus, and it is as simple as convenient. It is the soul, they argue, that does the act, so far as it is moral or immoral. As regards the body's share in it, neither virtue nor vice can be predicated of it. If, therefore, while the hand is shedding blood, or the tongue is calumniating character, or uttering a falsehood, the soul can so abstract itself from what the body is doing as to occupy itself the while with some holy theme, or fix its meditation upon some benefit or advantage likely to arise from the deed, which it knows, or at least suspects, the body is at that moment engaged in doing, the soul contracts neither guilt nor stain, and the man runs no risk of ever being called to account for the murder, or theft, or calumny, by God, or of incurring his displeasure on that ground. We are not satirising; we are simply stating the morality of the Jesuits. "We never," says the Father Jesuit in Pascal's

Letters, “suffer such a thing as the formal intention to sin with the sole design of sinning; and if any person whatever should persist in having no other end but evil in the evil that he does, we break with him at once- such conduct is diabolical. This holds true, without exception, of age, sex, or rank. But when the person is not of such a wretched disposition as this, we try to put in practice our method of directing the intention, which simply consists in his proposing to himself, as the end of his actions, some allowable object. Not that we do not endeavor, as far as we can, to dissuade men from doing things forbidden; but when we cannot prevent the action, we at least, purify the motive, and thus correct the viciousness of the means by the goodness of the end. Such is the way in which our Fathers [of the society] have contrived to permit those acts of violence to which men usually resort in vindication of their honour. They have no more to do than to turn off the intention from the desire of vengeance, which is criminal, and to direct it to a desire to defend their honour, which, according to us, is quite warrantable. And in this way our doctors discharge all their duty towards God and towards man. By permitting the action they gratify the world; and by purifying the intention they give satisfaction to the Gospel. This is a secret, sir, which was entirely unknown to the ancients; the world is indebted for the discovery entirely to our doctors. You understand it now, I hope.”⁷

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Let us take a few illustrative cases, but only such as Jesuit casuists themselves have furnished. “A military man,” says Reginald,⁸ “may demand satisfaction on the spot from the person who has injured him, not indeed with the intention of rendering evil for evil, but with that of preserving his honour. Lessius⁹ observes that if a man has received a blow on the face, he must on no account have an intention to avenge himself; but he may lawfully have an intention to avert infamy, and may, with that view, repel the insult immediately, even at the point of the sword. “If your enemy is disposed to injure you,” says Escobar, “you have no right to wish his death by a movement of hatred, though you may to save yourself from harm.” And says

⁷The Provincial Letters. Letter 8, p. 96; Edin., 1847.

⁸In Praxi, livr. 21, [Numbers 62](#).

⁹De Just., livr. 2, c. 9, d. 12, n. 79.

Hurtado de Mendoza ¹⁰ “We may pray God to visit with speedy death those who are bent on persecuting us, if there is no other way of escaping from it.” “An incumbent,” says Gaspar de Hurtado ¹¹ “may without any mortal sin desire the decease of a life-renter on his benefice, and a son that of a father, and rejoice when it happens, provided always it is for the sake of the profit that is to accrue from the event, and not from personal aversion.” Sanchez teaches that it is lawful to kill our adversary in a duel, or even privately, when he intends to deprive us of our honour or property unjustly in a law-suit, or by chicanery, and when there is no other way of preserving them. ¹² It is equally right to kill in a private way a false accuser, and his witness, and even the judge who has been bribed to favor them. “A most pious assassination!” exclaims Pascal.

¹⁰De Spe, vol. 2, d. 15, sec. 4.

¹¹De Sub. Pecc., diff. 9.

¹²Sanchez, Mor. Theol., livr. 2, c. 39, n. 7.

Chapter 5 : The Jesuit Teaching on Regicide, Murder, Lying, Theft, Etc

The Maxims of the Jesuits on Regicide-M. de la Chalotais' Report to the Parliament of Bretagne-Effects of Jesuit Doctrine as shown in History- Doctrine of Mental Equivocation-The Art of Swearing Falsely without Sin-The Seventh Commandment-Jesuit Doctrine on Blasphemy- Murder-Lying-Theft-An Illustrative Case from Pascal-Every Precept of the Decalogue made Void-Jesuit Morality the Consummation of the Wickedness of the Fall

Picture: St. Francis Xavier.

Picture: A Group of Jesuits.

The three great rules of the code of the Jesuits, which we have stated in the foregoing chapter-namely,

- (1) that the end justifies the means;
- (2) that it is safe to do any action if it be probably right, although it may be more probably wrong; and
- (3) that if one know to direct the intention aright, there is no deed, be its moral character what it may, which one may not do-may seem to give a licence of acting so immense that to add thereto were an altogether superfluous, and indeed an impossible task.

But if the liberty with which these three maxims endow the Jesuit cannot be made larger, its particular applications may nevertheless be made more pointed, and the man who holds back from using it in all its extent may be emboldened, despite his remaining scruples, or the dullness of his intellectual perceptions, to avail himself to the utmost of the advantages it offers, "for the greater glory of God." He is to be taught, not merely by general rules, but by specific examples, how he may sin and yet not become sinful; how he may break the law and yet not suffer the penalty. But, further, these sons of Loyola are the kings of the world, and the sole heirs of all its wealth, honors, and pleasures; and whatever law, custom, sacred and venerable office, august and kingly authority, may stand between

them and their rightful lordship over mankind, they are at liberty to throw down and tread into the dust as a vile and accursed thing. The moral maxims of the Jesuits are to be put in force against kings as well as against peasants.

The lawfulness of killing excommunicated, that is Protestant, kings, the Jesuit writers have been at great pains to maintain, and by a great variety of arguments to defend and enforce. The proof is as abundant as it is painful. M. de la Chalotais reports to the Parliament of Bretagne, as the result of his examination of the laws and doctrines of the Jesuits, that on this point there is a complete and startling unanimity in their teaching. By the same logical track do the whole host of Jesuit writers arrive at the same terrible conclusion, the slaughter, namely, of the sovereign on whom the Pope has pronounced sentence of deposition. If he shall take meekly his extrusion from Power, and seek neither to resist nor revenge his being hurled from his throne, his life may be spared; but should “he persist in disobedience,” says M. de la Chalotais, himself a Papist, and addressing a Popish Parliament, “he may be treated as a tyrant, in which case anybody may kill him.”¹ Such is the course of reasoning established by all authors of the society, who have written ex professo on these subjects-Bellarmino, Suarez, Molina, Mariana, Santarel-all the Ultramontanes without exception, since the establishment of the society.”²

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But have not the writers of this school expressed in no measured terms their abhorrence of murder? Have they not loudly exclaimed against the sacrilege of touching him on whom the Church’s anointing oil has been poured as king? In short, do they not forbid and condemn the crime of regicide? Yes: this is true; but they protest with a warmth that is fitted to awaken suspicion. Rome can take back her anointing, and when she has stripped the monarch of his office he becomes the lawful victim of her consecrated dagger. On what grounds, the Jesuits demand, can the killing of one who is no longer a king be called regicide? Suarez tells us that when a king is deposed

¹“A quocumque privato potest interfici.”-Suarez (1, 6, ch. 4) - Chalotais, Report Constit. Jesuits, p. 84.

²“There are,” adds M. de la Chalotais, in a footnote, “nearly 20,000 Jesuits in the world [1761], all imbued with Ultramontane doctrines, and the doctrine of murder.” That is more than a century ago. Their numbers have prodigiously increased since.

he is no longer to be regarded as a king, but as a tyrant: “he therefore loses his authority, and from that moment may be lawfully killed.” Nor is the opinion of the Jesuit Mariana less decided. Speaking of a prince, he says: “If he should overthrow the religion of the country, and introduce a public enemy within the State, I shall never consider that man to have done wrong, who, favouring the public wishes, would attempt to kill him... It is useful that princes should be made to know, that if they oppress the State and become intolerable by their vices and their pollution, they hold their lives upon this tenure, that to put them to death is not only laudable, but a glorious action... It is a glorious thing to exterminate this pestilent and mischievous race from the community of men.”³

Wherever the Jesuits have planted missions, opened seminaries, and established colleges, they have been careful to inculcate these principles in the minds of the youth; thus sowing the seeds of future tumults, revolutions, regicides, and wars. These evil fruits have appeared sometimes sooner, sometimes later, but they have never failed to show themselves, to the grief of nations and the dismay of kings. John Chatel, who attempted the life of Henry IV., had studied in the College of Clermont, in which the Jesuit Guignard was Professor of Divinity. In the chamber of the would-be regicide, a manuscript of Guignard was found, in which, besides other dangerous articles, that Father approved not only of the assassination of Henry III. by Clement, but also maintained that the same thing ought to be attempted against le Bearnois, as he called Henry IV., which occasioned the first banishment of the order out of France, as a society detestable and diabolical. The sentence of the Parliament, passed in 1594, ordained “that all the priests and scholars of the College of Clermont, and others calling themselves the Society of Jesus, as being corrupters of youth, disturbers of the public peace, and enemies of the king and State, should depart in three days from their house and college, and in fifteen days out of the whole kingdom.”

But why should we dwell on these written proofs of the disloyal and murderous principles of the Jesuits, when their acted deeds bear still more emphatic testimony to the true nature and effects of

³Maxiana., *De Rege et Regis Institutione*, lib. 1, cap. 6, p. 61, and lib. 1, cap. 7, p. 64; ed. 1640.

their principles? We have only to look around, and on every hand the melancholy monuments of these doctrines meet our afflicted sight. To what country of Europe shall we turn where we are not able to track the Jesuit by his bloody footprints? What page of modern history shall we open and not read fresh proofs that the Papal doctrine of killing excommunicated kings was not meant to slumber in forgotten tomes, but to be acted out in the living world? We see Henry III. falling by their dagger. Henry IV. perishes by the same consecrated weapon. The King of Portugal dies by their order.

The great Prince of Orange is dispatched by their agent, shot down at the door of his own dining-room. How many assassins they sent to England to murder Elizabeth, history attests. That she escaped their machinations is one of the marvels of history. Nor is it only the palaces of monarchs into which they have crept with their doctrines of murder and assassination; the very sanctuary of their own Popes they have defiled with blood. We behold Clement XIV. signing the order for the banishment of the Jesuits, and soon thereafter he is overtaken by their vengeance, and dies by poison. In the Gunpowder Plot we see them deliberately planning to destroy at one blow the nobility and gentry of England. To them we owe those civil wars which for so many years drenched with blood the fair provinces of France. They laid the train of that crowning horror, the St. Bartholomew massacre. Philip II. and the Jesuits share between them the guilt of the "Invincible Armada," which, instead of inflicting the measureless ruin and havoc which its authors intended, by a most merciful Providence became the means of exhausting the treasures and overthrowing the prestige of Spain. What a harvest of plots, tumults, seditions, revolutions, torturings, poisonings, assassinations, regicides, and massacres has Christendom reaped from the seed sown by the Jesuits! Nor can we be sure that we have yet seen the last and greatest of their crimes.

We can bestow only the most cursory glance at the teaching of the Jesuits under the other heads of moral duty. Let us take their doctrine of mental reservation. Nothing can be imagined more heinous and, at the same time, more dangerous. "The doctrine of equivocation," says Blackwell, "is for the consolation of afflicted Roman Catholics and the instruction of all the godly." It has been of special use to them when residing among infidels and heretics. In heathen countries, as

China and Malabar, they have professed conformity to the rites and the worship of paganism, while remaining Roman Catholics at heart, and they have taught their converts to venerate their former deities in appearance, on the strength of directing aright the intention, and the pious fraud of concealing a crucifix under their clothes.

Equivocation they have carried into civil life as well as into religion. “A man may swear,” says Sanchez, “that he hath not done a thing though he really have, by understanding within himself that he did it not on such and such a day, or before he was born; or by reflecting on some other circumstance of the like nature; and yet the words he shall make use of shall not have a sense implying any such thing; and this is a thing of great convenience on many occasions, and is always justifiable when it is necessary or advantageous in anything that concerns a man’s health, honour, or estate.”⁴ Filiutius, in his *Moral Questions*, asks, “Is it wrong to use equivocation in swearing? I answer, first, that it is not in itself a sin to use equivocation in swearing This is the common doctrine after Suarez.” Is it perjury or sin to equivocate in a just cause?” he further asks. “It is not perjury,” he answers. “As, for example, in the case of a man who has outwardly made a promise without the intention of promising; if he is asked whether he has promised, he may deny it, meaning that he has not promised with a binding promise; and thus he may swear.”

Filiutius asks yet again, “With what precaution is equivocation to be used? When we begin, for instance, to say, I swear, we must insert in a subdued tone the mental restriction, that today, and then continue aloud, I have not eaten such a thing; or, I swear-then insert, I say-then conclude in the same loud voice, that I have not done this or that thing; for thus the whole speech is most true.”⁵ What an admirable lesson in the art of speaking the truth to one’s self, and lying and swearing falsely to everybody else!⁶

⁴Sanch. *OP. Mot.*, pars. 2, lib. 3, cap. 6.

⁵*Mor. Quest. de Christianis Officiis et Casibus Conscientie*, tom. 2, tr. 25, cap. 11, n. 321-328; Lugduni, 1633.

⁶It is easy to see how these precepts may be put in practice in swearing the oath of allegiance, or promising to obey the law, or engaging not to attack the institutions of the State, or to obey the rules and further the ends of any society, lay or clerical, into which the Jesuit may enter. The swearer has only to repeat aloud the prescribed words, and insert silently such other words, at the fitting places, as shall make void the oath, clause

We shall offer no comment on the teaching of the Jesuits under the head of the seventh commandment. The doctrines of the society which relate to chastity are screened from exposure by the very enormity of their turpitude. We pass them as we would the open grave, whose putrid breath kills all who inhale it. Let all who value the sweetness of a pure imagination, and the joy of a conscience undefiled, shun the confessional as they would the chamber in which the plague is shut up, or the path in which lurks the deadly scorpion. The teaching of the Jesuits-everywhere deadly-is here a poison that consumes flesh, and bones, and soul.

Which precept of the Decalogue is it that the theology of the Jesuits does not set aside? We are commanded “to fear the great and dreadful name of the Lord our God.” The Jesuit Bauny teaches us to blaspheme it. “If one has been hurried by passion into cursing and doing despite to his Maker, it may be determined that he has only sinned venially.”⁷ This is much, but Casnedi goes a little farther. “Do what your conscience tells you to be good, and commanded,” says this Jesuit; “if through invincible error you believe lying or blasphemy to be commanded by God, blaspheme.”⁸ The license given by the Jesuits to regicide we have already seen; not less ample is the provision their theology makes for the perpetration of ordinary homicides and murders. Reginald says it is lawful to kill a false witness, seeing otherwise one should be killed by him.⁹ Parents who seek to turn their children from the faith, says Fagundez, “may justly be killed by them.”¹⁰ The Jesuit Amicus teaches that it is lawful for an ecclesiastic, or one in a religious order, to kill a calumniator when other means of defense are wanting.¹¹ And Airult extends the same privilege to laymen. If one brings an impeachment before a prince or judge against another, and if that other cannot by any means avert the injury to his character, he may kill him secretly. He fortifies his opinion by the authority of Bannez, who gives the same

by clause-nay, bind the swearer to the very opposite of that which the administrator of the oath intends to pledge him to.

⁷Stephen Bauny, *Som. des Peches*; Rouen, 1653.

⁸*Crisis Theol.*, tom. 1, disp. 6, sect. 2, Section 1, n. 59.

⁹*Praxis Fori Poenit.*, tom. 2, lib. 21, cap. 5, n. 57.

¹⁰*In Procep. Decal.*, tom. 1, lib. 4, cap. 2, n. 7, 8.

¹¹*Cursus Theol.*, tom. 5, disp. 36, sec. 5, n. 118.

latitude to the right of defense, with this slight qualification, that the calumniator should first be warned that he desist from his slander, and if he will not, he should be killed, not openly, on account of the scandal, but secretly. ¹²

Of a like ample kind is the liberty which the Jesuits permit to be taken with the property of one's neighbor. Dishonesty in all its forms they sanction. They encourage cheats, frauds, purloinings, robberies, by furnishing men with a ready justification of these misdeeds, and especially by persuading their votaries that if they will only take the trouble of doing them in the way of directing the intention according to their instructions, they need not fear being called to a reckoning for them hereafter. The Jesuit Emmanuel Sa teaches "that it is not a mortal sin to take secretly from him who would give if he were asked;" that "it is not theft to take a small thing from a husband or a father;" that if one has taken what he doubts to have been his own, that doubt makes it probable that it is safe to keep it; that if one, from an urgent necessity, or without causing much loss, takes wood from another man's pile, he is not obliged to restore it. One who has stolen small things at different times, is not obliged to make restitution till such time as they amount together to a considerable sum. But should the purloiner feel restitution burdensome, it may comfort him to know that some Fathers deny it with probability. ¹³

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The case of merchants, whose gains may not be increasing so fast as they could wish, has been kindly considered by the Fathers. Francis Tolet says that if a man cannot sell his wine at a fair price—that is, at a fair profit— he may mix a little water with his wine, or diminish his measure, and sell it for pure wine of full measure. Of course, if it be lawful to mix wine, it is lawful to adulterate all other articles of merchandise, or to diminish the weight, and go on vending as if the balance were just and the article genuine. Only the trafficker in spurious goods, with false balances, must be careful not to tell a lie; or if he should be compelled to equivocate, he must do it in accordance with the rules laid down by the Fathers for enabling one to say what is not true without committing falsehood. ¹⁴

¹²Cens., pp. 319, 320—Collation faite d la requete de l'U'niversite de Paris, 1643; Paris, 1720

¹³Aphorismi Confessariorum—verbo furtum, n. 3-8; Coloniae, 1590.

¹⁴Instruct to Sacerdotum—De Septera Peccat. Mort., cap. 49, n. 5; Romae, 1601.

Domestic servants also have been taken by the Fathers under the shield of their casuistry. Should a servant deem his wages not enough, or the food, clothing, and other necessaries provided for him not equal to that which is provided for servants of similar rank in other houses, he may recompense himself by abstracting from his master's property as much as shall make his wages commensurate with his services. So has Valerius Reginald decided. ¹⁵

It is fair, however, that the pupil be cautioned that this lesson cannot safely be put in practice against his teacher. The story of John d'Alba, related by Pascal, shows that the Fathers do not relish these doctrines in praxi nearly so well as in thesi, when they themselves are the sufferers by them. D'Alba was a servant to the Fathers in the College of Clermont, in the Rue St. Jacques, and thinking that his wages were not equal to his merits, he stole somewhat from his masters to make up the discrepancy, never dreaming that they would make a criminal of him for following their approved rules. However, they threw him into prison on a charge of larceny. He was brought to trial on the 16th April, 1647. He confessed before the court to having taken some pewter plates, but maintained that the act was not to be regarded as a theft, on the strength of this same doctrine of Father Bauny, which he produced before the judges, with attestation from another of the Fathers, under whom he had studied these cases of conscience. Whereupon the judge, M. de Montrouge, gave sentence as follows: - "That the prisoner should not be acquitted upon the writings of these Fathers, containing a doctrine so unlawful, pernicious, and contrary to all laws, natural, Divine, and human, such as might confound all families, and authorize all domestic frauds and infidelities;" but that the over-faithful disciple "should be whipt before the College gate of Clermont by the common executioner, who at the same time should burn all the writings of those Fathers treating of theft; and that they should be prohibited to teach any such doctrine again under pain of death." ¹⁶

But we should swell beyond all reasonable limit, our enumeration, were we to quote even a tith of the "moral maxims" of the Jesuits. There is not one in the long catalogue of sins and crimes

¹⁵Praxis Fori Peenitentialis, lib. 25, cap. 44, n. 555; Lugduni, 1620.

¹⁶Pascal, Letter 6, pp. 90,91; Edin., 1847.

which their casuistry does not sanction. Pride, ambition, avarice, luxury, bribery, and a host of vices which we cannot specify, and some of which are too horrible to be mentioned, find in these Fathers their patrons and defenders. The alchemists of the Middle Ages boasted that their art enabled them to operate on the essence of things, and to change what was vile into what was noble. But the still darker art of the Jesuits acts in the reverse order; it changes all that is noble into all that is vile. Theirs is an accursed alchemy by which they transmute good into evil, and virtue into vice. There is no destructive agency with which the world is liable to be visited, that penetrates so deep, or inflicts so remediless a ruin, as the morality of the Jesuits. The tornado sweeps along over the surface of the globe, leaving the earth naked and effaced and forgotten in the greater splendor and the more solid strength of the restored structures. Revolution may overturn thrones, abolish laws, and break in pieces the framework of society; but when the fury of faction has spent its rage, order emerges from the chaos, law resumes its supremacy, and the bare as before tree or shrub beautified it; but the summers of after years re-clothe it with verdure and beautify it with flowers, and make it smile as sweetly as before. The earthquake overturns the dwelling of man, and swallows up the proudest of his cities; but his skill and power survive the shock, and when the destroyer has passed, the architect sets up again the fallen palace, and rebuilds the ruined city, and the catastrophe is effaced and forgotten in the greater splendor and the more solid strength of the restored structures. Revolution may overturn thrones, abolish laws, and break in pieces the framework of society; but when the fury of faction has spent its rage, order emerges from the chaos, law resumes its supremacy, and the institutions which had been destroyed in the hour of madness, are restored in the hour of calm wisdom that succeeds. But the havoc the Jesuit inflicts is irremediable. It has nothing in it counteractive or restorative; it is only evil. It is not upon the works of man or the institutions of man merely that, it puts forth its fearfully destructive power; it is upon man himself. It is not the body of man that it strikes, like the pestilence; it is the soul. It is not a part, but the whole of man that it consigns to corruption and ruin. Conscience it destroys, knowledge it extinguishes, the very power of discerning between right and wrong it takes away, and shuts up the man in a

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prison whence no created agency or influence can set him free. The Fall defaced the image of God in which man was made; we say, defaced; it did not totally obliterate or extinguish it. Jesuitism, more terrible than the Fall, totally effaces from the soul of man the image of God. Of the “knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness” in which man was made it leaves not a tree. It plucks up by its very roots the moral constitution which God gave man. The full triumph of Jesuitism would leave nothing spiritual, nothing moral, nothing intellectual, nothing strictly and properly human existing upon the earth. Man it would change into the animal, impelled by nothing but appetites and passions, and these more fierce and cruel than those of the tiger.

Society would become simply a herd of wolves, lawless, ravenous, greedy of each other’s blood, and perpetually in quest of prey. Even Jesuitism itself would perish, devoured by its own progeny. Our earth at last would be simply a vast sepulcher, moving round the sun in its annual circuit, its bosom as joyless, dreary, and waste as are those silent spaces through which it rolls.

Chapter 6: The “Secret Instructions” of the Jesuits

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The Jesuit Soldier in Armor complete-Secret Instructions-How to Plant their First Establishments-Taught to Court the Parochial Clergy-to Visit the Hospitals-to Find out the Wealth of their several Districts- to make Purchases in another Name-to Draw the Youth round them-to Supplant the Older Orders-How to get the Friendship of Great Men-How to Manage Princes-How to Direct their Policy- Conduct their Embassies-Appoint their Servants, etc.-Taught to Affect a Great Show of Lowliness

So far we have traced the enrollment and training of that mighty army which Loyola had called into existence for the conquest of Protestantism. Their leader, who was quite as much the shrewd calculator as the fiery fanatic, took care before sending his soldiers into the field to provide them with armor, every way fitted for the combatants they were to meet, and the campaign they were to wage. The war in which they were to be occupied was one against right and truth, against knowledge and liberty, and where could weapons be found for the successful prosecution of a conflict like this, save in the old-established arsenal of sophisms

The schoolmen, those Vulcans of the Middle Ages, had forged these weapons with the hammers of their speculation on the anvil of their subtlety, and having made them sharp of edge, and given them an incomparable flexibility, they stored them up, and kept them in reserve against the great coming day of battle. To this armory Loyola, and the chiefs that succeeded him in command, had recourse. But not content with these weapons as the schoolmen had left them, the Jesuit doctors put them back again into the fire; they kept them in a furnace, heated seven times, till every particle of the dross of right and truth that cleaved to them had been purged out, and they had acquired a flexibility absolutely and altogether perfect, and a keenness of edge unattained before, and were now deemed every way fit for the hands that were to wield them, and every way worthy

of the cause in which they were to be drawn. So attempered, they could cut through shield and helmet, through body and soul of the foe.

Let us survey the soldier of Loyola, as he stands in the complete and perfect panoply his General has provided him with. How admirably harnessed for the battle he is to fight! He has his “loins girt about with” mental and verbal equivocation; he has “on the breast-plate of” probabilism; his “feet are shod with the preparation of the” Secret Instruction. “Above all, taking the shield of” intention, and rightly handling it, he is “able to quench all the fiery darts of” human remorse and Divine threatenings. He takes “for an helmet the hope of” Paradise, which has been most surely promised him as the reward of his services; and in his hand he grasps the two-edged sword of a fiery fanaticism, wherewith he is able to cut his way, with prodigious bravery, through truth and righteousness. ¹ Verily, the man who has to sustain the onset of soldiers like these, and parry the thrusts of their weapons, had need to be mindful of the ancient admonition, “Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

Shrewd, practical, and precise are the instructions of the Jesuits. First of all they are told to select the best points in that great field, all of which they are in due time to subjugate and possess. That field is Christendom. They are to begin by establishing convents, or colleges, in the chief cities. The great centers of population and wealth secured, the smaller places will be easily occupied.

Should any one ask on what errand the good Fathers have come, they are instructed to make answer that their “sole object is the salvation of souls.” What a pious errand! Who would not strive to be the first to welcome to their houses, and to seat at their tables, men whose aims are so unselfish and heavenly? They are to be careful to maintain a humble and submissive deportment; they are to pay frequent visits to the hospitals, the sick-chamber, and the prisons. They are to make great show of charity, and as they have nothing of their own to give to the poor, they are “to go far and near” to receive even the “smallest atoms.” These good deeds will not lose their reward if only they take care not to do them in secret. Men will

¹ See [Ephesians 6:14-17](#).

begin to speak of them and say, What a humble, pious, charitable order of men these Fathers of the Society of Jesus are! How unlike the Franciscans and Dominicans, who were wont to care for the sick and the poor, but have now forgotten the virtues of a former tune, and are grown proud, indolent, luxurious, and rich! Thus the "new-comers," the Instructions hint, will supplant the other and older orders, and will receive "the respect and reverence of the best and most eminent in the neighborhood."²

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Further, they are enjoined to conduct themselves very deferentially towards the parochial clergy, and not to perform any sacred function till first they have piously and submissively asked the bishop's leave. This will secure their good graces, and dispose the secular clergy to protect them; but by-and-by, when they have ingratiated themselves with the people, they may abate somewhat of this subserviency to the clergy.

The individual Jesuit takes a vow of poverty, but the society takes no such vow, and is qualified to hold property to any amount. Therefore, while seeking the salvation of souls, the members are carefully to note the rich men in the community. They must find out who own the estates in the neighborhood, and what are their yearly values. They are to secure these estates by gift, if possible; if not, by purchase. When it happens that they "get anything that is considerable, let the purchase be made under a strange name, by some of our friends, that our poverty may still seem the greater."³ And let our provincial "assign such revenues to some other colleges, more remote, that neither prince nor people may discover anything of our profits"⁴ -a device that combines many advantages. Every day their acres will increase, nevertheless their apparent poverty will be as great as ever, and the flow of benefactions and legacies to supply it will remain undiminished, although the sea into which all these rivers run will never be full.

Among the multifarious duties laid upon the Jesuits, special prominence was given to the instruction of youth. It was by this arm that they achieved their most brilliant success. "Whisper it sweetly in their [the people's] ears, that they are come to catechise the

²Secreta Monita, cap. 1, sec. 1.

³Ibid., cap. 1, sec. 5.

⁴Ibid., cap. 1, sec. 6.

children gratis.”⁵ Wherever the Jesuits came they opened schools, and gathered the youth around them; but despite their zeal in the work of education, knowledge somehow did not increase. The intellect refused to expand and the genius to open under their tutelage. Kingdoms like Poland, where they became the privileged and only instructors of youth, instead of taking a higher place in the commonwealth of letters, fell back into mental decrepitude, and lost their rank in the community of nations. The Jesuits communicated to their pupils little besides a knowledge of Latin. History, philosophy, and science were sealed books. They initiated their disciples into the mysteries of probabilism, and the art of directing the intention, and the youth trained in these paths, when old did not depart from them. They dwarfed the intellect and narrowed the understanding, but they gained their end. They stamped anew the Roman impress upon many of the countries of Europe.

The second chapter of the Instructions is entitled “What must be done to get the ear and intimacy of great men?” To stand well with monarchs and princes is, of course, a matter of such importance that no stone is to be left unturned to attain it. The Instructions here, as we should expect them to be, are full and precise. The members of the Society of Jesus are first of all to imbue princes and great men with the belief that they cannot dispense with their aid if they would maintain the pomp of their State, and the government of their realms. Should princes be filled with a conceit of their own wisdom, the Fathers must find some way of dispelling this egregious delusion. They are to surround them with confessors chosen from their society; but by no means are they to bear hard on the consciences of their royal penitents. They must treat them “sweetly and pleasantly,” oftener administering opiates than irritants. They are to study their humors, and if, in the matter of marriage, they should be inclined—as often happens with princes—to contract alliance with their own kindred, they are to smooth their way, by hinting at a dispensation from the Pope, or finding some palliative for the sin from the pharmacopoeia of their theology. They may tell them that such marriages, though forbidden to the commonalty, are sometimes allowed to princes, “for the greater glory of God.”

⁵Ibid. (tr. from a French copy, London, 1679), cap. 1, sec. 11.

⁶ If a monarch is bent on some enterprise—a war, for example—the issue of which is doubtful, they are to be at pains so to shape their counsel in the matter, that if the affair succeeds they shall have all the praise, and if it fails, the blame shall rest with the king alone. And, lastly, when a vacancy occurs near the throne, they are to take care that the empty post shall be filled by one of the tried friends of the society, of whom they are enjoined to have, at all times, a list in their possession. It may be well, in order still more to advance their interests at courts, to undertake embassies at times. This will enable them to draw the affairs of Europe into their own hands, and to make princes feel that they are indispensable to them, by showing them what an influence they wield at the courts of other sovereigns, and especially how great their power is at that of Rome. Small services and trifling presents they are by no means to overlook. Such things go a great way in opening the hearts of princes. Be sure, say the Instructions, to paint the men whom the prince dislikes in the same colors in which his jealousy and hatred teach him to view them. Moreover, if the prince is unmarried, it will be a rare stroke of policy to choose a wife for him from among the beautiful and noble ladies known to their society. “This is seen,” say the Instructions, “by experience in the House of Austria, and in the Kingdoms of Poland and France, and in many other principalities.” ⁷

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“We must endeavor,” say the Instructions, with remarkable plainness, but in the belief, doubtless, that the words would meet the faithful eyes of the members of the Society of Jesus only—

“We must endeavor to breed dissension among great men, and raise seditions, or anything a prince would have us to do to please him. If one who is chief Minister of State to a monarch who is our friend oppose us, and that prince cast his whole favors upon him, so as to add titles to his honour, we must present ourselves before him, and court him in the highest degree, as well by visits as all humble respect.” ⁸ Having specified the arts by which princes may be managed, the Instructions next prescribe certain methods for turning to account others “of great authority in the commonwealth, that by their credit we obtain profit and preferment.” “If,” say the

⁶ *Secreta Monita*, cap. 2, sec. 2.

⁷ *Secreta Monita*, cap. 2, sec. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 2, sec. 9, 10.

Instructions,⁹ “these lords be seculars, we ought to have recourse to their aid and friendship against our adversaries, and to their favor in our own suits, and those of our friends, and to their authority and power in the purchase of houses, manors, and gardens, and of stones to build with, especially in those places that will not endure to hear of our settling in them, because the authority of these lords serveth very much for the appeasing of the populace, and making our ill-willers quiet.”

Nor are they less sedulously to make court to the bishops. Their authority -great everywhere-is especially so in some kingdoms, “as in Germany, Poland, and France;” and, the bishops conciliated, they may expect to obtain a gift of “new-erected churches, altars, monasteries, foundations, and in some cases the benefices of the secular priests and canons, with the preferable right of preaching in all the great towns.” And when bishops so befriend them, they are to be taught that there is no less profit than merit in the deed; inasmuch as, done to the Order of Jesus, they are sure to be repaid with most substantial services; whereas, done to the other orders, they will have nothing in return for their pains “but a song.”¹⁰

To love their neighbor, and speak well of him, while they held themselves in lowly estimation, was not one of the failings of the Jesuits. Their own virtues they were to proclaim as loudly as they did the faults of their brother monks. Their Instructions commanded them to “imprint upon the spirits of those princes who love us, that our order is more perfect than all other orders.” They are to supplant their rivals, by telling monarchs that no wisdom is competent to counsel in the affairs of State but “ours;” and that if they wish to make their realms resplendent with knowledge, they must surrender the schools to Jesuit teachers. They are especially to exhort princes that they owe it as a duty to God to consult them in the distribution of honors and emoluments, and in all appointments to places of importance. Further, they are ever to have a list in their possession of the names of all persons in authority and power throughout Christendom, in order that they may change or continue them fit their several posts, as may be expedient. But so covertly must this delicate

⁹Ibid., cap. 3, sec. 1.

¹⁰“Praeter cantum.” (Secreta Monita, cap. 3, sec. 3.)

business be gone about, that their hand must not be seen in it, nor must it once be suspected that the change comes from them?

While slowly and steadily climbing up to the control of kings, and the government of kingdoms, they are to study great modesty of demeanor and simplicity of life. The pride must be worn in the heart, not on the brow; and the foot must be set down softly that is to be planted at last on the neck of monarchs. “Let ours that are in the service of princes,” say the Instructions, “keep but a very little money, and a few movables, contenting themselves with a little chamber, modestly keeping company with persons in humble station; and so being in good esteem, they ought prudently to persuade princes to do nothing without their counsel, whether it be in spiritual or temporal affairs.” ¹¹

¹¹ *Secreta Monita*, cap. 4, sec. 1-6.

[407] **Chapter 7: Jesuit Management of Rich Widows and the Heirs of Great Families**

How Rich Widows are to be Drawn to the Chapels and Confessionals of the Jesuits-Kept from Thoughts of a Second Marriage-Induced to Enter an Order, and Bequeath their Estates to the Society-Sons and Daughters of Widows-How to Discover the Revenues and Heirs of Noble Houses -Illustration from Spain-Borrowing on Bond-The Instructions to be kept Secret-If Discovered, to be Denied-How the Instructions came to Light

Picture: View in Rome: the Villa Pamphili-Doria.

Picture: View of Heidelberg Castle.

The sixth chapter of the Instructions treats “Of the Means to acquire the Friendship of Rich Widows.” On opening this new chapter, the reflection that forces itself on one is-how wide the range of objects to which the Society of Jesus is able to devote its attention! The greatest matters are not beyond its strength, and the smallest are not beneath its notice! From counselling monarchs, and guiding ministers of State, it turns with equal adaptability and dexterity to caring for widows. The Instructions on this head are minute and elaborate to a degree, which shows the importance the society attaches to the due discharge of what it owes to this class of its clients.

True, some have professed to doubt whether the action of the society in this matter be wholly and purely disinterested, from the restriction it puts upon the class of persons taken under its protection. The Instructions do not say “widows,” but “rich widows.” But all the more on that account do widows need defense against the arts of chicanery and the wiles of avarice, and how can the Fathers better accord them such than by taking measures to convey their bodies and their goods alike within the safe walls of a convent? There the cormorants and vultures of a wicked world cannot make them their prey. But let us mark how they are to proceed. First, a Father of suitable gifts is to be selected to begin operations. He must not, in

point of years, exceed middle age; he must have a fresh complexion, and a gracious discourse. He is to visit the widow, to touch feelingly on her position, and the snares and injuries to which it exposes her, and to hint at the fraternal care that the society of which he is a member delights to exercise over all in her condition who choose to place themselves under its guardianship. After a few visits of this sort, the widow will probably appear at one of the chapels of the society. Should it so happen, the next step is to appoint a confessor of their body for the widow. Should these delicate steps be well got over, the matter will begin to be hopeful. It will be the confessor's duty to see that the wicked idea of marrying again does not enter her mind, and for this end he is to picture to her the delightful and fascinating freedom she enjoys in her widowhood, and over against it he is to place the cares, vexations, and tyrannies which a second matrimony would probably draw upon her. To second these representations, the confessor is empowered to promise exemption from purgatory, should the holy estate of widowhood be persevered in. To maintain this pious frame of mind on the part of the object of these solitudes, the Instructions direct that it may be advisable to have an oratory erected in her house, with an altar, and frequent mass and confession celebrated thereat. The adorning of the altar, and the accompanying rites, will occupy the time of the widow, and prevent the thoughts of a husband entering her mind. The matter having been conducted to this stage, it will be prudent now to change the persons of trust about her, and to replace them with persons devoted to the society. The number of religious services must also be increased, especially confession, "so that," say the Instructions, "knowing their former accusations, manners, and inclinations, the whole may serve as a guide to make them obey our wills." ¹

These steps will have brought the widow very near the door of a convent. A continuance a little longer in the same cautious and skillful tactics is all that will be necessary to land her safely within its walls. The confessor must now enlarge on the quietude and eminent sanctity of the cloister how surely it conducts to Paradise; but should she be unwilling to assume the veil in regular form, she may be induced to enter some religious order, such as that of Paulina, "so

¹Secteta Monita, cap. 6, see. 6.

that being caught in the vow of chastity, all danger of her marrying again may be over.”² The great duty of Alms, that queen of the graces, “without which, it is to be represented to her, she cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven,” is now to be pressed upon her; [408] “which alms, notwithstanding, she ought not to dispose to every one, if it be not by the advice and with the consent of her spiritual father.”³ Under this Direction it is easy to see in what exchequer the lands, manors, and revenues of widows will ultimately be garnered.

But the Fathers deemed it inexpedient to leave such an issue the least uncertain, and accordingly the seventh chapter enters largely into the “Means of keeping in our hands the Disposition of the Estates of Widows.” To shut out worldly thoughts, and especially matrimonial ones, the time of such widows must be occupied with their devotions; they are to be exhorted to curtail their expenditure and abound yet more in alms “to the Church of Jesus Christ.” A dexterous confessor is to be appointed them. They are to be frequently visited, and entertained with pleasant discourse. They are to be persuaded to select a patron, or tutelary saint, say St. Francis or St. Xavier. Provision is to be made that all they do be known, by placing about them only persons recommended by the society. We must be excused for not giving in the words of the Fathers the [409] fourteenth section of this chapter. That section gives their proteges great license, indeed all license, “provided they be liberal and well-affected to our society, and that all things be carried cunningly and without scandal.” But the one great point to be aimed at is to get them to make an entire surrender of their estates to the society. This is to reach perfection now, and it may be to attain in future the yet higher reward of canonisation. But should it so happen, from love of kindred, or other motives, that they have not endowed the “poor companions of Jesus” with all their worldly goods, when they come to die, the preferable claims of “the Church of Jesus Christ” to those of kindred are to be urged upon them, and they are to be exhorted “to contribute to the finishing of our colleges, which are yet imperfect, for the greater glory of God, giving us lamps and pixes, and for the building of other foundations and houses, which we, the poor

²Ibid., cap. 6, sec. 8.

³Secreta Monita, cap. 6., sec. 10.

servants of the Society of Jesus, do still want, that all things may be perfected.”⁴ “Let the same be done with princes,” the Instructions go on to say, “and our other benefactors, who build us any sumptuous pile, or erect any foundation representing to them, in the first place, that the benefits they thus do us are consecrated to eternity; that they shall become thereby perfect models of piety; that we will have thereof a very particular memory, and that in the next world they shall have their reward. But if it be objected that Jesus Christ was born in a stable, and had not where to lay his head, and that we, who are his companions, ought not to enjoy perishing goods, we ought to imprint strongly on their spirits that in truth, at first, the Church was also in the same state, but now that by the providence of God she is raised to a monarchy, and that in those times the Church was nothing but a broken rock, which is now become a great mountain.”⁵

In the chapter that follows - the eighth, namely - the net is spread still wider. It is around the feet of “the sons and daughters of devout widows” that its meshes are now drawn. The scheme of machination and seduction unfolded in this chapter differs only in its minor points from that which we have already had disclosed to us. We pass it therefore, and go on to the ninth chapter, where we find the scheme still widening, and wholesale rapacity and extortion, sanctified of course by the end in view, still more openly avowed and enjoined. The chapter is entitled “Of the Means to Augment the Revenues of our Colleges,” and these means, in short, are the astute and persistent deception, circumvention, and robbery of every class. The net is thrown, almost without disguise, over the whole community, in order that the goods, heritages, and possessions of all ranks-prince, peasant, widow, and orphan-may be dragged into the convents of the Jesuits. The world is but a large preserve for the mighty hunters of the Society of Jesus. “Above and before all other things,” says this Instruction, “we ought to endeavor our own greatness, by the direction of our superiors, who are the only judges in this case, and who should labor that the Church of God may be in the highest degree of splendor, for the greater glory of God.”⁶

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⁴Secreta Monita, cap. 7, sec. 23.

⁵Secreta Monita, cap. 7, sec. 24.

⁶Secreta Monita, cap. 9, sec. 1.

In prosecution of this worthy end, the Secret Instructions enjoin the Fathers to visit frequently at rich and noble houses, and to “inform themselves, prudently and dexterously, whether they will not leave something to our Churches, in order to the obtaining remission of their sins, and of the sins of their kindred.”⁷ Confessors-and only able and eloquent; men are to be appointed as confessors to princes and statesmen -are to ascertain the name and surname of their penitents, the names of their kindred and friends, whether they have hopes of succeeding to anything, and how they mean to dispose of what they already have, or may yet have; whether they have brothers, sisters, or heirs, and of what age, inclination, and education they are. And they “should persuade them that all these questions do tend much to the clearing of the state of their conscience.”⁸

There is a refreshing plainness about the following Instructions. They are given with the air of men who had so often repeated their plea “for the greater glory of God,” that they themselves had come at last to believe it: - “Our provincial ought to send expert men into all those places where there is any considerable number of rich and wealthy persons, to the end they may give their superiors a true and faithful account.”

“Let the stewards of our college get an exact knowledge of the houses, gardens, quarries of stone, vineyards, manors, and other riches of every one who lives near the place where they reside, and if it be possible, what degree of affection they have for us.”

“In the next place we should discover every man’s office, and the revenue of it, their possessions, and the articles of their contracts, which they may surely do by confessions, by meetings, and by entertainments, or by our trusty friends. And generally when any confessor lights upon a wealthy person, from whom he hath good hopes of profit, he is obliged forthwith to give notice of it, and discover it at his return.”

“They should also inform themselves exactly whether there be any hope of obtaining bargains, goods, possessions,⁹ pious gifts,

⁷Ibid., sec. 4.

⁸Ibid., sec. 5.

⁹Contractus et possessiones”-leases and possessions.

and the like, in exchange for the admission of their sons into our society.”¹⁰

“If a wealthy family have daughters only, they are to be drawn by caresses to become nuns, fit which case a small portion of their estate may be assigned for their use, and the rest will be ours.”

“The last heir of a family is by all means to be induced to enter the society. And the better to relieve his mind from all fear of his parents, he is to be taught that it is more pleasing to God that he take this step without their knowledge or consent.¹¹ “Such a one,” the Instructions add, “ought to be sent to a distance to pass his novitiate.”

These directions were but too faithfully carried out in Spain, and to this among other causes is owing the depopulation of that once-powerful country. A writer who resided many years in the Peninsula, and had the best opportunities of observing its condition, says: “If a gentleman has two or three sons and as many daughters, the confessor of the family adviseth the father to keep the eldest son at home, and send the rest, both sons and daughters, into a convent or monastery; praising the monastic life, and saying that to be retired from the world is the safest way to heaven...

The fathers of these families, glad of lessening the expenses of the house, and of seeing their children provided for, do send them into the desert place of a convent, which is really the middle of the world. Now observe that it is twenty to one that their heir dieth before he marrieth and have children, so the estate and everything else falls to the second, who is a professed friar, or nun, and as they cannot use the expression of *meum* or *tuum*, all goes that way to the society. And this is the reason why many families are extinguished, and their names quite out of memory, the convent so crowded, the kingdom so thin of people, and the friars, nuns, and monasteries so rich.”¹²

Further, the Fathers are counseled to raise large sums of money on bond. The advantage of this method is, that when the bond-holder comes to die, it will be easy to induce him to part with the bond in exchange for the salvation of his soul. At all events, he is more likely

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¹⁰Secreta Morita, cap. 9, seca 7-10.

¹¹Ostendendo etiam Deo sacrificium gratissimum fore si parentibus insciis et invitis aufugerit.” (Lat. ed., cap. 9, sec. 8. L’Estrange’s tr., sec. 14.)

¹²A Master Key to Popery, p. 70.

to make a gift of the deed than to bequeath the same amount in gold. Another advantage of borrowing in this fashion, is that their pretense of poverty may still be kept up. Owners of a fourth or of a half of the property of a county, they will still be “the poor companions of Jesus.”¹³

We make but one other quotation from the Secret Instructions. It closes this series of pious advices and is, in one respect, the most characteristic of them all. “Let the superior keep these secret advices with great care, and let them not be communicated but to a very few discreet persons, and that only by parts; and let them instruct others with them, when they have profitably served the society. And then let them not communicate them as rules they have received, but as the effects of their own prudence. But if they should happen to fall into the hands of strangers, who should give them an ill sense or construction, let them be assured the society owns them not in that sense, which shall be confirmed by instancing those of our order who assuredly know them not.”¹⁴

It was some time before the contingency of exposure here provided against actually happened. But in the beginning of the seventeenth century the accidents of war dragged these Secret Instructions from the darkness in which their authors had hoped to conceal them from the knowledge of the world. The Duke of Brunswick, having plundered the Jesuits’ college at Paderborn in Westphalia, made a present of their library to the Capuchins of the same town. Among the books which had thus come into their possession was found a copy of the Secret Instructions. Another copy is said to have been discovered in the Jesuits’ college at Prague. Soon thereafter reprints and translations appeared in Germany, Holland, France, and England. The authenticity of the work was denied, as was to be expected; for any society that was astute enough to compile such a book would be astute enough to deny it. To only the fourth or highest order of Jesuits were these Instructions to be communicated; the others, who were ignorant of them in their written form, were brought forward to deny on oath that such a book existed, but their protestations weighed very little against the overwhelming evidence on the other side. The

¹³Seereta Moita, cap. 9, sec. 18, 19.

¹⁴Ibid., cap. 16 (L’Estrange’s tr.); printed as the Preface in the Latin edition.

perfect uniformity of the methods followed by the Jesuits in all countries favored a presumption that they acted upon a prescribed rule; and the exact correspondence between their methods and the secret advices showed that this was the rule. Gretza, a well-known member of the society, affirmed that the *Secreta Monita* was a forgery by a Jesuit who had been dismissed with ignominy from the society in Poland, and that he published it in 1616. But the falsehood of the story was proved by the discovery in the British Museum of a work printed in 1596, twenty years before the alleged forgery, in which the *Secreta Monita* is copied. ¹⁵

Since the first discovery in Paderborn, copies of the *Secreta Monita* have been found in other libraries, as in Prague, noted above. Numerous editions have since been published, and in so many languages, that the idea of collusion is out of the question. These editions all agree with the exception of a few unimportant variations in the reading. ¹⁶ “These private directions,” says M. l’Estrange, “are quite contrary to the rules, constitutions, and instructions which this society professeth publicly in those books it hath printed on this subject. So that without difficulty we may believe that the greatest part of their governors (if a very few be excepted especially) have a double rule as well as a double habit—one for their private and particular use, and another to flaunt with before the world.” ¹⁷

¹⁵*Secrete Menira*; Lond., 1850. Pref. by H. M. W., p. 9.

¹⁶Among the various editions of the *Secreta Monita* we mention the following: - Bishop Compton’s translation; Lond., 1669. Sir Roger L’Estrange’s translation; Lond., 1679; it was made from a French copy, printed at Cologne, 1678. Another edition, containing the Latin text with an English translation, dedicated to Sir Robert Walpole, Premier of England: Lond., 1723. This edition says, in the Preface, that Mr. John Schipper, bookseller at Amsterdam, bought a copy of the *Secreta Monita*, among other books, at Antwerp, and reprinted it. The Jesuits bought up the whole edition, a few copies excepted. From one of these it was afterwards reprinted. Of late years there have been several English reprints. One of the copies which we have used in this compend of the book was printed at Rome, in the printing-press of the Propaganda, and contains the Latin text page for page with a translation in Italian.

¹⁷*The Cabinet of the Jesuits*” *Secrete Opened*; Lond., 1679.

Chapter 8: Diffusion of the Jesuits Throughout Christendom

The Conflict Great-the Arms Sufficient-The Victory Sure-Set Free
from Episcopal Jurisdiction-Acceptance in
Italy-Venice-Spain- Portugal-Francis Xavier-France-Germany-Their
First Planting in Austria-In Cologne and Ingolstadt-Thence Spread
over all Germany- Their Schools-Wearing of Crosses-Revival of the
Popish Faith

Picture: Pilgrimage of the Young Jesuits of Ingolstadt.

Picture: Compulsory Conversion of Indians by Jesuit Missionaries.

The soldiers of Loyola are about to go forth. Before beginning the campaign we see their chief assembling them and pointing out the field on which their prowess is to be displayed. The nations of Christendom are in revolt: it will be theirs to subjugate them, and lay them once more, bound in chains, at the feet of the Papal See. They must not faint; the arms he has provided them with are amply sufficient for the arduous warfare on which he sends them. Clad in that armor, and wielding it in the way he has shown them, they will expel knowledge as night chases away the day. Liberty will die wherever their foot shall tread. And in the ancient darkness they will be able to rear again the fallen throne of the great Hierarch of Rome. But if the service is hard, the wages will be ample. As the saviors of that throne they will be greater than it. And though meanwhile their work is to be done in great show of humility and poverty, the silver and the gold of Christendom will in the end be theirs; they will be the lords of its lands and palaces, the masters of the bodies and the souls of its inhabitants, and nothing of all that the heart can desire will be withholden from them if only they will obey him.

The Jesuits rapidly multiplied, and we are now to follow them in their peregrinations over Europe. Going forth in little bands, animated with an entire devotion to their General, schooled in all the arts which could help to further their mission, they planted them-

selves in a few years in all the countries of Christendom, and made their presence felt in the turning of the tide of Protestantism, which till then had been on the flow.

There was no disguise they could not assume, and therefore there was no place into which they could not penetrate. They could enter unheard the closet of the monarch, or the cabinet of the statesman. They could sit unseen in Convocation or General Assembly, and mingle unsuspected in the deliberations and debates. There was no tongue they could not speak, and no creed they could not profess, and thus there was no people among whom they might not sojourn, and no Church whose membership they might not enter, and whose functions they might not discharge. They could execrate the Pope with the Lutheran, and swear the Solemn League with the Covenanter. They had their men of learning and eloquence for the halls of nobles and the courts of kings; their men of science and letters for the education of youth; their unpolished but ready orators to harangue the crowd; and their plain, unlettered monks, to visit the cottages of the peasantry and the workshops of the artisan. "I know these men," said Joseph II of Austria, writing to Choiseul, the Prime Minister of Louis XV- "I know these men as well as any one can do: all the schemes they have carried on, and the pains they have taken to spread darkness over the earth, as well as their efforts to rule and embroil Europe from Cape Finisterre to Spitzbergen! In China they were mandarins; in France, academicians, courtiers, and confessors; in Spain and Portugal, grandees; and in Paraguay, kings. Had not my grand-uncle, Joseph I, become emperor, we had in all probability seen in Germany, too, a Malagrida or an Alvieros."

In order that they might be at liberty to visit what city and diocese they pleased, they were exempted from episcopal jurisdiction. They could come and go at their pleasure, and perform all their functions without having to render account to any one save to their superior. This arrangement was resisted at first by certain prelates; but it was universally conceded at last, and it greatly facilitated the wide and rapid diffusion of the Jesuit corps.

Extraordinary success attended their first efforts throughout all Italy. Designed for the common people, the order found equal acceptance from princes and nobles. In Parma the highest families submitted themselves to the "Spiritual Exercises." In Venice, Lainez

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expounded the Gospel of St. John to a congregation of nobles; and in 1542 a Jesuits' college was founded in that city. The citizens of Montepulciano accompanied Francisco Strada through the streets begging. Their chief knocked at the doors, and his followers received the alms. In Faenza, they succeeded in arresting the Protestant movement, which had been commenced by the eloquent Bernardino Ochino, and by the machinery of schools and societies for the relief of the poor, they brought back the population to the Papacy. These are but a few instances out of many of their popularity and ¹ success.

In the countries of Spain and Portugal their success was even greater than in Italy. A son of the soil, its founder had breathed a spirit into the order which spread among the Spaniards like an infection. Some of the highest grandees enrolled themselves in its ranks. In the province of Valencia, the multitudes that flocked to hear the Jesuit preacher, Araoz, were such that no cathedral could contain them, and a pulpit was erected for him in the open air. From the city of Salamanca, where in 1548 they had opened their establishment in a small, wretched house, the Jesuits spread themselves over all Spain. Two members of the society were sent to the King of Portugal, at his own request: the one he retained as his confessor, the other he dispatched to the East Indies. This was that Francis Xavier who there gained for himself, says Ranke, "the name of an apostle, and the glory of a saint." At the courts of Madrid and Lisbon they soon acquired immense influence. They were the confessors of the nobles and the counselors of the monarch.

The Jesuits found it more difficult to force their way into France. Much they wished to found a college in that city where their first vow had been recorded, but every attempt was met by the determined opposition of the Parliament and the clergy, who were jealous of their enormous privileges. The wars between the Guises and the Huguenots at length opened a door for them. Lainez, who by this time had become their General, saw his opportunity, and in 1561 succeeded in effecting his object, although on condition of renouncing the peculiar privileges of the order, and submitting to episcopal jurisdiction. "The promise was made, but with a mental reservation,

¹Ranke, *Hist. of the Popes*, book. 2, sec. 7.

which removed the necessity of keeping it.”² They immediately founded a college in Paris, opened schools-which were taught by clever teachers-and planted Jesuit seminaries at Avignon, Rhodes, Lyons, and other places. Their intrigues kept the nation divided, and much inflamed the fury of the civil wars. Henry III was massacred by an agent of theirs: they next attempted the life of Henry IV. This crime led to their first banishment from France, in 1594; but soon they crept back into the kingdom in the guise of traders and operatives. They were at last openly admitted by the monarch-a service which they repaid by slaughtering him in the streets of his capital. Under their rule France continued to bleed and agonize, to plunge from woe into crime, and from crime into woe, till the crowning wickedness of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes laid the country prostrate; and it lay quiet for more than half a century, till, recovering somewhat from its exhaustion, it lifted itself up, only to encounter the terrible blow of its great Revolution.

We turn to Germany. Here it was that the Church of Rome had suffered her first great losses, and here, under the arms of the Jesuits, was she destined to make a beginning of those victories which recovered not a little of the ground she had lost. A generation had passed away since the rise of Protestantism. It is the year 1550: the sons of the men who had gathered round Luther occupy the stage when the van of this great invading host makes its appearance. They come in silence; they are plain in their attire, humble and submissive in their deportment; but behind them are the stakes and scaffolds of the persecutor, and the armies of France and Spain. Their quiet words find their terrible reverberations in those awful tempests of war which for thirty years desolated Germany.

Ferdinand I of Austria, reflecting on the decay into which Roman Catholic feeling had fallen in Germany, sent to Ignatius Loyola for a few zealous teachers to instruct the youth of his dominions. In 1551, thirteen Jesuits, including Le Jay, arrived at Vienna. They were provided with pensions, placed in the university chairs, and crept upwards till they seized the entire direction of that seminary. From that hour date the crimes and misfortunes of the House of Austria.³

²Duller, *Hist. of the Jesuits*, p. 83; Lond., 1845.

³Ranke, book 5, sec. 3.

[414] A little colony of the disciples of Loyola had, before this, planted itself at Cologne. It was not till some years that they took root in that city; but the initial difficulties surmounted, they began to effect a change in public sentiment, which went on till Cologne became, as it is sometimes called, the “Rome of the North.” About the same time, the Jesuits became flourishing in Ingolstadt. They had been driven away on their first entrance into that university seat, the professors dreading them as rivals; but in 1556 they were recalled, and soon rose to influence, as was to be expected in a city where the memory of Dr. Eck was still fresh. Their battles, less noisy than his, were fated to accomplish much more for the Papacy.

From these three centres—Vienna, Cologne, and Ingolstadt—the Jesuits extended themselves over all Germany. They established colleges in the chief cities for the sons of princes and nobles, and they opened schools in town and village for the instruction of the lower classes. From Vienna they distributed their colonies throughout the Austrian dominions. They had schools in the Tyrol and the cities at the foot of its mountains. From Prague they ramified over Bohemia, and penetrated into Hungary. Their colleges at Ingolstadt and Munich gave them the possession of Bavaria, Franconia, and Swabia. From Cologne they extended their convents and schools over Rhenish Prussia, and, planting a college at Spires, they counteracted the influence of Heidelberg University, then the resort of the most learned men of the German nation.

Wherever the Jesuits came, there was quickly seen a manifest revival of the Popish faith. In the short space of ten years, their establishments had become flourishing in all the countries in which they were planted. Their system of education was adapted to all classes. While they studied the exact sciences, and strove to rival the most renowned of the Protestant professors, and so draw the higher youth into their schools, they compiled admirable catechisms for the use of the poor. They especially excelled as teachers of Latin; and so great was their zeal and their success, that “even Protestants removed their children from distant schools, to place them under the care of the Jesuits.”⁴

⁴Ranke, book 5, sec. 3.

The teachers seldom failed to inspire the youth in their schools with their own devotion to the Popish faith. The sons of Protestant fathers were drawn to confession, and by-and-by into general conformity to Popish practices. Food which the Church had forbidden they would not touch on the interdicted days, although it was being [415] freely used by the other members of the family. They began, too, to distinguish themselves by the use of Popish symbols. The wearing of crosses and rosaries is recorded by Ranke as one of the first signs of the setting of the tide toward Rome. Forgotten rites began to be revived; relics which had been thrown aside buried in darkness, were sought out and exhibited to the public gaze. The old virtue returned into rotten bones, and the holiness of faded garments flourished anew. The saints of the Church came out in bold relief, while those of the Bible receded into the distance. The light of candles replaced the Word of Life in the temples; the newest fashions of worship were imported from Italy, and music and architecture in the style of the Restoration were called in to reinforce the movement. Customs which had not been witnessed since the days of their grandfathers, began to receive the reverent observance of the new generation. "In the year 1560, the youth of Ingolstadt belonging to the Jesuit school walked, two and two, on a pilgrimage to Eichstadt, in order to be strengthened for their confirmation by the dew that dropped from the tomb of St. Walpurgis." ⁵ The modes of thought and feeling thus implanted in the schools were, by means of preaching and confession, propagated through the whole population.

While the Jesuits were busy in the seminaries, the Pope operated powerfully in the political sphere. He had recourse to various arts to gain over the princes. Duke Albert V of Bavaria had a grant made him of one-tenth of the property of the clergy. This riveted his decision on the side of Rome, and he now set himself with earnest zeal and marked success to restore, in its ancient purity and rigor, the Popery of his territories. The Jesuits lauded the piety of the duke, who was a second Josias, a new Theodosius. ⁶

The Popes saw clearly that they could never hope to restore [416] the ancient discipline and rule of their Church without the help of

⁵Ranke, bk. v., sec. 3.

⁶Ibid.

the temporal sovereigns. Besides Duke Albert, who so powerfully contributed to re-establish the sway of Rome over all Bavaria, the ecclesiastical princes, who governed so large a part of Germany, threw themselves heartily into the work of restoration. The Jesuit Canisins, a man of blameless life, of consummate address, and whose great zeal was regulated by an equal prudence, was sent to counsel and guide them. Under his management they accepted provisionally the edicts of the Council of Trent. They required of all professors in colleges subscription to a confession of the Popish faith. They exacted the same pledge from ordinary schoolmasters and medical practitioners. In many parts of Germany no one could follow a profession till first he had given public proof of his orthodoxy. Bishops were required to exercise a more vigilant superintendence of their clergy than they had done these twenty years past. The Protestant preachers were banished; and in some parts the entire Protestant population was driven out. The Protestant nobles were forbidden to appear at court. Many withdrew into retirement, but others purchased their way back by a renunciation of their faith. By these and similar arts Protestantism was conquered on what may be regarded as its native soil. If not wholly rooted up it maintained henceforward but a languishing existence; its leaf faded and its fruit died in the mephitic air around it, while Romanism shot up in fresh strength and robustness. A whole century of calamity followed the entrance of the Jesuits into Germany. The troubles they excited culminated at last in the Thirty Years' War. For the space of a generation the thunder of battle continued to roll over the Fatherland. But the God of their fathers had not forsaken the Germans; it pleased him to summon from the distant Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, and by his arm to save the remnants of Protestant liberty in that country. Thus the Jesuits failed in their design of subjugating the whole of Germany, and had to content themselves with dominating over those portions, unhappily large, of which the ecclesiastical princes had given them possession at the first.

Chapter 9: Commercial Enterprises and Banishments

England-Poland-Cardinal Hosius-Sigismund III-Ruin of Poland- Jesuit Missions in the East Indies-Numbers of their Converts-Their Missions in Abyssinia-Their Kingdom of Paraguay-Their Trading Establishments in the West Indies-Episode of Father la Valette- Bankruptcy-Trial-Their Constitutions brought to Light—Banished from all Popish Kingdoms-Suppressed by Clement XIV-The Pope Dies Suddenly-The Order Restored by Plus VII-The Jesuits the Masters of the Pope

Picture: Pope Pius VII.

Picture: View of Naples and the Bay.

Of the entrance of the Jesuits into England, the arts they employed, the disguises they wore, the seditions they sowed, the snares they laid for the life of the sovereign, and the plots they concocted for the overthrow of the Protestant Church, we shall have an opportunity of speaking when we come to narrate the history of Protestantism in Great Britain. Meanwhile, we consider their career in Poland.

Cardinal Hosius opened the gates of this country to the Jesuits. Till then Poland was a flourishing country, united at home and powerful abroad. Its literature and science during the half-century preceding had risen to an eminence that placed Poland on a par with the most enlightened countries of Christendom. It enjoyed a measure of toleration which was then unknown to most of the nations of Europe. Foreign Protestants fled to it as a refuge from the persecution to which they were exposed in their native land, bringing to their adopted country their skill, their wealth, and their energy. Its trade increased, and its towns grew in population and riches. Italian, German, French, and Scottish Protestant congregations existed at

Cracow, Vilna, and Posnania. ¹ Such was Poland before the foot of Jesuit had touched its soil.

[417] But from the hour that the disciples of Loyola entered the country Poland began to decline. The Jesuits became supreme at court; the monarch Sigismund III, gave himself entirely up to their guidance; no one could hope to rise in the State who did not pay court to them; the education of youth was wholly in their hands, and the effects became speedily visible in the decay of literature, ² and the growing decrepitude of the national mind. At home the popular liberties were attacked in the persons of the Protestants, and abroad the nation was humiliated by a foreign policy inspired by the Jesuits, which drew upon the country the contempt and hostility of neighboring powers. These evil courses of intrigue and faction within the country, and impotent and arrogant policy outside of it, were persisted in till the natural issue was reached in the partition of Poland. It is at the door of the Jesuits that the fall of that once-enlightened, prosperous, and powerful nation is to be laid.

It concerns us less to follow the Jesuits into those countries which lie beyond the boundaries of Christendom, unless in so far as their doings in these regions may help to throw light on their principles and tactics. In following their steps among heathen nations and savage races, it is alike impossible to withhold our admiration of their burning zeal and intrepid courage, or our wonder at their prodigiously rapid success. No sooner had the Jesuit missionary set foot on a new shore, or preached, by an interpreter it might be, his first sermon in a heathen city, than his converts were to be counted in tens of thousands. Speaking of their missions in India, Sacchinus, their historian, says that "ten thousand men were baptized in the space of one year." ³ When the Jesuit mission to the East Indies was set on foot in 1559, Torrez procured royal letters to the Portuguese viceroys and governors, empowering them to lend their assistance to the missionaries for the conversion of the Indians. This shortened the process wonderfully. All that had to be done was to ascertain the place where the natives were assembled for some

¹Krasinski, *Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Reformation in Poland*, volume 2, p. 196; Lond., 1840.

²Krasinski, vol. 2., pp. 197, 198.

³Sacchinus, lib. 6., p. 172.

religious festival, and surround them with a troop of soldiers, who, with leveled muskets, offered them the alternative of baptism. The rite followed immediately upon the acceptance of the alternative; and next day the baptized were taught the sign of the cross. In this excellent and summary way was the evangelization of the island of Goa effected! ⁴

By similar methods did they attempt to plant the Popish faith and establish their own dominion in Abyssinia, and also at Mozambique (1560) on the opposite coast of Africa. One of the pioneers, Oviedo, who had entered Ethiopia, wrote thus to the Pope: - "He must be permitted to inform his Holiness that, with the assistance of 500 or 600 Portuguese soldiers, he could at any time reduce the Empire of Abyssinia to the obedience of the Pontificate; and when he considered that it was a country surrounded with territories abounding with the finest gold, and promising a rich harvest of souls to the Church, he trusted his Holiness would give the matter further consideration." ⁵ The Emperor of Ethiopia was gained by flatteries and miracles; a terrible persecution was raised against the native Christians; thousands were massacred; but at last, the king having detected the authors of these barbarities plotting against his own life and throne, they were ignominiously expelled the country.

Having secured the territory of Paraguay, a Portuguese possession in South America, the Jesuits founded a kingdom there, and became its sovereigns. They treated the natives at first with kindness, and taught them several useful arts, but by-and-by they changed their policy, and, reducing them to slavery, compelled them to labor for their benefit. Dealing out to the Paraguayan peasant from the produce of his own toil as much as would suffice to feed and clothe him, the Fathers laid up the rest in large storehouses, which they had erected for the purpose. They kept carefully concealed from the knowledge of Europe this seemingly exhaustless source of wealth, that no one else might share its sweets. They continued all the while to draw from it those vast sums wherewith they carried on their machinations in the Old World. With the gold wrung from the Paraguayan peasants' toil they hired spies, bribed courtiers,

⁴Steinmetz, *Hist. of the Jesuits*, vol. 2, pp. 46-48. Sacchinus, lib. 3, p. 129.

⁵Steinmetz, lib. 2., p. 59.

opened new missions, and maintained that pomp and splendor of their establishments by which the populace were dazzled.⁶

[418] Their establishments in Brazil formed the basis of a great and enriching trade, of which Santa Fe and Buenos Ayres were the chief depots. But the most noted episode of this kind in their history is that of Father Lavalette (1756). He was Visitor-General and Apostolic Prefect of their Missions in the West Indies. "He organized offices in St. Domingo, Granada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and other islands, and drew bills of exchange on Paris, London, Bordeaux, Nantes, Lyons, Cadiz, Leghorn, and Amsterdam." His vessels, loaded with riches, comprising, besides colonial produce, negro slaves, "crossed the sea continually."⁷ Trading on credit, they professed to give the property of the society as security. Their methods of business were abnormal. Treaties obeyed by other merchants they disregarded. Neutrality laws were nothing to them. They hired ships which were used as traders or privateers, as suited them, and sailed under whatever flag was convenient. At last, however, came trouble to these Fathers, who were making as the phrase is, "the best of both worlds." The Brothers Lioncy and Gouffre, of Marseilles, had accepted their bills for a million and a half of livres, to cover which two vessels had been dispatched for Martinique with merchandise to the value of two millions, unfortunately for the Fathers, the ships were captured at sea by the English.

The house of Lioncy and Gouffre asked the superior of the Jesuits in Marseilles for four thousand livres, as part payment of their debt, to save them from bankruptcy. The Father replied that the society was not answerable, but he offered the Brothers Lioncy and Gouffre the aid of their prayers, fortified by the masses which they were about to say for them. The masses would not fill the coffers which the Jesuits had emptied, and accordingly the merchants appealed to Parliament craving a decree for payment of the debt. The appeal was allowed, and the Jesuits were condemned to honour the bills drawn by their agent. At this critical moment the General of the society died: delay was inevitable: the new General sent all the funds he could raise; but before these supplies could reach Marseilles, Lioncy

⁶Duller, *Hist. of the Jesuits*, pp. 135-138.

⁷A Glimpse of the Great Secret Society, p. 79; ed. Lond., 1872.

and Gouffre had become bankrupt, involving in their misfortune their connections in all parts of France.

Now that the ruin had come and publicity was inevitable, the Jesuits refused to pay the debt, pleading that they were protected from the claims of their creditors by their Constitutions. The cause now came to a public hearing. After several pleas had been advanced and abandoned, the Jesuits took their final stand on the argument which, in an evil hour for themselves, they had put forth at first in their defense. Their rules, they said, forbade them to trade; and the fault of individual members could not be punished upon the Order: they were shielded by their Constitutions. The Parliament ordered these documents to be produced. They had been kept secret till now. They were laid before Parliament on the 16th of April, 1761. The result was disastrous for the Jesuits. They lost their cause, and became much more odious than before. The disclosure revealed Jesuitism to men as an organization based on the most iniquitous maxims, and armed with the most terrible weapons for the accomplishment of their object, which was to plant their own supremacy on the ruin of society. The Constitutions were one of the principal grounds of the decree for the extinction of the order in France, in 1762.⁸

That political kingdoms and civil communities should feel the Order a burden too heavy to be borne, is not to be wondered at when we reflect that even the Popes, of whose throne it was the pillar, have repeatedly decreed its extinction. Strange as it may seem, the first bolt in later times that fell on the Jesuits was launched by the hand of Rome. Benedict IV, by a bull issued in 1741, prohibited them from engaging in trade and making slaves of the Indians. In 1759, Portugal, finding itself on the brink of ruin by their intrigues, shook them off. This example was soon followed in France, as we have already narrated. Even in Spain, with all its devotion to the Papal See, all the Jesuit establishments were surrounded, one night in 1767, with troops, and the whole fraternity, amounting to 7,000, were caught and shipped off to Italy. Immediately thereafter a similar expulsion befell them in South America. Naples, Malta, and

⁸A Glimpse of the Great Secret Society, pp. 78-81. Chalotais, Report to Parl. of Bretagne.

Parma were the next to drive them from their soil. The severest blow was yet to come. Clement XIII, hitherto their firm friend, yielding at last to the unanimous demands of all the Roman Catholic courts, summoned a secret conclave for the suppression of the Order: “a step necessary,” said the brief of his successor, “in order to prevent Christians rising one against another, and massacring one another in the very bosom of our common mother the Holy Church.” Clement died suddenly the very evening before the day appointed for the conclave. Lorenzo Ganganelli was elevated to the vacant chair under the title of Clement XIV. Ganganelli was studious, learned, of pure morals, and of genuine piety. From the schoolmen he turned to the Fathers, forsaking the Fathers he gave himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, where he learned on what Rock to fix the anchor of his faith. Clement XIV strove for several years, with honest but mistaken zeal, to reform the Order. His efforts were fruitless. On the 21st of July, 1773, he issued the famous bull, “*Dominus ac Redemptor noster*,” By which he “dissolved and forever annihilated the Order as a corporate body,” at a moment when it counted 22,000 members.⁹

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The bull justifies itself by a long and formidable list of charges against the Jesuits. Had this accusation proceeded from a Protestant pen it might have been regarded as not free from exaggeration, but coming from the Papal chair it must be accepted as the sober truth. The bull of Clement charged them with raising various insurrections and rebellions, with plotting against bishops, undermining the regular monastic orders, and invading pious foundations and corporations of every sort, not only in Europe, but in Asia and America, to the danger of souls and the astonishment of all nations. It charged them with engaging in trade, and that, instead of seeking to convert the heathen, they had shown themselves intent only on gathering gold and silver and precious jewels. They had interpolated pagan rites and manners with Christian beliefs and worship: they had set aside the ordinances of the Church, and substituted opinions which the apostolic chair had pronounced fundamentally erroneous and evidently subversive of good morals. Tumults, disturbances, violences, had followed them in all countries. In fine, they had broken the peace of

⁹Duller, *Hist. of the Jesuits*, p. 151.

the Church, and so incurably that the Pontificates of his predecessors, Urban VIII, Clements IX, X, XI, and XII, Alexanders VII and VIII, Innocents X, XI, XII, and XIII, and Benedict XIV, had been passed in abortive attempts to re-establish the harmony and concord which they had destroyed. It was now seen that the peace of the Church would never be restored while the Order existed, and hence the necessity of the bull which dispossessed the Jesuits of “every office, service, and administration;” took away from them “their houses, schools, hospitals, estates;” withdrew “all their statutes, usages, decrees, customs, and ordinances;” and pronounced “all the power of the General, Provincial, Visitors, and every other head of the same Order, whether spiritual or secular, to be for ever annulled and suppressed.” “The present ordinance,” said the bull, in conclusion, “shall remain in full force and operation from henceforth and for ever.”

Nothing but the most tremendous necessity could have made Clement XIV issue this bull. He knew well how unforgiving was the pride and how deadly the vengeance of the Society, and he did not conceal from himself the penalty he should have to pay for decreeing its suppression. On laying down his pen, after having put his name to the bull, he said to those around him that he had subscribed his death-warrant.¹⁰ The Pope was at that time in robust health, and his vigorous constitution and temperate habits promised a long life. But now dark rumors began to be whispered in Italy that the Pontiff would die soon. In April of the following year he began to decline without any apparent cause: his illness increased: no medicine was of any avail: and after lingering in torture for months, he died, September 22nd, 1774. “Several days before his death,” says Caraccioli, “his bones were exfoliated and withered like a tree which, attacked at its roots, withers away and throws off its bark. The scientific men who were called in to embalm his body found the features livid, the lips black, the abdomen inflated, the limbs emaciated, and covered with violet spots. The size of the head was diminished, and all the muscles were shrunk up, and the spine

¹⁰“Sotto-scriviamo la nostra morte.”

was decomposed. They filled the body with perfumed and aromatic substances, but nothing could dispel the mephitic effluvia.”¹¹

The suppression with which Clement XIV smote the Society of Jesus was eternal; but the “forever” of the bull lasted only in actual deed during the brief interval that elapsed between 1773 and 1814. That short period was filled up with the awful tempest of the French Revolution—to the fallen thrones and desecrated altars of which the Jesuits pointed as the monuments of the Divine anger at the suppression of their Order. Despite the bull of Clement, the Jesuits had neither ceased to exist nor ceased to act. Amid the storms that shook the world they were energetically active. In revolutionary conventions and clubs, in war-councils and committees, on battle-fields they were present, guiding with unseen but powerful touch the course of affairs. Their maxim is, if despotisms will not serve them, to demoralize society and render government impossible, and from chaos to remodel the world anew. Thus the Society of Jesus, which had gone out of existence before the Revolution, as men believed, started up in full force the moment after, prepared to enter on the work of moulding and ruling the nations which had been chastised but not enlightened. Scarcely had Pius VII returned to the Vatican, when, by a bull dated August 7th, 1814, he restored the Order of Jesus. Thaddeus Borzodzowsky was placed at their head. Once more the brotherhood stalked abroad in their black birettas. In no long time their colleges, seminaries, and novitiates began to flourish in all the countries of Europe, Ireland and England not excepted. Their numbers, swelled by the sodalities of “St. Vincent de Paul,” “Brothers of the Christian Doctrine,” and other societies affiliated with the order, became greater, perhaps, than they ever were at any former period. And their importance was vastly enhanced by the fact that the contest between the “Order” and the “Papal Chair” ended—temporarily, at any rate—in the enslavement of the Popedom, of which they inspired the policy, indited the decrees, and wielded the power.

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¹¹All the world believed that Clement had been made to drink the Aqua Tofana, a spring in Perugia more famous than healthful. Some one has said that if Popes are not liable to err, they are nevertheless liable to sudden death.

Chapter 10: Restoration of the Inquisition

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Failure of Ratisbon Conference-What Next to be Done?-Restore the Inquisition-Paul III-Caraffa-His History-Spread of Protestantism in Italy-Juan di Valdez-His Reunions at Chiaja-Peter Martyr Vermigli- Bernardino Ochino-Galeazzo Caraccioli Vittoria Colonna, etc.-Pietro Carnesecchi, etc.-Shall Naples or Geneva Lead in the Reform Movement?

There is one arm of the Jesuits to which we have not yet adverted. The weapon that we refer to was not indeed unknown to former times, but it had fallen out of order, and had to be refurbished, and made fit for modern exigencies. No small part of the success that attended the operations of the Jesuits was owing to their use of it. That weapon was the Inquisition.

We have narrated in a former chapter the earnest attempt made at the Conference of Ratisbon to find a basis of conciliation between the Protestant and the Popish churches. The way had been paved at Rome for this attempted reconcilment of the two creeds by an infusion of new blood into the College of Cardinals. Gaspar Contarini, a senator of Venice, who was known to hold opinions on the doctrine of justification differing very little, if at all, from those of Luther,¹ was invested with the purple of the cardinalate. The chair of the Doge almost within his reach, Contarini was induced to come to Rome and devote the influence of his high character and great talents to the doubtful experiment of reforming the Papacy. By his advice, several ecclesiastics whose sentiments approximated to his own were added to the Sacred College, among other Sadoletto, Gioberto Caraffa, and Reginald Pole.

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In the end, these new elections but laid a basis for a more determined and bloody resistance to Protestantism. This was in the future as yet; meanwhile the reforming measures, for which this change

¹So he himself declared on his death-bed to Bernardino Ochino in 1542. (McCrie, Prog. and Sup. Ref. in Italy, p. 220.)

in the cardinalate was to pave the way, were taken. Deputies were sent to the Ratisbon Conference, with instructions to make such concessions to the Reformers as might not endanger the fundamental principles of the Papacy, or strip the tiara of its supremacy. The issue was what we have announced in a previous part of our history. When the deputies returned from the Diet, and told Paul III that all their efforts to frame a basis of agreement between the two faiths had proved abortive, and that there was not a country in Christendom where Protestantism was not spreading, the Pope asked in alarm, "What then is to be done?" Cardinal Caraffa, and John Alvarez de Toledo, Bishop of Burgos, to whom the question was addressed, immediately made answer, Re-establish the Inquisition.

The proposal accorded well with the gloomy genius, unbending opinions, and stern bigotry of the men from whom it came. Caraffa and Toledo were old Dominicans, the same order to whom Innocent III had committed the working of the "Holy Tribunal," when it was first set up. Men of pure but austere life, they were prepared to endure in their own persons, or to inflict on the persons of others, any amount of suffering and pain, rather than permit the Roman Church to be overthrown. Re-establish the Inquisition, said Caraffa; let the supreme tribunal be set up in Rome, with subordinate branches ramifying over all Europe. "Here in Rome must the successors of Peter destroy all the heresies of the whole world."² The Jesuit historians take care to tell us that Caraffa's proposal was seconded by a special memorial from the founder of their order, Ignatius Loyola. The bull re-establishing the Inquisition was published July 21st, 1542.

The "Holy Office" revived with terrors unknown to it in former ages. It had now a plenitude of power. Its jurisdiction extended over all countries, and not a man in all Christendom, however exalted in rank or dignity, but was liable to be made answerable at its bar. The throne was no protection; the altar was no shield; withered age and blooming youth, matron and maiden, might any hour be seized by its familiars, and undergo the question in the dark underground chamber, where, behind a table, with its crucifix and taper, sat the inquisitor, his stern pitiless features surmounted by his black cowl,

²Bromato, *Vita di Paolo*, tom. 4, lib. 7, sec. 3. Ranke, book 2, sec. 6.

and all around the instruments of torture. Till the most secret thought had been wrung out of the breast, no mercy was to be shown. For the inquisitor to feel the least pity for his writhing victim was to debase himself. Such were the instructions drafted by Caraffa.

The history of the man who restored the Inquisition is one of great interest, and more than ordinary instruction, but it is touchingly sad.

Caraffa had been a member of the Oratory of Divine Love, which was a little circle of moderate Reformers, that held its sitting in the Trastevere at Rome, and occupied, as regarded the Reform of the Roman Church, a position midway between the champions of things as they were, and the company of decided adherents of the Gospel, which held its reunions at Chiaja, in Naples, and of which we shall speak below. Caraffa had “tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,” but the gracious stirrings of the Spirit, and the struggles of his own conscience, he had quelled, and from the very threshold of Rest which he was seeking in the Gospel, he had cast himself again into the arms of an infallible Church. With such a history it was not possible that Caraffa could act a middle part. He threw himself with sterner zeal into the dreadful work of reviving the Inquisition than did even Paul III, under whom he served, and whom he was destined to succeed. “Caraffa,” says the historian Ranke, “lost not a moment in carrying this edict into execution; he would have thought it waste of time to wait for the usual issue of means from the apostolic treasury, and, though by no means rich, he hired a house for immediate proceedings at his own expense; this he fitted up with rooms for the officers, and prisons for the accused, supplying the latter with strong bolts and locks, with dungeons, chains, blocks, and every other fearful appurtenance of his office. He appointed commissioners-general for the different countries.”³

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The resolution to restore the Inquisition was taken at a critical moment for Italy, and all the countries south of the Alps. The dawn of the Protestant day was breaking around the very throne of the Pope. From the city of Ferrara in the north, where the daughter of Louis XII, the correspondent of Calvin, sheltered in her palace the disciples of the Gospel, to the ancient Parthenope, which looks down

³Ranke, book 2, sec. 6.

from its fig and aloe covered heights upon the calm waters of its bay, the light was breaking in a clearness and fullness that gave promise that in proportion to the depth of the previous darkness, so would be the splendors of the coming day. Distinguished as the land of the Renaissance, Italy seemed about to become yet more distinguished as the land of Protestantism. At the foot of Fiesole, and in that Florence on which Cosine and the brilliant group of scholars around him had so often looked down, while they talked of Plato, there were men who had learned a better knowledge than that which the Greek sage had taught. In Padua, in Bologna, in Lucca, in Modena, in Rome,⁴ and in other cities of classic fame, some of the first families had embraced the Gospel. Men of rank in the State, and of eminence in the Church, persons of mark in the republic of letters, orators, poets, and some noble ladies, as eminent for their talents as for their birth, were not ashamed to enrol themselves among the disciples of that faith which the Lutheran princes had confessed at Augsburg, and which Calvin was propagating from the little town on the shores of the Leman, then beginning to attract the notice of the world. But of all the Protestant groups now forming in Italy, none equalled in respect of brilliance of rank, luster of talent, and devotion of faith, that which had gathered round Juan di Valdez on the lovely shore of Naples.

This distinguished Spaniard had been forced to leave the court of Charles V and his native land for the sake of the Gospel. On the western arm of the Bay of Naples, hard by the tomb of Virgil, looking forth on the calm sea, and the picturesque island of Capri, with the opposite shore, on which Vesuvius, with its pennon of white vapor atop, kept watch over the cities which 1,400 years before it had wrapped in a winding-sheet of ashes, and enclosed in a tomb of lava, was placed the villa of Valdez. There his friends often assembled to discuss the articles of the Protestant creed, and confirm one another in their adherence to the Gospel. Among these was Peter Martyr Vermigli, Prior of St. Peter's ad aram. In the wilderness of Romanism the prior had become parched with thirst, for no water could he find that could refresh his soul. Valdez led him to a fountain, whereat Martyr drank, and thirsted no more. In his turn he zealously led

⁴See McCrie, *Prog. and Supp. Ref. in Italy*, chap. 3.

others to the same living stream. Another member of that Protestant band was Caserta, a Neapolitan nobleman. He had a young relative, then wholly absorbed in the gaieties and splendors of Naples; him Caserta introduced to Valdez. This was Galeazzo Caraccioli, only son of the Marquis of Vice, who embraced the Gospel with his whole heart, and when the tempest dispersed the brilliant company to which he had joined himself, leaving his noble palace, his rich patrimony, his virtuous wife, his dear children, and all his flourishing honors, he cleaved to the cross, and repairing to Geneva was there, in the words of Calvin, “content with our littleness, and lives frugally according to the habits of the commonalty-neither more nor less than any one of us.”⁵

In 1536 this select society received another member. Bernardino Ochino, the great orator of Italy, came at that time to Naples to preach the Lent Sermons. A native of Sienna, he assumed the cowl of St. Francis, which he afterwards exchanged for the frock of the more rigid order of the Capuchins. He was so eloquent that Charles V said of him, “That man is enough to make the stones weep.” His discourses were impregnated with the great principles of the Protestant faith, and his eloquence drew overwhelming crowds to the Church of St. Giovanni Maggiore, where he was now preaching. His accession to the society around Valdez gave it great additional strength, for the preacher was daily scattering the seeds of Divine truth among the common people. And not among these only, for persons of all ranks crowded to hear the eloquent Capuchin. Among his audience might be seen Giulia de Gonzaga, widow of the Duke of Trajetto, reputed the most beautiful woman in Italy, and, what was higher praise, one of the most humble and sincere of its Christians. And there was Vitteria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara, also renowned for the loveliness of her person, and not less renowned for her talents and virtues. And there was Pietro Carnesecchi, a patrician of Florence, and a former secretary of Clement VII, now a disciple, and afterwards to be a martyr, of the Gospel. Such were the illustrious men and the high-born women that formed this Protestant propaganda in Naples. It comprehended elements of power which promised brilliant results in the future. It formed a galaxy of rank,

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⁵Calvin, Comment, on 1st Corinthians - Dedication.

talent, oratory, genius, and tact, adapted to all classes of the nation, and constituted, one would have thought, such an organisation or "Bureau" as was sure to originate, and in due time accomplish, the Reformation of Italy. The ravages the Gothic nations had inflicted, and the yet greater ravages of the Papacy, were on the point of being repaired, and the physical loveliness which Italy had known in her first days, and a moral beauty greater than she had ever known, were about to be restored to her. It was during those same years that Calvin was beginning his labours at Geneva, and fighting with the Pantheistic Libertines for a secure foothold on which to place his Reformation, that this little phalanx of devoted Protestant champions was formed on the shore of Naples.

Of the two movements, the southern one appeared at that hour by much the more hopeful. Contemplated from a human point of view, it had all the elements of success. Here the flower of an ancient nation was gathering on its own soil to essay the noble task of evoking into a second development those mighty energies which had long slumbered, but were not dead, in the bosom of a race that had given arts and letters and civilisation to the West. Every needful power and gift was present in the little company here confederate for the glorious enterprise. Though small in numbers this little host was great in names, comprehending as it did men of ancient lineage, of noble birth, of great wealth, of accomplished scholarship, of poetical genius, and of popular eloquence. They could appeal, moreover, to a past of renown, the traditions of which had not yet perished, and the memory of which might be helpful in the struggle to shake off the yoke of the present. These were surpassing advantages compared with the conditions of the movement at Geneva—a little town which had borrowed glory from neither letters nor arms; with a population rude, lawless, and insolent; a diminutive territory, overshadowed on all sides by powerful and hostile monarchs, who stood with arm uplifted to strike down Protestantism should it here raise its head; and, most discouraging of all, the movement was guided by but one man of note, and he a stranger, an exile, without the prestige of birth, or rank, or wealth. The movement at Geneva cannot succeed; that at Naples cannot fail: so would we have said. But the battle of Protestantism was not to the strong. The world needs to have the lesson often repeated, that it is the truth of principles and not the

grandeur of names that gives assurance of victory. The young vine planted beneath the towers of the ancient Parthenope, and which was shooting forth so hopefully in the golden air of that classic region, was to wither and die, while that which had taken root beneath the shadow of the Alps was to expand amid the rude blasts of the Swiss mountains, and stretch its boughs over Christendom.

Chapter 11: The Tortures of the Inquisition

A Stunning Blow-Three Classes in Italy-Flight of Peter Martyr Vermigli -of Ochino-Caraffa made Pope-The Martyrs, Mollio and Tisserano- Italian Protestantism Crushed-A Notable Epoch-Three Movements- The Inquisition at Nuremberg-The Torture-Chamber- Its Furnishings- Max Tower-The Chamber of Question-The various Instruments of Torture-The Subterranean Dungeons-The Iron Virgin-Her Office- The Burial of the Dead

Picture: Peter Martyr Vermigli.

Picture: Mollio Throwing down his Torch before the Inquisition.

The re-establishment of the Inquisition decided the question of the Reformation of Italy. The country, struck with this blow as it was lifting itself up, instantly fell back into the old gulf. It had become suddenly apparent that religious reform must be won with a great fight of suffering, and Italy had not strength to press on through chains, and dungeons, and scaffolds to the goal she wished to reach. The prize was glorious, she saw, but the price was great. Pallavicino has confessed that it was the Inquisition that saved Italy from lapsing into Protestantism. ¹

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The religious question had divided the Italians of that day into three classes. The bulk of the nation had not thought on the question at all, and harbored no purpose of leaving the Church of Rome. To them the restoration of the Inquisition had no terrors. There was another and large class who had abandoned Rome, but who had not clearness to advance to the open profession of Protestantism. They were most to be pitied of all should they fall into the hands of the inquisitors, seeing they were too undecided either to decline or to face the horrors of the Holy Office. The third class were in no doubt as to the course they must pursue. They could not return to a Church which they held to be superstitious, and they had no alternative before them but provide for their safety by flight, or await

¹Istoria Cone. Trent, lib. 14., cap. 9.

death amid the fires of the Inquisition. The consternation was great; for the Protestants had not dreamed of their enemies having recourse to such violent measures. Numbers fled, and these fugitives were to be found in every city of Switzerland and Germany.² Among these was Bernardino Ochino, on whose eloquent orations all ranks of his countrymen had been hanging but a few months before, and in whose audience the emperor himself might be seen when he visited Italy. Not, however, till he had been served with a citation from the Holy Office at Rome did Ochino make his escape. Flight was almost as bitter as death to the orator. He was leaving behind him the scene of those brilliant triumphs which he could not hope to renew on a foreign soil. Pausing on the summit of the Great St. Bernard, he devoted a few moments to those feelings of regret which were so natural on abandoning so much that he could not hope ever again to enjoy. He then went forward to Geneva. But, alas! the best days of the eloquent monk were past. At Geneva, Ochino's views became tainted and obscured with the new philosophy, which was beginning to air itself at that young school of pantheism.

Peter Martyr Vermigli soon followed. He was presiding over the convent of his order in Lucca, when the storm came with such sudden violence. He set his house in order and fled; but it was discovered after he was gone that the heresy remained although the heretic had escaped, his opinions having been embraced by many of the Luccese monks. The same was found to be the case with the order to which Ochino belonged, the Capuchins namely, and the Pope at first meditated, as the only cure, the suppression of both orders. Peter Martyr went ultimately to Strasburg, and a place was found for him in its university, where his lamp continued to burn clearly to the close. Juan di Valdez died before the tempest burst, which drove beyond the Alps so many of the distinguished group that had formed itself around him at Pausilippo, and saw not the evil days which came on his adopted country. But the majority of those who had embraced the Protestant faith were unable to escape. They were immured in the prisons of the various Holy Offices throughout Italy; some were kept in dark cells for years, in the hope that they would recant, others were quickly relieved by martyrdom. The restorer

²Ranke, book. 2., sec. 6, p. 157; Lond., 1847.

of the Inquisition, the once reforming Caraffa, mounted the Papal chair, under the name of Paul IV. The rigors of the Holy Office were not likely to be relaxed under the new Pope; but twenty years were needed to enable the torture and the stake to annihilate the Protestants of Italy. ³

Of those who suffered martyrdom we shall mention only two—Mollo, a Bolognese professor, renowned throughout Italy for his learning and his pure life; and Tisserano, a native of Perugia. On the 15th of September, 1553, an assembly of the Inquisition, consisting of six cardinals with their episcopal assessors, was held with great pomp at Rome. A train of prisoners, with burning tapers in their hands, was led in before the tribunal. All of them recanted save Mollo and Tisserano. On leave being given them to speak, Mollo broke out, says McCrie, “in a strain of bold and fervid invective, which chained them to their seats, at the same time that it cut them to the quick.” He rebuked his judges for their lewdness, their avarice, and their blood-thirsty cruelty, and concluded as follows: - “Wherefore I appeal from your sentence, and summon you, cruel tyrants and murderers, to answer before the judgment-seat of Christ at the last day, where your pompous titles and gorgeous trappings will not dazzle, nor your guards and torturing apparatus terrify us. And in testimony of this, take back that which you have given me.’ In saying this, he threw the flaming torch which he held in his hand on the ground, and extinguished it. Galled, and gnashing upon him with their teeth, like the persecutors of the first Christian martyrs, the cardinals ordered Mollo, together with his companion, who approved of the testimony he had borne, to instant execution. They were conveyed, accordingly, to the Campo del Flor, where they died with the most pious fortitude.” ⁴

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The eight years that elapsed between 1534 and 1542 are notable ones in the annals of Protestant Christendom. That epoch witnessed the birth of three movements, which were destined to stamp a character upon the future of Europe, and powerfully to modify the conflict then in progress in Christendom. In 1534 the Jesuits recorded their first vow in the Church of Montmartre, in Paris. In 1540 their so-

³McCrie's Italy, p 233; Ed., 1833.

⁴Ib., pp. 318-320.

ciety was regularly launched by the Papal edict. In 1542, Paul III issued the bull for the re-establishment of the Inquisition; and in 1541 Calvin returned to Geneva, to prepare that spiritual army that was to wage battle with Jesuitism backed by the Inquisition. The meeting of these dates-the contemporaneous rise of these three instrumentalities, is sufficiently striking, and is one of the many proofs which we meet in history that there is an Eye watching all that is done on earth, and that never does an agency start up to destroy the world, but there is set over against it a yet more powerful agency to convert the evil it would inflict into good.

It is one of these great epochs at which we have arrived. Jesuitism, the consummation of error - the Inquisition, the maximum of force, stand up and array themselves against a now fully developed Protestantism. In following the steps of the combatants, we shall be led in succession to the mountains of the Waldenses, to the cities of France, to the swamps of Holland, to the plains of Germany, to Italy, to Spain, to England and Scotland. Round the whole of Christendom will roll the tide of this great battle, casting down one nation into the darkness of slavery, and lifting up another into the glory of freedom, and causing the gigantic crimes of the persecutor and the despot to be forgotten in the excelling splendor of the patriot and the martyr. This is the struggle with the record of which we shall presently be occupied. Meanwhile we proceed to describe one of those few Inquisitions that remain to this day in almost the identical state in which they existed when the Holy Office was being vigorously worked. This will enable us to realize more vividly the terror of that weapon which Paul III prepared for the hands of the Jesuits, and the Divine power of that faith which enabled the confessors of the Gospel to withstand and triumph over it.

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Turn we now to the town of Nuremberg, in Bavaria. The zeal with which Duke Albert, the sovereign of Bavaria, entered into the restoration of Roman Catholicism, we have already narrated. To further the movement, he provided every one of the chief towns of his dominions with a Holy Office, and the Inquisition of Nuremberg still remains-an anomalous and horrible monument in the midst of a city where the memorials of an exquisite art, and the creations of an

unrivalled genius, meet one at every step. We shall first describe the Chamber of Torture. ⁵

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The house so called immediately adjoins the Imperial Castle, which from its lofty site looks down on the city, whose Gothic towers, sculptured fronts, and curiously ornamented gables are seen covering both banks of the Pegnitz, which rolls below. The house may have been the guard-room of the castle. It derives its name, the Torture-chamber, not from the fact that the torture was here inflicted, but because into this one chamber has been collected a complete set of the instruments of torture gleaned from the various Inquisitions that formerly existed in Bavaria. A glance suffices to show the whole dreadful apparatus by which the adherents of Rome sought to maintain her dogmas. Placed next to the door, and greeting the sight as one enters, is a collection of hideous masks. These represent creatures monstrous of shape, and malignant and fiendish of nature, It is in beholding them that we begin to perceive how subtle was the genius that devised this system of coercion, and that it took the mind as well as the body of the victim into account. In gazing on them, one feels as if he had suddenly come into polluting and debasing society, and had sunk to the same moral level with the creatures here figured before him. He suffers a conscious abatement of dignity and fortitude. The persecutor had calculated, doubtless, that the effect produced upon the mind of his victim by these dreadful apparitions, would be that he would become morally relaxed, and less able to sustain his cause. Unless of strong mind, indeed, the unfortunate prisoner, on entering such a place, and seeing himself encompassed with such unearthly and hideous shapes, must have felt as if he were the vile heretic which the persecutor styled him, and as if already the infernal den had opened its portals, and sent forth its venomous swarms to bid him welcome. Yourself accursed, with accursed beings are you henceforth to dwell—such was the silent language of these abhorred images.

We pass on into the chamber, where more dreadful sights meet our gaze. It is hung round and round with instruments of torture, so numerous that it would take a long while even to name them,

⁵The Author was conducted over the Inquisition at Nuremberg in September, 1871, and wrote the description given of it in the text immediately thereafter on the spot. Others must have seen it, but he knows of no one who has described it.

and so diverse that it would take a much longer time to describe them. We must take them in groups, for it were hopeless to think of going over them one by one, and particularising the mode in which each operated, and the ingenuity and art with which all of them have been adapted to their horrible end. There were instruments for compressing the fingers till the bones should be squeezed to splinters. There were instruments for probing below the finger-nails till an exquisite pain, like a burning fire, would run along the nerves. There were instruments for tearing out the tongue, for scooping out the eyes, for grubbing-up the ears. There were bunches of iron cords, with a spiked circle at the end of every whip, for tearing the flesh from the back till bone and sinew were laid bare. There were iron cases for the legs, which were tightened upon the limb placed in them by means of a screw, till flesh and bone were reduced to a jelly. There were cradles set full of sharp spikes, in which victims were laid and rolled from side to side, the wretched occupant being pierced at each movement of the machine with innumerable sharp points. There were iron ladles with long handles, for holding molten lead or boiling pitch, to be poured down the throat of the victim, and convert his body into a burning cauldron. There were frames with holes to admit the hands and feet, so contrived that the person put into them had his body bent into unnatural and painful positions, and the agony grew greater and greater by moments, and yet the man did not die. There were chestfuls of small but most ingeniously constructed instruments for pinching, probing, or tearing the more sensitive parts of the body, and continuing the pain up to the very verge where reason or life gives way. On the floor and walls of the apartment were other and larger instruments for the same fearful end-lacerating, mangling, and agonizing living men; but these we shall meet in other dungeons we are yet to visit.

The first impression on entering the chamber was one of bewildering horror; a confused procession of mangled, mutilated, agonising men, speechless in their great woe, the flesh peeled from off their livid sinews, the sockets where eyes had been, hollow and empty, seemed to pass before one. The most dreadful scenes which the great genius of Dante has imagined, appeared tame in comparison with the spectral groups which this chamber summoned up. The first impulse was to escape, lest images of pain, memories of tormented

men, who were made to die a hundred deaths in one, should take hold of one's mind, never again to be effaced from it.

The things we have been surveying are not the mere models of the instruments made use of in the Holy Office; they are the veritable instruments themselves. We see before us the actual implements by which hundreds and thousands of men and women, many of them saints and confessors of the Lord Jesus, were torn, and mangled, and slain. These terrible realities the men of the sixteenth century had to face and endure, or renounce the hope of the life eternal. Painful they were to flesh and blood - nay, not even endurable by flesh and blood unless sustained by the Spirit of the mighty God.

We leave the Torture-chamber to visit the Inquisition proper. We go eastward, about half a mile, keeping close to the northern wall of the city, till we come to an old tower, styled in the common parlance of Nuremberg the Max Tower. We pull the bell, the iron handle and chain of which are seen suspended beside the door-post. The cicerone appears, carrying a bunch of keys, a lantern, and some half-dozen candles. The lantern is to show us our way, and the candles are for the purpose of being lighted and stuck up at the turnings in the dark underground passages which we are about to traverse. Should mischance befall our lantern, these tapers, like beacon-lights in a narrow creek, will pilot us safely back into the day.

[429] The cicerone, selecting the largest from the bunch of keys, inserts it in the lock of the massy portal before which we stand, bolt after bolt is turned, and the door, with hoarse heavy groan as it turns on its hinge, opens slowly to us. We begin to descend. We go down one flight of steps; we go down a second flight; we descend yet a third. And now we pause a moment. The darkness is intense, for here never came the faintest glimmer of day; but a gleam thrown forward from the lantern showed us that we were arrived at the entrance of a horizontal, narrow passage. We could see, by the flickering of the light upon its sides and roof, that the corridor we were traversing was hewn out of the rock. We had gone only a few paces when we were brought up before a massy door. As far as the dim light served us, we could see the door, old, powdery with dust, and partly worm-eaten. Passing in, the corridor continued, and we went forward other three paces or so, when we found ourselves before a second door. We opened and shut it behind us as we did the first. Again we began to

thread our way: a third door stopped us. We opened and closed it in like manner. Every step was carrying us deeper into the heart of the rock, and multiplying the barriers between us and the upper world. We were shut in with the thick darkness and the awful silence. We began to realize what must have been the feelings of some unhappy disciple of the Gospel, surprised by the familiars of the Holy Office, led through the midnight streets of Nuremberg, conducted to Max Tower, led down flight after flight of stairs, and along this horizontal shaft in the rock, and at every few paces a massy door, with its locks and bolts, closing behind him! He must have felt how utterly he was beyond the reach of human pity and human aid. No cry, however piercing, could reach the ear of man through these roofs of rock. He was entirely in the power of those who had brought him thither.

At last we came to a side-door in the narrow passage. We halted, applied the key, and the door, with its ancient mould, creaking harshly as if moving on a hinge long disused, opened to let us in. We found ourselves in a rather roomy chamber, it might be about twelve feet square. This was the Chamber of Question. Along one side of the apartment ran a low platform. There sat of old the inquisitors, three in number—the first a divine, the second a casuist, and the third a civilian. The only occupant of that platform was the crucifix, or image of the Savior on the cross, which still remained. The six candles that usually burned before the “holy Fathers” were, of course, extinguished, but our lantern supplied their place, and showed us the grim furnishings of the apartment. In the middle was the horizontal rack or bed of torture, on which the victim was stretched till bone started from bone, and his dislocated frame became the seat of agony, which was suspended only when it had reached a pitch that threatened death.

Leaning against the wall of the chamber was the upright rack, which is simpler, but as an instrument of torture not less effectual, than the horizontal one. There was the iron chain which wound over a pulley, and hauled up the victim to the vaulted roof; and there were the two great stone weights which, tied to his feet, and the iron cord let go, brought him down with a jerk that dislocated his limbs,

while the spiky rollers, which he grazed in his descent, cut into and excoriated his back, leaving his body a bloody, dislocated mass.⁶

Here, too, was the cradle of which we have made mention above, amply garnished within with cruel knobs, on which the sufferer, tied hand and foot, was thrown at every movement of the machine, to be bruised all over, and brought forth discoloured, swollen, bleeding, but still living.

All round, ready to hand, were hung the minor instruments of torture. There were screws and thumbkins for the fingers, spiked collars for the neck, iron boots for the legs, gags for the mouth, cloths to cover the face, and permit the slow percolation of water, drop by drop, down the throat of the person undergoing this form of torture. There were rollers set round with spikes, for bruising the arms and back; there were iron scourges, pincers, and tongs for tearing out the tongue, slitting the nose and ears, and otherwise disfiguring and mangling the body till it was horrible and horrifying to look upon it. There were other things of which an expert only could tell the name and the use. Had these instruments a tongue, and could the history of this chamber be written, how awful the tale!

We shall suppose that all this has been gone through; that the confessor has been stretched on the bed of torture; has been gashed, broken, mangled, and yet, by power given him from above, has not denied his Savior: he has been “tortured not accepting deliverance:” what further punishment has the Holy Office in reserve for those from whom its torments have failed to extort a recantation? These dreadful dungeons furnish us with the means of answering this question.

[430] We return to the narrow passage, and go forward a little way. Every few paces there comes a door, originally strong and massy, and garnished with great iron knobs but now old and mouldy, and creaking when opened with a noise painfully loud in the deep stillness. The windings are numerous, but at every turning of the passage a lighted candle is placed, lest peradventure the way should be missed, and the road back to the living world be lost for ever. A few steps are taken downwards, very cautiously, for a lantern can barely show

⁶The Author has described with greater minuteness the horizontal and upright racks in his account of the dungeons underneath the Townhouse of Nuremberg. (See ante, book 9, chapter 5, p. 501.)

the ground. Here there is a vaulted chamber, entirely dug out of the living rock, except the roof, which is formed of hewn stone. It contains an iron image of the Virgin; and on the opposite wall, suspended by an iron hook, is a lamp, which when lighted shows the goodly proportions of "Our Lady." On the instant of touching a spring the image flings open its arms, which resemble the doors of a cupboard, and which are seen to be stuck full on the inside with poignards, each about a foot in length. Some of these knives are so placed as to enter the eyes of those whom the image enfolded in its embrace, others are set so as to penetrate the ears and brain, others to pierce the breast, and others again to gore the abdomen.

The person who had passed through the terrible ordeal of the Question-chamber, but had made no recantation, would be led along the tortuous passage by which we had come, and ushered into this vault, where the first object that would greet his eye, the pale light of the lamp falling on it, would be the iron Virgin. He would be bidden to stand right in front of the image. The spring would be touched by the executioner - the Virgin would fling open her arms, and the wretched victim would straightway be forced within them. Another spring was then touched - the Virgin closed upon her victim; a strong wooden beam, fastened at one end to the wall by a movable joint, the other placed against the doors of the iron image, was worked by a screw, and as the beam was pushed out, the spiky arms of the Virgin slowly but irresistibly closed upon the man, cruelly goring him.

When the dreadful business was ended, it needed not that the executioner should put himself to the trouble of making the Virgin unclasp the mangled carcase of her victim; provision had been made for its quick and secret disposal. At the touching of a third spring, the floor of the image would slide aside, and the body of the victim drop down the mouth of a perpendicular shaft in the rock. We look down this pit, and can see, at a great depth, the shimmer of water. A canal had been made to flow underneath the vault where stood the iron Virgin, and when she had done her work upon those who were delivered over to her tender mercies, she let them fall, with quick descent and sullen plunge, into the canal underneath, where they were floated to the Pegnitz, and from the Pegnitz to the Rhine, and

by the Rhine to the ocean, there to sleep beside the dust of Huss and Jerome.

Book 16: Protestantism in the Waldensian Valleys

Chapter 1: Antiquity and First Persecutions of the Waldenses

Their Unique Position in Christendom-Their Twofold Testimony-They Witness against Rome and for Protestantism-Hated by Rome-The Cottian Alps-Albigenses and Waldenses-The Waldensian Territory Proper-Papal Testimony to the Flourishing State of their Church in the Fourteenth Century-Early Bulls against them-Tragedy of Christmas, 1400-Constancy of the Waldenses-Crusade of Pope Innocent VIII- His Bull of 1487—The Army Assembles-Two Frightful Tempests approach the Valleys

Picture: View of an Old Prison on the Pegnitz Nuremberg.

Picture: View in the Valley of Roumeyer Dauphine.

The Waldenses stand apart and alone in the Christian world. Their place on the surface of Europe is unique; their position in history is not less unique; and the end appointed them to fulfill is one which has been assigned to them alone, no other people being permitted to share it with them.

[431] The Waldenses bear a twofold testimony. Like the snow-clad peaks amid which their dwelling is placed, which look down upon the plains of Italy on the one side, and the provinces of France on the other, this people stand equally related to primitive ages and modern times, and give by no means equivocal testimony respecting both Rome and the Reformation. If they are old, then Rome is new; if they are pure, then Rome is corrupt; and if they have retained the faith of the apostles, it follows incontestably that Rome has departed from it. That the Waldensian faith and worship existed many centuries before Protestantism arose is undeniable; the proofs and monuments of this fact lie scattered over all the histories and all the lands of mediæval Europe; but the antiquity of the Waldenses is the antiquity of Protestantism. The Church of the Reformation was in the loins of the Waldensian Church ages before the birth of Luther; her first cradle was placed amid those terrors and sublimities, those

ice-clad peaks and great bulwarks of rock. In their dispersions over so many lands-over France, the Low Countries, Germany, Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, England, Calabria, Naples-the Waldenses sowed the seeds of that great spiritual revival which, beginning in the days of Wicliffe, and advancing in the times of Luther and Calvin, awaits its full consummation in the ages to come.

In the place which the Church of the Alps has held, and the office she has discharged, we see the reason of that peculiar and bitter hostility which Rome has ever borne this holy and venerable community. It was natural that Rome should wish to efface so conclusive a proof of her apostacy, and silence a witness whose testimony so emphatically corroborates the position of Protestantism. The great bulwark of the Reformed Church is the Word of God; but next to this is the pre-existence of a community spread throughout Western Christendom, with doctrines and worship substantially one with those of the Reformation.

The Persecutions of this remarkable people form one of the most heroic pages of the Church's history. These persecutions, protracted through many centuries, were endured with a patience, a constancy, a bravery honorable to the Gospel, as well as to those simple people, whom the Gospel converted into heroes and martyrs. Their resplendent virtues illumined the darkness of their age; and we turn with no little relief from a Christendom sunk in barbarism and superstition to this remnant of an ancient people, who here in their mountain-engirdled territory practiced the simplicity, the piety, and the heroism of a better age. It is mainly those persecutions of the Waldenses which connect themselves with the Reformation, and which were, in fact, part of the mighty effort made by Rome to extinguish Protestantism, on which we shall dwell. But we must introduce ourselves to the great tragedy by a brief notice of the attacks which led up to it.

That part of the great Alpine chain that extends between Turin on the east and Grenoble on the west is known as the Cottian Alps. This is the dwelling-place of the Waldenses, the land of ancient Protestantism. On the west the mountains slope towards the plains of France, and on the east they run down to those of Piedmont. That line of glittering summits, conspicuous among which is the lofty snow-clad peak of Monte Viso on the west, and the craggy escarpments

of Genevre on the east, forms the boundary between the Albigenses and the Waldenses, the two bodies of these early witnesses. On the western slope were the dwellings of the former people, and on the eastern those of the latter. Not entirely so, however, for the Waldenses, crossing the summits, had taken possession of the more elevated portion of the western declivities, and scarcely was there a valley in which their villages and sanctuaries were not to be found. But in the lower valleys, and more particularly in the vast and fertile plains of Dauphine and Provence, spread out at the foot of the Alps, the inhabitants were mainly of cis-Alpine or Gallic extraction, and are known in history as the Albigenses. How flourishing they were, how numerous and opulent their towns, how rich their corn-fields and vineyards, and how polished the manners and cultured the genius of the people, we have already said. We have also described the terrible expiation Innocent III exacted of them for their attachment to a purer Christianity than that of Rome. He launched his bull; he sent forth his inquisitors; and soon the fertility and beauty of the region were swept away; city and sanctuary sank in ruins; and the plains so recently covered with smiling fields were converted into a desert. The work of destruction had been done with tolerable completeness on the west of the Alps; and after a short pause it was commenced on the east, it being resolved to pursue these confessors of a pure faith across the mountains, and attack them in those grand valleys which open into Italy, where they lay entrenched, as in a fastness formed of massy chestnut forests and mighty pinnacles of rock.

[432] We place ourselves at the foot of the eastern declivity, about thirty miles to the west of Turin. Behind us is the vast sweep of the plain of Piedmont. Above us in front tower the Alps, here forming a crescent of grand mountains, extending from the escarped summit that leans over Pinerolo on the right, to the pyramidal peak of Monte Viso, which cleaves the ebon like a horn of silver, and marks the furthest limit of the Waldensian territory on the left. In the bosom of that mountain crescent, shaded by its chestnut forests, and encircled by its glittering peaks, are hung the famous valleys of that people whose martyrdoms we are now to narrate.

In the center of the picture, right before us, rises the pillar-like Castelluzzo; behind it is the towering mass of the Vandalin; and in front, as if to bar the way against the entrance of any hostile force

into this sacred territory, is drawn the long, low hill of Bricherasio, feathery with woods, bristling with great rocks, and leaving open, between its rugged mass and the spurs of Monte Friolante on the west, only a narrow avenue, shaded by walnut and acacia trees, which leads up to the point where the valleys, spreading out fan-like, bury themselves in the mountains that open their stony arms to receive them. Historians have enumerated some thirty persecutions enacted on this little spot.

One of the earliest dates in the martyr-history of this people is 1332, or thereabouts, for the time is not distinctly marked. The reigning Pope was John XXII. Desirous of resuming the work of Innocent III, he ordered the inquisitors to repair to the Valleys of Lucerne and Perosa, and execute the laws of the Vatican against the heretics that peopled them. What success attended the expedition is not known, and we instance it chiefly on this account, that the bull commanding it bears undesigned testimony to the then flourishing condition of the Waldensian Church, inasmuch as it complains that synods, which the Pope calls chapters, were used to assemble in the Valley of Angrogna, attended by 500 delegates.¹ This was before Wicliffe had begun his career in England.

After this date scarcely was there a Pope who did not bear unintentional testimony to their great numbers and wide diffusion. In 1352 we find Pope Clement VI charging the Bishop of Embrun, with whom he associates a Franciscan friar and inquisitor, to essay the purification of those parts adjoining his diocese which were known to be infected with heresy. The territorial lords and city

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¹Compare Antoine Monastier, *History of the Vaudois Church*, p. 121 (Lond., 1848), with Alexis Muston, *Israel of the Alps* p. 8 (Lond., 1852).

out and punish those of their subjects who had strayed from the faith. Clement referred doubtless to the Vaudois colonies, which are known to have existed in that age at Naples. The fact that the heresy of the Waldensian mountains extended to the plains at their feet, is attested by the letter of the Pope to Joanna, wife of the King of Naples, who owned lands in the Marquisate ² of Saluzzo, near the Valleys, urging her to purge her territory of the heretics that lived in it.

[434] The zeal of the Pope, however, was but indifferently seconded by that of the secular lords. The men they were enjoined to exterminate were the most industrious and peaceable of their subjects; and willing as they no doubt were to oblige the Pope, they were naturally averse to incur so great a loss as would be caused by the destruction of the flower of their populations. Besides, the princes of that age were often at war among themselves, and had not much leisure or inclination to make war on the Pope's behalf. Therefore the Papal thunder sometimes rolled harmlessly over the Valleys, and the mountain-home of these confessors was wonderfully shielded till very nearly the era of the Reformation, We find Gregory XI, in 1373, writing to Charles V of France, to complain that his officers thwarted his inquisitors in Dauphine; that the Papal judges were not permitted to institute proceedings against the suspected without the consent of the civil judge; and that the disrespect to the spiritual tribunal was sometimes carried so far as to release condemned heretics from prison. ³ Notwithstanding this leniency-so culpable in the eyes of Rome- on the part of princes and magistrates, the inquisitors were able to make not a few victims. These acts of violence provoked reprisals at times on the part of the Waldenses. On one occasion (1375) the Popish city of Susa was attacked, the Dominican convent forced, and the inquisitor put to death. Other Dominicans were called to expiate their rigor against the Vaudois with the penalty of their lives. An obnoxious inquisitor of Turin is said to have been slain on the highway near Bricherasio. ⁴

There came evil days to the Popes themselves. First, they were chased to Avignon; next, the yet greater calamity of the "schism"

²Monastier, p. 123.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

befell them; but their own afflictions had not the effect of softening their hearts towards the confessors of the Alps. During the clouded era of their “captivity,” and the tempestuous days of the schism, they pursued with the same inflexible rigor their policy of extermination. They were ever and anon fulminating their persecuting edicts, and their inquisitors were scouring the Valleys in pursuit of victims. An inquisitor of the name of Borelli had 150 Vaudois men, besides a great number of women, girls, and even young children, brought to Grenoble and burned alive.⁵

The closing days of the year 1400 witnessed a terrible tragedy, the memory of which has not been obliterated by the many greater which have followed it. The scene of this catastrophe was the Valley of Pragelas, one of the higher reaches of Perosa, which opens near Pinerolo, and is watered by the Clusone. It was the Christmas of 1400, and the inhabitants dreaded no attack, believing themselves sufficiently protected by the snows which then lay deep on their mountains. They were destined to experience the bitter fact that the rigors of the season had not quenched the fire of their persecutor’s malice. The man named above, Borelli, at the head of an armed troop, broke suddenly into Pragelas, meditating the entire extinction of its population. The miserable inhabitants fled in haste to the mountains, carrying on their shoulders their old men, their sick, and their infants, knowing what fate awaited them should they leave them behind. In their flight a great many were overtaken and slain. Nightfall brought them deliverance from the pursuit, but no deliverance from horrors not less dreadful. The main body of the fugitives wandered in the direction of Macel, in the storm-swept and now ice-clad valley of San Martino, where they encamped on a summit which has ever since, in memory of the event, borne the name of the Alberge or Refuge. Without shelter, without food, the frozen snow around them, the winter’s sky overhead, their sufferings were inexpressibly great. When morning broke what a heart-rending spectacle did day disclose! Of the miserable group the hands and feet of many were frozen; while others were stretched out on the snow, stiffened corpses. Fifty young children, some say eighty, were

⁵Histoire Generale des Eglises Evangeliques des Vallees de Piedmont, ou Vaudoises. Par Jean Leger. Part 2, pp. 6,7. Leyden, 1669. Monastier, pp. 123,124.

found dead with cold, some lying on the bare ice, others locked in the frozen arms of their mothers, who had perished on that dreadful night along with their babes. ⁶ In the Valley of Pragelas, to this day, sire recites to son the tale of that Christmas tragedy.

The century, the opening of which had been so fearfully marked, passed on amid continuous executions of the Waldenses. In the absence of such catastrophes as that of Christmas, 1400, individual Vaudois were kidnapped by the inquisitors, ever on the track for them, or waylaid, whenever they ventured down into the plain of Piedmont, were carried to Turin and other towns, and burned alive. But Rome saw that she was making no progress in the extermination of a heresy which had found a seat amid these hills, as firm as it was ancient. The numbers of the Waldenses were not thinned; their constancy was not shaken, they still refused to enter the Roman Church, and they met all the edicts and inquisitors, all the torturings and burnings of their great persecutor with a resistance as unyielding as that which their rocks offer to the tempests of hail and snow, which the whirlwinds of winter hurl against them.

It was the year 1487. A great blow was meditated. The process of purging the Valleys languished. Pope Innocent VIII, who then filled the Papal chair, remembered how his renowned namesake, Innocent III, by an act of summary vengeance, had swept the Albigensian heresy from the south of France. Imitating the rigor of his predecessor, he would purge the Valleys as effectually and as speedily as Innocent III had done the plains of Dauphine and Provence.

[435] The first step of the Pope was to issue a bull, denouncing as heretical those whom he delivered over to slaughter. This bull, after the manner of all such documents, was expressed in terms as sanctimonious as its spirit was inexorably cruel. It brings no charge against these men, as lawless, idle, dishonest, or disorderly; their fault was that they did not worship as Innocent worshipped, and that they practiced a “simulated sanctity,” which had the effect of seducing the sheep of the true fold, therefore he orders “that

⁶The bull is given in full in Leger, who also says that he had made a faithful copy of it, and lodged it with other documents in the University Library of Cambridge. [Hist. Gen. des Eglises Vaud., part 2, pp. 7-15.]

malicious and abominable sect of malignants,” if they “refuse to abjure, to be crushed like venomous snakes.”⁷

To carry out his bull, Innocent VIII appointed Albert Cataneo, Archdeacon of Cremona, his legate, devolving upon him the chief conduct of the enterprise. He fortified him, moreover, with Papal missives to all princes, dukes, and powers within whose dominions any Vaudois were to be found. The Pope especially accredited him to Charles VIII of France, and Charles II of Savoy, commanding them to support him with the whole power of their arms. The bull invited all Catholics to take up the cross against the heretics; and to stimulate them in this pious work, it “absolved from all ecclesiastical pains and penalties, general and particular; it released all who joined the crusade from any oaths they might have taken; it legitimatised their title to any property they might have illegally acquired, and promised remission of all their sins to such as should kill any heretic. It annulled all contracts made in favor of Vaudois, ordered their domestics to abandon them, forbade all persons to give them any aid whatever, and empowered all persons to take possession of their property.”

These were powerful incentives, plenary pardon and unrestrained licence. They were hardly needed to awaken the zeal of the neighboring populations, always too ready to show their devotion to Rome by spilling the blood and harrying the lands and goods of the Waldenses. The King of France and the Duke of Savoy lent a willing ear to the summons from the Vatican. They made haste to unfurl their banners, and enlist soldiers in this holy cause, and soon a numerous army was on its march to sweep from the mountains where they had dwelt from immemorial time, these confessors of the Gospel faith pure and undefiled. In the train of this armed host came a motley crowd of volunteers, “vagabond adventurers,” says Muston, “ambitious fanatics, reckless pillagers, merciless assassins, assembled from all parts of Italy,”⁸ a horde of brigands in short, the worthy tools of the man whose bloody work they were assembled to do.

Before all these arrangements were finished, it was the June of 1488. The Pope’s bull was talked of in all countries; and the din of

⁷Muston, *Israel of the Alps*, p. 10.

⁸Leger, *livr. 2*, p. 7.

preparation rung far and near, for it was not only on the Waldensian mountains, but on the Waldensian race, wherever dispersed, in Germany, in Calabria, and in other countries, that this terrible blow was to fall. ⁹ All kings were invited to gird on the sword, and come to the help of the Church in the execution of so total and complete an extermination of her enemies as should never need to be repeated. Wherever a Vaudois foot trod, the soil was polluted, and had to be cleansed; wherever a Vaudois breathed, the air was tainted, and must be purified; wherever Vaudois psalm or prayer ascended, there was the infection of heresy; and around the spot a cordon must be drawn to protect the spiritual health of the district. The Pope's bull was thus very universal in its application, and almost the only people left ignorant of the commotion it had excited, and the bustle of preparation it had called forth, were those poor men on whom this terrible tempest was about to burst.

The joint army numbered about 18,000 regular soldiers. This force was swelled by the thousands of ruffians, already mentioned, drawn together by the spiritual and temporal rewards to be earned in this work of combined piety and pillage. ¹⁰ The Piedmontese division of this host directed their course towards the "Valleys" proper, on the Italian side of the Alps. The French division, marching from the north, advanced to attack the inhabitants of the Dauphinese Alps, where the Albigensian heresy, recovering somewhat its terrible excision by Innocent III, had begun again to take root. Two storms, from opposite points, or rather from all points, were approaching those mighty mountains, the sanctuary and citadel of the primitive faith. That lamp is about to be extinguished at last, which has burned here during so many ages, and survived so many tempests. The mailed band of the Pope is uplifted, and we wait to see the blow fall.

⁹Ibid., livr. 2., p. 26.

¹⁰Ibid., livr. 2., p. 26.

Chapter 2: Cataneo's Expedition (1488) Against the Dauphinese and Piedmontese Confessors [436]

The Confessors of the Dauphinese Alps-Attacked-Flee to Mont Pelvoux-Retreat into a Cave-Are Suffocated—French Crusaders Cross the Alps-Enter the Valley of Pragelas-Piedmontese Army Advance against La Torre-Deputation of Waldenstart Patriarchs—The Valley of Lucerna-Villaro-Bobbio-Cataneo's Plan of Campaign- His Soldiers Cross the Col Julten-Grandeurs of the Pass- Valley of Prali- Defeat of Cataneo's Expedition

Picture: An Early Papal Crusade against the Waldenses.

We see at this moment two armies on the march to attack the Christians inhabiting the Cottian and Dauphinese Alps. The sword now unsheathed is to be returned to its scabbard only when there breathes no longer in these mountains a single confessor of the faith condemned in the bull of Innocent VIII. The plan of the campaign was to attack at the same time on two opposite points of the great mountain-chain; and advancing, the one army from the south-east, and the other from the north-west, to meet in the Valley of Angrogna, the center of the territory, and there strike the final blow. Let us attend first to the French division of this host, that which is advancing from the north against the Alps of Dauphine.

This portion of the crusaders was led by a daring and cruel man, skilled in such adventures, the Lord of La Palu. He ascended the mountains with his fanatics, and entered the Vale of Loyse, a deep gorge overhung by towering mountains. The inhabitants, seeing an armed force, twenty times their own number, enter their valley, despaired of being able to resist them, and prepared for flight. They placed their old people and children in rustic carts, together with their domestic utensils, and such store of victuals as the urgency of the occasion permitted them to collect, and driving their herds before them, they began to climb the rugged slopes of Mount Pelvoux, which rises some six thousand feet over the level of the valley. They

sang canticles as they climbed the steeps, which served at once to smooth their rugged path, and to dispel their terrors. Not a few were overtaken and slaughtered, and theirs was perhaps the happier lot.

About halfway up there is an immense cavern, called Aigue-Froid, from the cold springs that gush out from its rocky walls. In front of the cavern is a platform of rock, where the spectator sees beneath him only fearful precipices, which must be clambered over before one can reach the entrance of the grotto. The roof of the cave forms a magnificent arch, which gradually subsides and contracts into a narrow passage, or throat, and then widens once more, and forms a roomy hall of irregular form.

Into this grotto, as into an impregnable castle, did the Vaudois enter. Their women, infants, and old men they placed in the inner hall; their cattle and sheep they distributed along the lateral cavities of the grotto. The able-bodied men posted themselves at the entrance. Having barricaded with huge stones both the doorway of the cave and the path that led to it, they deemed themselves secure. They had provisions to last, Cataneo says in his *Memoirs*, “two years;” and it would cost them little effort to hurl headlong down the precipices, any one who should attempt to scale them in order to reach the entrance of the cavern.

But a device of their pursuer rendered all these precautions and defences vain. La Palu ascended the mountain on the other side, and approaching the cave from above, let down his soldiers by ropes from the precipice that overhangs the entrance of the grotto. The platform in front was thus secured by his soldiers. The Vaudois might have cut the ropes, and dispatched their foes as they were being lowered one by one, but the boldness of the maneuver would seem to have paralyzed them. They retreated into the cavern to find in it their grave. La Palu saw the danger of permitting his men to follow them into the depths of their hiding-place. He adopted the easier and safer method of piling up at its entrance all the wood he could collect and setting fire to it. A huge volume of black smoke began to roll into the cave, leaving to the unhappy inmates the miserable alternative of rushing out and falling by the sword that waited for them, or of remaining in the interior to be stifled by the murky vapor. ¹ Some

¹Monastier, p. 128.

~~rushed out and were massacred; but the greater part remained till~~
~~death slowly approached them by suffocation.~~ ^{Confessors} ^{dccxciii} “When the cavern was afterwards examined,” says Muston, “there were found in it 400 infants, suffocated in their cradles, or in the arms of their dead mothers. Altogether there perished in this cavern more than 3,000 Vaudois, including the entire population of Val Loyse. Cataneo distributed the property of these unfortunates among the vagabonds who accompanied him, and never again did the Vaudois Church raise its head in these bloodstained valleys.” ²

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The terrible stroke that fell on the Vale of Loyse was the shielding of the neighboring valleys of Argentièrè and Fraissinièrè. Their inhabitants had been destined to destruction also, but the fate of their co-religionists taught them that their only chance of safety lay in resistance. Accordingly barricading the passes of their valleys, they showed such a front to the foe when he advanced, that he deemed it prudent to turn away and leave them in peace. This devastating tempest now swept along to discharge its violence on other valleys. “One would have thought,” to use the words of Muston, “that the plague had passed along the track over which its march lay: it was only the inquisitors.”

A detachment of the French army struck across the Alps in a southeast direction, holding their course toward the Waldensian Valleys, there to unite with the main body of the crusaders under Cataneo. They slaughtered, pillaged, and burned as they went onward, and at last arrived with dripping swords in the Valley of Pragelas.

The Valley of Pragelas, where we now see these assassins, sweeps along, from almost the summit of the Alps, to the south, watered by the rivers Chinone and Dora, and opens on the great plain of Piedmont, having Pinerolo on the one side and Susa on the other. It was then and long after under the dominion of France. “Prior to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes,” says Muston, “the Vaudois of these valleys [that is, Pragelas, and the lateral vales branching out from it] possessed eleven parishes, eighteen churches, and sixty-four centers of religious assembling, where worship was celebrated morning and evening, in as many hamlets. It was in Laus, in Pragelas, that was held the famous synod where, 200 years before the Protestant

²Muston, p. 20.

Reformation, 140 Protestant pastors assembled, each accompanied by two or three lay deputies; and it was from the Val di Pragelas that the Gospel of God made its way into France prior to the fifteenth century.”³

This was the Valley of Pragelas which had been the scene of the terrible tragedy of Christmas, 1400. Again terror, mourning, and death were carried into it. The peaceful inhabitants, who were expecting no such invasion, were busy reaping their harvests, when this horde of assassins burst upon them. In the first panic they abandoned their dwellings and fled. Many were overtaken and slain; hamlets and whole villages were given to the flames; nor could the caves in which multitudes sought refuge afford any protection. The horrible barbarity of the Val Loyse was repeated in the Valley of Pragelas. Combustible materials were piled up and fires kindled at the mouths of these hiding-places; and when extinguished, all was silent within. Folded together in one motionless heap lay mother and babe, patriarch and stripling; while the fatal smoke, which had cast them into that deep sleep, was eddying along the roof, and slowly making its exit into the clear sunlit summer sky. But the course of this destruction was stayed. After the first surprise the inhabitants took heart, and turning upon their murderers drove them from their valley, exacting a heavy penalty in the pursuit for the ravages they had committed in it.

We now turn to the Piedmontese portion of this army. It was led by the Papal legate, Cataneo, in person. It was destined to operate against those valleys in Piedmont which were the most ancient seat of these religionists, and were deemed the stronghold of the Vaudois heresy. Cataneo repaired to Pinerolo, which adjoins the frontier of the doomed territory. Thence he dispatched a band of preaching monks to convert the men of the Valleys. These missionaries returned without having, so far as appears, made a single convert. The legate now put his soldiers in motion. Traversing the glorious plain, the Clusone gleaming out through rich corn-fields and vineyards on their left, and the mighty rampart of the hills, with their chestnut forests, their pasturages, and snows, rising grandly on their right, and turning round the shoulder of the copse-clad Bricherasio, this army,

³Ibid., part 2, p. 234.

~~with another army of pillagers and cutthroats in its rear, advanced~~
up the long avenue that leads to La Torre, the capital of the Valleys,
and sat down before it. They had come against a simple, unarmed
people, who knew to tend their vines, and lead their herds to pasture,
but were ignorant of the art of war. It seemed as if the last hour of
the Waldensian race had struck.

Seeing this mighty host before their Valleys, the Waldenses sent
two of their patriarchs to request an interview with Cataneo, and
turn, if possible, his heart to peace. John Campo and John Besiderio
were dispatched on this embassy. "Do not condemn us without
hearing us," said they, "for we are Christians and faithful subjects;
and our Barbes are prepared to prove, in public or in private, that our
doctrines are conformable to the Word of God...Our hope in God is
greater than our desire to please men; beware how you draw down
upon yourselves this anger by persecuting us; for remember that, if
God so wills it, all the forces you have assembled against us will
nothing avail."

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These were weighty words, and they were meekly spoken, but
as to changing Cataneo's purpose, or softening the hearts of the
ruffian-host which he led, they might as well have been addressed
to the rocks which rose around the speakers. Nevertheless, they fell
not to the ground.

Cataneo, believing that the Vaudois herdsmen would not stand
an hour before his men-at-arms, and desirous of striking a finishing
blow, divided his army into a number of attacking parties, which
were to begin the battle on various points at the same time. The
folly of extending his line so as to embrace the whole territory led
to Cataneo's destruction; but his strategy was rewarded with a few
small successes at first.

One troop was stationed at the entrance of the Val Lucerna; we
shall follow its march till it disappears on the mountains it hopes
to conquer, and then we shall return and narrate the more decisive
operations of the campaign under Cataneo in the Val Angrogna.

The first step of the invaders was to occupy the town of La Torre,
situated on the angle formed by the junction of the Val Lucerna
and the Val Angrogna, the silver Pelice at its feet and the shadow
of the Castelluzzo covering it. The soldiers were probably spared
the necessity or denied the pleasure of slaughter, the inhabitants

having fled to the mountains. The valley beyond La Torre is too open to admit of being defended, and the troop advanced along it unopposed. Than this theater of war nothing in ordinary times is more peaceful, nothing more grand. A carpet of rich meadows clothes it from side to side; fruitful trees fleck it with their shadows; the Pelice waters it; and on either hand is a wall of mountains, whose sides display successive zones of festooned vines, golden grain, dark chestnut forests, and rich pasturages. Over these are hung stupendous battlements of rock; and above all, towering high in air, are the everlasting peaks in their robes of ice and snow. But the sublimities of nature were nothing to men whose thoughts were only of blood.

Pursuing their march up the valley, the soldiers next came to Villaro. It is situated about midway between the entrance and head of Lucerna, on a ledge of turf in the side of the great mountains, raised some 200 feet above the Pelice, which flows past at about a quarter-mile's distance. The troop had little difficulty in taking possession. Most of the inhabitants, warned of the approach of danger, had fled to the Alps. What Cataneo's troop inflicted on those who had been unable to make their escape, no history records. The half of Lucerna, with the towns of La Torre and Villaro and their hamlets, was in the occupation of Cataneo's soldiers, their march so far had been a victorious one, though certainly not a glorious one, such victories as they had gained being only over unarmed peasants and bed-ridden women.

Resuming their march the troop came next to Bobbio. The name of Bobbio is not unknown in classic story. It nestles at the base of gigantic cliffs, where the lofty summit of the Col la Croix points the way to France, and overhangs a path which apostolic feet may have trodden. The Pelice is seen forcing its way through the dark gorges of the mountains in a thundering torrent, and meandering in a flood of silver along the valley.

At this point the grandeur of the Val Lucerna attains its height. Let us pause to survey the scene that must here have met the eyes of Cataneo's soldiers, and which, one would suppose, might have turned them from their cruel purpose. Immediately behind Bobbio shoots up the "Barion," symmetrical as Egyptian obelisk, but far taller and massier. Its summit rises 3,000 feet above the roofs of

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the little town. Compared with this majestic monolith the proudest monument of Europe's proudest capital is a mere toy. Yet even the Barion is but an item in this assemblage of glories. Overtopping it behind, and sweeping round the extremity of the valley, is a glorious amphitheatre of crags and precipices, enclosed by a background of great mountains, some rounded like domes, others sharp as needles; and rising out of this sea of hills, are the grander and loftier forms of the Alp des Rousses and the Col de Malaure, which guard the gloomy pass that winds its way through splintered rocks and under overhanging precipices, till it opens into the valleys of the French Protestants, and lands the traveller on the plains of Dauphine. In this unrivalled amphitheatre sits Bobbio, in summer buried in blossoms and fruit, and in winter wrapped in the shadows of its great mountains, and the mists of their tempests. What a contrast between the still repose and grand sublimity of nature and the dreadful errand on which the men now pressing forward to the little town are bent! To them, nature speaks in vain; they are engrossed with but one thought.

The capture of Bobbio-an easy task-put the soldiers in possession of the entire Valley of Lucerna: its inhabitants had been chased to the Alps, or their blood mingled with the waters of their own Pelice. Other and remoter expeditions were now projected. Their plan was to traverse the Col Julten, sweep down on the Valley of Prali, which lies on the north of it, chastise its inhabitants, pass on to the Valleys of San Martino and Perosa, and pursuing the circuit of the Valleys, and clearing the ground as they went onward of its inveterate heresy, at least of its heretics, join the main body of crusaders, who, they expected, would by this time have finished their work in the Valley of Angrogna, and unitedly celebrate their victory. They would then be able to say that they had gone the round of the Waldensian territory, and had at last effected the long-meditated work, so often attempted, but hitherto in vain, of the utter extirpation of its heresy. But the war was destined to have a very different termination.

The expedition across the Col Julten was immediately commenced. A corps of 700 men was detached from the army in Lucerna for this service. ⁴ The ascent of the mountain opens immediately

⁴Monastier, p. 129.

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on the north side of Bobbio. We see the soldiers toiling upwards on the track, which is a mere footpath formed by the herdsmen. At every short distance they pass the thick-planted chalets and hamlets sweetly embowered amid man fling vines, or the branches of the apple and cherry tree, or the goodlier chestnut, but the inhabitants have fled. They have now reached a great height on the mountain-side. Beneath is Bobbio, a speck of brown. There is the Valley of Lucerna, a ribbon of green, with a thread of silver woven into it, and lying along amid masses of mighty rocks. There, across Lucerna, are the great mountains that enclose the Valley of Rora, standing up in the silent sky; on the right are the spiky crags that bristle along the Pass of Mirabouc, that leads to France, and yonder in the east is a glimpse of the far-extending plains of Piedmont.

But the summit is yet a long way off, and the soldiers of the Papal legate, bearing their weapons, to be employed, not in venturesome battle, but in cowardly massacre, toil up the ascent. As they gain on the; mountain, they look down on pinnacles which half an hour before had looked down on them. Other heights, tall as the former, still rise above them; they climb to these airy spires, which in their turn sink beneath their feet. This process they repeat; again and again, and at last they come out upon the downs that clothe the shoulders of the mountain. Now it is that the scene around them becomes one of stupendous and inexpressible grandeur. Away to the east, now fully under the eye, is the plain of Piedmont, green as garden, and level as the ocean. At their feet yawn gorges and abysses, while spiky pinnacles peer up from below as if to buttress the mountain. The horizon is filled with Alps, conspicuous among which, in the east, is the Col la Verchera, whose snow-clad summit draws the eye to the more than classic valley over which it towers, where the Barbes in ancient days were wont to assemble in synod, and whence their missionaries went forth, at the peril of life, to distribute the Scriptures and sow the seed of the Kingdom. It was not unmarked, doubtless, by this corps, forming, as they meant it should do, the terminating point of their expedition in the Val di Angrogna. On the west, the crowning glory of the scene was Monte Viso, standing up in bold relief in the ebon vault, in a robe of silver. But in vain had Nature spread out her magnificence before men who had neither eyes to see nor hearts to feel her glory.

~~Climbing on their hands and knees the steep grassy slope in~~ which the pass terminates, they looked down from the summit on the Valley of Prali, at that moment a scene of peace. Its great snow-clad hills, conspicuous among which is the Col d'Abries, kept guard around it. Down their sides rolled foaming torrents, which, uniting in the valley, flowed along in a full and rapid river. Over the bosom of the plain were scattered numerous hamlets. The peasants were at work in the meadows and corn-fields; their children were at play; their herds were browsing in their pastures. Suddenly on the mountains above had gathered this flock of vultures that with greedy eyes were looking down upon their prey. A few hours, and these dwellings would be in flames, their inmates slaughtered, and their herds and goods carried off as booty. Impatient to begin their work, these 700 assassins rushed down on the plain.

The troop had reckoned that, no tidings of their approach having reached this secluded valley, they would fall upon its unarmed peasants as falls the avalanche, and crush them. But it was not to be so. Instead of fleeing, panic-struck, as the invaders expected, the men of Prali hastily assembled, and stood to their defense. Battle was joined at the hamlet of Pommiers. The weapons of the Vaudois were rude, but their trust in God, and their indignation at the cowardly and bloody assault, gave them strength and courage. The Piedmontese soldiers, wearied with the rugged, slippery tracks they had traversed, fell beneath the blows of their opponents. Every man of them was cut down with the exception of one ensign. ⁵ Of all the 700, he alone survived. During the carnage, he made his escape, and ascending the banks of a mountain torrent, he crept into a cavity which the summer heats had formed in a mass of snow. There he remained hid for some days; at last, cold and hunger drove him forth to cast himself upon the mercy of the men of Prali. They were generous enough to pardon this solitary survivor of the host that had come to massacre them. They sent him back across the Col Julien, to tell those from whom he had come that the Vaudois had courage to fight for their hearths and altars, and that of the army of 700 which they had sent to slay them, he only had escaped to carry tidings of the fate which had befallen his companions.

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⁵Monastier, p. 130

Chapter 3 : Failure of Cataneo's Expedition

The Valley of Angrogna-An Alternative-The Waldenses Prepare for Battle—Cataneo's Repulse-His Rage-He Renews the Attempt- Enters Angrogna with his Army—Advances to the Barrier-Enters the Chasm-The Waldenses on the point of being Cut to Pieces-The Mountain Mist-Deliverance-Utter Rout of the Papal Army-Pool of Saquet-Sufferings of the Waldenses-Extinction of the Invading Host- Deputation to their Prince-Vaudois Children-Peace

Picture: View in Turin.

Picture: General View of La Torre.

The camp of Cataneo was pitched almost at the gates of La Torre, beneath the shadow of the Casteluzzo. The Papal legate is about to try to force his way into the Val di Angrogna. This valley opens hard by the spot where the legate had established his camp, and runs on for a dozen miles into the Alps, a magnificent succession of narrow gorges and open dells, walled throughout by majestic mountains, and terminating in a noble circular basin -the Pra del Tor - which is set round with snowy peaks, and forms the most venerated spot in all the Waldensian territory, inasmuch as it was the seat of their college, and the meeting-place of their Barbes.

In the Pra del Tor, or Meadow of the Tower, Cataneo expected to surprise the mass of the Waldensan people, now gathered into it as being the strongest refuge which their hills afforded. There, too, he expected to be joined by the corps which he had sent round by Lucerna to make the circuit of the Valleys, and after devastating Prali and San Martino, to climb the mountain barrier and join their companions in the "Pra," little imagining that the soldiers he had dispatched on that errand of massacre were now enriching with their corpses the Valleys they had been sent to subdue. In that same spot where the Barbes had so often met in synod, and enacted rules for the government of their Church and the spread of their faith, the Papal legate would reunite his victorious host, and finish the campaign by

proclaiming that now the Waldensian heresy, root and branch, was extinct.

The Waldenses-their humble supplication for peace having been contemptuously rejected, as we have already said-had three courses in their choice-to go to mass, to be butchered as sheep, or to fight for their lives. They chose the last, and made ready for battle. But first they must remove to a place of safety all who were unable to bear arms.

Packing up their kneading-troughs, their ovens, and other culinary utensils, laying their aged on their shoulders, and their sick in couches, and leading their children by the hand, they began to climb the hills, in the direction of the Pra del Tor, at the head of the Val di Angrogna. Transporting their household stuff, they could be seen traversing the rugged paths, and making the mountains resound with psalms, which they sweetly sung as they journeyed up the ascent. Those who remained busied themselves in manufacturing pikes and other weapons of defense and attack, in repairing the barricades, in arranging themselves into fighting parties, and assigning to the various corps the posts they were to defend.

Cataneo now put his soldiers in motion. Advancing to near the town of La Torre, they made a sharp turn to the right, and entered the Val di Angrogna. Its opening offers no obstruction, being soft and even as any meadow in all England. By-and-by it begins to swell into the heights of Roccomaneot, where the Vaudois had resolved to make a stand. Their fighting men were posted along its ridge. Their armor was of the simplest. The bow was almost their only weapon of attack. They wore bucklers of skin, covered with the bark of the chestnut-tree, the better to resist thrust of pike or cut of sword. In the hollow behind, protected by the rising ground on which their fathers, husbands, and brothers were posted, were a number of women and children, gathered there for shelter. The Piedmontese host pressed up the activity, discharging a shower of arrows as they advanced, and the Waldensian line on which these missiles fell, seemed to waver, and to be on the point of giving way. Those behind, espying the danger, fell on their knees and, extending their hands in supplication to the God of battles, cried aloud, "O God of our fathers, help us! O God, deliver us!" That cry was heard by the attacking host, and especially by one of its captains, Le Noir of Mondovi, or the Black

Mondovi, a proud, bigoted, bloodthirsty man. He instantly shouted out that his soldiers would give the answer, accompanying his threat with horrible blasphemies. The Black Mondovi raised his visor as he spoke. At the instant an arrow from the bow of Pierre Revel, of Angrogna, entering between his eyes, transfixed his skull, and he fell on the earth a corpse. The fall of this daring leader disheartened the Papal army. The soldiers began to fall back. They were chased down the slopes by the Vaudois, who now descended upon them like one of their own mountain torrents. Having driven their invaders to the plain, cutting off not a few in their flight, they returned as the evening began to fall, to celebrate with songs, on the heights where they had won it, the victory with which it had pleased the God of their fathers to crown their arms.

Cataamo burned with rage and shame at being defeated by these herdsmen. In a few days, reassembling his host, he made a second attempt to enter the Angrogna. This promised to be successful. He passed the height of Roccomaneot, where he had encountered his first defeat, without meeting any resistance. He led his soldiers into the narrow defiles beyond. Here great rocks overhang the path: mighty chestnut-trees fling their branches across the way, veiling it in gloom, and far down thunders the torrent that waters the valley. Still advancing, he found himself, without fighting, in possession of the ample and fruitful expanse into which, these defiles passed, the valley opens. He was now master so far of the Val di Angrogna, comprehending the numerous hamlets, with their finely cultivated fields and vineyards, on the left of the torrent. But he had seen none of the inhabitants. These, he knew, were with the men of Lucerna in the Pra del Tor. Between him and his prey rose the "Barricade," a steep unscalable mountain, which runs like a wall across the valley, and forms a rampart to the famous "Meadow," which combines the solemnity of sanctuary with the strength of citadel.

Must the advance of the Papal legate and his army here end! It seemed as if it must. Cataneo was in a vast cul-de-sac. He could see the white peaks round the Pra, but between him and the Pra itself rose, in Cyclopean strength and height, the Barricade. He searched and, unhappily for himself, found all entrance. Some convulsion of nature has here rent the mountains, and through the long, narrow, and dark chasm thus formed lies the one only path that leads to the

head of Angrogna. The leader of the Papal host boldly ordered his men to enter and traverse this frightful gorge, not knowing how few of them he should ever lead back. The only pathway through this chasm is a rocky ledge on the side of the mountain, so narrow that not more than two abreast can advance along it. If assailed either in front, or in rear, or from above, there is absolutely no retreat. Nor is there room for the party attacked to fight. The pathway is hung midway between the bottom of the gorge, along which rolls the stream, and the summit of the mountain. Here the naked cliff runs sheer up for at least one thousand feet; there it leans over the path in stupendous masses, which look as if about to fall. Here lateral fissures admit the golden beams of the sun, which relieve the darkness of the pass, and make it visible. There a half-acre or so of level space gives standing-room on the mountain's side to a clump of birches, with their tall silvery trunks, or a chalet, with its bit of bright close-shaven meadow. But these only partially relieve the terrors of the chasm, which runs on from one to two miles, when, with a burst of light, and a sudden flashing of white peaks on the eye, it opens into an amphitheatre of meadow of dimensions so goodly, that an entire nation might find room to encamp in it.

It was into this terrible defile that the soldiers of the Papal legate now marched. They kept advancing, as best they could, along the narrow ledge. They were now nearing the Pra. It seemed impossible for their prey to escape them. Assembled on this spot the Waldensian people had but one neck, and the Papal soldiers, so Cataneo believed, were to sever that neck at a blow. But God was watching over the Vaudois. He had said of the Papal legate and his army, as of another tyrant of former days, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will cause thee to return by the way by which thou camest." But by what agency was the advance of that host to be stayed? Will some mighty angel smite Cataneo's army, as he did Sennacherib's? No angel blockaded the pass. Will thunderbolts and hailstones be rained upon Cataneo's soldiers, as of old on Sisera's? The thunders slept; the hail fell not. Will earthquake and whirlwind discomfit them? No earthquake rocked the ground; no whirlwinds rent the mountains. The instrumentality now put in motion to shield the Vaudois from destruction was one of the lightest and frailest in

all nature; yet no bars of adamant could have more effectually shut the pass, and brought the march of the host to an instant halt.

A white cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, unobserved by the Piedmontese, but keenly watched by the Vandois, was seen to gather on the mountain's summit, about the time the army would be entering the defile. That cloud grew rapidly bigger and blacker. It began to descend. It came rolling down the mountain's side, wave on wave, like an ocean tumbling out of heaven—a sea of murky vapor. It fell right into the chasm in which was the Papal army, sealing it up, and filling it from top to bottom with a thick black fog. In a moment the host were in night; they were bewildered, stupefied, and could see neither before nor behind, could neither advance nor retreat. They halted in a state bordering on terror. ¹

The Waldenses interpreted this as an interposition of Providence in their behalf. It had given them the power of repelling the invader. Climbing the slopes of the Pra, and issuing from all their hiding-places in its environs, they spread themselves over the mountains, the paths of which were familiar to them, and while the host stood riveted beneath them, caught in the double toils of the defile and the mist, they tore up the great stones and rocks, and sent them thundering down into the ravine. The Papal soldiers were crushed where they stood. Nor was this all. Some of the Waldenses boldly entered the chasm, sword in hand, and attacked them in front. Consternation seized the Piedmontese host. Panic impelled them to flee, but their effort to escape was more fatal than the sword of the Vaudois, or the rocks that, swift as arrow, came bounding down the mountain. They jostled one another; they threw each other down in the struggle; some were trodden to death; others were rolled over the precipice, and crushed on the rocks below, or drowned in the torrent, and so perished miserably. ²

The fate of one of these invaders has been preserved in stone. He was a certain Captain Saquet, a man, it is said, of gigantic stature, from Polonghera, in Piedmont. He began, like his Philistine prototype, to vent curses on the Waldensian dogs. The words were yet in his mouth when his foot slipped. Rolling over the precipice,

¹Monastier, pp. 133,134.

²Monastier, p. 134.

and tumbling into the torrent of the Angrogna, he was carried away by the stream, and his body finally deposited in a deep eddy or whirlpool, called in the patois of the country a "tompie," from the noise made by its waters. It bears to this day the name of the Tompie de Saquet, or Gulf of Saquet. ³

This war hung above the Valleys, like a cloud of tempest, for a whole year. It inflicted much suffering and loss upon the Waldenses; their homes were burned, their fields devastated, their goods carried off, and their persons slain; but the invaders suffered greatly more than they inflicted. Of the 18,000 regular troops, to which we may add about an equal number of desperadoes, with which the campaign opened, few ever returned to their homes. They left their bones on the mountains they had come to subdue. They were cut off mostly in detail. They were led weary chases from valley to mountain and from mountain to valley. The rocks rolled upon them gave them at once death and burial. They were met in narrow defiles and cut to pieces. Flying parties of Waldenses would suddenly issue from the mist, or from some cave known only to themselves, attack and discomfit the foe, and then as suddenly retreat into the friendly vapor or the sheltering rock. Thus it came to pass that, in the words of Muston, "this army of invaders vanished from the Vaudois mountains as rain in the sands of the desert." ⁴

"God," says Leger, "turned the heart of their prince toward this poor people." He sent a prelate to their Valleys, to assure them of his good-will, and to intimate his wish to receive their deputies. They sent twelve of their more venerable men to Turin, who being admitted into the duke's presence, gave him such an account of their faith, that he candidly confessed that he had been misled in what he

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³The Author was shown this pool when he visited the chasm. No one of the Valleys of the Waldenses is more illustrated by the sad, yet glorious, scenes of their martyrdom than this Valley of Angrogna. Every rock in it has its story. As you pass through it you are shown the spot where young children were dashed against the stones—the spot where men and women, stripped naked, were rolled up as balls, and precipitated down the mountain, and where caught by the stump of tree, or projecting angle of rock, they hung transfixed, enduring for days the agony of a living death. You are shown the entrance of caves, into which some hundreds of the Vaudois having fled, their enemies, lighting a fire at the mouth of their hiding-place, ruthlessly killed them all. Time would fail to tell even a tithe of what has been done and suffered in this famous pass.

⁴Muston, p. 11.

had done against them, and would not again suffer such wrongs to be inflicted upon them. He several times said that he “had not so virtuous, so faithful, and so obedient subjects as the Vaudois.”⁵

He caused the deputies a little surprise by expressing a wish to see some of the Vaudois children. Twelve infants, with their mothers, were straightway sent for from the Valley of Angrogna, and presented before the prince. He examined them narrowly. He found them well formed, and testified his admiration of their healthy faces, clear eyes, and lively prattle. He had been told, he said, that “the Vaudois children were monsters, with only one eye placed in the middle of the forehead, four rows of black teeth, and other similar deformities.”⁶ He expressed himself as not a little angry at having been made to believe such fables.

741 The prince, Charles II,⁷ a youth of only twenty years, but humane and wise, confirmed the privileges and immunities of the Vaudois, and dismissed them with his promise that they should be unmolested in the future. The Churches of the Valleys now enjoyed a short respite from persecution.

⁵Leger livr. 2, p. 26.

⁶Leger, livr. 2, p. 26.

⁷Leger and Gilles say that it was Philip VII who put an end to this war. Monastier says they “are mistaken, for this prince was then in France, and did not begin to reign till 1496.” This peace was granted in 1489.

Chapter 4: Synod in the Waldensian Valleys

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The Old Vine seems Dying-New Life-The Reformation-Tidings Reach the Waldenses-They Send Deputies into Germany and Switzerland to Inquire-Joy of Oecolampadius-His Admonitory Letter-Waldensian Deputies at Strasburg-The Two Churches a Wonder to each other- Martyrdom of One of the Deputies-Resolution to Call a Synod in the Valleys-Its Catholic Character-Spot where it Met-Confession of Faith framed-The Spirit of the Vaudois Revives- They Rebuild their Churches, etc.-Journey of Farel and Saunter to the Synod

The Duke of Savoy was sincere in his promise that the Vaudois should not be disturbed, but fully to make it good was not altogether in his power. He could take care that such armies of crusaders as that which mustered under the standard of Cataneo should not invade their Valleys, but he could not guard them from the secret machinations of the priesthood. In the absence of the armed crusader, the missionary and the inquisitor assailed them. Some were seduced, others were kidnapped, and carried of to the Holy Office. To these annoyances was added the yet greater evil of a decaying piety. A desire for repose made many conform outwardly to the Romish Church. "In order to be shielded from all interruption in their journeys on business, they obtained from the priests, who were settled in the Valleys, certificates or testimonials of their being Papists." ¹ To obtain this credential it was necessary to attend the Romish chapel, to confess, to go to mass, and to have their children baptised by the priests. For this shameful and criminal dissimulation they fancied that they made amends by muttering to themselves when they entered the Romish temples, "Cave of robbers, may God confound thee!" ² At the same time they continued to attend the preaching of the Vaudois pastors, and to submit themselves to their censures.

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¹ Monastier, Hist. of the Vaudois, p. 138.

² Ibid.

But beyond all question the men who practiced these deceits, and the Church that tolerated them, had greatly declined. That old vine seemed to be dying. A little while and it would disappear from off those mountains which it had so long covered with the shadow of its boughs.

But He who had planted it “looked down from heaven and visited it.” It was now that the Reformation broke out. The river of the Water of Life was opened a second time, and began to flow through Christendom. The old and dying stock in the Alps, drinking of the celestial stream, lived anew; its boughs began to be covered with blossoms and fruit as of old.

The Reformation had begun its career, and had already stirred most of the countries of Europe to their depths before tidings of the mighty changes reached these secluded mountains. When at last the great news was announced, the Vaudois “were as men who dreamed.” Eager to have them confirmed, and to know to what extent the yoke of Rome had been cast off by the nations of Europe, they sent forth Pastor Martin, of the Valley of Lucrena, on a mission of inquiry. In 1526 he returned with the amazing intelligence that the light of the old Evangel had broken on Germany, on Switzerland, on France, and that every day was adding to the number of those who openly professed the same doctrines to which the Vaudois had borne witness from ancient times. To attest what he said, he produced the books he had received in Germany containing the views of the Reformers.³

The remnant of the Vaudois on the north of the Alps also sent out men to collect information respecting that great spiritual revolution which had so surprised and gladdened them. In 1530 the Churches of Provence and Dauphine commissioned George Morel, of Merindol, and Pierre Masson, of Burgundy, to visit the Reformers of Switzerland and Germany, and bring them word touching their doctrine and manner of life. The deputies met in conference with the members of the Protestant Churches of Neuchatel, Morat, and Bern. They had also interviews with Berthold Haller and William Farel. Going on to Basle they presented to Oecolampadius, in October, 1530, a document in Latin, containing a complete account

³Gilles, p. 30. Monastier, p. 141

of their ecclesiastical discipline, worship, doctrine, and manners. They begged in return that Oecolampadius would say whether he approved of the order and doctrine of their Church, and if he held it to be defective, to specify in what points and to what extent. The elder Church submitted itself to the younger.

The visit of these two pastors of this ancient Church gave unspeakable joy to the Reformer of Basle. He heard in them the voice of the Church primitive and apostolic speaking to the Christians of the sixteenth century, and bidding them welcome within the gates of the City of God. What a miracle was before him! For ages had this Church been in the fires, yet she had not been consumed. Was not this encouragement to those who were just entering into persecutions not less terrific? "We render thanks," said Oecolampadius in his letter, October 13th, 1530, to the Churches of Provence, "to our most gracious Father that he has called you into such marvellous light, during ages in which such thick darkness has covered almost the whole world under the empire of Antichrist. We love you as brethren."

But his affection for them did not blind him to their declensions, nor make him withhold those admonitions which he saw to be needed. "As we approve of many things among you," he wrote, "so there are several which we wish to see amended. We are informed that the fear of persecution has caused you to dissemble and to conceal your faith...There is no concord between Christ and Belial. You commune with unbelievers; you take part in their abominable masses, in which the death and passion of Christ are blasphemed...

I know your weakness, but it becomes those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ to be more courageous. It is better for us to die than to be overcome by temptation." It was thus that Oecolampadius, speaking in the name of the Church of the Reformation, repaid the Church of the Alps for the services she had rendered to the world in former ages. By sharp, faithful, brotherly rebuke, he sought to restore to her the purity and glory which she had lost.

Having finished with Oecolampadius, the deputies went on to Strasburg. There they had interviews with Bucer and Capito. A similar statement of their faith to the Reformers of that city drew forth similar congratulations and counsels. In the clear light of her morning the Reformation Church saw many things which had

grown dim in the evening of the Vaudois Church; and the Reformers willingly permitted their elder sister the benefit of their own wider views. If the men of the sixteenth century recognised the voice of primitive Christianity speaking in the Vaudois, the latter heard the voice of the Bible, or rather of God himself, speaking in the Reformers, and submitted themselves with modesty and docility to their reproofs. The last had become first.

A manifold interest belongs to the meeting of these the two Churches. Each is a miracle to the other. The preservation of the Vaudois Church for so many ages, amid the fires of persecution, made her a wonder to the Church of the sixteenth century. The bringing up of the latter from the dead made her a yet greater wonder to the Church of the first century. These two Churches compare their respective beliefs: they find that their creeds are not twain, but one. They compare the sources of their knowledge: they find that they have both of them drawn their doctrine from the Word of God; they are not two Churches, they are one. They are the elder and younger members of the same glorious family, the children of the same Father. What a magnificent monument of the true antiquity and genuine catholicity of Protestantism!

Only one of the two Provence deputies returned from their visit to the Reformers of Switzerland. On their way back, at Dijon, suspicion, from some cause or other, fell on Pierre Masson. He was thrown into prison, and ultimately condemned and burned. His fellow-deputy was allowed to go on his way. George Morel, bearing the answers of the Reformers, and especially the letters of Oecolampadius, happily arrived in safety in Provence.

The documents he brought with him were much canvassed. Their contents caused these two ancient Churches mingled joy and sorrow; the former, however, greatly predominating. The news touching the numerous body of Christians, now appearing in many lands, so full of knowledge, and faith, and courage, was literally astounding. The confessors of the Alps thought that they were alone in the world; every successive century saw their numbers thinning, and their spirit growing less resolute; their ancient enemy, on the other hand, was steadfastly widening her dominion and strengthening her sway. A little longer, they imagined, and all public faithful profession of the Gospel would cease. It was at that moment they were told that a

new army of champions had arisen to maintain the old battle. This announcement explained and justified the past to them, for now they beheld the fruits of their fathers' blood. They who had fought the battle were not to have the honour of the victory. That was reserved for combatants who had come newly into the field. They had forfeited this reward, they painfully felt, by their defections; hence the regret that mingled with their joy.

They proceeded to discuss the answers that should be made to the Churches of the Protestant faith, considering especially whether they should adopt the reforms urged upon them in the communications which their deputies had brought back from the Swiss and German Reforming. The great majority of the Vaudois barbes were of opinion that they ought. A small minority, however, were opposed to this, because they thought that it did not become the new disciples to dictate to the old, or because they themselves were secretly inclined to the Roman superstitions. They went back again to the Reformers for advice; and, after repeated interchange of views, it was finally resolved to convene a synod in the Valleys, at which all the questions between the two Churches might be debated, and the relations which they were to sustain towards each other in time to come, determined. If the Church of the Alps was to continue apart, as before the Reformation, she felt that she must justify her position by proving the existence of great and substantial differences in doctrine between herself and the newly-arisen Church. But if no such differences existed, she would not, and dared not, remain separate and alone; she must unite with the Church of the Reformation.

It was resolved that the coming synod should be a truly oecumenical one - a general assembly of all the children of the Protestant faith. A hearty invitation was sent forth, and it was cordially and generally responded to. All the Waldensian Churches in the bosom of the Alps were represented in this synod. The Albigensian communities on the north of the chain, and the Vaudois Churches in Calabria, sent deputies to it. The Churches of French Switzerland chose William Farel and Anthony Saunier to attend it.⁴ From even more distant lands, as Bohemia, came men to deliberate and vote in this famous convention.

⁴Ruchat, tom. 3., pp.176, 557

The representatives assembled on the 12th of October, 1532. Two years earlier the Augsburg Confession had been given to the world, marking the culmination of the German Reformation. A year before, Zwingli had died on the field of Cappel. In France, the Reformation was beginning to be illustrated by the heroic deaths of its children. Calvin had not taken his prominent place at Geneva, but he was already enrolled under the Protestant banner. The princes of the Schmalkald League were standing at bay in the presence of Charles V. It was a critical yet glorious era in the annals of Protestantism which saw this assembly convened. It met at the town of Chamforans, in the heart of the Valley of Angrogna. There are few grander or stronger positions in all that valley than the site occupied by this little town. The approach to it was defended by the heights of Roccomaneot and La Serre, and by defiles which now contract, now widen, but are everywhere overhung by great rocks and mighty chestnut-trees, behind and above which rise the taller peaks, some of them snow-clad. A little beyond La Serre is the plateau on which the town stood, overlooking the grassy bosom of the valley, which is watered by the crystal torrent, dotted by numerous chalets, and runs on for about two miles, till shut in by the steep, naked precipices of the Barricade, which, stretching from side to side of Angrogna, leaves only the long, dark chasm we have already described, as the pathway to the Pra del Tor, whose majestic mountains here rise on the sight and suggest to the traveller the idea that he is drawing nigh some city of celestial magnificence. The town of Chamforans does not now exist; its only representative at this day is a solitary farmhouse.

The synod sat for six consecutive days. All the points raised in the communications received from the Protestant Churches were freely ventilated by the assembled barbes and elders. Their findings were embodied in a "Short Confession of Faith," which Monastier says "may be considered as a supplement to the ancient Confession of Faith of the year 1120, which it does not contradict in any point."⁵ It consists of seventeen articles,⁶ the chief of which are the Moral inability of man; election to eternal life; the will of God, as made

⁵Gilles, p. 80. Monastier, p. 141.

⁶It is entitled, says Leger, "A Brief Confession of Faith made by the Pastors and Heads of Families of the Valley of Piedmont." "it is preserved," he adds, "with other

known in the Bible, the only rule of duty; and the doctrine of two Sacraments only, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The lamp which had been on the point of expiring began, after this synod, to burn with its former brightness. The ancient spirit of the Waldenses revived. They no longer practiced those dissimulations and cowardly concealments to which they had had recourse to avoid persecution. They no longer feared to confess their faith. Henceforward they were never seen at mass, or in the Popish churches. They refused to recognize the priests of Rome as ministers of Christ, and under no circumstances would they receive any spiritual benefit or service at their hands.

Another sign of the new life that now animated the Vaudois was their setting about the work of rebuilding their churches. For fifty years previous public worship may be said to have ceased in their Valleys. Their churches had been razed by the persecutor, and the Vaudois feared to rebuild them lest they should draw down upon themselves a new storm of violence and blood. A cave would serve at times as a place of meeting. In more peaceful years the house of their barbe, or of some of their chief men, would be converted into a church; and when the weather was fine, they would assemble on the mountain-side, under the great boughs of their ancestral trees. But their old sanctuaries they dared not raise from the ruins into which the persecutor had cast them. They might say with the ancient Jews, "The holy and beautiful house in which our fathers praised thee is burned with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste." But now, strengthened by the fellowship and counsels of their Protestant brethren, churches arose, and the worship of God was reinstated. Hard by the place where the synod met, at Lorenzo namely, was the first of these post-Reformation churches set up; others speedily followed in the other valleys; pastors were multiplied; crowds flocked to their preaching, and not a few came from the plains of Piedmont, and from remote parts of their valleys, to drink of these living waters again flowing in their land.

Yet another token did this old Church give of the vigorous life that was now flowing in her veins. This was a translation of the

documents, in the Library of the University of Cambridge." (*Hist. des Vaud.*, livr. 1., p. 95.)

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Scriptures into the French tongue. At the synod, the resolution was taken to translate and print both the Old and New Testaments, and, as this was to be done at the sole charge of the Vaudois, it was considered as them gift to the Churches of the Reformation. A most appropriate and noble gift! That Book which the Waldenses had received from the primitive Church-which their fathers had preserved with their blood-which their barbes had laboriously transcribed and circulated-they now put into the hands of the Reformers, constituting them along with themselves the custodians of this the ark of the world's hopes. Robert Olivetan, a near relative of Calvin, was asked to undertake the translation, and he executed it-with the help of his great kinsman, it is believed. It was printed in folio, in black letter, at Neuchatel, in the year 1535, by Pierre de Wingle, commonly called Picard. The entire expense was defrayed by the Waldenses, who collected for this object 1,500 crowns of gold, a large sum for so poor a people. Thus did the Waldensian Church emphatically proclaim, at the commencement of this new era in her existence, that the Word of God was her one sole foundation.

As has been already mentioned, a commission to attend the synod had been given by the Churches of French Switzerland to Farel and Saunter. Its fulfillment necessarily involved great toil and peril. One crosses the Alps at this day so easily, that it is difficult to conceive the toil and danger that attended the journey then. The deputies could not take the ordinary tracks across the mountains for fear of pursuit; they were compelled to travel by unfrequented paths. The way often led by the edge of precipices and abysses, up steep and dangerous ascents, and across fields of frozen snow. for were their pursuers the only dangers they had to fear; they were exposed to death from the blinding drifts and tempests of the hills. Nevertheless, they arrived in safety in the Valleys, and added by their presence and their counsels to the dignity of this the first great ecclesiastical assembly of modern times. Of this we have a somewhat remarkable proof. Three years thereafter, a Vaudois, Jean Peyrel, of Angrogna, being cast into prison, deposed on his trial that "he had kept guard for the ministers who taught the good law, who were assembled in the town of Chamforans, in the center of Angrogna; and that amongst others present there was one called Farel, who had a red beard, and a beautiful white horse; and two others accompanied him,

one of whom had a horse, almost black, and the other was very tall, and rather lame.”

Chapter 5 : Persecutions and Martyrdoms

A Peace of Twenty-eight Years-Flourishing State-Bersour-A
Martyr- Martyrdom of Pastor Gonin-Martyrdoms of a Student and a
Monk- Trial and Burning of a Colporteur-A List of Horrible
Deaths-The Valleys under the Sway of France-Restored to
Savoy-Emmanuel Philibert-Persecution
Renewed-Carignano-Persecution Approaches the
Mountains-Deputation to the Duke-The Old Paths- Remonstrance
to the Duke-to the Duchess-to the Council

Picture: Farel and his Companions Journeying across the Alps.

Picture: View in the Village of Angrogna.

The Church of the Alps had peace for twenty-eight years. This was a time of great spiritual prosperity. Sanctuaries arose in all her Valleys; her pastors and teachers were found too few, and men of learning and zeal, some of them from foreign lands, pressed into her service. Individuals and families in the cities on the plain of Piedmont embraced her faith; and the crowds that attended her worship were continually growing. ¹ In short, this venerable Church had a second youth. Her lamp, retrimmed, burned with a brightness that justified her time-honoured motto, "A light shining in darkness." The darkness was not now so deep as it had been; the hours of night were drawing to a close. Nor was the Vaudois community the only light that now shone in Christendom. It was one of a constellation of lights, whose brilliance was beginning to irradiate the skies of the Church with an effulgence which no former age had known. ²

The exemption from persecution, which the Waldenses enjoyed during this period, was not absolute, but comparative. The lukewarm are seldom molested; and the quickened zeal of the Vaudois brought

¹George Morel states, in his Memoirs, that at this time there were more than 800,000 persons of the religion of the Vaudois. (Leger, Hist. des Vaudois, livr. 2, p. 27.) He includes, of course, in this estimate the Vaudois in the Valleys, on the plain of Piedmont, in Naples and Calabria, in the south of France, and in the countries of Germany.

²Gilles, p. 40. Monastier, p.146

with it a revival of the persecutor's malignity, though it did not find vent in violences so dreadful as the tempests that had lately smitten them. Only two years after the synod—that is, in 1534—wholesale destruction fell upon the Vaudois Churches of Provence; but the sad story of their extinction will more appropriately be told elsewhere. In the valleys of Piedmont events were from time to time occurring that showed that the inquisitor's vengeance had been scotched, not killed. While the Vaudois as a race were prosperous, their churches multiplying, and their faith extending its geographical area from one area to another, individual Vaudois were being at times seized, and put to death, at the stake, on the rack, or by the cord. [450]

Three years after, the persecution broke out anew, and raged for a short time. Charles III. of Savoy, a prince of mild manners, but under the rule of the priests, being solicited by the Archbishop of Turin and the inquisitor of the same city, gave his consent to “*hunting down*” the heretics of the Valleys. The commission was given to a nobleman of the name of Bersour, whose residence was at Pinerolo, near the entrance of the Valley of Perosa. Bersour, a man of savage disposition, collected a troop of 500 horse and foot, and attacked the Valley of Angrogna. He was repulsed, but the storm which had rolled away from the mountains fell upon the plains. Turning to the Vaudois who resided around his own residence, he seized a great number of persons, whom he threw into prisons and convents of Pinerolo and the Inquisition of Turin. Many of them suffered in the flames. One of these martyrs, Catalan Girard, quaintly taught the spectators a parabolic lesson, standing at the pile. From amid the flames he asked for two stones, which were instantly brought him. The crowd looked on in silence, curious to know what he meant to do with them. Rubbing them against each other, he said, “*You think to extinguish our poor Churches by your persecutions. You can no more do so than I with my feeble hands can crush these stones.*”³

Heavier tempests seemed about to descend, when suddenly the sky cleared above the confessors of the Alps. It was a change in the politics of Europe in this instance, as in many others, that stayed the arm of persecution. Francis I of France demanded of Charles, Duke of Savoy, permission to march an army through his dominions. The

³Leger, livr. 2, p. 27.

object of the French king was the recovery of the Duchy of Milan, a long-contested prize between himself and Charles V. The Duke of Savoy refused the request of his brother monarch; but reflecting that the passes of the Alps were in the hands of the men whom he was persecuting, and that should he continue his oppressions, the Vaudois might open the gates of his kingdom to the enemy, he sent orders to Bersour to stop the persecution in the Valleys.

In 1536, the Waldensian Church had to mourn the loss of one of the more distinguished of her pastors. Martin Gonin, of Angrogna - a man of public spirit and rare gifts-who had gone to Geneva on ecclesiastical affairs, was returning through Dauphine, when he was apprehended on suspicion of being a spy. He cleared himself on that charge, but the gaoler searching his person, and discovering certain papers upon him, he was convicted of what the Parliament of Grenoble accounted a much greater crime-heresy. Condemned to die, he was led forth at night, and drowned in the river Isere. He would have suffered at the stake had not his persecutors feared the effect of his dying words upon the spectators. ⁴

There were others, also called to ascend the martyr-pile, whose names we must not pass over in silence. Two pastors returning from Geneva to their flocks in the Valleys, in company of three French Protestants, were seized at the Col de Tamiers, in Savoy, and carried to Chambery. There all five were tried, condemned, and burned. The fate of Nicolas Sartoire is yet more touching. He was a student of theology at Geneva, and held one of those bursaries which the Lords of Bern had allotted for the training of young men as pastors in the Churches of the Valleys. He set out to spend his holiday with his family in Piedmont. We know how Vaudois heart yearns for its native mountains; nor would the coming of the youth awaken less lively anticipations on the part of his friends. The paternal threshold, alas! he was never to cross; his native Valleys he was to tread no more. Travelling by the pass of St. Bernard, and the grand Valley of Aosta, he had just passed the Italian frontier, when he was apprehended on the suspicion of heresy. It was the month of May, when all was life and beauty in the vales and mountains around him; he himself was in the spring-time of existence; it was hard to lay

⁴Monastier, p. 153.

down life at such a moment; but the great captain from whose feet he had just come, had taught him that the first duty of a soldier of Christ is obedience. He confessed his Lord, nor could promises or threats-and both were tried-make him waver. He continued steadfast unto the end, and on the 4th of May, 1557, he was brought forth from his dungeon at Aosta, and burned alive. ⁵

The martyr who died thus heroically at Aosta was a youth, the one we are now to contemplate was a man of fifty. Geofroi Varaile was a native of the town of Busco, in Piedmont. His father had been a captain in that army of murderers who, in 1488, ravaged the Valleys of Lucerna and Angrogna.

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The son in 1520 became a monk, and possessing the gift of a rare eloquence, he was sent on a preaching tour, in company with another cowed ecclesiastic, yet more famous, Bernardo Ochino of Sienna, the founder of the order of the Capuchins. The arguments of the men he was sent to convert staggered Varaile. He fled to Geneva, and in the city of the Reformers he was taught more fully the “way of life.” Ordained as a pastor, he returned to the Valleys, where “like another Paul,” says Leger, “he preached the faith he once destroyed.” After a ministry of some months, he set out to pay a visit of a few days to his native town of Busco. He was apprehended by the monks who were lying in wait for him. He was condemned to death by the Inquisition of Turin. His execution took place in the castle-piazza of the same city, March 29th, 1558. He walked to the place where he was to die with a firm step and a serene countenance; he addressed the vast multitude around his pile in a way that drew tears from many eyes; after this he began to sing with a loud voice, and so continued till he sank amid the flames. ⁶

Two years before this, the same piazza, the castle-yard at Turin, had witnessed a similar spectacle. Barthelemy Hector was a book-seller in Poitiers. A man of warm but well-tempered zeal, he traveled as far as the Valleys, diffusing that knowledge that maketh wise, unto salvation. In the assemblage of white peaks that look down on the Pra del Tor is one named La Vechera, so called because the cows love the rich grass that clothes its sides in summer-time.

⁵Leger, livr. 2, p. 29.

⁶Leger, livr. 2, p. 29. Monsastier, p. 168.

Barthelemy Hector would take his seat on the slopes of the mountain, and gathering the herdsmen and agriculturists of the Pra round him, would induce them to buy his books, by reading passages to them. Portions of the Scriptures also would he recite to the grandames and maidens as they watched their goats, or plied the distaff. His steps were tracked by the inquisitor, even amid these wild solitudes. He was dragged to Turin, to answer for the crime of selling Genevese books. His defense before his judges discovered an admirable courage and wisdom.

“You have been caught in the act,” said his judge, “of selling books that contain heresy. What say you?”

“If the Bible is heresy to you, it is truth to me,” replied the prisoner.

“But you use the Bible to deter men from going to mass,” urged the judge.

“If the Bible deters men from going to mass,” responded Barthelemy, “it is a proof that God disapproves of it, and that the mass is idolatry.”

The judge, deeming it expedient to make short shrift with such a heretic, exclaimed, “Retract.”

“I have spoken only truth,” said the bookseller, “can I change truth as I would a garment?”

His judges kept him some months in prison, in the hope that his recantation would save them the necessity of burning him. This unwillingness to have resort to the last penalty was owing to no feeling of pity for the prisoner, but entirely to the conviction that these repeated executions were endangering the cause of their Church. “The smoke of these martyr-piles,” as was said with reference to the death of Patrick Hamilton, “was infecting those on whom it blew.” But the constancy of Barthelemy compelled his persecutors to disregard these prudential considerations. At last, despairing of his abjuration, they brought him forth and consigned him to the flames. His behavior at the stake “drew rivers of tears,” says Leger, “from the eyes of many in the Popish crowd around his stake, while others vented reproaches and invectives against the cruelty of the monks and the inquisitors.” ⁷

⁷Leger, livr. 2, p. 28.

These are only a few of the many martyrs by whom, even during this period of comparative peace and prosperity, the Church of the Valleys was called to testify against Rome. Some of these martyrs perished by cruel, barbarous, and most horrible methods. To recite all these cases would be beyond our purpose, and to depict the revolting and infamous details would be to narrate what no reader could peruse. We shall only quote part of the brief summary of Muston. "There is no town in Piedmont," says he, "under a Vandois pastor, where some of our brethren have not been put to death..Hugo Chiamps of Finestrelle had his entrails torn from his living body, at Turin. Peter Geymarali of Bobbio, in like manner, had his entrails taken out at Luzerna, and a fierce cat thrust in their place to torture him further; Maria Romano was buried alive at Rocco-patia; Magdalen Foulano underwent the same fate at San Giovanni; Susan Michelini was bound hand and foot, and left to perish of cold and hunger at Saracena. Bartholomew Fache, gashed with sabres, had the wounds filled up with quicklime, and perished thus in agony at Fenile; Daniel Michelini had his tongue torn out at Bobbio for having praised God. James Baridari perished covered with sulphurous matches, which had been forced into his flesh under the nails, between the fingers, in the nostrils, in the lips, and over all his body, and then lighted. Daniel Revelli had his mouth filled with gunpowder, which, being lighted, blew his head to pieces. Maria Monnen, taken at Lioussa, had the flesh cut from her cheek and chin bones, so that her jaw was left bare, and she was thus left to perish. Paul Garnier was slowly sliced to pieces at Rora. Thomas Margueti was mutilated in an indescribable manner at Miraboco, and Susan Jaquin cut in bits at La Torre. Sara Rostagnol was slit open from the legs to the bosom, and so left to perish on the road between Eyral and Luzerna. Anne Charbonnier was impaled and carried thus on a pike, as a standard, from San Giovanni to La Torre. Daniel Rambaud, at Paesano, had his nails torn off, then his fingers chopped off, then his feet and his hands, then his arms and his legs, with each successive refusal on his part to abjure the Gospel." ⁸ Thus the roll of martyrs runs on, and with each new sufferer comes a new, a more excruciating and more horrible mode of torture and death.

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⁸Muston, *Israel of the Alps*, chap. 8.

We have already mentioned the demand which the King of France made upon the Duke of Savoy, Charles III, that he would permit him to march an army through his territories. The reply was a refusal; but Francis I must needs have a road into Italy. Accordingly he seized upon Piedmont, and held possession of it, together with the Waldensian Valleys, for twenty-three years. The Waldenses had found the sway of Francis I more tolerant than that of their own princes; for though Francis hated Lutheranism, the necessities of his policy often compelled him to court the Lutherans, and so it came to pass that while he was burning heretics at Paris he spared them in the Valleys. But the general peace of Chateau Cambresis, April 3rd, 1559, restored Piedmont, with the exception of Turin, to its former rulers of the House of Savoy.⁹ Charles III had been succeeded in 1553 by Emmanuel Philibert. Philibert was a prince of superior talents and humane disposition, and the Vaudois cherished the hope that under him they would be permitted to live in peace, and to worship as their fathers had done. What strengthened these just expectations was the fact that Philibert had married a sister of the King of France, Henry II, who had been carefully instructed in the Protestant faith by her illustrious relations, Margaret, Queen of Navarre, and Renee of France, daughter of Louis XII. But, alas! the treaty that restored Emmanuel Philibert to the throne of his ancestors, contained a clause binding the contracting parties to extinguish heresy. This was to send him back to his subjects with a dagger in his hand.

Whatever the king might incline-and we dare say, strengthened by the counsels of his Protestant queen, he intended dealing humanely by his faithful subjects the Vaudois-his intentions were overborne by men of stronger wills and more determined resolves. The inquisitors of his kingdom, the nuncio of the Pope, and the ambassadors of Spain and France, united in urging upon him the purgation of his dominions, in terms of the agreement in the treaty of peace. The unhappy monarch, unable to resist these powerful solicitations, issued on the 15th February, 1560, an edict forbidding his subjects to hear the Protestant preachers in the Valley of Lucerna, or anywhere else, under pain of a fine of 100 dollars of gold for the first offense,

⁹Leger, livr. 2, p. 29.

and of the galleys for life for the second. This edict had reference mainly to the Protestants on the plain of Piedmont, who resorted in crowds to hear sermon in the Valleys. There followed, however, in a short time a yet severer edict, commanding attendance at mass under pain of death. To carry out this cruel decree a commission was given to a prince of the blood, Philip of Savoy, Count de Raconis, and with him was associated George Costa, Count de la Trinita, and Thomas Jacomel, the Inquisitor-General, a man as cruel in disposition as he was licentious in manners. To these was added a certain Councillor Corbis, but he was not of the stuff which the business required, and so, after witnessing a few initial scenes of barbarity and horror, he resigned his commission. ¹⁰

The first burst of the tempest fell on Carignano. This town reposes sweetly on one of the spurs of the Apennines, about twenty miles to the south-west of Turin. It contained many Protestants, some of whom were of good position. The wealthiest were selected and dragged to the burning-pile, in order to strike terror into the rest. The blow had not fallen in vain; the professors of the Protestant creed in Carignano were scattered; some fled to Turin, then under the domination of France, some to other places, and some, alas! frightened by the tempest in front, turned back and sought refuge in the darkness behind them. They had desired the “better country,” but could not enter in at the cost of exile and death.

Having done its work in Carignano, this desolating tempest held its way across the plain of Piedmont, towards those great mountains which were the ancient fortress of the truth, marking its track through the villages and country communes in terror, in pillage and blood. It moved like one of those thunder-clouds which the traveller on the Alps may often descry beneath him, traversing the same plain, and shooting its lightnings earthwards as it advances. Wherever it was known that there was a Vaudois congregation, thither did the cloud turn. And now we behold it at the foot of the Waldensian Alps at the entrance of the Valleys, within whose mighty natural bulwarks crowds of fugitives from the towns and villages on the plain have already found asylum.

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¹⁰Monastier, chapter 19, p. 172. Muston, chapter 10, p. 52.

Rumors of the confiscations, arrests, cruel tortures, and horrible deaths which had befallen the Churches at the foot of their mountains, had preceded the appearance of the crusaders at the entrance of the Valleys. The same devastation which had befallen the flourishing Churches on the plain of Piedmont, seemed to impend over the Churches in the bosom of the Alps. At this juncture the pastors and leading laymen assembled to deliberate on the steps to be taken. Having fasted and humbled themselves before God, they sought by earnest prayer the direction of his Holy Spirit. ¹¹ They resolved to approach the throne of their prince, and by humble remonstrance and petition, set forth the state of their affairs and the justice of their cause. Their first claim was to be heard before being condemned—a right denied to no one accused, however criminal. They next solemnly disclaimed the main offense laid to their charge, that of departing from the true faith, and of adopting doctrines unknown to the Scriptures, and the early ages of the Church. Their faith was that which Christ himself had taught; which the apostles, following their Great Master, had preached; which the Fathers had vindicated with their pens, and the martyrs with their blood, and which the first four Councils had ratified, and proclaimed to be the faith of the Christian world. From the “old paths,” the Bible and all antiquity being witnesses, they had never turned aside; from father to son they had continued these 1,500 years to walk therein. Their mountains shielded no novelties; they had bowed the knee to no strange gods, and, if they were heretics, so too were the first four Councils; and so too were the apostles themselves. If they erred, it was in the company of the confessors and martyrs of the early ages. They were willing any moment to appeal their cause to a General Council, provided that Council were willing to decide the question by the only infallible standard they knew, the Word of God. If on this evidence they should be convicted of even one heresy, most willingly would they surrender it. On this, the main point of their indictment, what more could they promise? Show us, they said, what the errors are which you ask us to renounce under the penalty of death, and you shall not need to ask a second time. ¹²

¹¹Leger, livr. 2, p. 29.

¹²First, we do protest before the Almighty and All-just God, before whose tribunal we must all one day appear, that we intend to live and die in the holy faith, piety, and

Their duty to God did not weaken their allegiance to their prince. To piety they added loyalty. The throne before which they now stood had not more faithful and devoted subjects than they. When had they plotted treason, or disputed lawful command of their sovereign? Nay, the more they feared God, the more they honoured the king. Their services, their substance, their life, were all at the disposal of their prince; they were willing to lay them all down in defense of his lawful prerogative; one thing only they could not surrender - their conscience.

As regarded their Romanist fellow-subjects of Piedmont, they had lived in good-neighborhood with them. Whose person had they injured-whose property had they robbed-whom had they overreached in their bargains? Had they not been kind, courteous, honest? If their hills had vied in fertility with the naturally richer plains at their feet, and if their mountain-homes had been filled with store of corn and oil and wine, not always found in Piedmontese dwellings, to what was this owing, save to their superior industry, frugality, and skill? Never had marauding expedition descended from their hills to carry off the goods of their neighbors, or to inflict retaliation for the many murders and robberies to which they had had to submit. Why, then, should their neighbors rise against them to exterminate them, as if they were a horde of evil-doers, in whose neighborhood no man could live in peace; and why should their sovereign unsheathe the sword against those who had never been found disturbers of his kingdom, nor plotters against his government, but who, on the contrary, had ever striven to maintain the authority of his law and the honour of his throne?

“One thing is certain, most serene prince,” say they, in conclusion,

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“that the Word of God will not perish, but will abide for ever. If, then, our religion is the pure Word of God, as we are persuaded it is,

religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we do abhor all hereses that have been, and are, condemned by the Word of God. We do embrace the most holy doctrine of the prophets and apostles, as likewise of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds; we do subscribe to the four Councils, and to all the ancient Fathers, in all such things as are not repugnant to the analogy of faith.” (Leger, livr. 2, pp. 30,31.)

and not a human invention, no human power will be able to abolish it.”¹³

Never was there a more solemn, or a more just, or a more respectful remonstrance presented to any throne. The wrong about to be done them was enormous, yet not an angry word, nor a single accusatory sentence, do the Vaudois permit themselves to utter. But to what avail this solemn protest, this triumphant vindication? The more complete and conclusive it is, the more manifest does it make the immense injustice and the flagrant criminality of the House of Savoy. The more the Vaudois put themselves in the right, the more they put the Church of Rome in the wrong; and they who have already doomed them to perish are but the more resolutely determined to carry out their purpose.

This document was accompanied by two others: one to the queen, and one to the Council. The one to the queen is differently conceived from that to the duke. They offer no apology for their faith: the queen herself was of it. They allude in a few touching terms to the sufferings they had already been subjected to, and to the yet greater that appeared to impend. This was enough, they knew, to awaken all her sympathies, and enlist her as their advocate with the king, after the example of Esther, and other noble women in former times, who valued their lofty station less for its dazzling honors, than for the opportunities it gave them of shielding the persecuted confessors of the truth.¹⁴

The remonstrance presented to the Council was couched in terms more plain and direct, yet still respectful. They bade the counselors of the king beware what they did; they warned them that every drop of innocent blood they should spill they would one day have to account for; that if the blood of Abel, though only that of one man, cried with a voice so loud that God heard it in heaven, and came

¹³See in Leger (livr. 2, pp. 30,31) the petition of the Vaudois presented “Au Serenissime et tres-Puissant Prince, Philibert Emanuel, Duc de Saveye, Prince de Piemont, notre tres-Clement Seigneur” (To the Serene and most Mighty Prince, Philibert Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont, our most Gracious Lord).

¹⁴See in Leger. (livr. 2, p. 32), “A la tres-Vertueuse et tres-Excellente Dame, Madame Marguerite de France, Duchesse de Savoye et de Berry” - “the petition of her poor and humble subjects, the inhabitants of the Valleys of Lucerna and Angrogna, and Perosa and San Martino, and all those of the plain who call purely upon the name of the Lord Jesus.”

down to call its shedder to a reckoning, how much mightier the cry that would arise from the blood of a whole nation, and how much more terrible the vengeance with which it would be visited! In fine, they reminded the Council that what they asked was not an unknown privilege in Piedmont, nor would they be the first or the only persons who had enjoyed that indulgence if it should be extended to them. Did not the Jew and the Saracen live unmolested in their cities? Did they not permit the Israelite to build his synagogue, and the Moor to read his Koran, without annoyance or restraint? Was it a great thing that the faith of the Bible should be placed on the same level in this respect with that of the Crescent, and that the descendants of the men who for generations had been the subjects of the House of Savoy, and who had enriched the dominions with their virtues, and defended them with their blood, should be treated with the same humanity that was shown to the alien and the unbeliever?

These petitions the confessors of the Alps dispatched to the proper quarter, and having done so, they waited an answer with eyes lifted up to heaven. If that answer should be peace, with what gratitude to God and to their prince would they hail it! should it be otherwise, they were ready to accept that alternative too; they were prepared to die.

Chapter 6 : Preparations for a War of Extermination

Pastor Gilles Carries the Remonstrance to the Duke-No Tidings for
Three Months-The Monks of Pinerolo begin the Persecution-Raid
in San Martino-Philip of Savoy's Attempt at Conciliation-A Monk's
Sermon-The Duke Declares War against the Vaudois-Dreadful
Character of his Army-The Waldenses hold a Fast, etc.-Skirmishing
in Angrogna-Night Panic-La Trinita Occupies the Val di
Lucerna-An Intrigue-Fruitless Concessions-Affecting Incidents-La
Trinita Demands 20,000 Crowns from the Men of the Valleys—He
Retires into Winter Quarters—Outrages of his Soldiers

Picture: View of the Village of Balsiglia San Martino.

[457] Where was the Vaudois who would put his life in his hand, and carry this remonstrance to the duke? The dangerous service was undertaken by M. Gilles, Pastor of Bricherasio, a devoted and courageous man. A companion was associated with him, but wearied out with the rebuffs and insults he met with, he abandoned the mission, and left its conduct to Gilles alone. The duke then lived at Nice, for Turin, his capital, was still in the hands of the French, and the length of the journey very considerably increased its risks. Gilles reached Nice in safety, however, and after many difficulties and delays he had an interview with Queen Margaret, who undertook to place the representations of which he was the bearer in the hands of her husband, the duke. The deputy had an interview also with Philip of Savoy, the Duke's brother, and one of the commissioners under the Act for the purgation of the Valleys. The Waldensian pastor was, on the whole, well received by him. Unequally yoked with the cruel and bigoted Count La Trinita, Philip of Savoy soon became disgusted, and left the bloody business wholly in the hands of his fellow-commissioner. ¹ As regarded the queen, her heart was in the Valleys; the cause of the poor Vaudois was her cause also.

¹Muston p. 68.

But she stood alone as their intercessor with the duke; her voice was drowned by the solicitations and threats of the prelates, the King of Spain, and the Pope. ²

For three months there came neither letter nor edict from the court at Nice. If the men of the Valleys were impatient to know the fate that awaited them, their enemies, athirst for plunder and blood, were still more so. The latter, unable longer to restrain their passions, began the persecution on their own account. They thought they knew their sovereign's intentions, and made bold to anticipate them.

The tocsin was rung out from the Monastery of Pinerolo. Perched on the frontier of the Valleys, the monks of this establishment kept their eyes fixed upon the heretics of the mountains, as vultures watch their prey, ever ready to sweep down upon hamlet or valley when they found it unguarded. They hired a troop of marauders, whom they sent forth to pillage. The band returned, driving before them a wretched company of captives whom they had dragged from their homes and vineyards in the mountains. The poorer sort they burned alive, or sent to the galleys; the rich they imprisoned till they had paid the ransom to which they were held. ³

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The example of the monks was followed by certain Popish landlords in the Valley of San Martino. The two seigneurs of Perrier attacked, before daybreak of April 2nd, 1560, the villagers of Rioclareto, with an armed band. Some they slaughtered, the rest they drove out, without clothes or food, to perish on the snow-clad hills. The ruffians who had expelled them, took possession of their dwellings, protesting that no one should enter them unless he were willing to go to Mass. They kept possession only three days, for the Protestants of the Valley of Clusone, to the number of 400, hearing of the outrage, crossed the mountains, drove out the invaders, and reinstated their brethren. ⁴

Next appeared in the Valleys, Philip of Savoy, Count de Raconis, and Chief Commissioner. He was an earnest Roman Catholic, but a humane and upright man. He attended sermon one day in the Protestant church of Angrogna, and was so much pleased with what

²Muston, p. 72.

³Muston, p. 69. Monastier, p. 178.

⁴Muston, p. 70. Monastier, pp. 176,177.

he heard, that he obtained from the pastor an outline of the Vaudois faith, so as to send it to Rome, in the hope that the Pope would cease to persecute a creed that seemed so little heretical. A sanguine hope truly! Where the honest count had seen very little heresy, the Pope, Pius IV, saw a great deal; and would not even permit a disputation with the Waldensian pastors, as the count had proposed. He would stretch his benignity no farther than to absolve “from their past crimes” all who were willing to enter the Church of Rome. This was not very encouraging, still the count did not abandon his idea of conciliation. In June, 1560, he came a second time to the Valley of Lucerna, accompanied by his colleague La Trinita, and assembling the pastors and heads of families, he told them that the persecution would cease immediately, provided they would consent to hear the preachers he had brought with him, Brothers of the Christian Doctrine. He further proposed that they should silence their own ministers while they were making trial of his. The Vaudois expressed their willingness to consent, provided the count’s ministers preached the pure Gospel; but if they preached human traditions, they (the Vaudois) would be under the necessity of withholding their consent; and, as regarded silencing their own ministers, it was only reasonable that they should be permitted first to make trial of the count’s preachers. A few days after, they had a taste of the new expositors. Selecting the ablest among them, they made him ascend the pulpit and hold forth to a Vaudois congregation. He took a very effectual way to make them listen. “I will demonstrate to you,” said he, “that the mass is found in Scripture. The word massah signifies ‘sent,’ does it not?” “Not precisely,” replied his hearers, who knew more about Hebrew than was convenient for the preacher. “The primitive expression,” continued he, “*Ite missa est*, was employed to dismiss the auditory, was it not?” “That is quite true,” replied his hearers, without very clearly seeing how it bore on his argument. “Well, then, you see, gentlemen, that the mass is found in the Holy Scripture.”⁵ The congregation were unable to determine whether the preacher was arguing with them or simply laughing at them.

Finding the Waldenses obdurate, as he deemed them, the Duke of Savoy, in October, 1560, declared war against them. Early in

⁵Muston, p. 71. Monastier, pp. 177,178.

that month a dreadful rumor reached the Valleys, namely, that the duke was levying an army to exterminate them. The news was but too true. The duke offered a free pardon to all “outlaws, convicts, and vagabonds” who would enroll as volunteers to serve against the Vaudois. Soon an army of a truly dreadful character was assembled. The Vaudois seemed doomed to total and inevitable destruction. The pastors and chief persons assembled to deliberate on the measures to be taken at this terrible crisis. Feeling that their refuge was in God alone, they resolved that they would take no means for deliverance which might be offensive to him, or dishonorable to themselves. The pastors were to exhort every one to apply to God, with true faith, sincere repentance, and ardent prayer; and as to defensive measures, they recommended that each family should collect their provisions, clothes, utensils, and herds, and be ready at a moment’s notice to convey them, together with all infirm persons, to their strongholds in the mountains. Meanwhile, the duke’s army, if the collected ruffianism of Piedmont could be so called—came nearer every day. ⁶

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On the 31st of October, a proclamation was posted throughout the Valley of Angrogna, calling on the inhabitants to return within the Roman pale, under penalty of extermination by fire and sword. On the day following, the 1st of November, the Papal army appeared at Bubiana, on the right bank of the Pelice, at the entrance to the Waldensian Valley. The host numbered 4,000 infantry and 200 horse; ⁷ comprising, besides the desperadoes that formed its main body, a few veterans, who had seen a great deal of service in the wars with France.

The Vaudois, the enemy being now in sight, humbled themselves, in a public fast, before God. Next, they partook together of the Lord’s Supper. Refreshed in soul by these services, they proceeded to put in execution the measures previously resolved on. The old men and the women climbed the mountains, awakening the echoes with the psalms which they sung on their way to the Pra del Tor, within whose natural ramparts of rock and snow-clad peaks they sought asylum. The Vaudois population of the Valleys at that time was not more

⁶Muston, p. 72. Monastier, p. 182.

⁷Letter of Scipio Lentullus, Pastor of San Giovanni, (Leger, Hist. des Eglises Vaud., livr. 2, p. 35).

than 18,000; their armed men did not exceed 1,200; ⁸ these were distributed at various passes and barricades to oppose the enemy, who was now near.

On the 2nd of November the Piedmontese army, putting itself in motion, crossed the Pelice, and advanced along the narrow defile that leads up to the Valiants, having the heights of Bricherasio on the right, and the spurs of Monte Friolante on the left, with the towering masses of the Vandalin and Castelluzzo in front. The Piedmontese encamped in the meadows of San Giovanni, within a stone's-throw of the point where the Val di Lucerna and the Val di Angrogna divide, the former to expand into a noble breadth of meadow and vineyard, running on between magnificent mountains, with their rich clothing of pastures, chestnut groves, and chalets, till it ends in the savage Pass of Mirabouc; and the latter, to wind and climb in a grand succession of precipice, and gorge, and grassy dell, till it issues in the funnel-shaped valley around which the ice-crowned mountains stand the everlasting sentinels. It was the latter of these two valleys (Angrogna) that La Trinita first essayed to enter. He marched 1,200 men into it, the wings of his army deploying over its bordering heights of La Cotiere. His soldiers were opposed by only a small body of Vaudois, some of whom were armed solely with the sling and the cross-bow. Skirmishing with the foe, the Vaudois retired, fighting, to the higher grounds. When the evening set in, neither side could claim a decided advantage. Wearied with skirmishing, both armies encamped for the night -the Vaudois on the heights of Roccomaneot, and the Piedmontese, their camp-fires lighted, on the lower hills of La Cotiere.

Suddenly the silence of the evening was startled by a derisive shout that rose from the Piedmontese host. What had happened to evoke these sounds of contempt? They had descried, between them and the sky, on the heights above them, the bending figures of the Vaudois. On their knees the Waldensian warriors were supplicating the God of battles. Hardly had the scoffs with which the Piedmontese hailed the act died away, when a drum was heard to beat in a side valley. A child had got hold of the instrument, and was amusing itself

⁸So says the Pastor of Giovanni, Scipio Lentullus, in the letter already referred to. (Leger livr. 2, p. 35.)

with it. The soldiers of La Trinita saw in imagination a fresh body of Waldensians advancing from this lateral defile to rush upon them. They seized their arms in no little disorder. The Vaudois, seeing the movement of the foe, seized theirs also, and rushed downhill to anticipate the attack. The Piedmontese threw away their arms and fled, chased by the Waldenses, thus losing in half an hour the ground it had cost them a day's fighting to gain. The weapons abandoned by the fugitives formed a much-needed and most opportune supply to the Vaudois. As the result of the combats of the day, La Trinita had sixty-seven men slain; of the Vaudois three only had fallen.⁹

Opening on the left of La Trinita was the corn-clad, vine-clad, and mountain-ramparted Valley of Lucerna, with its towns, La Torre, Villaro, Bobbio, and others, forming the noblest of the Waldensian Valleys. La Trinita now occupied this valley with his soldiers. This was comparatively an easy achievement, almost all its inhabitants having fled to the Ira del Tor. Those that remained were mostly Romanists, who were, at that time, mixed with the Waldensian population, and even they, committing their wives and daughters to the keeping of their Vaudois neighbors, had sent them with them to the Pra del Tor, to escape the brutal outrages of the Papal army. On the following days La Trinita fought some small affairs with the Vaudois, in all of which he was repulsed with considerable slaughter. The arduous nature of the task he had in hand now began to dawn upon him.

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The mountaineers, he saw, were courageous, and determined to die rather than submit their conscience to the Pope, and their families to the passions of his soldiers. He discovered, moreover, that they were a simple and confiding people, utterly unversed in the ways of intrigue. He was delighted to find these qualities in them, because he thought he saw how he could turn them to account. He had tools with him as cunning and vile as himself - Jacomel, the inquisitor; and Gastaud, his secretary; the latter feigned a love for the Gospel. These men he set to work. When they had prepared matters, he assembled the leading men of the Waldenses, and recited to them some flattering words, which he had heard or professed to have heard the duke and duchess make use of towards them; he protested that

⁹Letter of Scipio Lentullus. (Leger, livr. 2, p. 35.) Muston, pp. 73,74.

this was no pleasant business in which he was engaged, and that he would be glad to have it off his hands; peace, he thought, could easily be arranged, if they would only make a few small concessions to show that they were reasonable men; he would propose that they should deposit their arms in the house of one of their syndics, and permit him, for form's sake, to go with a small train, and celebrate mass in the Church of St. Lorenzo, in Angrogna, and afterwards pay a visit to the Pra del Tor. La Trinita's proposal proved the correctness of the estimate he had formed of Vaudois confidingness. The people spent a whole night in deliberation over the count's proposition, and, contrary to the opinion of their pastors and some of their laymen, agreed to accept of it. ¹⁰

The Papal general said his mass in the Protestant church. After this he traversed the gloomy defiles that lead up to the famous Pra, on whose green slopes, with their snowy battlements, he was so desirous to feast his eyes, though, it is said, he showed evident trepidation when he passed the black pool of Tompie, with its memories of retribution. Having accomplished these feats in safety, he returned to wear the mask a little longer.

He resumed the efforts on which he professed to be so earnestly and laudably bent, of effecting peace. The duke had now come nearer, and was living at Vercelli, on the plain of Piedmont; La Trinita thought that the Vaudois ought by all means to send deputies thither. It would strengthen their supplication indeed, all but insure its success, if they would raise a sum of 20,000 crowns. On payment of this sum he would withdraw his army, and leave them to practice their religion in peace. ¹¹ The Vaudois, unable to conceive of dissimulation like La Trinita's, made concession after concession. They had previously laid down their arms; they now sent deputies to the duke; next, they taxed themselves to buy off his soldiers; and last and worst of all, at the demand of La Trinita, they sent away their pastors. It was dreadful to think of a journey across the Col Julien at that season; yet it had to be gone. Over its snowy summits, where the winter drifts were continually obliterating the track, and piling up fresh wreaths across the Valleys of Prali and San Martino,

¹⁰Leger livr. 2, p. 35. Monastier, pp. 184,185.

¹¹Leger, livr. 2, p. 35.

and over the ice-clad mountains beyond, had this sorrowful band of pastors to pursue their way, to find refuge among the Protestants in the French Valley of Pragelas. This difficult and dangerous route was forced upon them, the more direct road through the Valley of Perosa being closed by the marauders and assassins that infested it, and especially by those in the pay of the monks of Pinerolo.

The count believed that the poor people were now entirely in his power. His soldiers did their pleasure in the Valley of Lucerna. They pillaged the houses abandoned by the Vaudois. The few inhabitants who had remained, as well as those who had returned, thinking that during the negotiations for peace hostilities would be suspended, were fain to make their escape a second time, and to seek refuge in the woods and caves of the higher reaches of the Valleys. The outrages committed by the ruffians to whom the Valley of Lucerna was now given over were of a kind that cannot be told. The historian Gilles has recorded a touching instance. A helpless man, who had lived a hundred and three years, was placed in a cave, and his granddaughter, a girl of seventeen, was left to take care of him. The soldiers found out his hiding-place; the old man was murdered, and outrage was offered to his granddaughter. She fled from the brutal pursuit of the soldiers, leaped over a precipice, and died. In another instance, an old man was pursued to the brink of a precipice by one of La Trinita's soldiers. The Vaudois had no alternative but to throw himself over the brink or die by the sword of his pursuer. He stopped, turned round, and dropped on his knees, as if to supplicate for his life. The trooper was raising his sword to strike him dead, when the Vaudois, clasping him tightly round the legs, and swaying himself backward with all his might, rolled over the precipice, dragging the soldier with him into the abyss.

Part of the sum agreed on between La Trinita and the Waldenses had now been paid to him. To raise this money the poor people were under the necessity of selling their herds. The count now withdrew his army into winter quarters at Cavour, a point so near the Valleys that a few hours' march would enable him to re-enter them at any moment. The corn and oil and wine which he had not been able to carry away he destroyed. Even the mills he broke in pieces. His design appeared to be to leave the Vaudois only the alternative of submission, or of dying of hunger on their mountains. To afflict

them yet more he placed garrisons here and there in the Valleys; and, in the very wantonness of tyranny, required those who themselves were without bread to provide food for his soldiers. These soldiers were continually prowling about in search of victims on whom to gratify their cruelty and their lust. Those who had the unspeakable misfortune to be dragged into their den, had to undergo, if men, excruciating torture; if women, revolting outrage. ¹²

¹²Muston, p. 77. Monastier, pp. 186,187.

Chapter 7 : The Great Campaign of 1561

Mass or Extermination-Covenant in the Valleys-Their Solemn Oath- How the Waldenses Recant-Their Energetic Preparations-La Trinita Advances his Army-Twice attempts to Enter Angrogna, and is Repulsed -A Third Attempt-Attacks on Three Points-Repulsed on all Three- Ravages the Valley of Rera-Receives Reinforcements from France and Spain-Commences a Third Campaign-Six Men against an Army- Utter Discomfiture-Extinction of La Trinita's Host-Peace

Picture: The Vaudois taking their Oath.

Picture: Map of the Waldensian Valleys.

These frightful inflictions the Waldenses had submitted to in the hope that the deputies whom they had sent to the duke would bring back with them an honorable peace. The impatience with which they waited their return may well be conceived. At last, after an absence of six weeks, the commissioners reappeared in the Valleys; but their dejected faces, even before they had uttered a word, told that they had not succeeded. They had been sent back with an order, enjoining on the Vaudois unconditional submission to the Church of Rome on pain of extermination. To enforce that order to the uttermost a more numerous army was at that moment being raised. The mass or universal slaughter-such was the alternative now presented to them.

The spirit of the people woke up. Rather than thus disgrace their ancestors, imperil their own souls, and entail a heritage of slavery on their children, they would die a thousand times. Their depression was gone; they were as men who had awakened from heavy sleep; they had found their arms. Their first care was to recall their pastors, their next to raise up their fallen churches, and their third to resume public service in them. Daily their courage grew, and once more joy lighted up their faces.

There came letters of sympathy and promises of help from their fellow-Protestants of Geneva, Dauphine, and France. Over the two

latter countries persecution at that hour impended, but their own dangers made them all the more ready to succour their brethren of the Valleys. “Thereupon,” says an historian, “took place one of those grand and solemn scenes which, at once heroic and religious, seem rather adapted for an epic poem than for grave history.”¹

The Waldenses of Lucerna sent deputies across the mountains, then covered to a great depth with snow, to propose an alliance with the Protestants of the Valley of Pragelas, who were at that time threatened by their sovereign Francis I. The proposed alliance was joyfully accepted. Assembling on a plateau of snow facing the mountains of Sestrieres, and the chain of the Guinevert, the deputies swore to stand by each other and render mutual support in the coming struggle.² It was agreed that this oath of alliance should be sworn with a like solemnity in the Waldensian Valleys.

[462] The deputies from Pragelas, crossing the Mount Julien, arrived at Bobbio on the 21st January, 1561. Their coming was singularly opportune. On the evening before a ducal proclamation had been published in the Valleys, commanding the Vaudois, within twenty-four hours, to give attendance at mass, or abide the consequences—“fire, sword, the cord: the three arguments of Romanism,” says Muston. This was the first news with which the Pragelese deputies were met on their arrival. With all the more enthusiasm they proceeded to renew their oath. Ascending a low hill behind Bobbio, the deputies from Pragelas, and those from Lucerna, standing erect in the midst of the assembled heads of families, who kneeled around, pronounced these words—

“In the name of the Vaudois Churches of the Alps, of Dauphine and of Piedmont, which have ever been united, and of which we are the representatives, we here promise, our hands on our Bible, and in the presence of God, that all our Valleys shall courageously sustain each other in matters of religion, without prejudice to the obedience due to their legitimate superiors.

“We promise to maintain the Bible, whole and without admixture, according to the usage of the true Apostlic Church, persevering in this holy religion, though it be at the peril of our lives, in order that

¹Muston, p. 78.

²Monastier, p. 188. Muston, p. 78.

we may transmit it to our children, intact and pure, as we received it from our fathers.

“We promise aid and succour to our persecuted brothers, not regarding our individual interests, but the common cause; and not relying upon man, but upon God.”³

The physical grandeurs of the spot were in meet accordance with the moral sublimity of the transaction. Immediately beneath was spread out the green bosom of the valley, with here and there the silver of the Pelice gleaming out amid vineyards and acacia groves. Filling the horizon on all sides save one stood up an array of magnificent mountains, white with the snows of winter. Conspicuous among them were the grand peaks of the Col de Malaure and the Col de la Croix. They looked the silent and majestic witnesses of the oath, in which a heroic people bound themselves to die rather than permit the defilement of their hearths, and the profanation of their altars, by the hordes of an idolatrous tyranny. It was in this grand fashion that the Waldenses opened one of the most brilliant campaigns ever waged by their arms.

The next morning, according to the duke's order, they must choose between the mass and the penalty annexed to refusal. A neighboring church -one of those which had been taken from them- stood ready, with altar decked and tapers lighted, for the Vaudois to hear their first mass. Hardly had the day dawned when the expected penitents were at the church door. They would show the duke in what fashion they meant to read their recantation. They entered the building. A moment they stood surveying the strange transformation their church had undergone, and then they set to work. To extinguish the tapers, pull down the images, and sweep into the street rosary and crucifix and all the other paraphernalia of the Popish worship, was but the work of a few minutes. The minister, Humbert Artus, then ascended the pulpit, and reading out as his text [Isaiah 45:20](#)- “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot save”- preached a sermon which struck the key-note of the campaign then opening.

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³Muston, pp. 78,79.

The inhabitants of the hamlets and chalets in the mountains rushed down like their own winter torrents into Lucerna, and the army of the Vaudois reinforced set out to purge the temple at Villaro. On their way they encountered the Piedmontese garrison. They attacked and drove them back; the monks, seigneurs, and magistrates, who had come to receive the abjuration of the heretics, accompanying the troops in their ignominious flight. The whole band of fugitives-soldiers, priests, and judges-shut themselves up in the town of Villaro, which was now besieged by the Vaudois. Thrice did the garrison from La Torre attempt to raise the siege, and thrice were they repulsed. At last, on the tenth day, the garrison surrendered, and had their lives spared, two Waldensian pastors accompanying them to La Torre, the soldiers expressing greater confidence in them than in any other escort.

The Count La Trinita, seeing his garrison driven out, struck his encampment at Carour, and moved his army into the Valleys. He again essayed to sow dissension amongst the Vaudois by entangling them in negotiations for peace, but by this time they had learned too well the value of his promises to pay the least attention to them, or to intermit for an hour their preparations for defense. It was now the beginning of February, 1561.

The Vaudois labored with the zeal of men who feel that their cause is a great and a righteous one, and are prepared to sacrifice all for it. They erected barricades; they planted ambushes; they appointed signals, to telegraph the movements of the enemy from post to post. "Every house," says Muston, "became a manufactory of pikes, bullets, and other weapons." They selected the best marksmen their Valleys could furnish, and formed them into the "Flying Company," whose duty it was to hasten to the point where danger pressed the most. To each body of fighting men they attached two pastors, to maintain the morale of their army. The pastors, morning and evening, led the public devotions; they prayed with the soldiers before going into battle; and when the fighting was over, and the Vaudois were chasing the enemy down their great mountains, and through their dark gorges, they exerted themselves to prevent the victory being stained by any unnecessary effusion of blood.

La Trinita knew well that if he would subjugate the Valleys, and bring the campaign to a successful end, he must make himself master

of the Pra del Tor. Into that vast natural citadel was now gathered the main body of the Waldensian people. What of their herds and provisions remained to them had been transported thither; there they had constructed mills and baking ovens; there, too, sat their council, and thence directed the whole operations of the defense. A blow struck there would crush the Vaudois' heart, and convert what the Waldenses regarded as their impregnable castle into their tomb.

Deferring the chastisement of the other valleys meanwhile, La Trinita directed all his efforts against Angrogna. His first attempt to enter it with his army was made on the 4th February. The fighting lasted till night, and ended in his repulse. His second attempt, three days after, carried him some considerable way into Angrogna, burning and ravaging, but his partial success cost him dear, and the ground won had ultimately to be abandoned. ⁴

The 14th of February saw the severest struggle. Employing all his strategy to make himself master of the much-coveted Pra, with all in it, he divided his army into three corps, and advanced against it from three points. One body of troops, marching along the gorges of the Angrogna, and traversing the narrow chasm that leads up to the Pra, attacked it on the south. Another body, climbing the heights from Pramol, and crossing the snowy flanks of La Vechera, tried to force an entrance on the east; while a third, ascending from San Martino, and crossing the lofty summits that wall in the Pra on the north, descended upon it from that quarter. The count's confident expectation was that if his men should be unable to force an entrance at one point they were sure to do so at another.

No scout had given warning of what was approaching. While three armies were marching to attack them, the Waldenses, in their grand valley, with its rampart of ice-crowned peaks, were engaged in their morning devotions. Suddenly the cries of fugitives, and the shouts of assailants, issuing from the narrow chasm on the south, broke upon their ear, together with the smoke of burning hamlets. Of the three points of attack this was the easiest to be defended. Six brave Waldensian youths strode down the valley, to stop the way against La Trinita's soldiers. They were six against an army.

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⁴Monastier, p. 190. Muston, p. 80.

The road by which the soldiers were advancing is long and gloomy, and overhung by great rocks, and so narrow that only two men can march abreast. On this side rises the mountain: on that, far down, thunders the torrent; a ledge in the steep face of the cliff running here in the darkness, there in the sunshine, serves as a pathway. It leads to what is termed the gate of the Pra. That gateway is formed by an angle of the mountain, which obtrudes upon the narrow ledge on the one side, while a huge rock rises on the other and still further narrows the point of ingress into the Pra del Tor. Access into the famous Pra, of which La Trinita was now striving to make himself master, there is not on this side save through this narrow opening; seeing that on the right rises the mountain; on the left yawns the gulf, into which, if one steps aside but in the least, he tumbles headlong. To friend and foe alike the only entrance into the Pra del Tor on the south is by this gate of Nature's own erecting. It was here that the six Waldensian warriors took their stand.⁵ Immovable as their own Alps, they not only checked the advance of the host, but drove it back in a panic-stricken mass, which made the precipices of the defile doubly fatal.

Others would have hastened to their aid, had not danger suddenly presented itself in another quarter. On the heights of La Vechera, crossing the snow, was descried an armed troop, making their entrance into the valley on the east. Before they had time to descend they were met by the Waldenses, who dispersed them, and made them flee. Two of the attacking parties of the count have failed: will the third have better success?

As the Waldenses were pursuing the routed enemy on La Vechera, they saw yet another armed troop, which had crossed the mountains that separate the Val San Marring from the Pra del Tor on the north, descending upon them. Instantly the alarm was raised. A few men only could they dispatch to meet the invaders. These lay in ambush at the mouth of a defile through which the attacking party was making its way down into the Pra. Emerging from the defile, and looking down into the valley beneath them, they exclaimed, "Haste, haste! Angrogna is ours." The Vaudois, starting up, and crying out, "It is you that are ours," rushed upon them sword in

⁵Monastier, p. 191.

hand. Trusting in their superior numbers, the Piedmontese soldiers fought desperately. But a few minutes sufficed for the men of the Valleys to hurry from the points where they were now victorious, to the assistance of their brethren. The invaders, seeing themselves attacked on all sides, turned and fled up the slopes they had just descended. Many were slain, nor would a man of them have recrossed the mountains but for the pastor of the Flying Company, who, raising his voice to the utmost pitch, entreated the pursuers to spare the lives of those who were no longer able to resist. Among the slain was Charles Truchet, who so cruelly ravaged the commune of Rioclaret a few months before. A stone from a sling laid him prostrate on the ground, and his head was cut off with his own sword. Louis de Monteuil, another noted persecutor of the Vaudois, perished in the same action.

Furious at his repulse, the Count La Trinita turned his arms against the almost defenceless Valley of Rora. He ravaged it, burning its little town, and chasing away its population of eighty families, who escaped over the snows of the mountains to Villaro, in the Valley of Lucerna. That valley he next entered with his soldiers, and though it was for the moment almost depopulated, the Popish general received so warm a welcome from those peasants who remained that, after being again and again beaten, he was fain to draw off his men-at-arms, and retreat to his old quarters at Cavour, there to chew the cud over his misfortunes, and hatch new stratagems and plan new attacks, which he fondly hoped would retrieve his disgraces.

La Trinita spent a month in reinforcing his army, greatly weakened by the losses it had sustained. The King of France sent him ten companies of foot, and some other choice soldiers. ⁶ There came a regiment from Spain; and numerous volunteers from Piedmont, comprising many of the nobility. From 4,000, the original number of his army, it was now raised to 7,000. ⁷ He thought himself strong enough to begin a third campaign. He was confident that this time he would wipe out the disgrace which had befallen his arms, and sweep from the earth at once and for ever the great scandal of the

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⁶Leger, part 2, p. 36. Gilles, chapter 25.

⁷Ibid., part 2, p. 37.

Waldenses. He again directed all his efforts against Angrogna, the heart and bulwark of the Valleys.

It was Sunday, the 17th of March, 1561. The whole of the Vaudois assembled in the Pra del Tor had met on the morning of that day, soon after dawn, as was their wont, to unite in public devotion. The first rays of the rising sun were beginning to light up the white hills around them, and the last cadences of their morning psalm were dying away on the grassy slopes of the Pra, when a sudden alarm was raised. The enemy was approaching by three routes. On the ridges of the eastern summits appeared one body of armed men; another was defiling up the chasm, and in a few minutes would pour itself, through the gateway already described, into the Pra; while a third was forcing itself over the rocks by a path intermediate between the two. Instantly the enemy was met on all the points of approach. A handful of Waldensians sufficed to thrust back along the narrow gorge the line of glittering cuirassed men, who were defiling through it. At the other two points, where bastions of rock and earth had been erected, the fighting was severe, and the dead lay thick, but the day at both places went against the invaders. Some of the ablest captains were among the slain. The number of the soldiers killed was so great that Count La Trinita is said to have sat down and wept when he beheld the heaps of the dead. ⁸ It was matter of astonishment at the time that the Waldenses did not pursue the invaders, for had they done so, being so much better acquainted with the mountain-paths, not one of all that host would have been left alive to carry tidings of its discomfiture to the inhabitants of Piedmont. Their pastors restrained the victorious Vaudois, having laid it down as a maxim at the beginning of the campaign, that they would use with moderation and clemency whatever victories the "God of battles" might be pleased to give them, and that they would spill no blood unless when absolutely necessary to prevent their own being shed. The Piedmontese dead was again out of all proportion to those who had fallen on the other side; so much so, that it was currently said in the cities of Piedmont that "God was fighting for the barbers." ⁹

⁸Muston, p. 83.

⁹Ibid. Monastier, p. 194.

More deeply humiliated and disgraced than ever, La Trinita led back the remains of his army to its old quarters. Well had it been for him if he had never set foot within the Waldensian territory, and not less so for many of those who followed him, including not a few of the nobles of Piedmont, whose bones were now bleaching on the mountains of the Vaudois. But the Popish general was slow to see the lesson of these events. Even yet he harbored the design of returning to assail that fatal valley where he had lost so many laurels, and buried so many soldiers; but he covered his purpose with craft. Negotiations had been opened between the men of the Valleys and the Duke of Savoy, and as they were proceeding satisfactorily, the Vaudois were without suspicions of evil. This was the moment that La Trinita chose to attack them. He hastily assembled his troops, and on the night of the 16th April he marched them against the Pra del Tor, hoping to enter it unopposed, and give the Vaudois "as sheep to the slaughter."

The snows around the Pra were beginning to burn in the light of morning when the attention of the people, who had just ended their united worship, was attracted by unusual sounds which were heard to issue from the gorge that led into the valley. On the instant six brave mountaineers rushed to the gateway that opens from the gorge. The long line of La Trinita's soldiers was seen advancing two abreast, their helmets and cuirasses glittering in the light. The six Vaudois made their arrangements, and calmly waited till the enemy was near. The first two Vaudois, holding loaded muskets, knelt down. The second two stood erect, ready to fire over the heads of the first two. The third two undertook the loading of the weapons as they were discharged. The invaders came on. As the first two of the enemy turned the rock they were shot down by the two foremost Vaudois. The next two of the attacking force fell in like manner by the shot of the Vaudois in the rear. The third rank of the enemy presented themselves only to be laid by the side of their comrades. In a few minutes a little heap of dead bodies blocked the pass, rendering impossible the advance of the accumulating file of the enemy in the chasm.

Meantime, other Vaudois climbed the mountains that overhang the gorge in which the Piedmontese army was imprisoned. Tearing up the great stones with which the hill-side was strewn, the Vaudois

[467] sent them rolling down upon the host. Unable to advance from the wall of dead in front, and unable to flee from the ever-accumulating masses behind, the soldiers were crushed in dozens by the falling rocks. Panic set in and panic in such a position how dreadful! Wedged together on the narrow ledge, with a murderous rain of rocks falling on them, their struggle to escape was frightful. They jostled one another, and trod each other under foot, while vast numbers fell over the precipice, and were dashed on the rocks or drowned in the torrent. ¹⁰ When those at the entrance of the valley, who were watching the result, saw the crystal of the Angrogna begin about midday to be changed into blood, “Ah!” said they, “the Pra del Tor has been taken; La Trinita has triumphed; there flows the blood of the Vaudois.” And, indeed, the count on beginning his march that morning is said to have boasted that by noon the torrent of the Angrogna would be seen to change color; and so in truth it did. Instead of a pellucid stream, rolling along on a white gravelly bed, which is its usual appearance at the mouth of the valley, it was now deeply dyed from recent slaughter. But when the few who had escaped the catastrophe returned to tell what had that day passed within the defiles of the Angrogna, it was seen that it was not the blood of the Vaudois, but the blood of their ruthless invaders, which dyed the waters of the Angrogna. The count withdrew on that same night with his army, to return no more to the Valleys.

Negotiations were again resumed, not this time through the Count La Trinita, but through Philip of Savoy, Count of Raconis, and were speedily brought to a satisfactory issue. The Duke of Savoy had but small merit in making peace with the men whom he found he could not conquer. The capitulation was signed on the 5th of June, 1561, and its first clause granted an indemnity for all offenses. It is open to remark that this indemnity was given to those who had suffered, not to those who had committed the offenses it condoned. The articles that followed permitted the Vaudois to erect churches in their Valleys, with the exception of two or three of their towns, to hold public worship, in short, to celebrate all the offices of their religion. All the “ancient franchises, immunities, and privileges, whether conceded by his Highness, or by his Highness’s

¹⁰Leger, part 2, p. 37. Muston, p. 85.

predecessors,” were renewed, provided they were vouched by public documents. ¹¹ Such was the arrangement that closed this war of fifteen months. The Vaudois ascribed it in great part to the influence of the good Duchess Margaret. The Pope designated it a “pernicious example,” which he feared would not want imitators in those times when the love of many to the Roman See was waxing cold. It stank in the no perils of the prelates and monks of Piedmont, to whom the heretics had been a free booty. Nevertheless, Duke Emmanuel Philibert faithfully maintained its stipulations, the duchess being by his side to counteract any pressure in the contrary direction. This peace, together with the summer that was now opening, began to slowly efface the deep scars the persecution had left on the Valleys; and what further helped to console and reanimate this brave but afflicted people, was the sympathy and aid universally tendered them by Protestants abroad, in particular by Calvin and the Elector Palatine, the latter addressing a spirited letter to the duke on behalf of his persecuted subjects. ¹²

Nothing was more admirable than the spirit of devotion which the Vaudois exhibited all through these terrible conflicts. Their Valleys resounded not less with the voice of prayer and praise, than with the din of arms. Their opponents came from carousing, from blaspheming, from murdering, to engage in battle; the Waldenses rose from their knees to unsheathe the sword, and wield it in a cause which they firmly believed to be that of Him to whom they had bent in supplication. When their little army went a-field their barbes always accompanied it, to inspire the soldiers by suitable exhortations before joining battle, and to moderate in the hour of victory a vengeance which, however excusable, would yet have lowered the glory of the triumph. When the fighting men hastened to the bastion or to the defile, the pastors betook them to the mountain’s slope, or to its summit, and there with uplifted hands supplicated help from the “Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” When the battle had ceased, and the enemy were in flight, and the victors had returned from chasing their invaders from their Valleys, the grey-haired pastor, the lion-hearted man of battle, the matron,

¹¹The Articles of Capitulation are given in full in Leger, part 2, pp. 38-40.

¹²Leger, part 2, p. 41.

the maiden, the stripling, and the little child, would assemble in the Pra del Tor, and while the setting sun was kindling into glory the mountain-tops of their once more ransomed land, they would raise their voices together, and sing the old war-song of Judah, in strains so heroic that the great rocks around them would send back the thunder of their praise in louder echoes than those of the battle whose triumphant issue they were celebrating.

Chapter 8 : Waldensian Colonies in Calabria and Apulia

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An Inn at Turin-Two Waldensian Youths-A Stranger-Invitation to Calabria-The Waldenses Search the Land-They Settle there-Their Colony Flourishes-Build Towns-Cultivate Science-They Hear of the Reformation—Petition for a Fixed Pastor-Jean Louis Paschale sent to them-Apprehended-Brought in Chains to Naples-Conducted to Rome

Picture: Parting of Paschale from his Betrothed.

One day, about the year 1340, two Waldensian youths were seated in an inn in Turin, engaged in earnest conversation respecting their home prospects. Shut up in their valleys, and cultivating with toil their somewhat sterile mountains, they sighed for wider limits and a more fertile land. “Come with me,” said a stranger, who had been listening unperceived to their discourse, “Come with me, and I will give you fertile fields for your barren rocks.” The person who now courteously addressed the youths, and whose steps Providence had directed to the same hotel with themselves, was a gentleman from Calabria, at the southern extremity of the Italian Peninsula.

On their return to the Valleys the youths reported the words of the stranger, and the flattering hopes he had held out should they be willing to migrate to this southern land, where skies more genial, and an earth more mollient, would reward their labor with more bounteous harvests. The elders of the Vaudois people listened not without interest. The population of their Valleys had recently received a great accession in the Albigensian refugees, who had escaped from the massacres of Innocent III in the south of France; and the Waldenses, feeling themselves overcrowded, were prepared to welcome any fair scheme that promised an enlargement of their boundaries. But before acceding to the proposition of the stranger they thought it advisable to send competent persons to examine this new and to them unknown land. The Vaudois explorers returned

with a flattering account of the conditions and capabilities of the country they had been invited to occupy. Compared with their own more northern mountains, whose summits Witer covers all the year through with his snows, whose gorges are apt to be swept by furious gusts, and their sides stripped of their corn and vines by devastating torrents, Calabria was a land of promise. “There are beautiful hills,” says the historian Gilles, describing this settlement, “clothed with all kinds of fruit-trees spontaneously springing up according to their situations in the plains, vines and chestnuts; on the rising ground, walnuts and every fruit-tree. Everywhere were seen rich arable land and few laborers.” A considerable body of emigrants set out for this new country. The young men were accompanied to their future homes with partners. They carried with them the Bible in the Romance version, “that holy ark of the New Covenant, and of everlasting peace.”

The conditions of their emigration offered a reasonable security for the free and undisturbed exercise of their worship. “By a convention with the local seigneurs, ratified later by the King of Naples, Ferdinand of Arragon, they were permitted to govern their own affairs, civil and spiritual, by their own magistrates, and their own pastors.”¹ Their first settlement was near the town of Montalto. Half a century later rose the city of San Sexto, which afterwards became the capital of the colony. Other towns and villages sprang up, and the region, which before had been thinly inhabited, and but poorly cultivated, was soon transformed into a smiling garden. The swelling hills were clothed with fruit-trees, and the plains waved with luxuriant crops.

So struck was the Marquis of Spinello with the prosperity and wealth of the settlements, that he offered to cede lands on his own vast and fertile estates where these colonists might build cities and plant vineyards. One of their towns he authorised them to surround with a wall; hence its name, La Guardia. This town, situated on a height near the sea, soon became populous and opulent.²

Towards the close of the same century, another body of Vaudois emigrants from Provence arrived in the south of Italy. The new-

¹Muston, p. 37.

²Leger, part 2, p. 333.

comers settled in Apulia, not far from their Calabrian brethren, villages and towns arose, and the region speedily put on a new face under the improved arts and husbandry of the colonists. Their smiling homes, which looked forth from amid groves of orange and myrtle, their hills covered with the olive and the vine, their corn-fields and pasture-lands, were the marvel and the envy of their neighbors. [469]

In 1500 there arrived in Calabria yet another emigration from the Valleys of Pragelas and Fraissinieres. This third body of colonists established how different the aspect of the one from that of the other! The soil, touched by the plough of Vaudois, seemed to feel a charm that made it open its bosom and yield a tenfold increase. The vine tended by Vaudois hands bore richer clusters, and themselves on the Volturata, a river which flows from the Apennines into the Bay of Tarento. With the increase of their numbers came an increase of prosperity to the colonists. Their neighbors, who knew not the secret of this prosperity, were lost in wonder and admiration of it. The physical attributes of the region occupied by the emigrants differed in no respect from those of their own lands, both were placed under the same sky, but strove in generous rivalry with the fig and the olive to outdo them in enriching with its produce the Vaudois board. And how delightful the quiet and order of their towns; and the air of happiness on the faces of the people! And how sweet to listen to the bleating of the flocks on the hills, the lowing of the herds in the meadows, the song of the reaper and grape-gatherer, and the merry voices of children at play around the hamlets and villages! For about 200 years these colonies continued to flourish. [470]

“It is a curious circumstance,” says the historian McCrie, “that the first gleam of light, at the revival of letters, shone on that remote spot of Italy where the Vaudois had found an asylum. Petrarch first acquired a knowledge of the Greek tongue from Barlaam, a monk of Calabria; and Boccaccio was taught it from Leontius Pilatus, who was a hearer of Barlaam, if not also a native of the same place.”³ Muston says that “the sciences flourished among them.”⁴ The day of the Renaissance had not yet broken. The flight of scholars which

³McCrie, *Italy*, pp. 7,8.

⁴Muston, *Israet of the Alps*, p. 38.

was to bear with it the seeds of ancient learning to the West, had not yet taken place; but the Vaudois of Calabria would seem to have anticipated that great literary revival. They had brought with them the Scriptures in the Romance version. They possessed doubtless the taste and genius for which the Romance nations were then famous; and, moreover, in their southern settlement they may have had access to some knowledge of those sciences which the Saracens then so assiduously cultivated; and what so likely, with their leisure and wealth, as that these Vaudois should tune their attention to letters as well as to husbandry, and make their adopted country vocal with the strains of that minstrelsy with which Provence and Dauphine had resounded so melodiously, till its music was quenched at once and for ever by the murderous arms of Simon de Montfort? But here we can only doubtfully guess, for the records of this interesting people are scanty and dubious.

These colonists kept up their connection with the mother country of the Valleys, though situated at the opposite extremity of Italy. To keep alive their faith, which was the connecting link, pastors were sent in relays of two to minister in the Churches of Calabria and Apulia; and when they had fulfilled their term of two years they were replaced by other two. The barbes, on their way back to the Valleys, visited their brethren in the Italian towns; for at that time there were few cities in the peninsula in which the Vaudois were not to be found. The grandfather of the Vaudois historian, Gilles, in one of these pastoral visits to Venice, was assured by the Waldenses whom he there conversed with, that there were not fewer than 6,000 of their nation in that city. Fear had not yet awakened the suspicions and kindled the hatred of the Romanists, for the Reformation was not yet come. Nor did the Waldenses care to thrust their opinions upon the notice of their neighbors. Still the priests could not help observing that the manners of these northern settlers were, in many things, peculiar and strange. They eschewed revels and fetes; they had their children taught by foreign schoolmasters; in their churches was neither image nor lighted taper; they never went on pilgrimage; they buried their dead without the aid of the priests; and never were they known to bring a candle to the Virgin's shrine, or purchase a mass for the help of their dead relatives. These peculiarities were certainly startling, but one thing went far to atone for them—they

paid with the utmost punctuality and fidelity their stipulated tithes; and as the value of their lands was yearly increasing, there was a corresponding yearly increase in both the tithe due to the priest and the rent payable to the landlord, and neither was anxious to disturb a state of things so beneficial to himself, and which was every day becoming more advantageous. ⁵

But in the middle of the sixteenth century the breath of Protestantism from the north began to move over these colonies. The pastors who visited them told them of the synod which had been held in Angrogna in 1532, and which had been as the “beginning of months” to the ancient Church of the Valleys. More glorious tidings still did they communicate to the Christians of Calabria. In Germany, in France, in Switzerland, and in Denmark the old Gospel had blazed forth in a splendor unknown to it for ages. The Lamp of the Alps was no longer the one solitary light in the world: around it was a circle of mighty torches, whose rays, blending with those of the older luminary, were combining to dispel the night from Christendom. At the hearing of these stupendous things their spirit revived: their past conformity appeared to them like cowardice; they, too, would take part in the great work of the emancipation of the nations, by making open confession of the truth; and no longer content with the mere visit of a pastor, they petitioned the mother Church to send them one who might stately discharge amongst them the office of the holy ministry. ⁶

There was at that time a young minister at Geneva, a native of Italy, and him the Church of the Valleys designated to the perilous but honorable post. His name was John Louis Paschale; he was a native of Coni in the Plain of Piedmont. By birth a Romanist, his first profession was that of arms; but from a knight of the sword he had become, like Loyola, but in a truer sense, a knight of the Cross. He had just completed his theological studies at Lausaune. He was betrothed to a young Piedmontese Protestant, Camilia Guerina. ⁷

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⁵Perrin, *Histoire des Vaudois*, p. 197. Monastier, pp. 203,204.

⁶Muston, p. 38. Monastier and McCrie say that the application for a pastor was made to Geneva, and that Paschale set out for Calabria, accompanied by another minister and two schoolmasters. It is probable that the application was made to Geneva through the intermediation of the home Church.

⁷McCrie, p. 324.

“Alas!” she sorrowfully exclaimed, when he intimated to her his departure for Calabria, “so near to Rome and so far from me.” They parted, nevermore to meet on earth. The young minister carried with him to Calabria the energetic spirit of Geneva. His preaching was with power; the zeal and courage of the Calabrian flock revived, and the light formerly hid under a bushel was now openly displayed. Its splendor attracted the ignorance and awoke the fanaticism of the region. The priests, who had tolerated a heresy that had conducted itself so modestly, and paid its dues so punctually, could be blind no longer. The Marquis of Spinello, who had been the protector of these colonists hitherto, finding his kindness more than repaid in the flourishing condition of his states, was compelled to move against them. “That dreadful thing, Lutheranism,” he was told, “had broken in, and would soon destroy all things.” The marquis summoned the pastor and his flock before him. After a few moments’ address from Paschale, the marquis dismissed the members of the congregation with a sharp reprimand, but the pastor he threw into the dungeons of Foscalda. The bishop of the diocese next took the matter into his own hands, and removed Paschale to the prison of Cosenza, where he remained shut up during eight months.

The Pope heard of the case, and delegated Cardinal Alexandrini, Inquisitor-General, to extinguish the heresy in the Kingdom of Naples.⁸ Alexandrini ordered Paschale to be removed from the Castle of Cosenza, and conducted to Naples. On the journey he was subjected to terrible sufferings. Chained to a gang of prisoners the handcuffs so tight that they entered the flesh—he spent nine days on the road, sleeping at night on the bare earth, which was exchanged on his arrival at Naples for a deep, damp dungeon,⁹ the stench of which almost suffocated him.

On the 16th of May, 1560, Paschale was taken in chains to Rome, and imprisoned in the Torre di Nona, where he was thrust into a cell not less noisome than that which he had occupied at Naples.

His brother, Bartolomeo, having obtained letters of recommendation, came from Coni to procure, if possible, some mitigation of his fate. The interview between the two brothers, as told by Bartolomeo,

⁸Monastier, p. 205.

⁹McCrie, p. 325.

was most affecting. “It was quite hideous to see him,” says he, “with his bare head, and his hands and arms lacerated by the small cords with which he was bound, like one about to be led to the gibbet. On advancing to embrace him I sank to the ground. ‘My brother,’ said he, ‘if you are a Christian, why do you distress yourself thus? Do you know that a leaf cannot fall to the ground without the will of God? Comfort yourself in Christ Jesus, for the present troubles are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come.’” His brother, a Romanist, offered him half his fortune if only he would recant, and save his life. Even this token of affection could not move him. “Oh, my brother!” said he, “the danger in which you are involved gives me more distress than all that I suffer.”¹⁰

He wrote to his affianced bride with a pen which, if it softened the picture of his own great sufferings, freely expressed the affection he bore for her, which “grows,” said he, “with that I feel for God.” Nor was he unmindful of his flock in Calabria. “My state is this,” says he, in a letter which he addressed to them, “I feel my joy increase every day, as I approach nearer the hour in which I shall be offered a sweet-smelling sacrifice to the Lord Jesus Christ, my faithful Savior; yea, so inexpressible is my joy that I seem to myself to be free from captivity, and am prepared to die for Christ, and not only once, but ten thousand times, if it were possible; nevertheless, I persevere in imploring the Divine assistance by prayer, for I am convinced that man is a miserable creature when left to himself, and not upheld and directed by God.”¹¹

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 325-327.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 326, 327.

Chapter 9 : Extinction of Waldenses in Calabria

Arrival of Inquisitors in Calabria-Flight of the Inhabitants of San Sexto -Pursued and Destroyed-La Guardia-Its Citizens Seized-Their Tortures-Horrible Butchery-The Calabrian Colony Exterminated- Louis Paschale-His Condemnation-The Castle of St. Angelo-The Pope, Cardinals, and Citizens-The Martyr-His Last Words-His Execution-His Tomb

Picture: View of the Interior of St. John Lateran, Rome.

Picture: Group of Roman Peasants.

Leaving the martyr for a little while in his dungeon at Rome, we shall return to his flock in Calabria, on whom the storm which we saw gathering had burst in terrific violence.

When it was known that Protestant ministers had been sent from Geneva to the Waldensian Churches in Calabria, the Inquisitor-General, as already mentioned, and two Dominican monks, Valerio Malvicino and Alfonso Urbino, were dispatched by the Sacred College to reduce these Churches to the obedience of the Papal See, or trample them out. They arrived at San Sexto, and assembling the inhabitants, they assured them no harm was intended them, would they only dismiss their Lutheran teachers and come to mass. The bell was rung for the celebration of the Sacrament, but the citizens, instead of attending the service, left the town in a body, and retired to a neighboring wood. Concealing their chagrin, the inquisitors took their departure from San Sexto, and set out for La Guardia, the gates of which they locked behind them when they had entered, to prevent a second flight. Assembling the inhabitants, they told them that their co-religionists of San Sexto had renounced their errors, and dutifully attended mass, and they exhorted them to follow their good example, and return to the fold of the Roman shepherd; warning them, at the same time, that should they refuse they would expose themselves as heretics to the loss of goods and life. The poor people taken unawares, and believing what was told them, consented to hear

mass; but no sooner was the ceremony ended, and the gates of the town opened, than they learned the deceit which had been practiced upon them. Indignant, and at the same time ashamed of their own weakness, they resolved to leave the place in a body, and join their brethren in the woods, but were withheld from their purpose by the persuasion and promises of their feudal superior, Spinello.

The Inquisitor-General, Alexandrini, now made request for two companies of men-at-arms, to enable him to execute his mission. The aid requested was instantly given, and the soldiers were sent in pursuit of the inhabitants of San Sexto. Tracking them to their hiding-places, in the thickets and the caves of the mountains, they slaughtered many of them; others, who escaped, they pursued with bloodhounds, as if they had been wild beasts. Some of these fugitives scaled the craggy summits of the Apennines, and hurling down the stones on the soldiers who attempted to follow them, compelled them to desist from the pursuit.

Alexandrini dispatched a messenger to Naples for more troops to quell what he called the rebellion of the Vaudois. The viceroy obeyed the summons by coming in person with an army. He attempted to storm the fugitives now strongly entrenched in the great mountains, whose summits of splintered rock, towering high above the pine forests that clothe their sides, presented to the fugitives an almost inaccessible retreat. The Waldenses offered to emigrate; but the viceroy would listen to nothing but their return within the pale of the Church of Rome. They were prepared to yield their lives rather than accept peace on such conditions. The viceroy now ordered his men to advance; but the shower of rocks that met his soldiers in the ascent hurled them to the bottom, a discomfited mass in which the bruised, the maimed, and the dying were confusedly mingled with the corpses of the killed.

The viceroy, seeing the difficulty of the enterprise, issued an edict promising a free pardon to all bandits, outlaws, and other criminals, who might be willing to undertake the task of scaling the mountains and attacking the strongholds of the Waldenses. In obedience to this summons, there assembled a mob of desperadoes, who were but too familiar with the secret paths of the Apennines. Threading their way through the woods, and clambering over the great rocks, these assassins rushed from every side on the barricades on the summit,

and butchered the poor Vaudois. Thus were the inhabitants of San Sexto exterminated, some dying by the sword, some by fire, while others were torn by bloodhounds, or perished by famine. ¹

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While the outlaws of the Neapolitan viceroy were busy in the mountains, the Inquisitor-General and his monks were pursuing their work of blood at La Guardia. The military force at their command not enabling them to take summary measures with the inhabitants, they had recourse to a stratagem. Enticing the citizens outside the gates, and placing soldiers in ambush, they succeeded in getting into their power upwards of 1,600 persons. ² Of these, seventy were sent in chains to Montalto, and tortured, in the hope of compelling them to accuse themselves of practising shameful crimes in their religious assemblies. No such confession, however, could the most prolonged tortures wring from them. “Stefano Carlino,” says McCrie, “was tortured till his bowels gushed out;” and another prisoner, named Verminel, “was kept during eight hours on a horrid instrument called the hell, but persisted in denying the atrocious calumny.” ³ Some were thrown from the tops of towers, or precipitated over cliffs; others were torn with iron whips, and finally beaten to death with fiery brands; and others, smeared with pitch, were burned alive.

But these horrors pale before the bloody tragedy of Montalto, enacted by the Marquis di Buccianici, whose zeal was quickened, it is said, by the promise of a cardinal’s hat to his brother, if he would clear Calabria of heresy. One’s blood runs cold at the perusal of the deed. It was witnessed by a servant to Ascanio Caraccioli, himself a Roman Catholic, and described by him in a letter, which was published in Italy, along with other accounts of the horrible transaction, and has been quoted by McCrie. “Most illustrious sir, I have now to inform you of the dreadful justice which began to be executed on these Lutherans early this morning, being the 11th of June. And, to tell you the truth, I can compare it to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep. They were all shut up in one house as in a sheep-fold. The executioner went, and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, or benda, as we call it, led him out to a field near the house, and causing him to kneel down,

¹Leger, part 2, p. 333. McCrie, p. 303. Muston, p. 41.

²Monastier, p. 206.

³McCrie, p. 304.

cut his throat with a knife. Then, taking off the bloody napkin, he went and brought out another, whom he put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number, amounting to eighty-eight men, were butchered. I leave you to figure to yourself the lamentable spectacle, for I can scarcely refrain from tears while I write; nor was there any person, after witnessing the execution of one, could stand to look on a second. The meekness and patience with which they went to martyrdom and death are incredible. Some of them at their death professed themselves of the same faith with us, but the greater part died in their cursed obstinacy. All the old met their death with cheerfulness, but the young exhibited symptoms of fear. I still shudder while I think of the executioner with the bloody knife in his teeth, the dripping napkin in his hand, and his arms be-smearred with gore, going to the house, and taking out one victim after another, just as a butcher does the sheep which he means to kill.”⁴ Their bodies were quartered, and stuck up on pikes along the high road leading from Montalto to Chateau-Vilar, a distance of thirty-six miles.

Numbers of men and women were burned alive, many were drafted off to the Spanish galleys, some made their submission to Rome, and a few, escaping from the scene of these horrors, reached, after infinite toil, their native Valleys, to tell that the once-flourishing Waldensian colony and Church in Calabria no longer existed, and that they only had been left to carry tidings to their brethren of its utter extermination.

Meanwhile, preparations had been made at Rome for the trial of Jean Louis Paschale. On the 8th of September, 1560, he was brought out of his prison, conducted to the Convent della Minerva, and cited before the Papal tribunal. He confessed his Savior, and, with a serenity to which the countenances of his judges were strangers, he listened to the sentence of death, which was carried into execution on the following day.

Standing upon the summit of the Janiculum Mount, vast crowds could witness the spectacle. In front the Campagna spreads out its once glorious but now desolated bosom; and winding through it like a thread of gold is seen the Tiber, while the Apennines sweeping

⁴Pantaleon, *Rerum in Ecclesiastes Gest. Hist.*, f. 337,338. De Porta, tom. 2, pp. 309,312-ex McCrie, pp. 305,306.

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round it in craggy grandeur enclose it like a vast wall. Immediately beneath, uprearing her domes and monuments and palaces, with an air that seems to say, "I sit a queen," is the city of Rome. Yonder, asserting an easy supremacy amid the other fabrics of the Eternal City, is the scarred and riven yet Titanic form of the Coliseum, with its stains of early Christian blood not yet washed out. By its side, the partner of its guilt and doom, lies the Palatine, once the palace of the world's master, now a low mound of ruins, with its row of melancholy cypresses, the only mourners on that site of vanished glory and fallen empire. Nearer, burning in the midday sun, is the proud cupola of St. Peter's, flanked on the one side by the buildings of the Inquisition, and on the other by the huge Mole of Hadrian, beneath whose gloomy ramparts old Tiber rolls sluggishly and sullenly along. But what shout is this which we hear? Why does Rome keep holiday? Why do all her bells ring? Lo! from every street and piazza eager crowds rush forth, and uniting in one overwhelming and surging stream, they are seen rolling across the Bridge of St. Angelo, and pressing in at the gates of the old fortress, which are thrown wide open to admit this mass of human beings.

Entering the court-yard of the old castle, an imposing sight meets the eye. What a confluence of ranks, dignities, and grandeurs! In the center is placed a chair, the emblazonry of which tells us that it claims to rise in authority and dignity over the throne of kings. The Pontiff, Pius IV, has already taken his seat upon it, for he has determined to be present at the tragedy of to-day. Behind his chair, in scarlet robes, are his cardinals and counselors, with many dignitaries besides in miters and cowls, ranged in circles, according to their place in the Papal body. Behind the ecclesiastics are seated, row on row, the nobility and beauty of Rome. Plumes wave, stars gleam, and seem to mock the frocks and cowls gathered near them, whose wearers, however, would not exchange these mystic garments for all the bravery that blazes around them. The vast sweep of the Court of St. Angelo is densely occupied. Its ample floor is covered from end to end with a closely-wedged mass of citizens, who have come to see the spectacle. In the center of the throng, rising a little way over the sea of human heads, is seen a scaffold, with an iron stake, and beside it a bundle of faggots.

A slight movement begins to be perceptible in the crowd beside the gate. Some one is entering. The next moment a storm of hissing and execration salutes the ear. It is plain that the person who has just made his entrance is the object of universal dislike. The clank of irons on the stone floor of the court, as he comes forward, tells how heavily his limbs are loaded with fetters. He is still young; but his face is pale and haggard with suffering. He lifts his eyes, and with countenance undismayed surveys the vast assembly, and the dismal apparatus that stands in the midst of it, waiting its victim. There sits a calm courage on his brow; the serene light of deep, untroubled peace beams in his eye. He mounts the scaffold, and stands beside the stake. Every eye is now turned, not on the wearer of the tiara, but on the man who is clad in the sanbenito. "Good people," says the martyr-and the whole assembly keep silence-"I am come here to die for confessing the doctrine of my Divine Master and Savior, Jesus Christ. Then turning to Pius IV he arraigned him as the enemy of Christ, the persecutor of his people, and the Antichrist of Scripture, and concluded by summoning him and all his cardinals to answer for their cruelties and murders before the throne of the Lamb. "At his words," says the historian Crespin, "the people were deeply moved, and the Pope and the cardinals gnashed their teeth." ⁵

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The inquisitors hastily gave the signal. The executioners came round him, and having strangled him, they kindled the faggots, and the flames blazing up speedily reduced his body to ashes. For once the Pope had performed his function. With his key of fire, which he may truly claim to carry, he had opened the celestial doors, and had sent his poor prisoner from the dark dungeons of the Inquisition, to dwell in the palace of the sky.

So died, or rather passed into the life eternal, Jean Louis Paschale, the Waldensian missionary and pastor of the flock in Calabria. His ashes were collected and thrown into the Tiber, and by the Tiber they were borne to the Mediterranean. And this was the grave of the preacher-martyr, whose noble bearing and undaunted courage before the very Pope himself, gave added value to his splendid testimony for the Protestant cause. Time may consume the marble, violence or war may drag down the monumental pile;

⁵Crespin, *Hist. des Martyrs*, fol. 506-516. Leger, part 1, p. 204, and part 2, p. 335.

“The pyramids that cleave heaven’s jewelled portal;
Ele’an Jove’s star-spangled dome; the tomb Where rich
Mausolus sleeps-are not immortal.”⁶

⁶But the tomb of the far-sounding sea to which the ashes of Paschale were committed, with a final display of impotent rage, was indeed a nobler mausoleum than ever Rome raised to any of her Pontiffs, and it will remain through all the ages, until time shall be no more.

Chapter 10 : The Year of the Plague

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Peace-Re-occupation of their Homes—Partial
Famine-Contributions of Foreign Churches-Castrocaro, Governor of
the Valleys-His Treacheries and Oppressions-Letter of Elector
Palatine to the Duke—A Voice raised for Toleration-Fate of
Castrocaro-The Plague-Awful Ravages-10,000 Deaths-Only Two
Pastors Survive- Ministers come from Switzerland, etc.-Worship
conducted henceforward in French

A whole century nearly wore away between the trampling out of the Protestant Church in Calabria, and the next great persecution which befell that venerable people whose tragic history we are recording. We can touch on a few only, and these the more prominent, of the events which fill up the interval.

The war that La Trinita, so ingloriously for himself, had waged against the Waldenses, ended, as we have seen, in a treaty of peace, which was signed at Cavour on the 5th of June, 1561, between Philip of Savoy and the deputies of the Valleys. But though the cloud had rolled past, it had left numerous and affecting memorials of the desolation it had inflicted. The inhabitants descended from the mountains to exchange the weapons of war for the spade and the pruning-knife. With steps slow and feeble the aged and the infirm were led down into the vales, to sit once more at noon or at eve beneath the shadow of their vines and ancestral chestnut-trees. But, alas! how often did the tear of sorrow moisten the eye as it marked the desolation and ruin that deformed those scenes lately so fair and smiling! The fruit-bearing trees cut down; vineyard and corn-field marred; hamlets burned; villages, in some cases, a heap of ruins, all testified to the rage of the enemy who had invaded their land. Years must pass before these deep scars could be effaced, and the beauty of their Valleys restored. And there were yet tenderer griefs weighing upon them. How many were there who had lived under

the same roof-tree with them, and joined night and morning in the same psalm, who would return no more!

Distress, bordering on famine, began to invade the Valleys. Seven months of incessant fighting had left them no time to cultivate the fields; and now the stock of last year's provisions was exhausted, and starvation stared them in the face. Before the treaty of peace had been signed, the time of sowing was past, and when the autumn came there was scarcely anything to reap. Their destitution was further aggravated by the fugitives from Calabria, who began about this time to arrive in the Valleys. Escaping with nothing but their lives, they presented themselves in hunger and nakedness. Their brethren opened their arms to receive them, and though their own necessities were great, they nevertheless shared with them the little they had.

The tale of the suffering now prevailing in the Valleys was known in other countries, and evoked the sympathy of their Protestant brethren. Calvin, with characteristic promptness and ardour, led in the movement for their relief. By his advice they sent deputies to represent their case to the Churches of Protestantism abroad, and collections were made for them in Geneva, France, Switzerland, and Germany. The subscriptions were headed by the Elector Palatine, after whom came the Duke of Wurtemberg, the Canton of Bern, the Church at Strasburg, and others.

By-and-by, seed-time and harvest were restored in the Valleys; smiling chalets began again to dot the sides of their mountains, and to rise by the banks of their torrents; and the miseries which La Trinita's campaign had entailed upon them were passing into oblivion, when their vexations were renewed by the appointment of a deputy-governor of their Valleys, Castrocaro, a Tuscan by birth.

This man had served against the Vaudois as a colonel of militia under La Trinita; he had been taken prisoner in an encounter with them, but honorably treated, and at length generously released. He returned the Waldenses evil for good.

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His appointment as governor of the Valleys he owed mainly to his acquaintance with the Duchess Margaret, the protectress of the Vaudois, into whose favor he had ingratiated himself by professing a warm affection for the men of the Valleys; and his friendship with the Archbishop of Turin, to whom he had pledged himself

to do his utmost to convert the Vaudois to Romanism. When at length Castrocaro arrived in the Valleys in the character of governor, he forgot his professions to the duchess, but faithfully set about fulfilling the promise he had made to the archbishop.

The new governor began by restricting the liberties guaranteed to their Churches in the treaty of peace, he next ordered the dismissal of certain of the pastors, and when their congregations refused to comply, he began to fine and imprison the recusants, he sent false and calumnious reports to the court of the duke, and introduced a troop of soldiers into the country, on the pretext that the Waldenses were breaking out into rebellion. He built the fortress of Mirabouc, at the foot of the Col de la Croix, in the narrow gorge that leads from Bobbio to France, to close this gate of exit from their territory, and overawe the Valley of Lucerna. At last, he threatened to renew the war unless the Waldenses should comply with his wishes.

What was to be done? They carried their complaints and remonstrances to Turin; but, alas! the ear of the duke and duchess had been poisoned by the malice and craft of the governor. Soon again the old alternative would be presented to them, the mass or death.¹

In their extremity they sought the help of the Protestant princes of Germany. The cry from the Alps found a responsive echo from the German plains. The great Protestant chiefs of the Fatherland, especially Frederick, Elector Palatine, saw in these poor oppressed herdsmen and vine-dressers his brethren, and with zeal and warmth espoused their cause. He indited a letter to the duke, distinguished for its elevation of sentiment, as well as the catholicity of its views. It is a noble defense of the rights of conscience, and an eloquent pleading in behalf of toleration. "Let your highness," says the elector, "know that there is a God in heaven, who not only contemplates the actions, but also tries the hearts and reins of men, and from whom nothing is hid. Let your highness take care not voluntarily to make war upon God, and not to set secure Christ in his members....Persecution, moreover, will never advance the cause it pretends to defend. The ashes of the martyrs are the seed of the Christian Church. For the Church resembles the palm-tree, whose stem only shoots up the taller, the greater the weights that are hung upon it. Let your highness

¹Muston, chapter 16. Monastier, chapter 21.

consider that the Christian religion was established by persuasion, and not by violence; and as it is certain that religion is nothing else than a firm and enlightened persuasion of God, and of his will, as revealed in his Word, and engraven in the hearts of believers by his Holy Spirit, it cannot, when once rooted, be torn away by tortures.”

² So did the Elector Palatine warn the duke.

These are remarkable words when we think that they were written in the middle of the sixteenth century. We question whether our own age could express itself more justly on the subject of the rights of conscience, the spirituality of religion, and the impolicy, as well as criminality, of persecution. We sometimes apologise for the cruel deeds of Spain and France, on the ground of the intolerance and blindness of the age. But six years before the St. Bartholomew Massacre was enacted, this great voice had been raised in Christendom for toleration.

What effect this letter had upon the duke we do not certainly know, but from about this time Castrocaro moderated his violence, though he still continued at intervals to terrify the poor people he so basely oppressed by fulminating against them the most atrocious threats. On the death of Emmanuel Philibert, in 1580, the villany of the governor came to light. The young Duke Charles Emmanuel ordered his arrest; but the execution of it was a matter of difficulty, for Castrocaro had entrenched himself in the Castle of La Torre, and surrounded himself with a band of desperadoes, to which he had added, for his yet greater defense, a pack of ferocious blood-hounds of unusual size and strength. ³ A captain of his guard betrayed him, and thus as he had maintained himself by treachery, so by treachery did his doom at last overtake him. He was carried to Turin, where he perished in prison. ⁴

Famine, persecution, war—all three, sometimes in succession and sometimes together had afflicted this much-enduring people, but now they were visited from the hand of God. For some years they had enjoyed an unusual peace; and this quiet was the more remarkable inasmuch as all around their mountains Europe was in combustion.

[478] Their brethren or the Reformed Church in France, in Spain, and in

²See the letter in full in Leger, part 1, pp. 41-45.

³Muston, p. 98.

⁴Monastier, p. 222.

Italy were falling on the field, perishing by massacre, or dying at the stake, while they were guarded from harm. But now a new calamity carried gloom and mourning into their Valleys. On the morning of the 23rd of August, 1629, a cloud of unusual blackness gathered on the summit of the Col Julion. It burst in a water-spout or deluge. The torrents rolled down the mountain on both sides, and the villages of Bobbio and Prali, situated the one in the southern and the other in the northern valley, were overflowed by the sudden inundation. Many of the houses were swept away, and the inhabitants had barely time to save their lives by flight. In September of the same year, there came an icy wind, accompanied by a dry cloud, which scathed their Valleys and destroyed the crop of the chestnut-tree. There followed a second deluge of rain, which completely ruined the vintage. These calamities were the more grievous inasmuch as they succeeded a year of partial famine. The Vaudois pastors assembled in solemn synod, to humble themselves and to lift up their voices in prayer to God. Little did they imagine that at that moment a still heavier calamity hung over them, and that this was the last time they were ever to meet one another on earth. ⁵

In 1630, a French army, under Marshal Schomberg, suddenly occupied the Valleys. In that army were many volunteers, who had made their escape from a virulent contagious disease then raging in France. The weather was hot, and the seeds of the pestilence which the army had brought with it speedily developed themselves. The plague showed itself in the first week of May in the Valley of Perosa; it next broke out in the more northern Valley of Martino; and soon it spread throughout all the Valleys. The pastors met together to supplicate the Almighty, and to concert practical measures for checking the ravages of this mysterious and terrible scourge. They purchased medicine and collected provisions for the poor. ⁶ They visited the sick, consoled the dying, and preached in the open air to crowds, solemnised and eager to listen.

In July and August the heat was excessive, and the malady raged yet more furiously. In the month of July four of the pastors were carried off by the plague; in August seven others died; and in the

⁵Muston, p. 111.

⁶Monastier, p. 241.

following month another, the twelfth, was mortally stricken. There remained now only three pastors, and it was remarked that they belonged to three several valleys- Lucerna, Martino, and Perosa. The three survivors met on the heights of Angrogna, to consult with the deputies of the various parishes regarding the means of providing for the celebration of worship. They wrote to Geneva and Dauphine requesting that pastors might be sent to supply the place of those whom the plague had struck down, that so the venerable Church of the Valleys, which had survived so many calamities, might not become extinct. They also recalled Antoine Leger from Constantinople.⁷

The plague subsided during the winter, but in spring (1631) it rose up again in renewed force. Of the three surviving pastors, one other died; leaving thus only two, Pierre Gilles of Lucerna, and Valerius Gross of Martino. With the heats of the summer the pestilence waxed in strength. Armies, going and coming in the Valleys, suffered equally with the inhabitants. Horsemen would be seen to drop from the saddle on the highway, seized with sudden illness. Soldiers and sutlers, struck in by paths, lay there infecting the air with their corpses. In La Torre alone fifty families became extinct. The most moderate estimate of the numbers cut off by the plague is 10,000, or from a half to two-thirds of the entire population of the Valleys. The corn in many places remained uncut, the grapes rotted on the bough, and the fruit dropped from the tree. Strangers who had come to find health in the pure mountain air, obtained from the soil nothing but a grave. Towns and villages, which had rung so recently with the sounds of industry, were now silent. Parents were without children, and children were without parents. Patriarchs, who had been wont with pride and joy to gather round them their numerous grandchildren, had seen them sicken and die, and were now alone. The venerable pastor Gilles lost his four elder sons. Though continually present in the homes of the stricken, and at the bedsides of the dying, he himself was spared to compile the monuments of his ancient Church, and narrate among other woes

⁷Muston, pp. 112,113. Antoine Leger was uncle of Leger the historian. He had been tutor for many years in the family of the Ambassador of Holland at Constantinople.

that which had just passed over his native land, and “part of which he had been.”

Of the Vaudois pastors only two now remained; and ministers hastened from Geneva and other places to the Valleys, lest the old lamp should go out. The services of the Waldensian Churches had hitherto been performed in the Italian tongue, but the new pastors could speak only French. Worship was henceforward conducted in that language, but the Vaudois soon came to understand it, their own ancient tongue being a dialect between the French and Italian. Another change introduced at this time was the assimilation of their ritual to that of Geneva. And farther, the primitive and affectionate name of Barba was dropped, and the modern title substituted, Monsieur le Ministre. ⁸

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⁸Monastier, chapter 18. Muston, pp. 242,243.

Chapter 11 : The Great Massacre

Preliminary Attacks-The Propaganda de Fide-Marchioness di Pianeza- Gastaldo's Order-Its Barbarous Execution-Greater Sorrows-Perfidy of Pianeza—The Massacring Army-Its Attack and Repulse- Treachery-The Massacre Begins-Its Horrors-Modes of Torture- Individual Martyrs-Leger Collects Evidence on the Spot-He Appeals to the Protestant States—Interposition of Cromwell-Mission of Sir Samuel Morland-A Martyr's Monument

Picture: The Entrance to La Torre.

Picture: Cromwell and Milton.

Picture: A Vaudois Family Entertaining some of Pianezas Soldiers.

The first labor of the Waldenses, on the departure of the plague, was the re-organization of society. There was not a house in all their Valleys where death had not been. All ties rent, the family relationship was all but extinct; but the destroyer being gone, the scattered inhabitants began to draw together, and to join hand and heart in restoring the ruined churches, raising up the fallen habitations, and creating anew family, and home.

Other events of an auspicious kind, which occurred at this time, contributed to revive the spirits of the Waldenses, and to brighten with a gleam of hope the scene of the recent great catastrophe. The army took its departure, peace having been signed between the French monarch and the duke, and the Valleys returned once more under the dominion of the House of Savoy. A decade and a half of comparative tranquillity allowed the population to root itself anew, and their Valleys and mountain-sides to be brought again under tillage. Fifteen years-how short a breathing-space amid storms so awful!

These fifteen years draw to a close; it is now 1650, and the Vaudois are entering within the shadow of their greatest woe. The throne of Savoy was at this; time filled by Charles Emmanuel II, a youth of fifteen. He was a prince of mild and humane disposition; but he

was counselled and ruled by his mother, the Duchess Christina, who had been appointed regent of the kingdom during his minority. That mother was sprung of a race which have ever been noted for their dissimulation, their cruelty, and their bigoted devotion to Rome. She was the daughter of Henry IV of France and his second wife, Mary de Medici, daughter of Francis II, Duke of Tuscany. The ferocious temper and gloomy superstition of her ancestors, the Medici a name so conspicuously mixed up with the world-execrated massacre of St. Bartholomew - had descended to the Duchess Christina. In no other reign did the tears and blood of the Waldenses flow so profusely, a fact for which we cannot satisfactorily account, unless on the supposition that the sufferings which now overwhelmed them came not from the mild prince who occupied the throne, but from the cold, cruel, and bloodthirsty regent who governed the kingdom. In short, there is reason to believe that it was not the facile spirit of the House of Savoy, but the astute spirit of the Medici, prompted by the Vatican, that enacted those scenes of carnage that we are now to record.

The blow did not descend all at once; a series of lesser attacks heralded the great and consummating stroke. Machinations, chicaneries, and legal robberies paved the way for an extermination that was meant to be complete and final.

First of all came the monks. We have seen the plague with which the Valleys were visited in 1630; there came a second plague-not this time the pestilence, but a swarm of Capuchins. They had been sent to convert the heretics, and they began by eagerly challenging the pastors to a controversy, in which they felt sure of triumphing. A few attempts, however, convinced them that victory was not to be so easily won as they had fondly thought. The heretics made "a Pope of their Bible," they complained, and as this was a book which the Fathers had not studied, they did not know where to find the passages which they felt sure would confute the Vaudois pastors. They could silence them only by banishing them, and among others whom they drove into exile was the accomplished Antione Leger, the uncle of the historian. Thus were the people deprived of their natural leaders.

¹ The Vaudois were forbidden on pain of confiscation and death to

¹Musto, p. 126.

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purchase or farm lands outside their own narrow territories. Certain of their churches were closed. Their territory was converted into a prison by an order forbidding them to cross the frontier even for a few hours, unless on fair-days. The wholly Protestant communes of Bobbio, Villaro, Angrogna, and Rora were ordered to maintain each a mission of Capuchins; and foreign Protestants were interdicted from settling in the Valleys under pain of death, and a fine of 1,000 gold crowns upon the communes that should receive them. This law was levelled against their pastors, who, since the plague, were mostly French or Swiss. It was hoped that in a few years the Vaudois would be without ministers. *Monts-de-Piete* were established to induce the Vaudois, whom confiscations, bad harvests, and the billeting of soldiers had reduced to great straits, to pawn their goods, and when all had been put in pledge they were offered restitution in full on condition of renouncing their faith. Dowries were promised to young maidens on the same terms. ² These various arts had a success surprisingly small. Some dozen of Waldensian perverts were added to the Roman Church. It was plain that the good work of proselytising was proceeding too slowly. More efficient measures must be had recourse to.

The Society for the “Propagation of the Faith,” established by Pope Gregory XV in 1622, had already been spread over Italy and France. The object of the society was originally set forth in words sufficiently simple and innocent - “*De Propaganda Fidei*” (for the Propagation of the Faith). Since the first institution of this society, however, its object had undergone enlargement, or, if not its object, at all events its title. Its first modest designation was supplemented by the emphatic words, “*et Extirpandis Haereticis*” (and the Extirpation of Heretics). The membership of the society soon became numerous: it included both laymen and priests; all ranks, from the noble and the prelate to the peasant and the pauper, pressed forward to enrol themselves in it-the inducement being a plenary indulgence to all who should take part in the good work so unmistakably indicated in the one brief and pithy clause, “*et Extirpandis Haereticis.*” The societies in the smaller towns reported to the metropolitan cities; the metropolitan cities to the capital; and the capitals to Rome, where, in

²Muston, p. 129.

the words of Leger, “sat the great spider that held the threads of this mighty web.”

In 1650 the “Council of the Propagation of the Faith” was established at Turin. The chief counselors of state, the great lords of the country, and the dignitaries of the Church enrolled themselves as a presiding board.

Societies of women were formed, at the head of which was the Marchioness di Pianeza. She was the first lady at court; and as she had not worn “the white rose of a blameless life,” she was all the more zealous in this cause, in the hope of making expiation for the errors of the past. She was at infinite pains to further the object of the society; and her own eager spirit she infused into all under her. “The lady propagandists,” says Leger: ³ “distributed the towns into districts, and each visited the district assigned to her twice a week, suborning simple girls, servant maids, and young children by their flattering allurements and fair promises, and doing evil turns such as would not listen to them. They had their spies everywhere, who, among other information, ascertained in what Protestant families disagreements existed, and hither would the propagandists repair, stirring up the flame of dissension in order to separate the husband from the wife, the wife from the husband, the children from the parents; promising them, and indeed giving them, great advantages, if they would consent to attend mass. Did they hear of a tradesman whose business was falling off, or of a gentleman who from gambling or otherwise was in want of money, these ladies were at hand with their *Dabo tibi* (I will give thee), on condition of apostacy; and the prisoner was in like manner relieved from his dungeon, who would give himself up to them. To meet the very heavy expenses of this proselytising, to keep the machinery at work, to purchase the souls that sold themselves for bread, regular collections were made in the chapels, and in private families, in the shops, in the inns, in the gambling-houses, in the streets-everywhere was alms-begging in operation. The Marchioness of Pianeza herself, great lady as she was, used every second or third day to make a circuit in search of subscriptions, even going into the taverns for that purpose. If any person of condition, who was believed able to contribute a coin,

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³Leger, part 2., chap. 6, pp. 72, 73.

chanced to arrive at any hotel in town these ladies did not fail to wait upon him, purse in hand, and solicit a donation. When persons of substance known to belong to the religion [Reformed] arrived in Turin, they did not scruple to ask money of them for the propagation of the faith, and the influence of the marchioness, or fear of losing their errand and ruining their affairs, would often induce such to comply.”

While busied in the prosecution of these schemes the Marchioness di Pianeza was stricken with death. Feeling remorse, and wishing to make atonement, she summoned her lord, from whom she had been parted many years, to her bedside, and charged him, as he valued the repose of her soul and the safety of his own, to continue the good work, on which her heart had been so much set, of converting the Vaudois. To stimulate his zeal, she bequeathed him a sum of money, which, however, he could not touch till he had fulfilled the condition on which it was granted. The marquis undertook the task with the utmost goodwill.⁴ A bigot and a soldier, he could think of only one way of converting the Vaudois. It was now that the storm burst.

On the 25th of January, 1655, came the famous order of Gastaldo. This decree commanded all the Vaudois families domiciled in the communes of Lucerua, Fenile, Bubiana, Bricherasio, San Giovanni, and La Torre - in short, the whole of that rich district that separates their capital from the plain of Piedmont-to quit their dwellings within three days, and retire into the Valleys of Bobbio, Angrogna, and Rora. This they were to do on pain of death. They were farther required to sell their lands to Romanists within twenty days. Those who were willing to abjure the Protestant faith were exempted from the decree.

Anything more inhuman and barbarous in the circumstances than this edict it would not be easy to imagine. It was the depth of winter, and an Alpine winter has terrors unknown to the winters of even more northern regions. However could a population like that on which the decree fell, including young children and old men, the sick and bed-ridden, the blind and the lame, undertake a journey across swollen rivers, through valleys buried in snow, and over

⁴Muston, p. 130.

mountains covered with ice? They must inevitably perish, and the edict that cast them out was but another form of condemning them to die of cold and hunger. "Pray ye," said Christ, when warning his disciples to flee when they should see the Roman armies gathering round Jerusalem, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter." The Romish Propaganda at Turin chose this season for the enforced flight of the Vaudois. Cold were the icy peaks that looked down on this miserable troop, who were now fording the torrents and now struggling up the mountain tracks, but the heart of the persecutor was colder still. True, an alternative was offered them: they might go to mass. Did they avail themselves of it? The historian Leger informs us that he had a congregation of well-nigh 2,000 persons, and that not a man of them all accepted the alternative. "I can well bear them this testimony," he observes, "seeing I was their pastor for eleven years, and I knew every one of them by name; judge, reader, whether I had not cause to weep for joy, as well as for sorrow, when I saw that all the fury of these wolves was not able to influence one of these lambs, and that no earthly advantage could shake their constancy. And when I marked the traces of their blood on the snow and ice over which they had dragged their lacerated limbs, had I not cause to bless God that I had seen accomplished in their poor bodies what remained of the measure of the sufferings of Christ, and especially when I beheld this heavy cross borne by them with a fortitude so noble?" ⁵

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The Vaudois of the other valleys welcomed these poor exiles, and joyfully shared with them their own humble and scanty fare. They spread the table for all, and loaded it with polenta and roasted chestnuts, with the milk and butter of their mountains, to which they did not forget to add a cup of that red wine which their valleys produce. ⁶ Their enemies were amazed when they saw the whole community rise up as one man and depart.

Greater woes trod fast upon the heels of this initial calamity. A part only of the Vaudois nation had suffered from the cruel decree of Gastaldo, but the fixed object of the Propaganda was the extirpation of the entire race, and the matter was gone about with consummate

⁵Leger, part 2, chapter 8, p. 94.

⁶Monastier, p. 265.

perfidy and deliberate cruelty. From the upper valleys, to which they had retired, the Waldenses sent respectful representations to the court of Turin. They described their piteous condition in terms so moving-and it would have been hard to have exaggerated it-and besought the fulfillment of treaties in which the honour and truth of the House of Savoy were pledged, in language so temperate and just, that one would have thought that their supplication must needs prevail. Alas, no! The ear of their prince had been poisoned by falsehood. Even access to him was denied them. As regarded the Propaganda, their remonstrances, though accompanied with tears and groans, were wholly unheeded. The Vaudois were but charming deaf adders. They were put off with equivocal answers and delusive promises till the fatal 17th of April had arrived, when it was no longer necessary to dissemble and equivocate. ⁷

On the day above named, April 17th, 1655, the Marquis di Pianeza departed secretly at midnight from Turin, and appeared before the Valleys at the head of an army of 15,000 men. ⁸ The Waldensian deputies were by appointment knocking at the door of the marquis in Turin, while he himself was on the road to La Torre. He appeared under the walls of that town at eight o'clock on Saturday evening, the same 17th of April, attended by about 300 men; the main body of his army he had left encamped on the plain. That army, secretly prepared, was composed of Piedmontese, comprehending a good many banditti, who were promised pardon and plunder should they behave themselves well, some companies of Bavarians, six regiments of French, whose thirst for blood the Huguenot wars had not been able to slake, and several companies of Irish Romanists, who, banished by Cromwell, arrived in Piedmont dripping from the massacre of their Protestant fellow-subjects in their native land. ⁹

The Waldenses had hastily constructed a barricade at the entrance of La Torre. The marquis ordered his soldiers to storm it; but the besieged resisted so stoutly that, after three hours' fighting, the enemy found he had made no advance. At one o'clock on the Sunday morning, Count Amadeus of Lucerna, who knew the locality, made a

⁷Leger, part 2, pp. 95,96.

⁸Ibid., part 4, p. 108.

⁹Monastier, p. 267.

flank movement along the banks of the Pelice, stole silently through the meadows and orchards, and, advancing from the opposite quarter, attacked the Vaudois in the rear. They faced round, pierced the ranks of their assailants, and made good their retreat to the hills, leaving La Torre in the hands of the enemy. The Vaudois had lost only three men in all that fighting. It was now between two and three o'clock on Sunday morning, and though the hour was early, the Romanists repaired in a body to the church and chanted a *Te Deum*.¹⁰ The day was Palm-Sunday, and in this fashion did the Roman Church, by her soldiers, celebrate that great festival of love and goodwill in the Waldensian Valleys.

The Vaudois were once more on their mountains. Their families had been previously transported to their natural fastnesses. Their sentinels kept watch night and day along the frontier heights. They could see the movements of Pianeza's army on the plains beneath. They beheld their orchards falling by the axes, and their dwellings being consumed by the torches of the soldiers. On Monday the 19th, and Tuesday the 20th, a series of skirmishes took place along the line of their mountain passes and forts. The Vaudois, though poorly armed and vastly outnumbered—for they were but as one to a hundred—were victorious on all points. The Popish soldiers fell back in ignominious rout, carrying wondrous tales of the Vaudois' valor and heroism to their comrades on the plain, and infusing incipient panic into the camp.¹¹

Guilt is ever cowardly. Pianeza now began to have misgivings touching the issue. The recollection that mighty armies had aforetime perished on these mountains haunted and disquieted him. He betook him to a weapon which the Waldenses have ever been less

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able to cope with than the sword. On Wednesday, the 21st, before daybreak, he announced, by sound of trumpet at the various Vaudois entrenchments, his willingness to receive their deputies and treat for peace. Delegates set out for his camp, and on their arrival at head-quarters were received with the utmost urbanity, and sumptuously entertained. Pianeza expressed the utmost regret for the excesses his soldiers had committed, and

¹⁰Muston, p. 135.

¹¹Leger, part 2, pp. 108,109.

which had been done, he said, contrary to orders, he protested that he had come into their valleys only to track a few fugitives who had disobeyed Gastaldo's order, that the higher communes had nothing to fear, and that if they would admit a single regiment each for a few days, in token of their loyalty, all would be amicably ended. The craft of the man conquered the deputies, and despite the warnings of the more sagacious, the pastor Leger in particular, the Waldenses opened the passes of their valleys and the doors of their dwellings to the soldiers of Pianeza.

Alas! alas! these poor people were undone. They had received under their roof the murderers of themselves and their families. The first two days, the 22nd and 23rd of April, were passed in comparative peace, the soldiers eating at the same table, sleeping under the same roof, and conversing freely with their destined victims. This interval was needed to allow every preparation to be made for what was to follow. The enemy now occupied the towns, the villages, the cottages, and the roads throughout the valleys. They hung upon the heights. Two great passes led into France: the one over the snows of the lofty Col Julten, and the other by the Valley of Queyras into Dauphine. But, alas! escape was not possible by either outlet. No one could traverse the Col Julten at this season and live, and the fortress of Mirabouc, that guarded the narrow gorge which led into the Valley of Queyras, the enemy had been careful to secure.¹² The Vaudois were enclosed as in a net-shut in as in a prison.

At last the blow fell with the sudden crash of the thunderbolt. At four o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 24th of April, 1655, the signal was given from the castle-hill of La Torre.¹³ But who shall rehearse the tragedy that followed? "It is Cain a second time," says Monastier, "shedding the blood of his brother Abel."¹⁴ On the instant a thousand assassins began the work of death. Dismay, horror, agony, woe in a moment overspread the Valleys of Lucerna and Angrogna. Though Pandemonium had sent forth its fiends to riot in crime and revel in blood, they could not have outdone the soldiers of the Propaganda. We see the victims climbing the hills with what speed they are able, the murderer on their track. We see

¹²Leger part 2, p. 110.

¹³So says Leger, Who was an eye-witness of these horrors.

¹⁴Monastier, p. 270.

the torrents as they roll down from the heights beginning to be tinged with blood. Gleams of lurid light burst out through the dark smoke that is rolling through the vales, for a priest and monk accompany each party of soldiers, to set fire to the houses as soon as the inmates have been dispatched. Alas! what sounds are these that fall upon our ears

The cries and groans of the dying are echoed and re-echoed from the rocks around, and it seems as if the mountains had taken up a wailing for the slaughter of their children. "Our Valley of Lucerna," exclaims Leger, "which was like a Goshen, was now converted into a Mount Etna, darting forth cinders and fire and flames. The earth resembled a furnace, and the air was filled with a darkness like that of Egypt, which might be felt, from the smoke of towns, villages, temples, mansions, granges, and buildings, all burning in the flames of the Vatican."¹⁵

The soldiers were not content with the quick dispatch of the sword, they invented new and hitherto unheard-of modes of torture and death. No man at this day dare write in plain words all the disgusting and horrible deeds of these men; their wickedness can never be all known, because it never can be all told.

From the awful narration of Leger we select only a few instances; but even these few, however mildly stated, grow, without our intending it, into a group of horrors. Little children were torn from the arms of their mothers, clasped by their tiny feet, and their heads dashed against the rocks; or were held between two soldiers and their quivering limbs torn up by main force. Their mangled bodies were then thrown on the highways or fields, to be devoured by beasts. The sick and the aged were burned alive in their dwellings. Some had their hands and arms and legs lopped off, and fire applied to the severed parts to staunch the bleeding and prolong their suffering. Some were flayed alive, some were roasted alive, some disemboweled; or tied to trees in their own orchards, and their hearts cut out. Some were horribly mutilated, and of others the brains were boiled and eaten by these cannibals. Some were fastened down into the furrows of their own fields, and ploughed into the soil as men plough manure into it. Others were buried alive.¹⁶ Fathers were

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¹⁵Leger, part 2, p. 113.

marched to death with the heads of their sons suspended round their necks. Parents were compelled to look on while their children were first outraged, then massacred, before being themselves permitted to die. But here we must stop. We cannot proceed farther in Leger's awful narration. There come vile, abominable and monstrous deeds, utterly and overwhelmingly disgusting, horrible and fiendish, which we dare not transcribe. The heart sickens, and the brain begins to swim. "My hand trembles," says Leger, "so that I scarce even hold the pen, and my tears mingle in torrents with my ink, while I write the deeds of these children of darkness-blacker even than the Prince of Darkness himself." ¹⁷

No general account, however awful, can convey so correct an idea of the horrors of this persecution as would the history of individual cases; but this we are precluded from giving. Could we take these martyrs one by one- could we describe the tragical fate of Peter Simeon of Angrogna- the barbarous death of Magdalene, wife of Peter Pilon of Villare-the sad story-but no, that story could not be told - of Anne, daughter of John Charbonier of La Torre-the cruel martyrdom of Paul Garnier of Rora, whose eyes were first plucked out, who next endured other horrible indignities, and, last of all, was flayed alive, and his skin, divided into four parts, extended on the window gratings of the four principal houses in Lucerna-could we describe these cases, with hundreds of others equally horrible and appalling, our narrative would grow so harrowing that our readers, unable to proceed, would turn from the page. Literally did the Waldenses suffer all the things of which the apostle speaks, as endured by the martyrs of old with other torments not then invented, or which the rage of even a Nero shrank from inflicting: - "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth."

These cruelties form a scene that is unparalleled and unique in the history of at least civilized countries. There have been tragedies

¹⁶Leger, part 2, p. 111.

¹⁷Leger, part 2, p. 112.

in which more blood was spilt, and more life sacrificed, but none in which the actors were so completely dehumanized, and the forms of suffering so monstrously disgusting, so unutterably cruel and revolting. The “Piedmontese Massacres” in this respect stand alone. They are more fiendish than all the atrocities and murders before or since, and Leger may still advance his challenge to “all travelers, and all who have studied the history of ancient and modern pagans, whether among the Chinese, Tartars and Turks, they ever witnessed or heard tell of such execrable perfidies and barbarities.”

The authors of these deeds, thinking it may be that their very atrocity would make the world slow to believe them, made bold to deny that they had ever been done, even before the blood was well dry in the Valleys. Pastor Leger took instant and effectual means to demonstrate the falsehood of that denial, and to provide that clear, irrefragable, and indubitable proof of these awful crimes should go down to posterity. He traveled from commune to commune, immediately after the massacre, attended by notaries, who took down the depositions and attestations of the survivors and eye-witnesses of these deeds, in presence of the council and consistory of the place.¹⁸ From the evidence of these witnesses he compiled and gave to the world a book, which Dr. Gilly truly characterised as one of the most “dreadful” in existence.¹⁹ The originals of these depositions Leger gave to Sir Samuel Morland, who deposited them, together with other valuable documents pertaining to the Waldenses, in the Library of the University of Cambridge.

Uncontrollable grief seized the hearts of the survivors at the sight of their brethren slain, their country devastated, and their Church overthrown. “Oh that my head were waters,” exclaims Leger, “and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.” “It was then,” he adds, “that the fugitives, who had been snatched as brands from the burning,

¹⁸The book is that from which we have so largely quoted, entitled *Histoire Generale des Eglises Evangeliques des Vallees de Piemont ou Vaudoises*. Par Jean Leger, Pasteur et Modérateur des Eglises des Valées, et depuis la violence de la Persecution, appelle a< l’Eglise Wallonne de Leyde. A. Leyde, 1669.

¹⁹Leger, part 2, p. 113.

could address God in the words of the 79th Psalm, which literally as emphatically describes their condition: -

“O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritances,
 Thy holy temple have they defiled;
 They have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given
 To be meat unto the fowls of heaven,
 The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth,
 Their blood have they shed like water;..
 And there was none to bury them!”²⁰

[486] When the storm had abated, Leger assembled the scattered survivors, in order to take counsel with them as to the steps to be now taken. It does not surprise us to find that some had begun to entertain the idea of abandoning the Valleys altogether. Leger strongly dissuaded them against the thought of forsaking their ancient inheritance. They must, he said, rebuild their Zion in the faith that the God of their fathers would not permit the Church of the Valleys to be finally overthrown. To encourage them, he undertook to lay a representation of their sufferings and broken condition before their brethren of other countries, who, he was sure, would hasten to their help at this great crisis. These counsels prevailed. “Our tears are no longer of water,” so wrote the remnant of the slaughtered Vaudois to the Protestants of Europe, “they are of blood; they do not merely obscure our sight, they choke our very hearts. Our hands tremble and our heads ache by the many blows we have received. We cannot frame an epistle answerable to the intent of our minds, and the strangeness of our desolations. We pray you to excuse us, and to collect amid our groans the meaning of what we fain would utter.” After this touching introduction, they proceed with a representation of their state, expressing themselves in terms the moderation of which contrasts strongly with the extent of their wrongs. Protestant Europe was horror-struck when the tale of the massacre was laid before it.

²⁰The sum collected in England was, in round numbers, £38,000. Of this, £16,000 was invested on the security of the State, to pension pastors, schoolmasters, and students in the Valleys. This latter sum was appropriated by Charles II, on the pretext that he was not bound to implement the engagements of a usurper.

Nowhere did these awful tidings awaken a deeper sympathy or kindle a stronger indignation than in England. Cromwell, who was then at the head of the State, proclaimed a fast, ordered a collection for the sufferers,²¹ and wrote to all the Protestant princes, and to the King of France, with the intent of enlisting their sympathy and aid in behalf of the Vaudois. One of the noblest as well as most sacred of the tasks ever undertaken by the great poet, who then acted as the Protector's Latin secretary, was the writing of these letters. Milton's pen was not less gloriously occupied when writing in behalf of these venerable sufferers for conscience sake, than when writing "Paradise Lost." In token of the deep interest he took in this affair, Cromwell sent Sir Samuel Morland with a letter to the Duke of Savoy, expressive of the astonishment and sorrow he felt at the barbarities which had been committed on those who were his brethren in the faith. Cromwell's ambassador visited the Valleys on his way to Turin, and saw with his own eyes the frightful spectacle which the region still presented. "If," said he, addressing the duke, the horrors he had just seen giving point to his eloquence, and kindling his republican plainness into Puritan fervor, "If the tyrants of all times and ages were alive again, they would doubtless be ashamed to find that nothing barbarous nor inhuman, in comparison of these deeds, had ever been invented by them. In the meantime," he continued, "the angels are stricken with horror; men are dizzy with amazement; heaven itself appears astonished with the cries of the dying, and the very earth to blush with the gore of so many innocent persons. Avenge not thyself, O God, for this mighty wickedness, this parricidal slaughter! Let thy blood, O Christ, wash out this blood!"

We have repeatedly mentioned the Castelluzzo in our narrative of this people and their many martyrdoms. It is closely connected with the Massacre of 1655, and as such kindled the muse of Milton. It stands at the entrance of the Valleys, its feet swathed in feathery woods; above which is a mass of debris and fallen rocks, which countless tempests have gathered like a girdle round its middle. From

²¹The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont: containing a most exact Geographical Description of the place, and a faithful Account of the Doctrine, Life, and Persecutions of the ancient Inhabitants, together with a most naked and punctual Relation of the late bloody Massacre, 1655. By Samuel Motland, Esq., His Highness' Commissioner Extraordinary for the Affairs of the said Valleys. London, 1658.

amidst these the supreme column shoots up, pillar-like, and touches that white cloud which is floating past in mid-heaven. One can see a dark spot on the face of the cliff just below the crowning rocks of the summit. It would be taken for the shadow of a passing cloud upon the mountain, were it not that it is immovable. That is the mouth of a cave so roomy, it is said, as to be able to contain some hundreds. To this friendly chamber the Waldenses were wont to flee when the valley beneath was a perfect Pandemonium, glittering with steel, red with crime, and ringing with execrations and blasphemies. To this cave many of the Vaudois fled on occasion of the great massacre. But, alas! thither the persecutor tracked them, and dragging them forth rolled them down the awful precipice.

[487] The law that indissolubly links great crimes with the spot where
[488] they were perpetrated, has written the Massacre of 1655 on this mountain, and even it in eternal keeping to its rock. There is not another such martyrs' monument in the whole world. While the Castelluzzo stands the memory of this great crime cannot die; through all the ages it will continue to cry, and that cry our sublimest poet has interpreted in his sublime sonnet: -

“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold; Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old, When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones, Forget not: in thy book record their groans Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold Slain by the bloody Piedmentese, that roll'd Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans The vales redoubled to the hills, and they To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway The triple tyrant; that from these may grow A hundredfold, who, having learned thy way, Early may fly the Babylonian woe.”

Chapter 12 : Exploits of Gianavello - Massacre and Pillage of Rora

Ascent of La Combe-Beauty and Grandeur of Valley of Rora- Gianavello-His Character-Marquis di Pianeza-His First Assault- Brave Repulse-Treachery of the Marquis-No Faith with Heretics- Gianavello's Band-Repulse of Second and Third Attacks-Death of a Persecutor-An Army Raised to Invade Rora-Massacre and Pillage- Letter of Pianeza-Gianavello's Heroic Reply-Gianavello Renews the War-500 against 15,000-Success of the Waldenses-Horror at the Massacre-Interposition of England-Letter of Cromwell-Treaty of Peace

Picture: The Protestant Church of St. Jean Waldensian Valleys.

Picture: The Pass of Pra del Tor.

The next tragic episode in the history of the Waldenses takes us to the Valley of Rora. The invasion and outrages of which this valley became the scene were contemporaneous with the horrors of the Great Massacre. In what we are now to relate, feats of heroism are blended with deeds of suffering, and we are called to admire the valor of the patriot, as well as the patience of the martyr.

The Valley of Rora lies on the left as one enters La Torre; it is separated from Lucerna by a barrier of mountains, Rora has two entrances: one by a side ravine, which branches off about two miles before reaching La Torre, and the other by crossing the Valley of Lucerna and climbing the mountains. This last is worthy of being briefly described. We start, we shall suppose, from the town of La Torre; we skirt the Castelluzzo on the right, which high in air hangs its precipices, with their many tragic memories, above us. From this point we turn to the left, descend into the valley, traverse its bright meadows, here shaded by the vine which stretches its arms in classic freedom from tree to tree. We cross the torrent of the Pelice by a small bridge, and hold on our way till we reach the foot of the mountains of La Combe, that wall in the Valley of Rora. We begin

to climb by a winding path. Pasturage and vineyard give place to chestnut forest; the chestnut in its turn yields to the pine; and, as we mount still higher, we find ourselves amid the naked ledges of the mountain, with their gushing rills, margined by moss or other Alpine herbage.

An ascent of two hours brings us to the summit of the pass. We have here a pedestal, some 4,000 feet in height, in the midst of a stupendous amphitheatre of Alps, from which to view their glories. How profoundly deep the valley from which we have just climbed up! A thread of silver is now the Pelice; a patch of green a few inches square is now the meadow; the chestnut-tree is a mere dot, hardly visible; and yonder are La Torre and the white Villaro, so tiny that they look as if they could be packed into a child's toy-box.

But while all else has diminished, the mountains seem to have enlarged their bulk and increased their stature, high above us towers the summit of the Castelluzzo; still higher rise the rolling masses of the Vandalin, the lower slopes of which form a vast and magnificent hanging garden, utterly dwarfing those of which we read as one of the wonders of Babylon. And in the far distance the eye rests on a tumultuous sea of mountains, here rising in needles, there running off in long serrated ridges, and there standing up in massy peaks of naked granite, wearing the shining garments which winter weaves for the giants of the Alps.

[489] We now descend into the Valley of Rora. It lies at our feet, a cup of verdure, some sixty miles in circumference, its sides and bottom variously clothed with corn-field and meadow, with vineyard and orchard, with the walnut, the cherry, and all fruit-bearing trees, from amid which numerous brown chalets peep out. The great mountains sweep round the valley like a wall, and among them, pre-eminent in glory as in stature, stands the monarch of the Cottian Alps-Monte Viso.

As among the Jews of old, so among the Waldenses, God raised up, from time to time, mighty men of valor to deliver his people. One of the most remarkable of these men was Gianavello, commonly known as Captain Joshua Gianavello, a native of this same Valley of Rora. He appears, from the accounts that have come down to us, to have possessed all the qualities of a great military leader. He was a man of daring courage, of resolute purpose, and of venturesome

enterprise. He had the faculty, so essential in a commander, of skillful combination. He was fertile in resource, and self-possessed in emergencies; he was quick to resolve, and prompt to execute. His devotion and energy were the means, under God, of mitigating somewhat the horrors of the Massacre of 1655, and his heroism ultimately rolled back the tide of that great calamity, and made it recoil upon its authors. It was the morning of the 24th of April, 1655, the day which saw the butchery commenced that we have described above. On that same day 500 soldiers were dispatched by the Marquis di Pianeza to the Valley of Rora, to massacre its unoffending and unsuspecting inhabitants. Ascending from the Valley of the Pelice, they had gained the summit of the pass, and were already descending on the town of Rora, stealthily and swiftly, as a herd of wolves might descend upon a sheepfold, or as, says Leger, "a brood of vultures might descend upon a flock of harmless doves." Happily Gianavello, who had known for weeks before that a storm was gathering, though he knew not when or where it would burst, was on the outlook. He saw the troop, and guessed their errand. There was not a moment to be lost; a little longer, and not a man would be left alive in Rora to carry tidings of its fate to the next commune. But was Gianavello single-handed to attack an army of 500 men? He stole uphill, under cover of the rocks and trees, and on his way he prevailed on six peasants, brave men like himself, to join him in repelling the invaders. The heroic little band marched on till they were near the troop, then hiding amid the bushes, they lay in ambush by the side of the path. The soldiers came on, little suspecting the trap into which they were marching. Gianavello and his men fired, and with so unerring an aim that seven of the troop fell dead. Then, reloading their pieces, and dexterously changing their ground, they fired again with a like effect. The attack was unexpected; the foe was invisible; the frightened imaginations of Pianeza's soldiers multiplied tenfold the number of their assailants. They began to retreat. But Gianavello and his men, bounding from cover to cover like so many chamois, hung upon their rear, and did deadly execution with their bullets. The invaders left fifty-four of their number dead behind them; and thus did these seven peasants

chase from their Valley of Rora the 500 assassins who had come to murder its peaceful inhabitants.¹

That same afternoon the people of Rora, who were ignorant of the fearful murders which were at that very moment proceeding in the valleys of their brethren, repaired to the Marquis di Pianeza to complain of the attack.

The marquis affected ignorance of the whole affair. "Those who invaded your valley," said he, "were a set of banditti. You did right to repel them. Go back to your families and fear nothing; I pledge my word and honour that no evil shall happen to you."

These deceitful words did not impose upon Gianavello. He had a wholesome recollection of the maxim enacted by the Council of Constance, and so often put in practice in the Valleys, "No faith is to be kept with heretics." Pianeza, he knew, was the agent of the "Council of Extirpation." Hardly had the next morning broke when the hero-peasant was abroad, scanning with eagle-eye the mountain paths that led into his valley. It was not long till his suspicions were more than justified. Six hundred men-at-arms, chosen with special reference to this difficult enterprise, were seen ascending the mountain Cassuleto, to do what their comrades of the previous day had failed to accomplish. Gianavello had now mustered a little host of eighteen, of whom twelve were armed with muskets and swords, and six with only the sling. These he divided into three parties, each consisting of four musketeers and two slingers, and he posted them in a defile, through which he saw the invaders must pass. No sooner had the van of the enemy entered the gorge than a shower of bullets and stones from invisible hands saluted them. Every bullet and stone did its work. The first discharge brought down an officer and twelve men. That volley was succeeded by others equally fatal. The cry was raised, "All is lost, save yourselves!" The flight was precipitate, for every bush and rock seemed to vomit forth deadly missiles. Thus a second ignominious retreat rid the Valley of Rora of these murderers.

The inhabitants carried their complaints a second time to Pianeza. "Concealing," as Leger says, "the ferocity of the tiger under the skin of the fox," he assured the deputies that the attack had been the result

¹Leger, part 2, chapter 11, p. 186.

of a misunderstanding; that certain accusations had been lodged against them, the falsity of which had since been discovered, and now they might return to their homes, for they had nothing to fear. No sooner were they gone than Pianeza began vigorously to prepare for a third attack. ²

He organized a battalion of from 800 to 900 men. Next morning, this host made a rapid march on Rora, seized all the avenues leading into the valley, and chasing the inhabitants to the caves in Monte Friolante, set fire to their dwellings, having first plundered them. Captain Joshua Gianavello, at the head of his little troop, saw the enemy enter, but their numbers were so overwhelming that he waited a more favorable moment for attacking them. The soldiers were retiring, laden with their booty, and driving before them the cattle of the peasants. Gianavello knelt down before his hero-band, and giving thanks to God, who had twice by his hand saved his people, he prayed that the hearts and arms of his followers might be strengthened, to work yet another deliverance. He then attacked the foe. The spoilers turned and fled uphill, in the hope of escaping into the Valley of the Pelice, throwing away their booty in their flight. When they had gained the pass, and begun their descent, their flight became yet more disastrous; great stones, torn up and rolled after them, were mingled with the bullets, and did deadly execution upon them, while the precipices over which they fell in their haste consummated their destruction. The few who survived fled to Villaro. ³

The Marquis di Pianeza, instead of seeing in these events the finger of God, was only the more inflamed with rage, and the more resolutely bent on the extirpation of every heretic from the Valley of Rora. He assembled all the royal troops then under his command, or which could be spared from the massacre in which they were occupied in the other valleys, in order to surround the little territory. This was now the fourth attack on the commune of Rora, but the invaders were destined once more to recoil before the shock of its heroic defenders. Some 8,000 men had been got under arms, and 'were ready to march against Rora, but the impatience of a certain Captain Mario, who had signalled himself in the massacre at

²Leger, part 2, pp. 186,187.

³Ibid, part 2, p. 187. Muston, pp. 146,147.

Bobbio, and wished to appropriate the entire glory of the enterprise, would not permit him to await the movement of the main body. He marched two hours in advance, with three companies of regular troops, few of whom ever returned. Their ferocious leader, borne along by the rush of his panic-stricken soldiers, was precipitated over the edge of the rock into the stream, and badly bruised. He was drawn out and carried to Lucerna, where he died two days afterwards, in great torment of body, and yet greater torment of mind. Of the three companies which he led in this fatal expedition, one was composed of Irish, who had been banished by Cromwell, and who met in this distant land the death they had inflicted on others in their own, leaving their corpses to fatten those valleys which were to have been theirs, had they succeeded in purging them of heresy and heretics.⁴

This series of strange events was now drawing to an end. The fury of Pianezza knew no bounds. This war of his, though waged only with herdsmen, had brought him nothing but disgrace, and the loss of his bravest soldiers. Victor Amadeus once observed that “the skin of every Vaudois cost him fifteen of his best Piedmontese soldiers.” Pianezza had lost some hundreds of his best soldiers, and yet not one of the little troop of Gianavello, dead or alive, had he been able to get into his hands. Nevertheless, he resolved to continue the struggle, but with a much greater army. He assembled 10,000, and attacked Rora on three sides at once. While Gianavello was bravely combating with the first troop of 3,000, on the summit of the pass that gives entrance from the Valley of the Pelice, a second of 6,000 had entered by the ravine at the foot of the valley; and a third of 1,000 had crossed the mountains that divide Bagnolo from Rora. But, alas! who shall describe the horrors that followed the entrance of these assassins? Blood, burning, and rapine in an instant overwhelmed the little community. No distinction was made of age or sex. None had pity for their tender years; none had reverence for their grey hairs. Happy they who were slain at once, and thus escaped horrible indignities and tortures. The few spared from the

⁴Leger, part 2, p. 188. Muston, pp. 148,149.

sword were carried away as captives, and among these were the wife and the three daughters of Gianavello.⁵

There was now nothing more in the Valley of Rora for which the patriot hero could do battle. The light of his hearth was quenched, his village was a heap of smoking ruins, his fathers and brethren had fallen by the sword; but rising superior to these accumulated calamities, he marched his little troop over the mountains, to await on the frontier of his country whatever opportunities Providence might yet open to him of wielding his sword in defense of the ancient liberties and the glorious faith of his people.

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It was at this time that Pianeza, intending to deal the finishing blow that should crush the hero of Rora, wrote to Gianavello as follows: - "I exhort you for the last time to renounce your heresy. This is the only hope of your obtaining the pardon of your prince, and of saving the life of your wife and daughters, now my prisoners, and whom, if you continue obstinate, I will burn alive. As for yourself, my soldiers shall no longer pursue you, but I will set such a price upon your head, as that were you Beelzebub himself, you shall infallibly be taken; and be assured that, if you fall alive into my hands, there are no torments with which I will not punish your rebellion." To these ferocious threats Gianavello magnanimously and promptly replied: "There are no torments so terrible, no death so barbarous, that I would not choose rather than deny my Savior. Your threats cannot cause me to renounce my faith; they but fortify me in it. Should the Marquis di Pianeza cause my wife and daughters to pass through the fire it can but consume their mortal bodies; their souls I commend to God, trusting that he will have mercy on them, and on mine, should it please him that I fall into the marquis's hands."

⁶ We do not know whether Pianeza was capable of seeing that this was the most mortifying defeat he had yet sustained at the hands of the peasant-hero of Rora; and that he might as well war against the Alps themselves as against a cause that could infuse a spirit like this into its champions. Gianavello's reply, observes Leger, "certified him as a chosen instrument in the hands of God for the recovery of his country seemingly lost."

⁵Ibid., part 2, p. 189. Monastier, p. 277.

⁶Leger, part 2, p. 189.

Gianavello had saved from the wreck of his family his infant son, and his first care was to seek a place of safety for him. Laying him on his shoulders, he passed the frozen Alps which separate the Valley of Lucerna from France, and entrusted the child to the care of a relative resident at Queyras, in the Valleys of the French Protestants. With the child he carried thither the tidings of the awful massacre of his people. Indignation was roused. Not a few were willing to join his standard, brave spirits like himself; and, with his little band greatly recruited, he repassed the Alps in a few weeks, to begin his second and more successful campaign. On his arrival in the Valleys he was joined by Giaheri, under whom a troop had been assembling to avenge the massacre of their brethren.

In Giaheri, Captain Gianavello had found a companion worthy of himself, and worthy of the cause for which he was now in arms. Of this heroic man Leger has recorded that, "though he possessed the courage of a lion, he was as humble as a lamb, always giving to God the glory of his victories; well versed in Scripture, and understanding controversy, and of great natural talent." The massacre had reduced the Vaudois race to all but utter extermination, and 500 men were all that the two leaders could collect around their standard. The army opposed to them, and at this time in their Valleys, was from 15,000 to 20,000 strong, consisting of trained and picked soldiers. Nothing but an impulse from the God of battles could have moved these two men, with such a handful, to take the field against such odds. To the eye of a common hero all would have seemed lost; but the courage of these two Christian warriors was based on faith. They believed that God would not permit his cause to perish, or the lamp of the Valleys to be extinguished; and, few though they were, they knew that God was able by their humble instrumentality to save their country and Church. In this faith they unsheathed the sword; and so valiantly did they wield it, that soon that sword became the terror of the Piedmontese armies. The ancient promise was fulfilled, "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

We cannot go into details. Prodiges of valor were performed by this little host. "I had always considered the Vaudois to be men," said Descombies, who had joined them, "but I found them lions." Nothing could withstand the fury of their attack. Post after post and village after village were wrested from the Piedmontese troops.

Soon the enemy was driven from the upper valleys. The war now passed down into the plain of Piedmont, and there it was waged with the same heroism and the same success. They besieged and took several towns, they fought not a few pitched battles; and in nearly all of them they were victorious, though opposed by more than ten times their number. Their success could hardly be credited had it not been recorded by historians whose veracity is above suspicion, and the accuracy of whose statements was attested by eye-witnesses. Not unfrequently did it happen at the close of a day's fighting, that 1,400 Piedmontese dead covered the field of battle, while not more than six or seven of the Waldensea had fallen. Such success might well be termed miramfious; and not only did it appear so to the Vaudois themselves, but even to their foes, who could not refrain from expressing their conviction "that surely God was on the side of the Barbers."

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While the Vaudois were thus heroically maintaining their cause by arms, and rolling back the chastisement of war on those from whom its miseries had come, tidings of their wrongs were travelling to all the Protestant States of Europe. Wherever these tidings came a feeling of horror was evoked, and the cruelty of the Government of Savoy was universally and loudly execrated. All confessed that such a tale of woe they had never before heard. But the Protestant States did not content themselves with simply condemning these deeds; they judged it to be their clear duty to move in behalf of this poor and greatly oppressed people; and foremost among those who did themselves lasting honour by interposing in behalf of a people "drawn unto death and ready to perish," was, as we have already said, England, then under the Protectorate of Cromwell. We mentioned in the previous chapter the Latin letter, the composition of Milton, which the Protector addressed to the Duke of Savoy. In addition, Cromwell wrote to Louis XIV of France, soliciting his mediation with the duke ill behalf of the Vaudois. The letter is interesting as containing the truly catholic and noble sentiments of England, to which the pen of her great poet gave fitting expression: -

"Most Serene and Potent King, "After a most barbarous slaughter of persons of both sexes, and of all ages, treaty of peace was concluded, or rather secret acts of hostility were committed the more securely under the name of a pacification. The conditions of the

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treaty were determined in your town of Pinerolo: hard conditions enough, but such as these poor people would gladly have agreed to, after the horrible outrages to which they had been exposed, provided that they had been faithfully observed. But they were not observed; the meaning of the treaty is evaded and violated, by putting a false interpretation upon some of the articles, and by straining others. Many of the complainants have been deprived of their patrimonies, and many have been forbidden the exercise of their religion. New payments have been exacted, and a new fort has been built to keep them in check, from whence a disorderly soldiery make frequent sallies, and plunder or murder all they meet. In addition to these things, fresh levies of troops are clandestinely preparing to march against them; and those among them who profess the Roman Catholic religion have been advised to retire in time; so that everything threatens the speedy destruction of such as escaped the former massacre. I do therefore beseech and conjure your Majesty not to suffer such enormities, and not to permit (I will not say any prince, for surely such barbarity never could enter into the heart of a prince, much less of one of the duke's tender age, or into the mind of his mother) those accursed murderers to indulge in such savage ferocity, who, while they profess to be the servants and followers of Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, do blaspheme his name, and transgress his mild precepts, by the slaughter of innocent men. Oh, that your Majesty, who has the power, and who ought to be inclined to use it, may deliver so many supplicants from the hands of murderers, who are already drunk with blood, and thirst for it again, and who take pleasure in throwing the odium of their cruelty upon princes! I implore your Majesty not to suffer the borders of your kingdom to be polluted by such monstrous wickedness. Remember that this very race of people threw themselves upon the protection of your grandfather, King Henry IV, who was most friendly disposed towards the Protestants, when the Duke of Lesdiguières passed victoriously through their country, as affording the most commodious passage into Italy at the time he pursued the Duke of Savoy in his retreat across the Alps. The act or instrument of that submission is still extant among the public records of your kingdom, in which it is provided that the Vaudois shall not be transferred to any other government, but upon the same condition that they were received

under the protection of your invincible grandfather. As supplicants of his grandson, they now implore the fulfilment of this compact.

“Given at our Court at Westminster, this 26th of May, 1658.”

The French King undertook the mediation, as requested by the Protestant princes, but hurried it to a conclusion before the ambassadors from the Protestant States had arrived. The delegates from the Protestant cantons of Switzerland were present, but they were permitted to act the part of onlookers simply. The Grand Monarch took the whole affair upon himself, and on the 18th of August, 1655, a treaty of peace was concluded of a very disadvantageous kind. The Waldenses were stripped of their ancient possessions on the right bank of the Pelice, lying toward the plain of Piedmont. Within the new boundary they were guaranteed liberty of worship; an amnesty was granted for all offenses committed during the war; captives were to be restored when claimed; and they were to be exempt from all imposts for five years, on the ground that they were so impoverished as not to be able to pay anything.

When the treaty was published it was found to contain two clauses that astonished the Protestant world. In the preamble the Vaudois were styled rebels, whom it had pleased their prince graciously to receive back into favor; and in the body of the deed was an article, which no one recollected to have heard mentioned during the negotiations, empowering the French to construct a fort above La Torre. This looked like a preparation for renewing the war.

By this treaty the Protestant States were outwitted; their ambassadors were duped; and the poor Vaudois were left as much as ever in the power of the Duke of Savoy and of the Council for the Propagation of the Faith, and the Extirpation of Heretics.

Chapter 13 : The Exile

New Troubles-Louis XIV and his Confessor-Edict against the Vaudois -Their Defenseless Condition-Their Fight and Victory-They Surrender -The Whole Nation Thrown into Prison-Utter Desolation of the Land -Horrors of the Imprisonment-Their Release-Journey across the Alps -Its Hardships-Arrival of the Exiles at Geneva-Their Hospitable Reception

After the great Massacre of 1655, the Church of the Valleys had rest from persecution for thirty years. This period, however, can be styled one of rest only when contrasted with the frightful storms which had convulsed the era that immediately preceded it. The enemies of the Vaudois still found innumerable ways in which to annoy and harass them. Ceaseless intrigues were continually breeding new alarms, and the Vaudois had often to till their fields and prune their vines with their musket slung across their shoulders. Many of their chief men were sent into exile. Captain Gianavello and Pastor Leger whose services to their people were too great ever to be forgiven, had sentence of death passed on them. Leger was [495] “to be strangled; then his body was to be hung by one foot on a gibbet for four-and-twenty hours; and, lastly, his head was to be cut off and publicly exposed at San Giovanni. His name was to be inserted in the list of noted outlaws; his houses were to be burned.”

¹ Gianavello retired to Geneva, where he continued to watch with unabated interest the fortunes of his people. Leger became pastor of a congregation at Leyden, where he crowned a life full of labor and suffering for the Gospel, by a work which has laid all Christendom under obligations to him; we refer to his History of the Churches of the Vaudois-a noble monument of his Church’s martyr-heroism and his own Christian patriotism.

Hardly had Leger unrolled to the world’s gaze the record of the last awful tempest which had smitten the Valleys, when the clouds

¹Leger, part 2, p. 275.

returned, and were seen rolling up in dark, thunderous masses against this devoted land. Former storms had assailed them from the south, having collected in the Vatican; the tempest now approaching had its first rise on the north of the Alps. It was the year 1685; Louis XIV was nearing the grave, and with the great audit in view he inquired of his confessor by what good deed as a king he might atone for his many sins as a man. The answer was ready. He was told that he must extirpate Protestantism in France.

The Grand Monarch, as the age styled him, bowed obsequiously before the shaven crown of priest, while Europe was trembling before his armies. Louis XIV did as he was commanded; he revoked the Edict of Nantes. This gigantic crime, which inflicted so much misery on the Protestants in the first place, and brought so many woes on the throne and nation of France in the second, will be recorded in its place. It is the nation of the Vaudois, and the persecution which the counsel of Father la Chaise brought upon them, with which we have here to do. Wishing for companionship in the sanguinary work of purging France from Protestantism, Louis XIV. sent an ambassador to the Duke of Savoy, with a request that he would deal with the Waldenses as he was now dealing with the Huguenots. The young and naturally humane Victor Amadeus was at the moment on more than usually friendly terms with his subjects of the Valleys. They had served bravely under his standard in his late war with the Genoese, and he had but recently written them a letter of thanks. How could he unsheathe his sword against the men whose devotion and valor had so largely contributed to his victory? Victor Amadeus deigned no reply to the French ambassador. The request was repeated; it received an evasive answer; it was urged a third time, accompanied by a hint from the potent Louis that if it was not convenient for the duke to purge his dominions, the King of France would do it for him with an army of 14,000 men, and would keep the Valleys for his pains. This was enough. A treaty was immediately concluded between the duke and the French King, in which the latter promised an armed force to enable the former to reduce the Vaudois to the Roman obedience, or to exterminate them.

² On the 31st of January, 1686, the following edict was promulgated in the Valleys: -

“1. The Vaudois shall henceforth and for ever cease and discontinue all the exercises of their religion.

“2. They are forbidden to have religious meetings, under pain of death, and penalty of confiscation of all their goods.

“3. All their ancient privileges are abolished.

“4. All the churches, prayer-houses, and other edifices consecrated to their worship shall be razed to the ground.

“5. All the pastors and schoolmasters of the Valleys are required either to embrace Romanism or to quit the country within fifteen days, under pain of death and confiscation of goods.

“6. All the children born, or to be born, of Protestant parents, shall be compulsorily trained up as Roman Catholics. Every such child yet unborn shall, within a week after its birth, be brought to the cure of its parish, and admitted of the Roman Catholic Church, under pain, on the part of the mother, of being publicly whipped with rods, and on the part of the father of laboring five years in the galleys.

“7. The Vaudois pastors shall abjure the doctrine they have hitherto publicly preached; shall receive a salary, greater by one-third than that which they previously enjoyed; and one-half thereof shall go in reversion to their widows.

“8. All Protestant foreigners settled in Piedmont are ordered either to become Roman Catholics, or to quit the country within fifteen days.

“9. By a special act of his great and paternal clemency, the sovereign will permit persons to sell, in this interval, the property they may have acquired in Piedmont, provided the sale be made to Roman Catholic purchasers.”

[496] This monstrous edict seemed to sound the knell of the Vaudois as a Protestant people. Their oldest traditions did not contain a decree so cruel and unrighteous, nor one that menaced them with so complete and summary a destruction as that which now seemed to impend over them. What was to be done! Their first step was to send delegates to Turin, respectfully to remind the duke that the

²Monastier, p. 311.

Vaudois had inhabited the Valleys from the earliest times; that they had led forth their herds upon their mountains before the House of Savoy had ascended the throne of Piedmont; that treaties and oaths, renewed from reign to reign, had solemnly secured them in the freedom of their worship and other liberties; and that the honour of princes and the stability of States lay in the faithful observance of such covenants; and they prayed him to consider what reproach the throne and kingdom of Piedmont would incur if he should become the executioner of those of whom he was the natural protector. The Protestant cantons of Switzerland joied their mediation to the intercessions of the Waldenses. And when the almost incredible edict came to be known in Germany and Holland, these countries threw their shield over the Valleys, by interceding with the duke that he would not inflict so great a wrong as to cast out from a land which was theirs by irrevocable charters, a people whose only crime was that they worshipped as their fathers had worshipped, before they passed under the scepter of the duke. All these powerful parties pleaded in vain. Ancient charters, solemn treaties, and oaths, made in the face of Europe, the long-tried loyalty and the many services of the Vaudois to the House of Savoy, could not stay the uplifted arm of the duke, or prevent the execution of the monstrously criminal decree. In a little while the armies of France and Savoy arrived before the Valleys.

At no previous period of their history, perhaps, had the Waldenses been so entirely devoid of human aid as now. Gianavello, whose stout heart and brave arm had stood them in such stead formerly, was in exile. Cromwell, whose potent voice had stayed the fury of the great massacre, was in his grave. An avowed Papist filled the throne of Great Britain. It was going in at this hour with Protestantism everywhere. The Covenanters of Scotland were hiding on the moors, or dying in the Grass-market of Edinburgh. France, Piedmont, and Italy were closing in around the Valleys; every path guarded, all their succours cut off, an overwhelming force waited the signal to massacre them. So desperate did their situation appear to the Swiss envoys, that they counselled them to “transport elsewhere the torch of the Gospel, and not keep it here to be extinguished in blood.”

The proposal to abandon their ancient inheritance, coming from such a quarter, startled the Waldenses. It produced, at first, a division

of opinion in the Valleys; but ultimately they united in rejecting it. They remembered the exploits their fathers had done, and the wonders God had wrought in the mountain passes of Rora, in the defiles of Angrogna, and in the field of the Pra del Tor, and their faith reviving, they resolved, in a reliance on the same Almighty Arm which had been stretched out in their behalf in former days, to defend their hearths and altars. They repaired the old defenses, and made ready for resistance. On the 17th of April, being Good Friday, they renewed their covenant, and on Easter Sunday their pastors dispensed to them the Communion. This was the last time the sons of the Valleys partook of the Lord's Supper before their great dispersion.

Victor Amadeus II had pitched his camp on the plain of San Gegonzo before the Vaudois Alps. His army consisted of five regiments of horse and foot. He was here joined by the French auxiliaries who had crossed the Alps, consisting of some dozen battalions, the united force amounting to between 15,000 and 20,000 men. The signal was to be given on Easter Monday, at break of day, by three cannon-shots, fired from the hill of Bricherasio. On the appointed morning, the Valleys of Lucerna and San Martino, forming the two extreme opposite points of the territory, were attacked, the first by the Piedmontese host, and the last by the French, under the command of General Catthat, a distinguished soldier. In San Martino the fighting lasted ten hours, and ended in the complete repulse of the French, who retired at night with a loss of more than 500 killed and wounded, while the Vaudois had lost only two.³ On the following day the French, burning with rage at their defeat, poured a more numerous army into San Martino, which swept along the valley, burning, plundering, and massacring, and having crossed the mountains descended into Pramol, continuing the same indiscriminate and exterminating vengeance. To the rage of the sword were added other barbarities and outrages too shocking to be narrated.⁴

The issue by arms being deemed uncertain, despite the vast disparity of strength, treachery, on a great scale, was now had recourse to. Wherever, throughout the Valleys, the Vaudois were

³Monastier, p. 317. Muston, p. 199.

⁴Muston, p. 200.

found strongly posted, and ready for battle, they were told that their brethren in the neighboring communes had submitted, and that it was vain for them, isolated and alone as they now were, to continue their resistance. When they sent deputies to head-quarters to inquire-and passes were freely supplied to them for that purpose-they were assured that the submission had been universal, and that none save themselves were now in arms. They were assured, moreover, that should they follow the example of the rest of their nation, all their ancient liberties would be held intact.⁵ This base artifice was successfully practiced at each of the Vaudois posts in succession, till at length the Valleys had all capitulated. We cannot blame the Waldenses, who were the victims of an act so dishonorable and vile as hardly to be credible; but the mistake, alas! was a fatal one, and had to be expiated afterwards by the endurance of woes a hundred times more dreadful than any they would have encountered in the rudest campaign. The instant consequence of the submission was a massacre which extended to all their Valleys, and which was similar in its horrors to the great butcher of 1655. In that massacre upwards of 3,000 perished. The remainder of the nation, amounting, according to Arnaud, to between 12,000 and 15,000 souls, were consigned to the various gaols and fortresses of Piedmont.⁶

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We now behold these famous Valleys, for the first time in their history, empty. The ancient lamp burns no longer. The school of the prophets in the Pra del Tor is razed. No smoke is seen rising from cottage, and no psalm is heard ascending from dwelling or sanctuary. No herdsman leads forth his kine on the mountains, and no troop of worshippers, obedient to the summons of the Sabbath-bell, climbs the mountain paths. The vine flings wide her arms, but no skillful hand is nigh to train her boughs and prune her luxuriance. The chestnut-tree rains its fruits, but there is no group of merry children to gather them, and they lie rotting on the ground. The terraces of the hills, that were wont to overflow with flowers and fruitage, and which presented to the eye a series of hanging gardens, now torn and breached, shoot in a mass of ruinous rubbish down the slope. Nothing is seen but dismantled forts, and the blackened ruins of

⁵Muston, p. 202.

⁶Monastier, p. 320.

churches and hamlets. A dreary silence overspreads the land, and the beasts of the field strangely multiply. A few herdsmen, hidden here and there in forests and holes of the rocks, are now the only inhabitants. Monte Viso, from out the silent vault, looks down with astonishment at the absence of that ancient race over whom, from immemorial time, he had been wont to dart his kindling glories at dawn, and let fall at eve the friendly mantle of his purple shadows.

We know not if ever before an entire nation were in prison at once. Yet now it was so. All of the Waldensian race that remained from the sword of their executioners were immured in the dungeons of Piedmont! The pastor and his flock, the father and his family, the patriarch and the stripling had passed in, in one great procession, and exchanged their grand rock-walled Valleys, their tree-embowered homes, and their sunlit peaks, for the filth, the choking air, and the Tartarean walls of an Italian gaol. And how were they treated in prison? As the African slave was treated on the "middle passage." They had a sufficiency of neither food nor clothing. The bread dealt out to them was fetid. They had putrid water to drink. They were exposed to the sun by day and to the cold at night. They were compelled to sleep on the bare pavement, or on straw so full of vermin that the stone-floor was preferable. Disease broke out in these horrible abodes, and the mortality was fearful. "When they entered these dungeons," says Henri Arnaud, "they counted 14,000 healthy mountaineers, but when, at the intercession of the Swiss deputies, their prisons were opened, 3,000 skeletons only crawled out." These few words portray a tragedy so awful that the imagination recoils from the contemplation of it.

Well, at length the persecutor looses their chains, and opening their prison doors he sends forth these captives-the woe-worn remnant of a gallant people. But to what are they sent forth? To people again their ancient Valleys? To rekindle the fire on their 'ancestral hearths? To rebuild "the holy and beautiful house" in which their fathers had praised God? Ah, no! They are thrust out of prison only to be sent into exile-to Vaudois a living death.

The barbarity of 1655 was repeated. It was in December (1686) that the decree of liberation was issued in favor of these 3,000 men who had escaped the sword, and now survived the not less deadly epidemic of the prison. At that season, as every one knows, the

snow and ice are piled to a fearful depth on the Alps; and daily tempests threaten with death the too adventurous traveller who would cross their summits. It was at this season that these poor captives, emaciated with sickness, weakened by hunger, and shivering from insufficient clothing, were commanded to rise up and cross the snowy hills. They began their journey on the afternoon of that very day on which the order arrived; for their enemies would permit no delay. One hundred and fifty of them died on their first march. At night they halted at the foot of the Mont Cents. Next morning, when they surveyed the Alps they saw evident signs of a gathering tempest, and they besought the officer in charge to permit them, for the sake of their sick and aged, to remain where they were till the storm had spent its rage. With heart harder than the rocks they were to traverse, the officer ordered them to resume their journey. That troop of emaciated beings began the ascent, and were soon struggling with the blinding drifts and fearful whirlwinds of the mountain. Eighty-six of their number, succumbing to the tempest, dropped by the way. Where they lay down, there they died. No relative or friend was permitted to remain behind to watch their last moments or tender them needed succour. That ever-thinning procession moved on and on over the white hills, leaving it to the falling snow to give burial to their stricken companions. When spring opened the passes of the Alps, alas! what ghastly memorials met the eye of the horror-stricken traveller. Strewed along the track were the now unshrouded corpses of these poor exiles, the dead child lying fast locked in the arms of the dead mother.

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But why should we prolong this harrowing tale? The first company of these miserable exiles arrived at Geneva on Christmas Day, 1686, having spent about three weeks on the journey. They were followed by small parties, who crossed the Alps one after the other, being let out of prison at different times. It was not till the end of February, 1687, that the last band of these emigrants reached the hospitable gates of Geneva. But in what a plight! way-worn, sick, emaciated, and faint through hunger. Of some the tongue was swollen in their mouth, and they were unable to speak; of others the arms were bitten with the frost, so that they could not stretch them out to accept the charity offered to them; and some there were who dropped down and expired on the very threshold of the city,

“finding,” as one has said, “the end of their life at the beginning of their liberty.” Most hospitable was the reception given them by the city of Calvin. A deputation of the principal citizens of Geneva, headed by the patriarch Gianavello, who still lived, went out to meet them on the frontier, and taking them to their homes, they vied with each other which should show them the greatest kindness. Generous city! If he who shall give a cup of cold water to a disciple shall in nowise lose his reward, how much more shalt thou be requited for this thy kindness to the suffering and sorrowing exiles of the Savior!

Chapter 14 : Return to the Valleys

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Longings after their Valleys-Thoughts of Returning-Their Reassembling -Cross the Lemman-Begin their March-The “Eight Hundred”-Cross Mont Cents-Great Victory in the Valley of the Dora-First View of their Mountains-Worship on the Mountain-top- Enter their Valleys- Pass their First Sunday at Prali-Worship

Picture: The Vaudois Crossing Lake Lemman by Night.

We now open the bright page of the Vaudois history. ‘We have seen nearly 3,000 Waldensian exiles enter the gates of Geneva, the feeble remnant of a population of from 14,000 to 16,000. One city could not contain them all, and arrangements were made for distributing the expatriated Vaudois among the Reformed cantons. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes had a little before thrown thousands of French Protestants upon the hospitality of the Swiss; and now the arrival of the Waldensian refugees brought with it yet heavier demands on the public and private charity of the cantons; but the response of Protestant Helvetia was equally cordial in the case of the last comers as in that of the first, and perhaps even more so, seeing their destitution was greater. Nor were the Vaudois ungrateful. “Next to God, whose tender mercies have preserved us from being entirely consumed,” said they to their kind benefactors, “we are indebted to you alone for life and liberty.”

Several of the German princes opened their States to these exiles; but the influence of their great enemy, Louis XIV, was then too powerful in these parts to permit of their residence being altogether an agreeable one. Constantly watched by his emissaries, and their patrons tampered with, they were moved about from place to place. The question of their permanent settlement in the future was beginning to be anxiously discussed. The project of carrying them across the sea in the ships of Holland, and planting them at the Cape, was even talked of. The idea of being separated for ever from their

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native land, dearer in exile than when they dwelt in it, gave them intolerable anguish. Was it not possible to reassemble their scattered colonies, and marching back to their Valleys, rekindle their ancient lamp in them? This was the question which, after three years of exile, the Vaudois began to put to themselves. As they wandered by the banks of the Rhine, or traversed the German plains, they feasted their imaginations on their far-off homes. The chestnuts shading their former abodes, the vine bending gracefully over their portal, and the meadow in front, which the crystal torrent kept perpetually bright, and whose murmur sweetly blended with the evening psalm, all rose before their eyes. They never knelt to pray but it was with their faces turned toward their grand mountains, where slept their martyred fathers. Attempts had been made by the Duke of Savoy to people their territory by settling in it a mongrel race, partly Irish and partly Piedmontese; but the land knew not the strangers, and refused to yield its strength to them. The Vaudois had sent spies to examine its condition; ¹ its fields lay untilled, its vines unpruned, nor had its ruins been raised up; it was almost as desolate as on the day when its sons had been driven out of it. It seemed to them that the land was waiting their return.

At length the yearning of their heart could no longer be repressed. The march back to their Valleys is one of the most wonderful exploits ever performed by any people. It is famous in history by the name of “*La Rentree Glorieuse*.” The parallel event which will recur to the mind of the scholar is, of course, the retreat of “the ten thousand Greeks.” The patriotism and bravery of both will be admitted, but a candid comparison will, we think, incline one to assign the palm of heroism to the return of “the eight hundred.”

The day fixed on for beginning their expedition was the 10th of June, 1688. Quitting their various cantonments in Switzerland, and travelling by by-roads, they traversed the country by night, and assembled at Bex, a small town in the southern extremity of the territory of Bern. Their secret march was soon known to the senates of Zurich, Bern, and Geneva; and, foreseeing that the departure of the exiles would compromise them with the Popish powers, their Excellencies took measures to prevent it. A bark laden with arms

¹Monastier, p. 336.

for their use was seized on the Lake of Geneva. The inhabitants of the Vallais, in concert with the Savoyards, at the first alarm seized the Bridge of St. Maurice, the key of the Rhone Valley, and stopped the expedition. Thus were they, for the time, compelled to abandon their project.

To extinguish all hopes of their return to the Valleys, they were anew distributed over Germany. But scarcely had this second dispersion been effected, when war broke out; the French troops overran the Palatinate, and the Vaudois settled there, dreading, not without reason, the soldiers of Louis XIV, retired before them, and retook the road to Switzerland. The Protestant cantons, pitying these poor exiles, tossed from country to country by political storms, settled them once more in their former allotments. Meanwhile, the scenes were shifting rapidly around the expatriated Vaudois, and with eyes uplifted they waited the issue. They saw their protector, William of Orange, mount the throne of England. They saw their powerful enemy, Louis XIV, attacked at once by the emperor and humiliated by the Dutch. They saw their own Prince Victor Amadeus withdraw his soldiers from Savoy, seeing that he needed them to defend Piedmont. It seemed to them that an invisible Hand was opening their path back to their own land. Encouraged by these tokens, they began to arrange a second time for their departure.

The place of appointed rendezvous was a wood on the northern shore of the Lemman, near the town of Noyon. For days before they continued to converge, in scattered bands, and by stealthy marches, on the selected point. On the decisive evening, the 16th of August, 1689, a general muster took place under cover of the friendly wood of Prangins. Having by solemn prayer commended their enterprise to God, they embarked on the lake, and crossed by star-light. Their means of transport would have been deficient but for a circumstance which threatened at first to obstruct their expedition, but which, in the issue, greatly facilitated it. Curiosity had drawn numbers to this part of the lake, and the boats that brought hither the sightseers furnished more amply the means of escape to the Vaudois.

At this crisis, as on so many previous ones, a distinguished man arose to lead them. Henri Arnaud, whom we see at the head of the 800 fighting men who are setting out for their native possessions, had at first discharged the office of pastor, but the troubles of his

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nation compelling him to leave the Valleys, he had served in the armies of the Prince of Orange. Of decided piety, ardent patriotism, and of great decision and courage, he loud presented a beautiful instance of the union of the pastoral and the military character. It is hard to say whether his soldiers listened more reverentially to the exhortations he at times delivered to them from the pulpit, or to the orders he gave them on the field of battle.

Arriving on the southern shore of the lake, these 800 Vaudois bent their knees in prayer, and then began their march through a country covered with foes. Before them rose the great snow-clad mountains over which they were to fight their way. Arnaud arranged his little host into three companies-an advanced-guard, a center, and a rear-guard. Seizing some of the chief men as hostages, they traversed the Valley of the Arve to Sallenches, and emerged from its dangerous passes just as the men of the latter place had completed their preparations for resisting them. Occasional skirmishes awaited them, but mostly their march was unopposed, for the terror of God had fallen upon the inhabitants of Savoy. Holding on their way they climbed the Haut Luce Alp, ² and next that of Bon Homme, the neighboring Alp to Mont Blanc; sinking sometimes to their middle in snow. Steep precipices and treacherous glaciers subjected them to both toil and danger. They were wet through with the rain, which at times fell in torrents. Their provisions were growing scanty, but their supply was recruited by the shepherds of the mountains, who brought them bread and cheese, while their huts served them at night. They renewed their hostages at every stage; sometimes they “caged”-to use their own phrase-a Capuchin monk, and at other times an influential landlord, but all were treated with uniform kindness.

Having crossed the Bon Homme, which divides the basin of the Arve from that of the Isere, they descended, on Wednesday, the fifth day of their march, into the valley of the latter stream. They had looked forward to this stage of their journey with great misgivings, for the numerous population of the Val Isere was known to be well armed, and decidedly hostile, and might be expected to oppose their

²So named by the author of the *Rentree*, from the village at its foot, but which without doubt, says Monastier (p. 349), “is either the Col Joli (7,240 feet high) or the Col de la Fene~tre, or Portetta, as it was named to Mr. Brockedon, who has visited these countries, and followed the same road: as the Vaudois.”

march, but the enemy was “still as a stone” till the people had passed over. They next traversed Mont Iseran, and the yet more formidable Mont Cenis, and finally descended into the Valley of the Dora. It was here, on Saturday, the 24th of August, that they encountered for the first time a considerable body of regular troops.

As they traversed the valley they were met by a peasant, of whom they inquired whether they could have provisions by paying for them. “Come on this way,” said the man, in a tone that had slight touch of triumph in it, “you will find all that you want; they are preparing an excellent supper for you.”³ They were led into the defile of Salabertrand, where the Col d’Albin closes in upon the stream of the Dora, and before they were aware they found themselves in presence of the French army, whose camp-fires- for night had fallen-illumined far and wide the opposite slope. Retreat was impossible. The French were 2,500 strong, flanked by the garrison of Exiles, and supported by a miscellaneous crowd of armed followers.

Under favor of the darkness, they advanced to the bridge which crossed the Dora, on the opposite bank of which the French were encamped. To the challenge, “Who goes there?” the Vandots answered, “Friends.” The instant reply shouted out was “Kill, kill!” followed by a tremendous fire, which was kept up for a quarter of an hour. It did no harm, however, for Arnaud had bidden his soldiers lie flat on their faces, and permit the deadly shower to pass over them. But now a division of the French appeared in their rear, thus placing them between two fires. Some one in the Vaudois army, seeing that all must be risked, shouted out, “Courage! the bridge is won!” At these words the Vaudois started to their feet, rushed across the bridge sword in hand, and clearing it, they threw themselves with the impetuosity of a whirlwind upon the enemy’s entrenchments. Confounded by the suddenness of the attack, the French could only use the butt-ends of their muskets to parry the blows. The fighting lasted two hours, and ended in the total rout of the French. Their leader, the Marquis de Larrey, after a fruitless attempt to rally his soldiers, fled wounded to Briancon, exclaiming, “Is it possible that I have lost the battle and my honour?”

³Monastier, p. 352.

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Soon thereafter the moon rose and showed the field of battle to the victors. On it, stretched out in death, lay 600 French soldiers, besides officers; and strewn promiscuously with the fallen, all over the field, were arms, military stores, and provisions. Thus had been suddenly opened an armory and magazines to men who stood much in need both of weapons and of food. Having amply replenished themselves, they collected what they could not carry away into a heap, and set fire to it. The loud and multifarious noises formed by the explosions of the gunpowder, the sounding of the trumpets, and the shouting of the captains, who, throwing their caps in the air, exclaimed, "Thanks be to the Lord of hosts who hath given us the victory," echoed like the thunder of heaven, and reverberating from hill to hill, formed a most extraordinary and exciting scene, and one that is seldom witnessed amid these usually quiet mountains. This great victory cost the Waldenses only fifteen killed and twelve wounded.

Their fatigue was great, but they feared to halt on the battle-field, and so, rousing those who had already sunk into sleep, they commenced climbing the lofty Mont Sci. The day was breaking as they gained the summit. It was Sunday, and Henri Arnaud, halting till all should assemble, pointed out to them, just as they were becoming visible in the morning light, the mountain-tops of their own land. Welcome sight to their longing eyes! Bathed in the radiance of the rising sun, it seemed to them, as one snowy peak began to burn after another, that the mountains were kindling into joy at the return of their long-absent sons. This army of soldiers resolved itself into a congregation of worshippers, and the summit of Mont Sci became their church. Kneeling on the mountaintop, the battle-field below them, and the solemn and sacred peaks of the Col du Pis, the Col la Vechera, and the glorious pyramid of Monte Viso looking down upon them in reverent silence, they humbled themselves before the Eternal, confessing their sins, and giving thanks for their many deliverances. Seldom has worship more sincere or more rapt been offered than that which this day ascended from this congregation of warrior-worshippers gathered under the dome-like vault that rose over them.

Refreshed by the devotions of the Sunday, and exhilarated by the victory of the day before, the heroic band now rushed down to

take possession of their inheritance, from which the single Valley of Clusone only parted them. It was three years and a half since they had crossed the Alps, a crowd of exiles, worn to skeletons by sickness and confinement, and now they were returning a marshalled host, victorious over the army of France, and ready to encounter that of Piedmont. They traversed the Clusone, a plain of about two miles in width, watered by the broad, clear, blue-tinted Gelmagnasca, and bounded by hills, which offer to the eye a succession of terraces, clothed with the richest vines, mingled with the chestnut and the appletree. They entered the narrow defile of Pis, where a detachment of Piedmontese soldiers had been posted to guard the pass, but who took flight at the approach of the Vaudois, thus opening to them the gate of one of the grandest of their Valleys, San Martino. On the twelfth day after setting out from the shores of the Lemman they crossed the frontier, and stood once more within the limits of their inheritance. When they mustered at Balsiglia, the first Vaudois village which they entered, in the western extremity of San Martino, they found that fatigue, desertion, and battle had reduced their numbers from 800 to 700.

Their first Sunday after their return was passed at the village of Prali. Of all their sanctuaries the church of Prali alone remained standing; of the others only the ruins were to be seen. They resolved to recommence this day their ancient and scriptural worship. Purging the church of its Popish ornaments, one half of the little army, laying down their arms at the door, entered the edifice, while the other half stood without, the church being too small to contain them all. Henri Arnaud, the soldier-pastor, mounting a table which was placed in the porch, preached to them. They began their worship by chanting the 74th Psalm—"O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?" etc. The preacher then took as his text the 129th Psalm—"Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say." The wonderful history of his people behind him, so to speak, and the reconquest of their land before him, we can imagine how thrilling every word of his discourse must have been, and how it must have called up the glorious achievements of their fathers, provoking the generous emulation of their sons. The worship was closed by these 700

warriors chanting in magnificent chorus the psalm from which their leader had preached. So passed their first Sunday in their land.

To many it seemed significant that here the returned exiles should spend their first Sunday, and resume their sanctuary services. They remembered how this same village of Prali had been the scene of a horrible outrage at the time of their exodus. The Pastor of Prali, M. Leidet, a singularly pious man, had been discovered by the soldiers as he was praying under a rock, and being dragged forth, he was first tortured and mutilated, and then hanged; his last words being, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It was surely appropriate, after the silence of three years and a half, during which the 839 rage of the persecutor had forbidden the preaching of the glorious Gospel, that its reopening should take place in the pulpit of the martyr Leidet.

Chapter 15 : Final Re-Establishment in their Valleys [503]

Cross the Col Julten-Seize Bobbio-Oath of Sibaud-March to Villaro
-Guerilla War-Retreat to La Balsiglia-Its Strength-Beauty and
Grandeur of San Martino-Encampment on the
Balsiglia- Surrounded- Repulse of the Enemy-Depart for the
Winter-Return of French and Piedmontese Army in Spring-The
Balsiglia Stormed- Enemy Driven Back-Final Assault with
Cannon-Wonderful Deliverance of the Vaudois -Overtures of Peace

Picture: View in the Village of San Lorenzo Angrogna.

Picture: The Church of Chabas the Oldest in the Valleys.

The Vaudois had entered the land, but they had not yet got possession of it. They were a mere handful; they would have to face the large and well-appointed army of Piedmont, aided by the French. But their great leader to his courage added faith. The “cloud” which had guided them over the great mountains, with their snows and abysses, would cover their camp, and lead them forth to battle, and bring them in with victory. It was not surely that they might die in the land, that they had been able to make so marvellous a march back to it. Full of these courageous hopes, the “seven hundred” now addressed themselves to their great task.

They began to climb the Col Julten, which separates Prali from the fertile and central valley of the Waldenses, that of Lucerna. As they toiled up and were now near the summit of the pass, the Piedmontese soldiers, who had been stationed there, shouted out, “Come on, ye Barbers; we guard the pass, and there are 3,000 of us!” They did come on. To force the entrenchments and put to flight the garrison was the work of a moment. In the evacuated camp the Vaudois found a store of ammunition and provisions, which to them was a most seasonable booty. Descending rapidly the slopes and precipices of the great mountain, they surprised and took the town of Bobbio, which nestles at its foot. Driving out the Popish inhabitants to whom it had been made over, they took possession of their ancient

dwellings, and paused a little while to rest after the march and conflict of the previous days. Here their second Sunday was passed, and public worship again celebrated, the congregation chanting their psalm to the clash of arms. On the day following, repairing to the “Rock of Sibaud,” where their fathers had pledged their faith to God and to one another, they renewed on the same sacred spot their ancient oath, swearing with uplifted hands to abide steadfastly in the profession of the Gospel, to stand by one another, and never to lay down their arms till they had re-established themselves and their brethren in those galleys, which they believed had as really been given to them by the God of heaven, as Palestine had been to the Jews.

Their next march was to Villaro, which is situated half-way between Bobbio at the head and La Torre at the entrance of the valley. This town they stormed and took, driving away the new inhabitants. But here their career of conquest was suddenly checked. The next day a strong reinforcement of regular troops coming up, the Vaudois were under the necessity of abandoning Villaro, and falling back on Bobbio.¹ This patriot army now became parted into two bands, and for many weeks had to wage a sort of guerilla war on the mountains. France on the one side, and Piedmont on the other, poured in soldiers, in the hope of exterminating this handful of warriors. The privations and hardships which they endured were as great as the victories which they won in their daily skirmishes were marvellous. But though always conquering, their ranks were rapidly thinning. What though a hundred of the enemy were slain for one Waldensian who fell? The Piedmontese could recruit their numbers, the Vaudois could not add to theirs. They had now neither ammunition nor provisions, save what they took from their enemies; and, to add to their perplexities, winter was near, which would bury their mountains beneath its snows, and leave them without food or shelter. A council of war was held, and it was ultimately resolved to repair to the Valley oi Martino, and entrench themselves on La Balsiglia.

This brings us to the last heroic stand of the returned exiles. But first let us sketch the natural strength and grandeur of the spot on

¹Monastier, p. 356.

which that stand was made. The Balsiglia is situated at the western extremity of San Martino, which in point of grandeur yields to few things in the Waldensian Alps. It is some five miles long by about two in width, having as its floor the richest meadow-land; and for walls, mountains superbly hung with terraces, overflowing with flower and fruitage, and ramparted a-top with splintered cliffs and dark peaks. It is closed at the western extremity by the naked face of a perpendicular mountain, down which the Germagnasca is seen to dash in a flood of silver. The meadows and woods that clothe the bosom of the valley are seamed by a broad line of white, formed by the torrent, the bed of which is strewn with so many rocks that it looks a continuous river of foam. [504]

Than the clothing of the mountains that form the bounding walls of this valley nothing could be finer. On the right, as one advances up it, rises a successtion of terraced vineyards, finely diversified with corn-fields and massy knolls of rock, which rise crowned with cottages or hamlets, looking out from amid their rich embowerings of chestnut and apple-tree. Above this fruit-bearing zone are the grassy uplands, the resort of herdsmen, which in their turn give place to the rocky ridges that rise off to the higher summits, which recede into the clouds.

On the left the mountain-wall is more steep, but equally rich in its clothing. Swathing its foot is a carpeting of delicious sword. Trees, vast of girth, part, with their over-arching branches, the bright sunlight. Higher up are fields of maize and forests of chestnut; and higher still is seen the rock-loving birch, with its silvery stem and graceful tresses. Along the splintered rocks a-top runs a bristling line of firs, forming a mighty

chevaux-de-frise.

Toward the head of the valley, near the vast perpendicular cliff already mentioned, which shuts it in on the west, is seen a glorious assemblage of mountains. One mighty cone uplifts itself above and behind another mighty cone, till the last and highest buries its top in the rolling masses of cloud, which are seen usually hanging like a canopy above this part of the valley. These noble *aiguilles*, four in number, rise feathery with firs, and remind one of the fretted pinnacles of some colossal cathedral. This is La Balsiglia. It was on the terraces of this mountain that Henri Arnaud, with his patriot-

[505] warriors, pitched his camp, amid the dark tempests of winter, and the yet darker tempests of a furious and armed bigotry. The Balsiglia shoots its gigantic pyramids heavenward, as if proudly conscious of having once been the resting-place of the Vaudois ark. It is no castle of man's erecting; it had for its builder the Almighty Architect himself.

It only remains, in order to complete this picture of a spot so famous in the wars of conscience and liberty, to say that behind the Balsiglia on the west rises the lofty Col du Pis. It is rare that this mountain permits to the spectator a view of his full stature, for his dark sides run up and bury themselves in the clouds. Face to face with the Col du Pis, stands on the other side of the valley, the yet loftier Mont Guinevert, with, most commonly, a veil of cloud around him, as if he too were unwilling to permit to the eye of visitor a sight of his stately proportions. Thus do these two Alps, like twin giants, guard this famous valley.

It was on the lower terrace of this pyramidal mountain, the Balsiglia, that Henri Arnaud - his army now, alas! reduced to 400 - sat down. Viewed from the level of the valley, the peak seems to terminate in a point, but on ascending, the top expands into a level grassy plateau. Steep and smooth as escarped fortress, it is tinscalable on every side save that on which a stream rushes past from the mountains. The skill of Arnaud enabled him to add to the natural strength of the Vaudois position, the defenses of art. They enclosed themselves within earthen walls and ditches; they erected covered ways; they dug out some four-score cellars in the rock, to hold provisions, and they built huts as temporary barracks. Three springs that gushed out of the rock supplied them with water. They constructed similar entrenchments on each of the three peaks that rose above them, so that if the first were taken they could ascend to the second, and so on to the fourth. On the loftiest summit of the Balsiglia, which commanded the entire valley, they placed a sentinel, to watch the movements of the enemy.

[506] Only three days elapsed till four battalions of the French army arrived, and enclosed the Balsiglia on every side. On the 29th of October, an assault was made on the Vaudois position, which was repulsed with great slaughter of the enemy, and the loss of not one man to the defenders. The snows of early winter had begun to

fall, and the French general thought it best to postpone the task of capturing the Balsiglia till spring. Destroying all the corn which the Vaudois had collected and stored in the villages, he began his retreat from San Martiino, and, taking laconic farewell of the Waldenses, he bade them have patience till Easter, when he would again pay them a visit. ²

All through the winter of 1689-90, the Vaudois remained in their mountain fortress, resting after the marches, battles, and sieges of the previous months, and preparing for the promised return of the French. Where Henri Arnaud had pitched his camp, there had he also raised his altar, and if from that mountain-top was pealed forth the shout of battle, from it ascended also, morning and night, the prayer, and the psalm. Besides the daily devotions, Henri Arnaud preached two sermons weekly, one on Sunday and another on Thursday. At stated times he administered the Lord's Supper. Nor was the commissariat overlooked. Foraging parties brought in wine, chestnuts, apples, and other fruits, which the autumn, now far advanced, had fully ripened. A strong detachment made an incursion into the French valleys of Pragelas and Queyras, and returned with salt, butter, some hundred head of sheep, and a few oxen. The enemy, before departing, had destroyed their stock of grain, and as the fields were long since reaped, they despaired of being able to repair their loss. And yet bread to last them all the winter through had been provided, in a way so marvellous as to convince them that He who feeds the fowls of the air was caring for them. Ample magazines of grain lay all around their encampment, although unknown as yet to them. The snow that year began to fall earlier than usual, and it covered up the ripened corn, which the Popish inhabitants had not time to cut when the approach of the Vaudois compelled them to flee. From this unexpected store-house the garrison drew as they had need. Little did the Popish Peasantry, when they sowed the seed in spring, dream that Vaudois hands would reap the harvest.

Corn had been provided for them, and, to Vaudois eyes, provided almost as miraculously as was the manna for the Israelites, but where were they to find the means of grinding it into meal? At almost the foot of the Balsiglia, on the stream of the Germagnasca, is a little

²Monastier, pp. 365,365.

mill. The owner, M. Tron-Poulat, three years before, when going forth into exile with his brethren, threw the mill-stone into the river; “for,” said he, “it may yet be needed.” It was needed now, and search being made for it, it was discovered, drawn out of the stream, and the mill set a-working. There was another and more distant mill at the entrance of the valley, to which the garrison had recourse when the immediate precincts of the Balsiglia were occupied by the enemy, and the nearer mill was not available. Both mills exist to this day, their roofs of brown slate may be seen by the visitor, peering up through the luxuriant foliage of the valley, the wheel motionless, it may be, and the torrent which turned it shooting idly past in a volley of spray.

With the return of spring, the army of France and Piedmont reappeared. The Balsiglia was now completely invested, the combined force amounting to 22,000 in all - 10,000 French and 12,000 Piedmontese. The troops were commanded by the celebrated De Catinat, lieutenant-general of the armies of France. The “four hundred” Waldenses looked down from their “camp of rock” on the valley beneath them, and saw it glittering with steel by day, and shining with camp-fires by night. Catinat never doubted that a single day’s fighting would enable him to capture the place. That the victory, which he looked upon as already won, might be duly celebrated, he ordered four hundred ropes to be sent along with the army, in order to hang at once the four hundred Waldenses; and he had commanded the inhabitants of Pinerolo to prepare feux-de-joie to grace his return from the campaign. The head-quarters of the French were at Great Passet-so called in contradistinction to Little Passet, situated a mile lower in the valley. Great Passet counts some thirty roofs, and is placed on an immense ledge of rock that juts out from the foot of Mont Guinevert, some 800 feet above the stream, and right opposite the Balsiglia. On the flanks of this rocky ledge are still to be seen the ruts worn by the cannon and baggage-waggons of the French army. There can be no doubt that these marks are the memorials of the siege, for no other wheeled vehicles ever were in these mountains. ³

³The Author was conducted over the ground, and had all the memorials of the siege pointed out to him by two most trustworthy and intelligent guides-M. Turin, then Pastor of Macel, whose ancestors had figured in the “Glorious Return;” and the late M. Tron, Syndic of the Commune. The ancestors of M. Tron had returned with Henri Arnaud, and

Having reconnoitred, Catinat ordered the assault (1st May, 1690). Only on that side of Balsiglia, where a stream trickles down from the mountains, and which offers a gradual slope, instead of a wall of rock as everywhere else, could the attack be made with any chance of success. But this point Henri Arnaud had taken care to fortify with strong palisades. Five hundred picked men, supported by seven thousand musketeers, advanced to storm the fortress. ⁴ They rushed forward with ardour: they threw themselves upon the palisades; but they found it impossible to tear them down, formed as they were of great trunks, fastened by mighty boulders. Massed behind the defense were the Vaudois, the younger men loading the muskets, and the veterans taking steady aim, while the besiegers were falling in dozens at every volley. The assailants beginning to waver, the Waldensians made a fierce sally, sword in hand, and cut in pieces those whom the musket had spared. Of the five hundred picked soldiers only some score lived to rejoin the main body, which had been spectators from the valley of their total rout. Incredible as it may appear, we are nevertheless assured of it as a fact, that not a Vaudois was killed or wounded: not a bullet had touched one of them. The fireworks which Catinat had been so provident as to bid the men of Pinerolo get ready to celebrate his victory, were not needed that night. [507]

Despairing of reducing the fortress by other means, the French now brought up cannon, and it was not till the 14th of May that all was ready, and that the last and grand assault was made. Across the ravine in which the conflict we have just described took place, an immense knoll juts out, at an equal level with the lower entrenchments of the Waldenses. To this rock the cannons were hoisted up to play upon the fortress. ⁵ Never before had the sound of artillery shaken the rocks of San Martino. It was the morning of Whit-Sunday, and the Waldenses were preparing to celebrate the Lord's Supper, when

recovered their lands in the Valley of San Martino, and here had the family of M. Troll lived ever since, and the precise spots where the more memorable events of the war had taken place had been handed down from father to son.

⁴Monastier, pp. 369,370.

⁵Cannon-balls are occasionally picked up in the neighborhood of the Balsiglia. In 1857 the Author was shown one in the Presbytere of Pomaretto, which had been dug up a little before.

the first boom from the enemy's battery broke upon their ear.⁶ All day the cannonading continued, and its dreadful noises, re-echoed from rock to rock, and rolled upwards to the summits of the Col du Pis and the Mont Guinevert, were still further heightened by the thousands of musketeers who were stationed all round the Balsiglia. When night closed in the ramparts of the Waldenses were in ruins, and it was seen that it would not be possible longer to maintain the defense. What was to be done? The cannonading had ceased for the moment, but assuredly the dawn would see the attack renewed.

Never before had destruction appeared to impend so inevitably over the Vandots. To remain where they were was certain death, yet whither could they flee? Behind them rose the unsealable precipices of the Col du Pis, and beneath them lay the valley swarming with foes. If they should wait till the morning broke it would be impossible to pass the enemy without being seen; and even now, although it was night, the numerous camp-fires that blazed beneath them made it almost as bright as day. But the hour of their extremity was the time of God's opportunity. Often before it had been seen to be so, but perhaps never so strikingly as now. While they looked this way and that way, but could discover no escape from the net that enclosed them, the mist began to gather on the summits of the mountains around them. They knew the old mantle that was wont to be cast around their fathers in the hour of peril. It crept lower and yet lower on the great mountains. Now it touched the supreme peak of the Balsiglia.

Will it mock their hopes? Will it only touch, but not cover their mountain camp? Again it is in motion; downward roll its white fleecy billows, and now it hangs in sheltering folds around the war-battered fortress and its handful of heroic defenders. They dared not as yet attempt escape, for still the watch-fires burned brightly in the valley. But it was only for a few minutes longer. The mist kept its downward course, and now all was dark. A Tartarean gloom filled the gorge of San Martino.

At this moment, as the garrison stood mute, pondering whereunto these things would grow, Captain Poulat, a native of these parts, broke silence. He bade them be of good courage, for he knew the

⁶Monastier, p. 371.

paths, and would conduct them past the French and Piedmontese lines, by a track known only to himself. Crawling on their hands and knees, and passing close to the French sentinels, yet hidden from them by the mist, they descended frightful precipices, and made their escape. "He who has not seen such paths," says Arnaud in his *Rentree Glorieuse*, "cannot conceive the danger of them, and will be inclined to consider my account of the march a mere fiction. But it is strictly true; and I must add, the place is so frightful that even some of the Vaudois themselves were terror-struck when they saw by daylight the nature of the spot they had passed in the dark." When the day broke, every eye in the plain below was turned to the Balsiglia. That day the four hundred ropes which Catinat had brought with him were to be put in requisition, and the feux-de-joie so long prepared [508] were to be lighted at Pinerolo. What was their amazement to find the Balsiglia abandoned! The Vaudois had escaped and were gone, and might be seen upon the distant mountains, climbing the snows, far out of the reach of their would-be captors. Well might they sing -

"Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and we are escaped."

There followed several days, during which they wandered from hill to hill, or lay hid in woods, suffering great privations, and encountering numerous perils. At last they succeeded in reaching the Pra del Tor. To their amazement and joy, on arriving at this celebrated and hallowed spot, they found deputies from their prince, the Duke of Savoy, waiting them with an overture of peace. The Vaudois were as men that dreamed. An overture of peace! How was this? A coalition, including Germany, Great Britain, Holland, and Spain, had been formed to check the ambition of France, and three days had been given Victor Amadeus to say to which side he would join himself the Leaguers or Louis XIV. He resolved to break with Louis and take part with the coalition. In this case, to whom could he so well commit the keys of the Alps as to his trusty Vaudois? Hence the overture that met them in the Pra del Tor. Ever ready to rally round the throne of their prince the moment the hand of persecution was withdrawn, the Vaudois closed with the peace offered them. Their towns and lands were restored: their churches were reopened for Protestant worship: their brethren still in prison at Turin were liberated, and the colonists of their countrymen in Germany had

passports to return to their homes; and thus, after a dreary interval of three and a half years, the Valleys were again peopled with their ancient race, and resounded with their ancient songs. So closed that famous period of their history, which, in respect of the wonders, we might say the miracles that attended it, we can compare only to the march of the chosen people through the wilderness to the Land of Promise.

Chapter 16 : Condition of the Waldenses from 1690

Annoyances-Burdens-Foreign Contributions-French Revolution- Spiritual Revivals-Felix Neff-Dr. Gilly-General Beckwith- Oppressed Condition previous to 1840-Edict of Carlo Alberto- Freedom of Conscience-The Vaudois Church, the Door by which Religious Liberty Entered Italy-Their Lamp Kindled at Rome

Picture: The Tomb of General Beckwith.

With this second planting of the Vaudois in their Valleys, the period of their great persecutions may be said to have come to an end. Their security was not complete, nor their measure of liberty entire. They were still subject to petty oppressions; enemies were never wanting to whisper things to their prejudice; little parties of Jesuits would from time to time appear in their Valleys, the forerunners, as they commonly found them, of some new and hostile edict; they lived in continual apprehension of having the few privileges which had been conceded to them swept away; and on one occasion they were actually threatened with a second expatriation. They knew, moreover, that Rome, the real author of all their calamities and woes, still meditated their extermination, and that she had entered a formal protest against their rehabilitation, and given the duke distinctly to understand that to be the friend of the Vaudois was to be the enemy of the Pope. ¹ Nevertheless, their condition was tolerable compared with the rightful tempests which had darkened their sky in previous eras.

The Waldenses had everything to begin anew. Their numbers were thinned; they were bowed down by poverty; but they had vast recuperative power; and their brethren in England and Germany hastened to aid them in reorganising their Church, and bringing once more into play that whole civil and ecclesiastical economy

¹Monastier, p. 3S9. The Pope, Innocent XII, declared (19th August, 1694) the edict of the duke re-establishing the Vaudois null and void, and enjoined his inquisitors to pay no attention to it in their pursuit of the heretics.

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which the “exile” had so rudely broken in pieces. William III of England incorporated a Vaudois regiment at his own expense, which he placed at the service of the duke, and to this regiment it was mainly owing that the duke was not utterly overwhelmed in his wars with his former ally, Louis XIV. At one point of the campaign, when hard pressed, Victor Amadeus had to sue for the protection of the Vaudois, on almost the very spot where the deputies of Gianavello had sued to him for peace, but had sued in vain.

In 1692 there were twelve churches in the Valleys; but the people were unable to maintain a pastor to each. They were ground down by military imposts. Moreover, a peremptory demand was made upon them for payment of the arrears of taxes which had accrued in respect of their lands during the three years they had been absent, and when to them there was neither seed-time nor harvest. Anything more extortionate could not be imagined. In their extremity, Mary of England, the consort of William III granted them a “Royal Subsidy,” to provide pastors and schoolmasters, and this grant was increased with the increased number of parishes, till it reached the annual sum of £550. A collection which was made in Great Britain at a subsequent period (1770) permitted an augmentation of the salaries of the pastors. This latter fund bore the name of the “National Subsidy,” to distinguish it from the former, the “Royal Subsidy.” The States-General of Holland followed in the wake of the English sovereign, and made collections for salaries to schoolmasters, gratuities to superannuated pastors, and for the founding of a Latin school. Nor must we omit to state that the Protestant cantons of Switzerland appropriated bursaries to students from the Valleys at their academies—one at Basle, five at Lausanne, and two at Geneva. ²

The policy of the Court of Turin towards the Waldenses changed with the shifting in the great current of European politics. At one unfavorable moment, when the influence of the Vatican was in the ascendant, Henri Arnaud, who had so gloriously led back the Israel of the Alps to their ancient inheritance, was banished from the Valleys, along with others, his companions in patriotism and virtue, as now in exile. England, through William, sought to draw the hero to her own shore, but Arnaud retired to Schoenberg, where he spent

²Muston, pp. 220,221. Monastier, pp. 388, 389.

his last years in the humble and most affectionate discharge of the duties of a pastor among his expatriated countrymen, whose steps he guided to the heavenly abodes, as he had done those of their brethren to their earthly land. He died in 1721, at the age of four-score years.

The century passed without any very noticeable event. The spiritual condition of the Vandots languished. The year 1789 brought with it astounding changes. The French Revolution rung out the knell of the old times, and introduced, amidst those earthquake-shocks that convulsed nations, and laid thrones and altars prostrate, a new political age. The Vaudois once again passed under the dominion of France. There followed an enlargement of their civil rights, and an amelioration of their social condition; but, unhappily, with the friendship of France came the poison of its literature, and Voltairianism threatened to inflict more deadly injury on the Church of the Alps than all the persecutions of the previous centuries. At the Restoration the Waldenses were given back to their former sovereign, and with their return to the House of Savoy they returned to their ancient restrictions, though the hand of bloody persecution could no more be stretched out.

The time was now drawing near when this venerable people was to obtain a final emancipation. That great deliverance rose on them, as day rises on the earth, by slow stages. The visit paid them by the apostolic Felix Neff, in 1808, was the first dawning of their new day: With him a breath from heaven, it was felt, had passed over the dry bones. The next stage in their resurrection was the visit of Dr. William Stephen Gilly, in 1828. He cherished, he tells us, the conviction that “this is the spot from which it is likely that the great Sower will again cast his seed, when it shall please him to permit the pure Church of Christ to resume her seat in those Italian States from which Pontifical intrigues have dislodged her.”³ The result of Dr. Gilly’s visit was the erection of a college at La Torre, for the instruction of youth and the training of ministers, and an hospital for

³Waldensian Researches, by William Stephen Gilly, M.A., Prebendary of Durham; p. 158; Lond., 1831.

the sick; besides awakening great interest on their behalf in England.

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After Dr. Gilly there stood up another to befriend the Waldenses, and prepare them for their coming day of deliverance. The career of General Beckwith is invested with a romance not unlike that which belongs to the life of Ignatius Loyola. Beckwith was a young soldier, and as brave, and chivalrous, and ambitious of glory as Loyola. He had passed unhurt through battle and siege. He fought at Waterloo till the enemy was in full retreat, and the sun was going down. But a flying soldier discharged his musket at a venture, and the leg of the young officer was hopelessly shattered by the bullet. Beckwith, like Loyola, passed months upon a bed of pain, during which he drew forth from his portmanteau his neglected Bible, and began to read and study it. He had lain down, like Loyola, a knight of the sword, and like him he rose up a knight of the Cross, but in a truer sense. One day in 1827 he paid a visit to Apsley House, and while he waited for the duke, he took up a volume which was lying on the table. It was Dr. Gilly's narrative of his visit to the Waldenses. Beckwith felt himself drawn irresistibly to a people with whose wonderful history this book made him acquainted for the first time. From that hour his life was consecrated to them. He lived among them as a father - as a king. He devoted his fortune to them. He built schools, and churches, and parsonages. He provided improved school-books, and suggested better modes of teaching. He strove above all things to quicken their spiritual life. He taught them how to respond to the exigencies of modern times. He specially inculcated upon them that the field was wider than their Valleys; and that they would one day be called to arise and to walk through Italy, in the length of it and in the breadth of it. He was their advocate at the Court of Turin; and when he had obtained for them the possession of a burying-ground outside their Valleys, he exclaimed, "Now they have got infestment of Piedmont, as the patriarchs did of Canaan, and soon all the land will be theirs." 5

⁴So deep was the previous ignorance respecting this people, that Sharon Turner, speaking of the Waldenses in his *History of England*, placed them on the shores of the Lake Lemman, confounding the Valleys of the Vaudois with the Canton de Vaud.

⁵The Author may be permitted to bear his personal testimony to the labors of General Beckwith for the Waldenses, and through them for the evangelization of Italy. On occasion

But despite the efforts of Gilly and Beckwith, and the growing spirit of toleration, the Waldenses continued to groan under a load of political and social disabilities. They were still a proscribed race.

The once goodly limits of their Valleys had, in later times, been greatly contracted, and like the iron cell in the story, their territory was almost yearly tightening its circle round them. They could not own, or even farm, a foot-breadth of land, or practice any industry, beyond their own boundary. They could not bury their dead save in their Valleys; and when it chanced that any of their people died at Turin or elsewhere, their corpses had to be carried all the way to their own graveyards. They were not permitted to erect a tombstone above their dead, or even to enclose their burial-grounds with a wall. They were shut out from all the learned and liberal professions—they could not be bankers, physicians, or lawyers. No avocation was left them but that of tending their herds and pruning their vines. When any of them emigrated to Turin, or other Piedmontese town, they were not permitted to be anything but domestic servants. There was no printing-press in their Valleys—they were forbidden to have one; and the few books they possessed, mostly Bibles, catechisms, and hymn-books, were printed abroad, chiefly in Great Britain; and when they arrived at La Torre, the Moderator had to sign before the Reviser-in-Chief an engagement that not one of these books should be sold, or even lent, to a Roman Catholic. ⁶

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They were forbidden to evangelize or make converts. But though lettered on the one side they were not equally protected on the other, for the priests had full liberty to enter their Valleys and proselytise; and if a boy of twelve or a girl of ten professed their willingness to enter the Roman Church, they were to be taken from their parents, that they might with the more freedom carry out their intention. They could not marry save among their own people. They could not erect a sanctuary save on the soil of their own territory. They could take no degree at any of the colleges of Piedmont. In short, the

of his first visit to the Valleys in 1851, he passed a week mostly in the society of the general, and had the detail from his own lips of the methods he was pursuing for the elevation of the Church of the Vaudois. All through the Valleys he was revered as a father. His common appellation among them was “The Benefactor of the Vaudois.”

⁶General Beckwith: his Life and Labors, etc. By J.P. Meille, Pastor of the Waldensian Church at Turin. Page 26. Lond., 873.

duties, lights, and privileges that constitute life they were denied. They were reduced as nearly as was practicable to simple existence, with this one great exception-which was granted them not as a right, but as a favor-namely, the liberty of Protestant worship within their territorial limits.

The Revolution of 1848, with trumpet-peal, sounded the overthrow of all these restrictions. They fell in one day. The final end of Providence in preserving that people during long centuries of fearful persecutions now began to be seen. The Waldensian Church became the door by which freedom of conscience entered Italy. When the hour came for framing a new constitution for Piedmont, it was found desirable to give standing-room in that constitution to the Waldenses, and this necessitated the introduction into the edict of the great principle of freedom of worship as a right. The Waldenses had contended for that principle for ages-they had maintained and vindicated it by their sufferings and martyrdoms; and therefore they were necessitated to demand, and the Piedmontese Government to grant, this great principle. It was the only one of the many new constitutions framed for Italy at that same time in which freedom of conscience was enacted. Nor would it have found a place in the Piedmontese constitution, but for the circumstance that here were the Waldenses, and that their great distinctive principle demanded legal recognition, otherwise they would remain outside the constitution. The Vaudois alone had fought the battle, but all their countrymen shared with them the fruits of the great victory. When the news of the Statute of Carlo Alberto reached La Torre there were greetings on the streets, psalms in the churches, and blazing bonfires at night on the crest of the snowy Alps.

At the door of her Valleys, with lamp in hand, its oil unspent and its light unextinguished, as seen, at the era of 1848, the Church of the Alps, prepared to obey the summons of her heavenly King, who has passed by in earthquake and whirlwind, casting down the thrones that of old oppressed her, and opening the doors of her ancient prison. She is now to go forth and be "The Light of all Italy,"⁷ as Dr. Gilly, twenty years before, had foretold she would at no distant day become. Happily not all Italy as yet, but only Piedmont, was opened to her.

⁷"Totius Italiae lumen."

She addressed herself with zeal to the work of erecting churches and forming congregations in Turin and other towns of Piedmont. Long a stranger to evangelistic work, the Vaudois Church had time and opportunity thus given her to acquire the mental courage and practical habits needed in the novel circumstances in which she was now placed. She prepared evangelists, collected funds, organized colleges and congregations, and in various other ways perfected her machinery in anticipation of the wider field that Providence was about to open to her.

It is now the year 1859, and the drama which had stood still since 1849 begins once more to advance. In that year France declared war against the Austrian occupation of the Italian peninsula. The tempest of battle passes from the banks of the Po to those of the Adige, along the plain of Lombardy, rapid, terrible, and decisive as the thunder-cloud of the Alps, and the Tedeschi retreat before the victorious arms of the French. The blood of the three great battles of the campaign was scarcely dry before Austrian Lombardy, Modena, Parma, Tuscany, and part of the Pontifical States had annexed themselves to Piedmont, and their inhabitants had become fellow-citizens of the Waldenses. With scarcely a pause there followed the brilliant campaign of Garibaldi in Sicily and Naples, and these rich and ample territories were also added to the kingdom of the patriotic Victor Emmanuel. We now behold the whole of Italy - one little spot excepted, the greatly diminished "States of the Church"-comprehended in the Kingdom of Piedmont, and brought under the operation of that constitution which contained in its bosom the beneficent principle of freedom of conscience. The whole of Italy, from the Alps to Etna, with the exception already stated, now became the field of the Waldensian Church. Nor was this the end of the drama. Another ten years pass away: France again sends forth her armies to battle, believing that she can command victory as aforesaid. The result of the brief but terrible campaign of 1870, in which the French Empire disappeared and the German uprose, was the opening of the gates of Rome. And let us mark for in the little incident we hear the voice of ten centuries-in the first rank of the soldiers whose cannon had burst open the old gates, there enters a Vaudois colporteur with a bundle of Bibles. The Waldenses now kindle their lamp at Rome, and the purpose of the ages stands revealed!

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Who can fail to see in this drama, advancing so regularly and majestically, that it is the Divine Mind that arranges, and the Divine Hand that executes? Before this Power it becomes us to bow down, giving thanks that he does his will, nor once turns aside for the errors of those that would aid or the strivings of those that would oppose his plan; and, by steps unfathomably wise and sublimely grand, carries onward to their full accomplishment his infinitely beneficent purposes.

**Book 17: Protestantism in France from
Death of Francis I (1547) to Edict of Nantes
(1598)**

Chapter 1 : Henry II and Parties in France

Francis I—His Last Illness-Waldensian Settlement in
Provence- Fertility and Beauty-Massacre-Remorse of the
King—His Death- Lying in State-Henry II-Parties at Court-The
Constable de Montmorency- The Guises-Diana of
Poitiers-Marshal de St. Andre-Catherine de Medici

Picture: Francis I. On his Deathbed.

Picture: Henry II. Of France.

We have rapidly traced the line of Waldensian story from those early ages when the assembled barbes are seen keeping watch around their lamp in the Pra del Tor, with the silent silvery peaks looking down upon them, to those recent days when the Vaudois carried that lamp to Rome and set it in the city of Pius IX. Our desire to pursue their conflicts and martyrdoms till their grand issues to Italy and the world had been reached has carried us into modern times. We shall return, and place ourselves once more in the age of Francis I.

[513] We resume our history at the death-bed of that monarch. Francis died March 31st, 1547, at the age of fifty-two, “of that shameful distemper,” says the Abbe Millot, “which is brought on by debauchery, and which had been imported with the gold of America.”¹ The character of this sovereign was adorned by some fine qualities, but his reign was disgraced by many great errors. It is impossible to withhold from him the praise of a generous disposition, a cultivated taste, and a chivalrous bearing; but it is equally impossible to vindicate him from the charge of rashness in his enterprises, negligence in his affairs, fickleness in his conduct, and excess in his pleasures. He lavished his patronage upon the scholars of the Renaissance, but he had nothing but stakes wherewith to reward the disciples of Protestantism. He built Fontainebleau, and began the Louvre. And now, after all his great projects for adorning his court with learned men, embellishing his capital with gorgeous fabrics, and strengthening

¹Millot, Elements of History, volume 4, p. 317; Lond., 1779.

his throne by olitical alliances, there remains to him only “darkness and the worm.”

Let us enter the royal closet, and mark the setting of that sun which had shed such a brilliance during his course. Around the bed upon which Francis I lies dying is gathered a clamorous crowd of priests, courtiers, and courtesans,² who watch his last moments with decent but impatient respect, ready, the instant he has breathed his last, to turn round and bow the knee to the rising sun. Let us press through the throng and observe the monarch. His face is haggard. He groans deeply, as if he were suffering in soul. His starts are sudden and violent. There flits at times across his face a dark shadow, as if some horrible sight, afflicting him with unutterable woe, were disclosed to him; and a quick tremor at these moments runs through all his frame. He calls his attendants about him and, mustering all the strength left him, he protests that it is not he who is to blame, inasmuch as his orders were exceeded. What orders? we ask; and what deed is it, the memory of which so burdens and terrifies the dying monarch?

We must leave the couch of Francis while we narrate one of the greatest of the crimes that blackened his reign. The scene of the tragedy which projected such dismal shadows around the death-bed of the king was laid in Provence. In ancient times Provence was comparatively a desert. Its somewhat infertile soil was but thinly peopled, and but indifferently tilled and planted. It lay strewn all over with great boulders, as if here the giants had warred, or some volcanic explosion had rained a shower of stones upon it. The Vaudois who inhabited the high-lying valleys of the Piedmontese Alps, cast their eyes upon this more happily situated region, and began to desire it as a residence. Here, said they, is a fine champaign country, waiting for occupants; let us go over and possess it. They crossed the mountains, they cleared the land of rocks, they sowed it with wheat, they planted it with the vine, and soon there was seen a smiling garden, where before a desert of swamps, and great stones, and wild herbage had spread out its neglected bosom to be baked by the summer’s sun, and frozen by the winter’s winds. “An estate which before their establishment hardly paid four crowns as

²Felice, *History of the Protestants of France*, volume 1, p. 61; Lond., 1853.

rental, now produced from three to four hundred.”³ The successive generations of these settlers flourished here during a period of three hundred years, protected by their landlords, whose revenues they had prodigiously enriched, loved by their neighbors, and loyal to their king.

When the Reformation arose, this people sent delegates-as we have related in the previous book-to visit the Churches of Switzerland and Germany, and ascertain how far they agreed with, and how far they differed from themselves. The report brought back by the delegates satisfied them that the Vaudois faith and the Protestant doctrine were the same; that both had been drawn from the one infallible fountain of truth; and that, in short, the Protestants were Vaudois, and the Vaudois were Protestants. This was enough. The priests, who so anxiously guarded their territory against the entrance of Lutheranism, saw with astonishment and indignation a powerful body of Protestants already in possession. They resolved that the heresy should be swept from off the soil of France as speedily as it had arisen. On the 18th of November, 1540, the Parliament of Aix passed an arret to the following effect: - “Seventeen inhabitants of Merindol shall be burnt to death” (they were all the heads of families in that place); “their wives, children, relatives, and families shall be brought to trial, and if they cannot be laid hold on, they shall be banished the kingdom for life. The houses in Merindol shall be burned and razed to the ground, the woods cut down, the fruit-trees torn up, and the place rendered uninhabitable, so that none may be built there.”⁴

[514] The president of the Parliament of Aix, a humane man, had influence with the king to stay the execution of this horrible sentence. But in 1545 he was succeeded by Baron d’Oppede, a cruel, intolerant, bloodthirsty man, and entirely at the devotion of Cardinal Tournon-a man, says Abbe Millot, “of greater zeal than humanity, who principally enforced the execution of this barbarous arret.”⁵ Francis I offered them pardon if within three months they should enter the pale of the Roman Church. They disdained to buy their lives by apostacy; and now the sword, which had hung for five years above

³ Felice, volume 1, p. 45.

⁴ Ibid., volume 1, p. 44.

⁵ Millot, volume 4, pp. 317,318.

their heads, fell with crushing force. A Romanist pen shall tell the sequel: - "Twenty-two towns or villages were burned or sacked, with an inhumanity of which the history of the most barbarous people hardly presents examples. The unfortunate inhabitants, surprised, during the night, and pursued from rock to rock by the light of the fires which consumed their dwellings, frequently escaped one snare only to fall into another; the pitiful cries of the old men, the women, and the children, far from softening the hearts of the soldiers, mad with rage like their leaders, only set them on following the fugitives, and pointed out the places whither to direct their fury. Voluntary surrender did not exempt the men from execution, nor the women from excesses of brutality which made Nature blush. It was forbidden, under pain of death, to afford them any refuge. At Cabrieres, one of the principal towns of that canton, they murdered more than seven hundred men in cold blood; and the women, who had remained in their houses, were shut up in a barn filled with straw, to which they set fire; those who attempted to escape by the window were driven back by swords and pikes. Finally, according to the tenor of the sentence, the houses were razed, the woods cut down, the fruit-trees pulled up, and in a short time this country, so fertile and so populous, became uncultivated and uninhabited."⁶

Thus did the red sword and the blazing torch purge Provence. We cast our eyes over the purified land, but, alas! we are unable to recognize it. Is this the land which but a few days ago was golden with the yellow grain, and purple with the blushing grape; at whose cottage doors played happy children; and from whose meadows and mountain-sides, borne on the breeze, came the bleating of flocks and the lowing of herds? Now, alas! its bosom is scarred and blackened by smouldering ruins, its mountain torrents are tinged with blood, and its sky is thick with the black smoke of its burning woods and cities.

We return to the closet of the dying monarch. Francis is still protesting that the deed is not his, and that too zealous executioners exceeded his orders. Nevertheless he cannot banish, we say not from his memory, but from his very sight, the awful tragedy enacted on the plains of Provence. Shrieks of horror, wailings of woe, and cries for

⁶Abbe Anquetil, *Histoire de France*, Tom. 3, pp. 246-249; Paris. 1835.

help seem to resound through his chamber. Have his ministers and courtiers no word of comfort wherewith to assuage his terrors, and fortify him in the prospect of that awful Bar to which he is hastening with the passing hours? They urged him to sanction the crime, but they leave him to bear the burden of it alone. He summons his son, who is so soon to mount his throne, to his bedside, and charges him with his last breath to execute vengeance on those who had shed this blood.⁷ With this slight reparation the unhappy king goes his dark road, the smoking and blood-sprinkled Provence behind him, the great Judgment-seat before him.

Having breathed his last, the king lay in state, preparatory to his being laid in the royal vaults at St. Denis. Two of his sons who had pre-deceased him—Francis and Charles—were kept unburied till now, and their corpses accompanied that of their father to the grave. Of the king's lying-in-state, the following very curious account is given us by Sleidan: -

“For some days his effigies, in most rich apparel, with his crown, scepter, and other regal ornaments, lay upon a bed of state, and at certain hours dinner and supper were served up before it, with the very same solemnity as was commonly performed when he was alive. When the regal ornaments were taken off, they clothed the effigies in mourning; and eight-and-forty Mendicant friars were always present, who continually sung masses and dirges for the soul departed. About the corpse were placed fourteen great wax tapers, and over against it two altars, on which from daylight to noon masses were said, besides what were said in an adjoining chapel, also full of tapers and other lights. Four-and-twenty monks, with wax tapers in their hands, were ranked about the hearse wherein the corpse was carried, and before it marched fifty poor men in mourning, every one with a taper in his hand. Amongst other nobles, there were eleven cardinals present.”

Henry II now mounted the throne of France. At the moment of his accession all seemed to promise a continuance of that prosperity and splendor which had signalised the reign of his father. The kingdom enjoyed peace, the finances were flourishing, the army

⁷Sleidan, book 19, p. 429. Beza, *Hist. Ecclesiastes des Eglises Reformdes du Royaume de France*, livr. 1, p. 30; Lille, 1841. Laval, *Hist. of the Reformation in France*, volume 1, book 1, page 55; Lond., 1737.

was brave and well-affected to the throne; and all men accepted these as auguries of a prosperous reign. This, however, was but a brief gleam before the black night. France had missed the true path. Henry had worn the crown for only a short while when the clouds began to gather, and that night to descend which is only now beginning to pass away from France. His father had early initiated him into the secrets of governing, but Henry loved not business. The young king sighed to get away from the council-chamber to the gay tournament, where mailed and plumed warriors pursued, amid applauding spectators, the mimic game of war. What good would this principedom do him if it brought him not pleasure? At his court there lacked not persons, ambitious and supple, who studied to flatter his vanity and gratify his humors. To lead the king was to govern France, and to govern France was to grasp boundless riches and vast power. It was under this feeble king that those factions arose, whose strivings so powerfully influenced the fate of Protestantism in that great kingdom, and opened the door for so many calamities to the nation. Four parties were now formed at court, and we must pause here to describe them, otherwise much that is to follow would be scarcely intelligible. In the passions and ambitions of these parties, we unveil the springs of those civil wars which for more than a century deluged France with blood. [515]

At the head of the first party was Anne de Montmorency, High Constable of France. Claiming descent from a family which had been one of the first to be baptised into the Christian faith, he assumed the glorious title of the First Christian and Premier Baron ⁸ of France. He possessed great strength of will, and whatever end he proposed to himself he pursued, without much caring whom he trod down in his way to it. He had the misfortune on one occasion to give advice to Francis I which did not prosper, and this, together with his head-strongness, made that monarch in his latter days banish him from the court. When Francis was dying he summoned his son Henry to his bedside, and earnestly counselled him never to recall Montmorency, fearing that the obstinacy and pride which even he

⁸Davila, *Historia delle Guerre Civili di Francia*, livr. 1, p. 9; Lyons, 1641. Maimbourg, *Hist. de Calvinisme*, livr. 2, p. 118; Paris, 1682.

had with difficulty repressed, the weaker hands to which he was now bequeathing his crown⁹ would be unequal to the task of curbing.

No sooner had Henry assumed the reins of government than he recalled the Constable. Montmorency's recall did not help to make him a meeker man. He strode back to court with brow more elate, and an air more befitting one who had come to possess a throne than to serve before it. The Constable was beyond measure devout, as became the first Christian in France. Never did he eat flesh on forbidden days; and never did morning dawn or evening fall but his beads were duly told. It is true he sometimes stopped suddenly in the middle of his chaplet to issue orders to his servants to hang up this or the other Huguenot, or to set fire to the corn-field or plantation of some neighbor of his who was his enemy; but that was the work of a minute only, and the Constable was back again with freshened zeal to his Paternosters and his Ave-Marias. It became a proverb, says Brantome, "God keep us from the Constable's beads."¹⁰ These singularities by no means lessened his reputation for piety, for the age hardly placed acts of religion and acts of mercy in the same category. Austere, sagacious, and resolute, he constrained the awe if not the love of the king, and as a consequence his heavy hand was felt in every part of the kingdom.

The second party was that of the Guises. The dominancy of that family in France marks one of the darkest eras of the nation. The House of Lorraine, from which the Lords of Guise are descended, derived its original from Godfrey Bullen, King of Jerusalem, and on the mother's side from a daughter of Charlemagne. Anthony, flourishing in wealth and powerful in possessions, was Duke of Lorraine; Claude, a younger brother, crossed the frontier in 1513, staff in hand, attended by but one servant, to seek his fortunes in France. He ultimately became Duke of Guise. This man had six sons, to all of whom wealth seemed to come at their wish. Francis I, perceiving the ambition of these men, warned his son to keep them at a distance.¹¹ But the young king, despising the warning, recalled Francis de Lorraine as he had done the Constable Montmorency, and the power of the Guises continued to grow, till at last they became the

⁹Davila, p. 14.

¹⁰Laval, volume 1, pp. 70,71.

¹¹Thaunus, Hist., lib. 3. Laval, volume 1, p. 71.

scourge of the country in which they had firmly rooted themselves, and the terror of the throne which they aspired to mount.

The two brothers, Francis and Charles, stood at the head of the family, and figured at the court. Francis, now in the flower of his age, was sprightly and daring; Charles was crafty, but timid; Laval says of him that he was “the cowardliest of all men.” The qualities common to both brothers, and possessed by each in inordinate degree, were cruelty and ambition. Rivals they never could become, for though their ambitions were the same, their spheres lay apart, Francis having chosen the profession of arms, and Charles the Church. This division of pursuits doubled their strength, for what the craft of the one plotted, the sword of the other executed. They were the acknowledged heads of the Roman Catholic party. “But for the Guises,” says Mezeray, “the new religion would perhaps have become dominant in France.”

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The third party at the court of France was that of Diana of Poitiers. This woman was the daughter of John of Poitiers, Lord of St. Valier, and had been the wife of Seneschal of Normandy. She was twenty years older than the king, but this disparity of age did not hinder her from becoming the mistress of his heart. The populace could not account for the king’s affection for her, save by ascribing it to the philtres which she made him drink. A more likely cause was her brilliant wit and sprightly manners, added to her beauty, once dazzling, and not yet wholly faded. But her greed was enormous. The people cursed her as the cause of the taxes that were grinding them into poverty; the nobility hated her for her insulting airs; but access there was none to the king, save through the good graces of Diana of Poitiers, whom the king created Duchess of Valentinois. The title by embellishing made only the more conspicuous the infamy of her relation to the man who had bestowed it. The Constable on the one side, and the guises on the other, sought to buttress their own power by paying court to Diana.¹² To such a woman the holy doctrines of Protestantism could not be other than offensive; in truth, she very thoroughly hated all of the religion, and much of the righteous blood shed in the reign of Henry II is to be laid at the door of the lewd, greedy, and cruel Diana of Poitiers.

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¹²Davila, lib.1, pp. 13,14.

The fourth and least powerful faction was that of the Marshal de St. Andre. He was as brave and valiant as he was witty and polite; but he was drowned in debt. Though a soldier he raised himself not by his valor, but by court intrigues; “under a specious pretense for the king’s service he hid a boundless ambition, and an unruly avarice,” said his Romanist friends, “and was more eager after the forfeited estates than after the overthrow of the rebels and Huguenots.”¹³ Neither court nor country was likely to be quiet in which such a man figured.

To these four parties we may add a fifth, that of Catherine de Medici, the wife of Henry. Of deeper passions but greater self-control than many of those around her, Catherine meanwhile was “biding her time.” There were powers in this woman which had not yet disclosed themselves, perhaps not even to herself; but when her husband died, and the mistress no longer divided with the wife the ascendancy over the royal mind, then the hour of revelation came, and it was seen what consummate guile, what lust of power, what love of blood and revenge had slumbered in her dark Italian soul. As one after another of her imbecile sons, each more imbecile than he who had preceded him-mounted the throne, the mother stood up in a lofty and yet loftier measure of truculence and ambition. As yet, however, her cue was not to form a party of her own, but to maintain the poise among the other factions, that by weakening all of them she might strengthen herself.

Such were the parties that divided the court of Henry II. Thrice miserable monarch! without one man of real honour and sterling patriotism in whom to confide. And not less miserable courtiers! They make a brave show, no doubt, living in gilded saloons, wearing sumptuous raiment, and feasting at luxuriant tables, but their hearts all the while are torn with envy, or tortured with fear, lest this gay life of theirs should come to a sudden end by the stiletto or the poison-cup. “Two great sins,” says an old historian, “crept into France under this prince’s reign-atheism and magic.”

¹³Laval, volume 1, p. 73.

Chapter 2 : Henry II and his Persecutions

Bigotry of Henry II-Persecution-The Tailor and Diana of Poitiers- The Tailor Burned-The King Witnesses his Execution-Horror of the King-Martyrdoms-Progress of the Truth-Bishop of Macon-The Gag—First Protestator Congregation-Attempt to Introduce the Inquisition-National Disasters-Princes and Nobles become Protestants -A Mercuriale-Arrest of Du Bourg-A Tournament-The King Killed -Strange Rumors

Picture: The Tailor before the King and Diana of Poitiers.

Henry II walked in the ways of his father, Francis, who first made France to sin by beginning a policy of persecution. To the force of paternal example was added, in the case of Henry, the influence of the maxims continually poured into his ear by Montmorency, Guise, and Diana of Poitiers. These counselors inspired him with a terror of Protestantism as pre-eminently the enemy of monarchs and the source of all disorders in States; and they assured him that should the Huguenots prevail they would trample his throne into the dust, and lay France at the feet of atheists and revolutionists. The first and most sacred of duties, they said, was to uphold the old religion. To cut off its enemies was the most acceptable atonement a prince could make to Heaven. With such schooling, is it any wonder that the deplorable work of burning heretics, begun by Francis, went on under Henry; and that the more the king multiplied his profulgacies, the greater his zeal in kindling the fires by which he thought he was making atonement for them? ¹

The historians of the time record a sad story, which unhappily is not a solitary instance of the bigotry of the age, and the vengeance that was beginning to animate France against all who favored Protestantism. It affectingly displays the heartless frivolity and wanton cruelty two qualities never far apart-which characterized the French

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¹Laval, volume 1, p. 73.

court. The coronation of the queen, Catherine de Medici, was approaching, and Henry, who did his part so ill as a husband in other respects, resolved to acquit himself with credit in this. He wished to make the coronation fetes of more than ordinary splendor; and in order to this he resolved to introduce what would form a new feature in these rejoicings, and give variety and piquancy to them, namely, the burning piles of four Huguenots. Four victims were selected, and one of these was a poor tailor, who, besides having eaten flesh on a day on which its use was forbidden, had given other proofs of being not strictly orthodox. He was to form, of course, one of the coronation torches; but to burn him was not enough. It occurred to the Cardinal of Lorraine that a little amusement might be extracted from the man. The cardinal pictured to himself the confusion that would overwhelm the poor tailor, were he to be interrogated before the king, and how mightily the court would be diverted by the incoherence of his replies. He was summoned before Henry, but the matter turned out not altogether as the Churchman had reckoned it would. The promise was fulfilled to the confessor, "When ye shall be brought before kings and rulers for my sake and the Gospel's, it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak." So far from being abashed, the tailor maintained perfect composure in the royal presence, and replied so pertinently to all interrogatories and objections put by the Bishop of Macon, that it was the king and the courtiers who were disconcerted. Diana of Poitiers-whose wit was still fresh, if her beauty had faded-stepped boldly forward, in the hope of rescuing the courtiers from their embarrassment; but, as old Crespin says, "the tador cut her cloth otherwise than she expected; for he, not being able to endure such unmeasured arrogance in her whom he knew to be the cause of these cruel persecutions, said to her, 'Be satisfied, Madam, with having infected France, without mingling your venom and filth in a matter altogether holy and sacred, as is the religion and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.'" ² The king took the words as an affront, and ordered the man to be reserved for the stake. When the day of execution came (14th July, 1549), the king bade a window overlooking the pile be prepared, that thence he might see the man, who had had the audacity to insult his favorite,

²Beza. tom. 1, livr. 2, p. 50.

slowly consuming in the fires. Both parties had now taken their places, the tailor burning at the stake, the king reposing luxuriously at the window, and Diana of Poitiers seated in haughty triumph by his side. The martyr looked up to the window where the king was seated, and fixed his eye on Henry. From the midst of the flames that eye looked forth with calm steady gaze upon the king. The eye of the monarch quailed before that of the burning man. He turned away to avoid it, but again his glance wandered back to the stake. The flames were still blazing around the martyr; his limbs were dropping off, his face was growing fearfully livid, but his eye, unchanged, was still looking at the king; and the king felt as if, with Medusa-power, it was changing him into stone.

The execution was at an end: not so the terror of the king. The tragedy of the day was reacted in the dreams of the night. The terrible apparition rose before Henry in his sleep. There again was the blazing pile, there was the martyr burning in the fire, and there was the eye looking forth upon him from the midst of the flames. For several successive nights was the king scared by this terrible vision. He resolved, nay, he even took an oath, that never again would he be witness to the burning of a heretic. It had been still better had he given orders that never again should these horrible executions be renewed.³

So far, however, was the persecution from being relaxed, that its rigor was greatly increased. Piles were erected at Orleans, at Poitiers, at Bordeaux, at Nantes - in short, in all the chief cities of the kingdom. These cruel proceedings, however, so far from arresting the progress of the Reformed opinions, only served to increase the number of their professors. Men of rank in the State, and of dignity in the Church, now began, despite the disfavor in which all of the "religion" were held at court, to enroll themselves in the Protestant army. But the Gospel in France was destined to owe more to men of humble faith than to the possessors of rank, however lofty. We have mentioned Chatelain, Bishop of Macon, who disputed with the poor tador before Henry II. As Beza remarks, one thing only did he lack, even grace, to make him one of the most brilliant characters and most illustrious professors of the Gospel in

³Beza, tom. 1, livr. 2, p. 51. Laval, volume 1, p. 76.

France. Lowly born, Chatelain had raised himself by his great talents and beautiful character. He sat daily at the table of Francis I, among the scholars and wise men whom the king loved to hear discourse. [520] To the accomplishments of foreign travel he added the charms of an elegant latinity. He favored the new opinions, and undertook the defense of Robert Stephens, the king's printer, when the Sorbonne attacked him for his version of the Bible. ⁴ These acquirements and gifts procured his being made Bishop of Macon. But the miter would seem to have cooled his zeal for the Reformation, and in the reign of Henry II we find him persecuting the faith he had once defended. Soon after his encounter with the tailor he was promoted to the See of Orleans, and he set out to take possession of his new bishopric. Arriving at a monastery in the neighborhood of Orleans, he halted there, intending to make his entry into the city on the morrow. The Fathers persuaded him to preach; and, as Beza remarks, to see a bishop in a pulpit was so great a wonder in those days, that the sight attracted an immense crowd. As the bishop was thundering against heretics, he was struck with a sudden and violent illness, and had to be carried out of the pulpit. He died the following night. ⁵ At the very gates of his episcopal city, on the very steps of his episcopal throne, he encountered sudden arrest, and gave up the ghost.

Five days thereafter (9th July, 1550), Paris was lighted up with numerous piles. Of these martyrs, who laid gloriously with their blood the foundations of the French Protestant Church, we must not omit the names of Leonard Galimar, of Vendome, and Florent Venot, of Sedan. The latter endured incredible torments, for no less a period than four years, in the successive prisons into which he was thrown. His sufferings culminated when he was brought to Paris. He was there kept for six weeks in a hole where he could neither lie, nor stand upright, nor move about, and the odour of which was beyond measure foul and poisonous, being filled with all manner of abominable filth. His keepers said that they had never known any one inhabit that dreadful place for more than fifteen days, without losing either life or reason. But Venot surmounted all these sufferings with a most admirable courage. Being burned alive in the Place Maubert,

⁴Laval, volume 1, p. 78.

⁵Beza, tom. 1, pp. 51,52.

he ceased not at the stake to sing and magnify the Savior, till his tongue was cut out, and even then he continued to testify his joy by signs. ⁶

In the following year (1551) a quarrel broke out between Henry and Pope Julius III, the cause being those fruitful sources of strife, the Duchies of Parma and Placentia, The king showed his displeasure by forbidding his subjects to send money to Rome, and by protesting against the Council of Trent, the Fathers having returned for the second time to that town. But this contention between the king and the Pope only tended to quicken the flames of persecution. Henry wished to make it clear to his subjects that it was against the Pope in his temporal and not in his spiritual character that he had girded on the sword; that if he was warring against the Prince of the Roman States, his zeal had not cooled for the Holy See; and that if Julius the monarch was wicked, and might be resisted, Julius the Pope was none the less entitled to the obedience of all Christians. ⁷

To teach the Protestants, as Maimbourg observes, that they must not take advantage of these quarrels to vent their heresies, there was published at this time (27th June) the famous Edict of Chateaubriand, so called from the place where it was given. By this law, all former severities were re-enacted; the cognizance of the crime of heresy was given to the secular power; informers were rewarded with the fourth part of the forfeited goods; the possessions and estates of all those who had fled to Geneva were confiscated to the king; and no one was to hold any office under the crown, or teach any science, who could not produce a certificate of being a good Romanist. ⁸ This policy has at all times been pursued by the monarchs of France when they quarrelled with the Pope. It behooved them, they felt, all the more that they had incurred suspicion, to vindicate the purity of their orthodoxy, and their claim to the proud title of “the Eldest Son of the Church.”

Maurice, Elector of Saxony, was at this time prosecuting his victorious campaign against Charles V. The relations which the King of France had contracted with the Protestant princes, and which enabled him to make an expedition into Lorraine, and to annex Metz

⁶Ibid, tom. 1, p. 52.

⁷Maimbourg, *Hist. Calv.*, livr. 2, p. 94; Paris, 1682.

⁸Ibid., livr. 2, pp. 94,95. Laval, volume 1, p. 80.

and other cities to his crown, moderated for a short while the rigors of persecution. But the Peace of Passau (1552), which ratified the liberties of the Protestants of Germany, rekindled the fires in France. “Henry having no more measures to observe with the Protestant princes,” says Laval, “nothing was to be seen in his kingdom but fires kindled throughout all the provinces against the poor Reformed.”

[521] ⁹ Vast numbers were executed in this and the following year. It was now that the gag was brought into use for the first time. It had been invented on purpose to prevent the martyrs addressing the people at the stake, or singing psalms to solace themselves when on their way to the pile. “The first who suffered it,” says Laval, “was Nicholas Noil, a book-hawker, who was executed at Paris in the most barbarous manner.” ¹⁰

The scene of martyrdom was in those days at times the scene of conversion. Of this, the following incident is a proof. Simon Laloe, of Soisson, was offering up his life at Dijon. As he stood at the stake, and while the faggots were being kindled, he delivered an earnest prayer for the conversion of his persecutors. The executioner, Jacques Sylvester, was so affected that his tears never ceased to flow all the time he was doing his office. He had heard no one before speak of God, or of the Gospel, but he could not rest till he was instructed in the Scriptures. Having received the truth, he retired to Geneva, where he died a member of the Reformed Church. ¹¹ The same stake that gave death to the one, gave life to the other.

The insatiable avarice of Diana of Poitiers, to whom the king had gifted the forfeited estates of the Reformed, not less than zeal for Romanism, occasioned every day new executions. The truth continued notwithstanding to spread. “When the plague,” says Maimbourg, “attacks a great city, it matters little what effort is made to arrest it. It enters every door; it traverses every street; it invades every quarter, and pursues its course till the whole community have been enveloped in its ravages: so did this dangerous sect spread through France. Every day it made new progress, despite the edicts with which it was assailed, and the dreadful executions to which so many

⁹Laval, volume 1, p. 81.

¹⁰Laval, volume 1, p. 82. Beza, tom. 1, p. 59.

¹¹Beza, tom. 1, p. 59.

of its members were consigned.”¹² It was in the midst of this persecution that the first congregations of the Reformed Church in France were settled with pastors, and began to be governed by a regular discipline.

The first Church to be thus constituted was in Paris; “where,” says Laval, “the fires never went out.” At that time the disciples of the Gospel were wont to meet in the house of M. de la Ferriere, a wealthy gentleman of Maine, who had come to reside in the capital. M. de la Ferriere had a child whom he wished to have baptised, and as he could not present him to the priests for that purpose, nor undertake a journey to Geneva, he urged the Christians, who were wont to assemble in his house, to elect one of themselves to the office of pastor, with power to administer the Sacraments. They were at last prevailed upon, and, after prayer and fasting, their choice fell on Jean Maçon de la Riviere. He was the son of the king’s attorney at Angers, a rich man, but a bitter enemy of Protestantism. He was so offended at his son for embracing the Reformed faith, that he would have given him up to the judges, had he not fled to Paris. The sacrifice which M. de la Riviere had made to preserve the purity of his conscience, fixed the eyes of the little flock upon him. In him we behold the first pastor of the Reformed Church of France,¹³ elected forty years after Lefevre had first opened the door for the entrance of the Protestant doctrines. “They chose likewise,” says Laval, speaking of this little flock, “some amongst them to be elders and deacons, and made such other regulations for the government of their Church as the times would allow. Such were the first beginnings of the Church of Paris in the month of September, 1555, which increased daily during the war of Henry II with Charles V.”¹⁴

If France blazed with funeral piles, it was day by day more widely illuminated with the splendor of truth. This gave infinite vexation and torment to the friends of Rome, who wearied themselves to devise new methods for arresting the progress of the Gospel. Loud accusations and reproaches passed between the courts of jurisdiction for not showing greater zeal in executing the edicts against heresy. The cognizance of that crime was committed sometimes to

¹²Maimbourg, livr. 2, p. 95.

¹³Beza, tom. 1, pp. 62-64.

¹⁴Laval, volume 1, pp. 83,84.

the royal and sometimes to the ecclesiastical judges, and sometimes parted between them. The mutual recriminations still continued. A crime above all crimes, it was said, was leniently treated by those whose duty it was to pursue it without mercy. At last, in the hope of attaining the requisite rigor, the Cardinal of Lorraine stripped the Parliament and the civil judges of the right of hearing such causes, and transferred it to the bishops, leaving nothing to the others but the mere execution of the sentence against the condemned. This arrangement the cardinal thought to perfect by establishing the Inquisition in France on the Spanish model. In this, however, he did not succeed, the Parliament having refused its consent thereto. ¹⁵

[522] The calamities that befell the kingdom were a cover to the evangelization. Henry II had agreed on a truce with the Emperor Charles for five years. It did not, however, suit the Pope that the truce should be kept. Paul IV sent his legate to France to dispense Henry from his oath, and induce him to violate the peace. The flames of war were rekindled, but the French arms were disgraced. The battle of St. Quentin was a fatal blow to France, and the Duke of Guise was recalled from Italy to retrieve it. He recovered in the Low Countries the reputation which he had lost in Sicily; ¹⁶ but even this tended in the issue to the weakening of France. The duke's influence at court was now predominant, and the intrigues which his great rival, Montmorency, set on foot to supplant him, led to the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis (1559), by which France lost 198 strongholds, ¹⁷ besides the deepening of the jealousies and rivalships between the House of Lorraine and that of the Constable, which so nearly proved the ruin of France. One main inducement with Henry to conclude this treaty with Philip of Spain, was that it left him free to prosecute the design formed by the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Bishop of Arras for the utter extirpation of the Reformed. In fact, the treaty contained a secret clause binding both monarchs to combine their power for the utter extirpation of heresy in their dominions.

But despite the growing rigor of the persecution, the shameful slanders which were propagated against the Reformed, and the hideous deaths inflicted on persons of all ages and both sexes, the

¹⁵Beza, tom. 1, p. 72. Laval, volume 1, pp. 85,86

¹⁶Havila, Hist. delle Guerre Civili di Francia, lib. 1, p. 13.

¹⁷Laval, volume 2, p. 107.

numbers of the Protestants and their courage daily increased. It was now seen that scarcely was there a class of French society which did not furnish converts to the Gospel. Mezeray says that there was no town, no province, no trade in the kingdom wherein the new opinions had not taken root. The lawyers, the learned, nay, the ecclesiastics, against their own interest, embraced them.¹⁸ Some of the greatest nobles of France now rallied round the Protestant standard. Among these was Antoine de Bourbon, Duke of Vendome, and first prince of the blood, and Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Conde, his brother. With these were joined two nephews of the Constable Montmorency, the Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, and his brother, Francois de Chatilion, better known as the Sire d'Andelot. A little longer and all France would be Lutheran. The king's alarm was great: the alarm of all about him was not less so, and all united in urging upon him the adoption of yet more summary measures against an execrable belief, which, if not rooted out, would most surely overthrow his throne, root out his house, and bring his kingdom to ruin. Might not the displeasure of Heaven, evoked by that impious sect, be read in the many dark calamities that were gathering round France

It was resolved that a "Mercuriale," as it is called in France, should be held, and that the king, without giving previous notice of his coming, should present himself in the assembly. He would thus see and hear for himself, and judge if there were not, even among his senators, men who favored this pestilent heresy. It had been a custom from the times of Charles VIII (1493), when corruption crept into the administration, and the State was in danger of receiving damage, that representatives of all the principal courts of the realm should meet, in order to inquire into the evil, and admonish one another to greater vigilance. Francis I had ordered that these "Censures" should take place once every three months, and from the day on which they were held-namely, Wednesday (Dies Mercurii) - they were named "Mercuriales."¹⁹

On the 10th of June, 1559, the court met in the house of the Austin Friars, the Parliament Hall not being available, owing to the preparations for the wedding of the king's daughter and sister. The

¹⁸Mezeray. Abr. Chr., tom. 4, p. 720. Laval, volume 1, p. 107.

¹⁹Laval, volume 1, pp. 109,110.

king suddenly appeared in the assembly, attended by the princes of the blood, the Constable, and the Guises. Having taken his seat on the throne, he delivered a discourse on religion; he enlarged on his own labours for the peace of Christendom, which he was about to seal by giving in marriage his daughter Elizabeth to Philip of Spain, and his only sister Margaret to Philibert Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy; and he concluded by announcing his resolution to devote himself henceforward to the healing of the wounds of the Christian world. He then ordered the senators to go on with their votes.

Though all felt that the king was present to overawe them in the expression of their sentiments, many of the senators declared themselves with that ancient liberty which became their rank and office. They pointed to the fact that a Council was at that moment convened at Trent to pronounce on the faith, and that it was unjust to burn men for heresy before the Council had decreed what was heresy. Arnold du Ferrier freely admitted that the troubles of France sprang out of its religious differences, but then they ought to inquire who was the real author of these differences, lest, while pursuing the sectaries, they should expose themselves to the rebuke, "Thou art the man that troubles Israel."

[523] Annas du Bourg, who next rose, came yet closer to the point. There
[524] were, he said, many great crimes and wicked actions, such as oaths, adulteries, and perjuries, condemned by the laws, and deserving of the severest punishment, which went without correction, while new punishments were every day invented for men who as yet had been found guilty of no crime. Should those be held guilty of high treason who mentioned the name of the prince only to pray for him? and should the rack and the stake be reserved, not for those who raised tumults in the cities, and seditions in the provinces, but for those who were the brightest patterns of obedience to the laws, and the firmest defenders of order! It was a very grave matter, he added, to condemn to the flames men who died calling on the name of the Lord Jesus. Other speakers followed in the same strain. Not so the majority, however. They recalled the examples of old days, when the Albigenian heretics had been slaughtered in thousands by Innocent III; and when the Waldenses, in later times, had been choked with smoke in their own dwellings, and the dens of the mountains; and they urged the instant adoption of these time-honoured usages.

When the opinions of the senators had been marked, the king took possession of the register in which the votes were recorded, then rising up, he sharply chid those members who had avowed a preference for a moderate policy; and, to show that under a despot no one could honestly differ from the royal opinion and be held guiltless, he ordered the Constable to arrest Du Bourg. The captain of the king's guard instantly seized the obnoxious senator, and carried him to the Bastile. Other members of Parliament were arrested next day at their own houses.²⁰

The king's resolution was fully taken to execute all the senators who had opposed him, and to exterminate Lutheranism everywhere throughout France. He would begin with Du Bourg, who, shut up in an iron cage in the Bastile, waited his doom. But before the day of Du Bourg's execution arrived, Henry himself had gone to his account. We have already mentioned the delight the king took in jousts and tournaments. He was giving his eldest daughter in marriage to the mightiest prince of his time - Philip II of Spain-and so great an occasion he must needs celebrate with fetes of corresponding magnificence. Fourteen days have elapsed since his memorable visit to his Parliament, and now Henry presents himself in a very different assemblage. It is the last day of June, 1559, and the rank and beauty of Paris are gathered in the Faubourg St. Antoine, to see the king tilting with selected champions in the lists. The king bore himself "like a sturdy and skillful cavalier" in the mimic war. The last passage-at-arms was over, the plaudits of the brilliant throng had saluted the royal victor, and every one thought, that the spectacle was at an end. But no; it wan to close with a catastrophe of which no one present so much as dreamed. A sudden resolve seizing the king yet farther to display his prowess before the admiring multitude, he bade the Count Montgomery, the captain of his guard, make ready and run a tilt with him. Montgomery excused himself, but the king insisted. Mounting his horse and placing his lance in rest, Montgomery stood facing the king. The trumpet sounded. The two warriors, urging their steeds to a gallop, rushed at each other: Montgomery's lance struck the king with such force that the staff was shivered. The blow made Henry's visor fly open, and a splinter from the broken beam

²⁰Beza, tom. 1, pp. 122,123.

entered his left eye and drove into his brain. The king fell from his horse to the ground. A thrill of horror ran through the spectators. Was the king slain? No; but he was mortally wounded, and the death-blow had been dealt by the same hand—that of the captain of his guard which he had employed to arrest the martyr Du Bourg. He was carried to the Hotel de Tournelles, where he died on the 10th of July, in the forty-first year of his age. ²¹

Many strange things were talked of at the time; and have been related by contemporary historians, in connection with the death of Henry II. His queen, Catherine de Medici, had a dream the night before, in which she saw him tilting in the tournament, and so hard put to, that in the morning when she awoke she earnestly begged him that day not to stir abroad; but, says Beza, he no more heeded the warning than Julius Caesar did that of his wife, who implored him on the morning of the day on which he was slain not to go to the Senate-house. Nor did it escape observation that the same palace which had been decked out with so much magnificence for the two marriages was that in which the king breathed his last, and so “the hall of triumph was changed into the chamber of mourning.” And, finally, it was thought not a little remarkable that when the bed was prepared on which Henry was to lie in state, and the royal corpse laid upon it, the attendants, not thinking of the matter at all, covered it with a rich piece of tapestry on which was represented the conversion of St. Paul, with the words in large letters, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” This was remarked upon by so many who saw it, that the officer who had charge of the body ordered the coverlet to be taken away, and replaced with another piece. ²² The incident recalled the last words of Julian, who fell like Henry, warring against Christ: “Thou hast overcome, O Galilean!”

²¹Daytin, lib. 1, pp. 17,18. Laval, volume 1, p. 142.

²²Beza, tom. 1, p. 124.

Chapter 3 : First National Synod of the French Protestant Church

Early Assemblies of French Protestants-Colportage-Holy Lives-The
Planting of Churches throughout France-Play at La Rochelle-First
National Synod-Confession of Faith of the French
Church- Constitution and Government-Gradation of Courts—Order
and Liberty -Piety Flourishes

Picture: View of La Rochelle.

Picture: Claude de Lorraine Duke of Guise; Diana of Poitiers;
Catherine de Medici; Anne de Montmorency.

The young vine which had been planted in France, and which was beginning to cover with its shadow the plains of that fair land, was at this moment sorely shaken by the tempests; but the fiercer the blasts that warred around it, the deeper did it strike its roots in the soil, and the higher did it lift its head into the heavens. There were few districts or cities in France in which there was not to be found a little community of disciples. These flocks had neither shepherd to care for them, nor church in which to celebrate their worship. The violence of the times taught them to shun observation; nevertheless, they neglected no means of keeping alive the Divine life in their souls, and increasing their knowledge of the Word of God. They assembled at stated times, to read together the Scriptures, and to join in prayer, and at these gatherings the more intelligent or the more courageous of their number expounded a passage from the Bible, or delivered a word of exhortation. These teachers, however, confined themselves to doctrine. They did not dispense the Sacraments, for Calvin, who was consulted on the point, gave it as his opinion that, till they had obtained the services of a regularly ordained ministry, they should forego celebrating the Lord's Supper. They were little careful touching the fashion of the place in which they offered their united prayer and sang their psalm. It might be a garret, or a cellar, or a barn. It might be a cave of the mountains, or a glen in the far

wilderness, or some glade shaded by the ancient trees of the forest. Assemble where they might, they knew that there was One ever in the midst of them, and where he was, there was the Church. One of their number gave notice to the rest of the time and place of meeting. If in a city, they took care that the house should have several secret doors, so that, entering by different ways, their assembling might attract no notice. And lest their enemies should break in upon them, they took the precaution of bringing cards and dice with them, to throw upon the table in the room of their Bibles and psalters, as a make-believe that they had been interrupted at play, and were a band of gamblers instead of a congregation of Lutherans. ¹

In the times we speak of, France was traversed by an army of book-hawkers. The printing-presses of Geneva, Lausanne, and Neuchatel supplied Bibles and religious books in abundance, and students of theology, and sometimes even ministers, assuming the humble office of colporteurs carried them into France. Staff in hand, and pack slung on their back, they pursued their way, summer and winter, by highways and cross-roads, through forests and over marshes, knocking from door to door, often repulsed, always hazarding their lives, and at times discovered, and dragged to the pile. By their means the Bible gained admission into the mansions of the nobles, and the cottages of the peasantry. They employed the same methods as the ancient Vaudois colporteur to conceal their calling. Their precious wares they deposited at the bottom of their baskets, so that one meeting them in city alley, or country highway, would have taken them for vendors of silks and jewelry—a deception for which Florimond de Raemond rebukes them, without, however, having a word in condemnation of the violence that rendered the concealment necessary. The success of these humble and devoted evangelists was attested by the numbers whom they prepared for the stake, and who, in their turn, sowed in their blood the seed of new confessors and martyrs.

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At times, too, though owing to the fewness of pastors it was only at considerable intervals, these little assemblies of believing men and women had the much-prized pleasure of being visited by a minister

¹Flor. de Reemond, *Hist. de la Naissance, etc., de l'Herésie de ce Siecle*, lib. 7, p. 931.

of the Gospel. From him they learned how it was going with their brethren in other parts of France. Their hearts swelled and their eyes brightened as he told them that, despite the fires everywhere burning, new converts were daily pressing forward to enroll themselves in the army of Christ, and that the soldiers of the Cross were multiplying faster than the stake was thinning them. Then covering the table, and placing upon it the “bread” and “cup,” he would dispense the Lord’s Supper, and bind them anew by that holy pledge to the service of their heavenly King, even unto the death. Thus the hours would wear away, till the morning was on the point of breaking, and they would take farewell of each other as men who would meet no more till, by way of the halter or the stake, they should reassemble in heaven.

The singular beauty of the lives of these men attracted the notice, and extorted even the praise, of their bitterest enemies. It was a new thing in France. Florimond de Raemond, ever on the watch for their halting, could find nothing of which to accuse them save that “instead of dances and Maypoles they set on foot Bible-readings, and the singing of spiritual hymns, especially the psalms after they had been turned into rhyme. The women, by their deportment and modest apparel, appeared in public like sorrowing Eves, or penitent Magdalenes, as Tertullian said of the Christian women of his day. The men too, with their mortified air, seemed to be overpowered by the Holy Ghost.”² It does not seem to have occurred to the monkish chronicler to inquire why it was that what he considered an evil tree yielded fruits like these, although a true answer to that question would have saved France from many crimes and woes. If the facts were as Raemond stated them—if the confessors of an heretical and diabolical creed were men of preeminent virtue the conclusion was inevitable, either that he had entirely misjudged regarding their creed, or that the whole moral order of things had somehow or other come to be reversed. Even Catherine de Medici, in her own way, bore her testimony to the moral character of Protestantism. “I have a mind,” observed she one day, “to turn to the new religion, to pass for a prude and a pious woman.” The persecutors of that age are condemned out of their own mouths. They confess that they “killed the innocent.”

²Flor. de Raemond, lib. 7, p. 864.

Truly wonderful was the number of Protestant congregations already formed in France at the time of the death of Henry II. “Burning,” yet “not consumed,” the Reformed Church was even green and flourishing, because refreshed with a secret dew, which was more efficacious to preserve its life than all the fury of the flames to extinguish it. We have already recorded the organization of the Church in Paris, in 1555. It was followed in that and the five following years by so many others in all parts of France, that we can do little save recite the names of these Churches. The perils and martyrdoms through which each struggled into existence, before taking its place on the soil of France, we cannot recount. The early Church of Meaux, trodden into the dust years before, now rose from its ruins. In 1546 it had seen fourteen of its members burned; in 1555 it obtained a settled pastor.³ At Angers (1555) a congregation was formed, and placed under the care of a pastor from Geneva. At Poitiers, to which so great an interest belongs as the flock which Calvin gathered together, and to whom he dispensed, for the first time in France, the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, a congregation was regularly organized (1555). It happened that the plague came to Poitiers, and drove from the city the bitterest enemies of the Reformation; whereupon its friends, taking heart, formed themselves into a Church, which soon became so flourishing that it supplied pastors to the congregations that by-and-by sprang up in the neighbourhood.⁴ At Alevert, an island lying off the coast of Saintonge, a great number of the inhabitants received the truth, and were formed into a congregation in 1556. At Agen, in Guienne, a congregation was the same year organized, of which Pierre David, a converted monk, became pastor. He was afterwards chaplain to the King of Navarre.

At Bourges, at Aubigny, at Issoudun, at Blois, at Tours, at Montoigne, at Pau in Bearn, Churches were organized under regular pastors in the same year, 1556. To these are to be added the Churches at Montauban and Angouleme.⁵

In the year following (1557), Protestant congregations were formed, and placed under pastors, at Orleans, at Sens, at Rouen in Normandy, and in many of the towns and villages around, including

³Beza, tom. 1, p. 124.

⁴Laval, volume 1, p. 146. Beza, tom. i., p. 125.

⁵Beza, tom. 1, p. 135.

Dieppe on the shores of the English Channel. Protestantism had penetrated the mountainous region of the Cevennes, and left the memorials of its triumphs amid a people proverbially primitive and rude, in organized Churches. In Brittany numerous Churches arose, as also along both banks of the Garonne, in Nerac, in Bordeaux, and other towns too numerous to be mentioned. In Provence, the scene of recent slaughter, there existed no fewer than sixty Churches in the year 1560.⁶

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The beginnings of the “great and glorious” Church of La Rochelle are obscure. So early as 1534 a woman was burned in Poitou, who said she had been instructed in the truth at La Rochelle. From that year we find no trace of Protestantism there till 1552, when its presence there is attested by the barbarous execution of two martyrs, one of whom had his tongue cut out for having acted as the teacher of others; from which we may infer that there was a little company of disciples in that town, though keeping themselves concealed for fear of the persecutor.⁷

In 1558 the King and Queen of Navarre, on their way to Paris, visited La Rochelle, and were splendidly entertained by the citizens. In their suite was M. David, the ex-monk, and now Protestant preacher, already referred to. He proclaimed openly the pure Word of God in all the places through which the court passed, and so too did he in La Rochelle. One day during their majesties’ stay at this city, the town-crier announced that a company of comedians had just arrived, and would act that day a new and wonderful piece. The citizens crowded to the play; the king, the queen, and the court being also present.

When the curtain rose, a sick woman was seen at the point of death, shrieking in pain, and begging to be confessed. The parish priest was sent for. He arrived in breathless haste, decked out in his canonicals. He began to shrive his penitent, but to little purpose. Tossing from side to side, apparently in greater distress than ever, she cried out that she was not well confessed. Soon a crowd of ecclesiastics had assembled round the sick woman, each more anxious than the other to give her relief. One would have thought

⁶Beza, tom. 1, p. 108.

⁷Lava, I, volume 1, p. 149.

that in such a multitude of physicians a cure would be found; but no: her case baffled all their skill. The friars next took her in hand. Opening great bags which they had brought with them, they drew forth, with solemn air, beads which they gave her to count, relics which they applied to various parts of her person, and indulgences which they read to her, with a perfect confidence that these would work an infallible cure.

It was all in vain. Not one of these renowned specifics gave her the least mitigation of her sufferings. The friars were perfectly non-plussed. At last they bethought them of another expedient. They put the habit of St. Francis upon her. Now, thought they, as sure as St. Francis is a saint, she is cured. But, alas! attired in cowl and frock, the poor sick woman sat rocking from side to side amid the friars, still grievously tormented by the pain in her conscience, and bemoaning her sad condition, that those people understood not how to confess her. At that point, when priest and friar had exhausted their skill, and neither rosary nor holy habit could work a cure, one stepped upon the stage, and going up to the woman, whispered into her ear that he knew a man who would confess her right, and give her ease in her conscience; but, added he, he goes abroad only in the night-time, for the day-light is hurtful to him. The sick person earnestly begged that that man might be called to her. He was straightway sent for: he came in a lay-dress, and drawing near the bolster, he whispered something in the woman's ear which the spectators did not hear. They saw, however, by her instant change of expression, that she was well pleased with what had been told her. The mysterious man next drew out of his pocket a small book, which he put into her hand, saying aloud, "This book contains the most infallible recipes for the curing of your disease; if you will make use of them, you will recover your health perfectly in a few days." Hereupon he left the stage, and the sick woman, getting out of bed with cheerful air, as one perfectly cured, walked three times round the stage, and then turning to the audience, told them that that unknown man had succeeded where friar and priest had failed, and that she must confess that the book he had given her was full of most excellent recipes, as they themselves might see from the happy change it had wrought in her; and if any of them was afflicted with the same disease, she would advise them to consult that book,

which she would readily lend them; and if they did not mind its being somewhat hot in the handling, and having about it a noisome smell like that of a fagot, they might rest assured it would certainly cure them. If the audience desired to know her name, and the book's name, she said, they were two riddles which they might guess at. ⁸

The citizens of La Rochelle had no great difficulty in reading the riddle. Many of them made trial of the book, despite its associations with the stake and the fagot, and they found that its efficacy was sufficiently sovereign to cure them. They obtained deliverance from that burden on the conscience which had weighed them down in fear and anguish, despite all that friar or penance could do to give them ease. From that time Protestantism flourished in La Rochelle; a Church was formed, its members not daring as yet, however, to meet for worship in open day, but assembling under cloud of night, as was still the practice in almost all places in France. [528]

We are now arrived at a new and most important development of Protestantism in France. As has been already mentioned, the crowns of France and Spain made peace between themselves, that they might be at liberty to turn their arms against Protestantism, and effect its extermination. Both monarchs were preparing to inflict a great blow. It was at that hour that the scattered sections of the French Protestant Church drew together, and, rallying around a common standard, presented a united front to their enemies.

It was forty years since Lefevre had opened the door of France to the Gospel. All these years there had been disciples, confessors, martyrs, but no congregations in our sense of the term. The little companies of believing men and women scattered over the country, were cared for and fed only by the Great Shepherd, who made them lie down in the green pastures of his Word, and by the still waters of his Spirit. But this was an incomplete and defective condition. Christ's people are not only a "flock," but a "kingdom," and it is the peculiarity of a kingdom that it possesses "order and government" as well as subjects. The former exists for the edification and defense of the latter.

⁸Laval, volume 1, pp. 150-152-ex Vincent, Recherchos sur les Commencements de la Ref a< la Rochelle.

In 1555 congregations began to be formed on the Genevan model. A pastor was appointed to teach, and with him was associated a small body of laymen to watch over the morals of the flock. The work of organizing went on vigorously, and in 1560 from one to two thousand Protestant congregations existed in France. Thus did the individual congregation come into existence. But the Church of God needs a wider union, and a more centralized authority.

[529] Scattered over the wide space that separates the Seine from the
[530] Rhone and the Garonne, the Protestant Churches of France were isolated and apart. In the fact that they had common interests and common dangers, a basis was laid, they felt, for confederation. In this way would the wisdom of all be available for the guidance of each, and the strength of each be combined for the defense of all.

As the symbol of such a confederation it was requisite that a creed should be drafted which all might confess, and a code of discipline compiled to which all would submit. Not to fetter the private judgment of individual Christians, nor to restrict the rights of individual congregations, was this creed framed; on the contrary, it was intended as a shield of both liberty of opinion and liberty of Christian action. But in order to effect this, it was essential that it should be drawn from the doctrines of the Bible and the models of apostolic times, with the same patient investigation, and the same accurate deduction, with which men construct a science from the facts which they observe in nature, but with greater submission of mind, inasmuch as the facts observed for the framing of a creed are of supernatural revelation, and with a more anxious vigilance to avoid error where error would be so immensely more pernicious and destructive, and above all, with a dependence on that Spirit who inspired the Word, and who has been promised to enlighten men in the true sense of it. As God has revealed himself in his Word, so the Church is bound to reveal the Word to the world. The French Protestant Church now discharged that duty to its nation.

It was agreed between the Churches of Paris and Poitiers, in 1558, that a National Synod should be held for the purpose of framing a common confession and a code of discipline. In the following spring, circular letters were addressed to all the Churches of the kingdom, and they, perceiving the benefit to the common cause likely to accrue from the step, readily gave their consent. It was

unanimously agreed that the Synod should be held in Paris. The capital was selected, says Beza, not because any preeminence or dignity was supposed to belong to the Church there, but simply because the confluence of so many ministers and elders was less likely to attract notice in Paris than in a provincial town.⁹ As regards rank, the representative of the smallest congregation stood on a perfect equality with the deputy of the metropolitan Church.

The Synod met on the 25th of May, 1559. At that moment the Parliament was assembling for the *Mercuriale*, at which the king avowed his purpose of pursuing the Reformed with fire and sword till he had exterminated them. From eleven Churches only came deputies to this Synod: Paris, St. Lo, Dieppe, Angers, Orleans, Tours, Poitiers, Saintes, Marennes, Chatellerault, and St. Jean d'Angely.¹⁰ Pastor Francois Morel, Sieur of Cellonges, was chosen to preside. Infinite difficulties had to be overcome, says Beza, before the Churches could be advertised of the meeting, but greater risks had to be run before the deputies could assemble: hence the fewness of their number. The gibbet was then standing in all the public places of the kingdom, and had their place of meeting been discovered, without doubt, the deputies would have been led in a body to the scaffold.

There is a simplicity and a moral grandeur appertaining to this assembly that compels our homage. No guard stands sentinel at the door. No mace or symbol of authority traces the table round which the deputies of the Churches are gathered; no robes of office dignify their persons; on the contrary, royal edicts have proclaimed them outlaws, and the persecutor is on their track. Nevertheless, as if they were assembled in peaceful times, and under the shadow of law, they go on day by day, with calm dignity and serene power, planting the foundations of the House of God in their native land. They will do their work, although the first stones should be cemented with their blood.

We can present only an outline of their great work. Their Confession of Faith was comprehended in forty articles, and agrees in all essential points with the Creed of the Church of England. They

⁹Beza, tom. 1, p. 109.

¹⁰Felice, volume 1, p. 70.

received the Bible as the sole infallible rule of faith and manners. They confessed the doctrine of the Trinity; of the Fall, of the entire corruption of man's nature, and his condemnation; of the election of some to everlasting life; of the call of sovereign and omnipotent race; of a free redemption by Christ, who is our righteousness; of that righteousness as the ground of our justification; of faith, which is the gift of God, as the instrument by which we obtain an interest in that righteousness; of regeneration by the Spirit to a new life, and to good works; of the Divine institution of the ministry; of the equality of all pastors under one chief Pastor and universal Bishop, Jesus Christ; of the true Church, as composed of the assembly of believers, who agree to follow the rule of the Word; of the two Sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper; of the policy which Christ has established for the government of his Church; and of the obedience and homage due to rulers in monarchies and commonwealths, as God's lieutenants whom he has set to exercise a lawful and holy office. ¹¹

[531] Their code of discipline was arranged also in forty articles. Dismissing details, let us state in outline the constitution of the Reformed Church of France, as settled at its first National Synod. Its fundamental idea was that which had been taught both at Wittemberg and Geneva, namely, that the government of the Church is diffused throughout the whole body of the faithful, but that the exercise of it is to be restricted to those to whom Christ, the fountain of that government, has given the suitable gifts, and whom their fellow Church members have called to its discharge. On this democratic basis there rose four grades of power: -

1. 1. The Consistory.
2. 2. The Colloquy.
3. 3. The Provincial Synod.
4. 4. The National Synod.

Corresponding with these four grades of power there were four circles or areas - the Parish, the District, the Province, and the Kingdom. Each grade of authority narrowed as it ascended, while the circle within which it was exercised widened. What had its beginning in a democracy, ended in a constitutional monarchy, and the interests of each congregation and each member of the Church

¹¹Beza, tom. 1, pp. 109-118. Laval, volume 1, pp. 118-132.

were, in the last resort, adjudicated upon by the wisdom and authority of all. There was perfect liberty, combined with perfect order.

Let us sketch briefly the constitution of each separate court, with the sphere within which, and the responsibilities under which, it exercised its powers. First came the Consistory. It bore rule over the congregation, and was composed of the minister, elders, and deacons. The minister might be nominated by the Consistory, or by the Colloquy, or by the Provincial Synod, but he could not be ordained till he had preached three several Sundays to the congregation, and the people thus had had an opportunity of testing his gifts, and his special fitness to be their pastor. The elders and deacons were elected by the congregation

The Colloquy came next, and was composed of all the congregations of the district. Each congregation was represented in it by one pastor and one elder or deacon. The Colloquy met twice every year, and settled all questions referred to it from the congregations within its limits.

Next came the Provincial Synod. It comprehended all the Colloquies of the Province, every congregation sending a pastor and an elder to it. The Provincial Synod met once a year, and gave judgment in all cases of appeal from the court below, and generally in all matters deemed of too great weight to be determined in the Colloquy.

At the head of this gradation of ecclesiastical authority came the National Synod. It was composed of two pastors and two elders from each of the Provincial Synods, and had the whole kingdom for its domain or circle. It was the court of highest judicature; it determined all great causes, and heard all appeals, and to its authority, in the last resort, all were subject. It was presided over by a pastor chosen by the members. His preeminence was entirely official, and ended at the moment the Synod had closed its sittings.

In the execution of their great task, these first builders of the Protestant Church in France availed themselves of the counsel of Calvin. Nevertheless, their eyes were all the while directed to a higher model than Geneva, and they took their instructions from a higher authority than Calvin. They studied the New Testament, and what they aimed at following was the pattern which they thought stood revealed to them there, and the use they made of Calvin's

advice was simply to be able to see that plan more clearly, and to follow it more closely. Adopting as their motto the words of the apostle - "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren"- they inferred that there must be government in the Church-" One is your Master"-that the source of that government is in heaven, namely, Christ; that the revelation of it is in the Bible, and that the depository of it is in the Church - "All ye are brethren." Moving between the two great necessities which their motto indicated, authority and liberty, they strove to adjust and reconcile these two different but not antagonistic forces-Christ's royalty and his people's brotherhood. Without the first there could not be order, without the second there could not be freedom. Their scheme of doctrine preceded their code of discipline; the first had been accepted before the second was submitted to; thus all the bonds that held that spiritual society together, and all the influences that ruled it, proceeded out of the throne in the midst of the Church. If they, as constituted officers, stood between the Monarch and the subjects of this spiritual empire, it was neither as legislators nor as rulers, strictly so called. "One" only was Master, whether as regarded law or government. Their power was not legislative but administrative, and their rule was not lordly but ministerial; they were the fellow-servants of those among whom, and for whom, their functions were discharged.

The Synod sat four days; its place of meeting was never discovered, and its business finished, its members departed for their homes, which they reached in safety. Future councils have added nothing of moment to the constitution of the French Protestant Church, as framed by this its first National Synod. ¹²

[532] The times subsequent to the holding of this assembly were times of great prosperity to the Protestants of France. The Spirit of God was largely given them; and though the fires of persecution continued to burn, the pastors were multiplied, congregations waxed numerous, and the knowledge and purity of their members kept pace with their increase. The following picture of the French Church at this era has been drawn by Quick: - "The holy Word of God is duly, truly, and powerfully preached in churches and fields, in ships and houses, in vaults and cellars, in all places where the Gospel ministers can have

¹²Beza, tom. 1, pp. 118-121. Laval, volume 1, pp. 132-139.

admission and conveniency, and with singular success. Multitudes are convinced and converted, established and edified. Christ rideth out upon the white horse of the ministry, with the sword and the bow of the Gospel preached, conquering and to conquer. His enemies fall under him, and submit themselves unto him.”

“Oh! the unparalleled success of the plain and earnest sermons of the first Reformers! Multitudes flock in like doves into the windows of God’s ark. As innumerable drops of dew fall from the womb of the morning, so hath the Lord Christ the dew of his youth. The Popish churches are drained, the Protestant churches are filled. The priests complain that their altars are neglected; their masses are now indeed solitary. Dagon cannot stand before God’s ark. Children and persons of riper years are catechized in the rudiments and principles of the Christian religion, and can give a satisfactory account of their faith, a reason of the hope that is in them. By this ordinance do their pious pastors prepare them for communion with the Lord at his holy table.” ¹³

¹³Synodicon in Gallia Reformata, Introduction, 5, 6; Lond., 1692.

Chapter 4 : A Gallery of Portraits

National Decadence-Francis II-Scenes Shift at Court-The Guises and the Queen-mother-Anthony de Bourbon-His Paltry Character- Prince of Conde-His Accomplishments-Admiral Coilgny-His Conversion- Embraces the Reformed Faith-His Daily Life-Great Services-Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre-Greatness of her Character-Services to French Protestantism-Her Kingdom of Navarre-Edict Establishing the Reformed Worship in it-Her Cede- Her Fame

Picture: View of the Castle of Pau.

Henry II went to his grave amid the deepening shadows of fast-coming calamity. The auspicious signs which had greeted the eyes of men when he ascended the throne had all vanished before the close of his reign, and given place to omens of evil. The finances were embarrassed, the army was dispirited by repeated defeat, the court was a hotbed of intrigue, and the nation, broken into factions, was on the brink of civil war. So rapid had been the decline of a kingdom which in the preceding reign was the most flourishing in Christendom.

Henry II was succeeded on the throne by the eldest of his four sons, under the title of Francis III. The blood of the Valois and the blood of the Medici -two corrupt streams-were now for the first time united on the throne of France. With the new monarch came a shifting of parties in the Louvre; for of all slippery places in the world those near a throne are the most slippery. The star of Diana of Poitiers, as a matter of course, vanished from the firmament where it had shone with bright but baleful splendor. The Constable Montmorency had a hint given him that his health would be benefited by the air of his country-seat. The king knew not, so he said to him, how to reward his great merits, and recompense him for the toil he had undergone in his service, save by relieving him of the burden of affairs, in order that he might enjoy his age in quiet, being resolved

not to wear him out as a vassal or servant, but always to honour him as a father. ¹ The proud Constable, grumbling a little, strode off to his Castle of Chantilly, ten leagues from Paris. The field cleared of these parties, the contest for power henceforward lay between the Guises and the Queen-mother.

Francis II was a lad of sixteen, and when we think who had had the rearing of him, we are not surprised to learn that he was without principles and without morals. Feeble in mind and body, he was a tool all the more fit for the hand of a bold intriguer. At the foot of the throne from which she had just descended stood the crafty Italian woman, his mother, Catherine de Medici: might she not hope to be the sovereign-counsellor of her weak-minded son? During the lifetime of her husband, Henry II, her just influence as the wife had been baulked by the ascendancy of the mistress, Diana of Poitiers. That rival had been swept from her path, but another and more legitimate competitor had come in the room of the fallen favorite. By the side of Francis II, on the throne of France, sat Mary Stuart, the heir of the Scottish crown, and the niece of the Guises. The king doted upon her beauty, ² and thus the niece was able to keep open the door of the royal closet, and the ear of her husband, to her uncles. This gave the Guises a prodigious advantage in the game that was now being played round the person of the king. And when we think how truculent they were, and how skilled they had now become in the arts by which princes' favor is to be won, it does not surprise us to learn that in the end of the day they were foremost in the race. Catherine de Medici was a match for them any day in craft and ambition, but with the niece of her rivals by the king's side, she found it expedient still to dissemble, and to go on a little while longer disciplining herself in those arts in which nature had fitted her to excel, and in which long practice would at last make her an expert, and then would she grasp the government of France.

The question which the Queen-mother now put, "What shall be my policy?" was to be determined by the consideration of who were her rivals, and what the tactics to which they were committed. Her rivals, we have just said, were the Guises, the heads of the Roman

¹Davilaj Hist. del. Guer. Civ. Franc., p. 20.

²Davila, p. 19.

Catholic party. This threw Catherine somewhat on the other side. She was nearly as much the bigot as the Cardinal of Lorraine himself, but if she loved the Pope, still more did she love power, and in order to grasp it she stooped to caress what she mortally hated, and reigned to protect what she secretly wished to root out. Thus did God divide the counsels and the arms of these two Powerful enemies of his Church. Had the Guises stood alone, the Reformation would have been crushed in France; or had Catherine de Medici stood alone, a like fate would have befallen it; but Providence brought both upon the scene together, and made their rivalry a shield over the little Protestant flock. The Queen-mother now threw herself between the leaders of the Reformed, and the Guises who were for striking them down without mercy. The new relation of Catherine brings certain personages upon the stage whom we have not yet met, but whom it is fitting, seeing they are to be conspicuous actors in what is to follow, we should now introduce.

The first is Anthony de Bourbon, Duke of Vendome, and first prince of the blood. From the same parent stock sprang the two royal branches of France, the Valois and the Bourbon. Louis IX (St. Louis) had four sons, of whom one was named Philip and another Robert. From Philip came the line of the Valois, in which the succession was continued for upwards of 300 years. From Robert, through his son's marriage with the heiress of the Duchy of Bourbon, came the house of that name, which has come to fill so large a space in history, and has placed its members upon the thrones³ of France, and Spain, and Naples. Princes of the blood, and adding to that dignity vast possessions, a genius for war, and generous dispositions, the Bourbons aspired to fill the first posts in the kingdom. Their pretensions were often troublesome to the reigning monarch, who found it necessary at times to visit their haughty bearing with temporary banishment from court. They were under this cloud at the time when Henry II died. On the accession of Francis II they resolved on returning to court and resuming their old influence in the government; but to their chagrin they found those places which they thought they, as princes of the blood, should have held, already possessed by the Guises. The latter united with the Queen-mother in repelling their

³Davila, pp. 7,8.

advances, and the Bourbons had again to retire, and to seek amid the parties of the country that influence which they were denied in the administration.

Anthony de Bourbon had married Jeanne d'Albret, who was the most illustrious woman of her time, and one of the most illustrious women in all history. She was the daughter of Margaret of Valois, Queen of Navarre, whose genius she inherited, and whom she surpassed in her gifts of governing, and in her more consistent attachment to the Reformation. Her fine intellect, elevated soul, and deep piety were unequally yoked with Anthony de Bourbon, who was a man of humane dispositions, but of low tastes, indolent habits, and of paltry character. His marriage with Jeanne d'Albret brought him the title of King of Navarre; but his wife was a woman of too much sense, and cherished too enlightened a regard for the welfare of her subjects, to give him more than the title. She took care not to entrust him with the reins of government. Today, so zealous was he for the Gospel, that he exerted himself to have the new opinions preached in his wife's dominions; and tomorrow would he be so zealous for Rome, that he would persecute those who had embraced the opinions he had appeared, but a little before, so desirous to have propagated. "Unstable as water," he spent his life in travelling between the two camps, the Protestant and the Popish, unable long to adhere to either, and heartily despised by both. ⁴ The Romanists, knowing the vulgar ambition that actuated him, promised him a territory which he might govern in his own right, and he kept pursuing this imaginary principedom. It was a mere lure to draw him over to their side; and his life ended without his ever attaining the power he was as eager to grasp as he was unable to wield. He died fighting in the ranks of the Romanists before the walls of Rouen; and, true to his character for inconsistency to the last, he is said to have requested in his dying moments to be re-admitted into the Protestant Church.

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His brother, the Prince of Conde, was a person of greater talent, and more manly character. He had a somewhat diminutive figure, but this defect was counterbalanced by the graces of his manner, the wit of his discourse, and the gallantry of his spirit. ⁵ He shone

⁴Maimbourg, livr. 2, p. 123. Laval, volume 1, p. 170.

⁵Ibid., livr. 2, p. 124. Laval, volume 1, p. 171.

equally among the ladies of the court and the soldiers of the camp. He could be oozy with the one, and unaffectedly frank and open with the other. The Prince of Conde attached himself to the Protestant side, from a sincere conviction that the doctrines of the Reformation were true, that they were favorable to liberty, and that their triumph would contribute to the greatness of France. But the Prince of Conde was not a great man. He did not rise to the true height of the cause he had espoused, nor did he bring to it that large sagacity, that entire devotion of soul, and that singleness of purpose which were required of one who would lead in such a cause. But what was worse, the Prince of Conde had not wholly escaped the blight of the profligacy of the age; although he had not suffered by any means to the same extent as his brother, the King of Navarre. A holy cause cannot be effectually succoured save by holy hands. "It may be asked whether the Bourbons, including even Henry IV, did not do as much damage as service to the Reformation. They mixed it up with politics, thrust it into the field of battle, dragged it into their private quarrels, and then when it had won for them the crown, they deserted it." ⁶

The next figure that comes before us is a truly commanding one. It is that of Gaspard de Coligny, better known as Admiral de Coligny. He towers above the Bourbon princes, and illustrates the fact that greatness of soul is a much more enviable possession than mere greatness of rank. Coligny, perhaps the greatest layman of the French Reformation, was descended from an ancient and honorable house, that of Chatillon. He was born in the same year in which Luther commenced the Reformation by the publication of his Theses, 1517. He lost his father on the 24th of August, 1522, being then only five years of age. The 24th of August was a fatal day to Coligny, for on that day, fifty years afterwards, he fell by the poignard of an assassin in the St. Bartholomew Massacre. His mother, Louise de Montmorency, a lady of lofty virtue and sincere piety, was happily spared to him, and by her instructions and example those seeds were sown in his youthful mind which afterwards bore so noble fruit in the cause of his country's religion and liberty. He was offered a cardinal's hat if he would enter the Church. He chose instead the profession of arms. He served with great distinction in the wars of

⁶Felice, volume 1, p. 83.

Flanders and Italy, was knighted on the field of battle, and returning home in 1547 he married a daughter of the illustrious house of Laval—a woman of magnanimous soul and enlightened piety, worthy of being the wife of such a man, and by whose prompt and wise counsel he was guided at more than one critical moment of his life. What he might have been as cardinal we do not know, but in his own profession as a soldier he showed himself a great reformer and administrator. Brantome says of the military ordinances which he introduced into the French army, “They were the best and most politic that have ever been made in France, and, I believe, have preserved the lives of a million of persons; for, till then, there was nothing but pillage, brigandage, murders, and quarrels, so that the companies resembled hordes of wild Arabs rather than noble soldier.”

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At an early age Coligny was taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and to beguile the solitary hours of his confinement, he asked for a Bible and some religious books. His request was complied with, and from that incident dates his attachment to the Reformed doctrines. But he was slow to declare himself. He must be fully persuaded in his own mind before openly professing the truth, and he must needs count the cost. With Coligny, Protestantism was no affair of politics or of party, which he might cast aside if on trial he found it did not suit. Having put his hand to the plough, he must not withdraw it, even though, leaving castle and lands and titles, he should go forth an outcast and a beggar. For these same doctrines men were being every day burned at the stake.

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Before making profession of them, Coligny paused, that by reading, and converse with the Reformed pastors, he might arrive at a full resolution of all his doubts. But the step was all the more decisive when at last it was taken. As men receive the tidings of some great victory or of some national blessing, so did the Protestants of France receive the news that Coligny had cast in his lot with the Reformation. They knew that he must have acted from deep conviction, that his choice would never be reversed, and that it had brought a mighty accession of intellectual and moral power to the Protestant cause. They saw in Coligny’s adherence an additional

⁷Brantome, tom. 3, p. 204.

proof of its truth, and a new pledge of its final triumph. Protestantism in France, just entering on times of awful struggles, had now a leader worthy of it. A captain had risen up to march before its consecrated hosts, and fight its holy battles.

From the moment he espoused the Protestant cause, Coligny's character acquired a new grandeur. The arrangements of his household were a model of order. He rose early, and having dressed himself, he summoned his household to prayers, himself leading their devotion. Business filled up the day and not a few of its hours were devoted to the affairs of the Church; for deputies were continually arriving at the Castle of Chatillon from distant congregations, craving the advice or aid of the admiral. Every other day a sermon was preached before dinner when it chanced, as often happened, that a minister was living under his roof. At table a psalm was sung, and a prayer offered. After an early supper came family devotions, and then the household were dismissed to rest. It mattered not where Colby was, or how occupied- in the Castle of Chatillon surrounded by his children and servants, or in the camp amid the throng of captains and soldiers-this was ever the God-fearing manner of his life. Not a few of the nobles of France felt the power of his example, and in many a castle the chant of psalms began to be heard, where aforetime there had reigned only worldly merriment and boisterous revelry.

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To the graces of Christianity there were added, in the character of Coligny, the gifts of human genius. He excelled in military tactics, and much of his life was passed on the battle-field; but he was no less fitted to shine in senates, and to guide in matters of State. His foresight, sagacity, and patriotism would, had he lived in happier times, have been the source of manifold blessings to his native country. As it was, these great qualities were mainly shown in arranging campaigns and fighting battles. Protestantism in France, so at least Coligny judged, had nothing for it but to stand to its defense. A tyranny, exercised in the king's name, but none the less art audacious usurpation, was trampling on law, outraging all rights, and daily destroying by horrible deaths the noblest men in France, and the Protestants felt that they owed it to their faith, to their country, to the generations to come, and to the public liberties and Reformation of Christendom, to repel force by force, seeing all

other means of redress were denied them. This alone made Coligny unsheathe the sword. The grand object of his life was freedom of worship for the Reformed in France. Could he have secured that object, most gladly would he have bidden adieu for ever to camps and battle-fields, and, casting honors and titles behind him, been content to live unknown in the privacy of Chatillon. This, however, was denied him. He was opposed by men who "hated peace," and so he had to fight on, almost without intermission, till the hour came when he was called to seal with his blood the cause he had so often defended with his sword.

Before quitting this gallery of portraits, there is one other figure which must detain us a little. Her name we have already mentioned incidentally, but her great qualities make her worthy of more lengthened observation. Jeanne d'Albret was the daughter of the accomplished and pious Margaret of Valois; but the daughter was greater than the mother. She had a finer genius, a stronger character, and she displayed the graces of a more consistent piety. The study of the Bible drew her thoughts in her early years to the Reformation, and her convictions ripening into a full belief of its truth, although untoward circumstances made her long conceal them, she at last, in 1560, made open profession of Protestantism. At that tune not only did the Protestant cause underlie the anathemas of Popes, but the Parliament of Paris had put it beyond the pale of law, and having set a price upon the heads of its adherents, it left them to be hunted down like wild beasts. Jeanne d'Albret, having made her choice, was as resolute as her husband, Anthony de Bourbon, was vacillating. Emulating the noble steadfastness of Coligny, she never repented of her resolution. Whether victory shone or defeat lowered on the Reformed cause, Jeanne d'Albret was ever by its side. When overtaken by disaster, she was ever the first to rally its dispirited adherents, and to bring them succour. Her husband forsook her; her son was taken from her; nothing daunted, she withdrew to her own principality of Bearn, and there devised, with equal wisdom and spirit, measures for the Reformation of her own subjects, at the same time that she was aiding, by her counsels and her resources, the Protestants in all parts of France.

Her little kingdom lay on the slope of the Pyrenees, looking toward France, which it touched on its northern frontier. In former

times it was divided into Lower Navarre, of which we have spoken above, and Upper Navarre, which lay on the southern slope of the Pyrenees, and was conterminous with Old Castile. Though but a small territory, its position gave Navarre great importance. Seated on the Pyrenees, it held in the one hand the keys of France, and in the other those of Spain. It was an object of jealousy to the sovereigns of both countries. It was coveted especially by the Kings of Spain, and in the days of Jeanne's grandfather Upper Navarre was torn from its rightful sovereigns by Ferdinand, King of Arragon, whose usurpation was confirmed by Pope Julius II. The loss of Upper Navarre inferred the loss of the capital of the kingdom, Pampeluna, which contained the tombs of its kings. Henceforward it became a leading object with Jean d'Albret to recover the place of his fathers' sepulchres, that his own ashes might sleep with theirs, but in this he faded; and when his granddaughter came to the throne, her dominions were restricted to that portion of the ancient Navarre which lay on the French side of the Pyrenees.

[537] In 1560, we have said, Jeanne d'Albret made open profession of the Protestant faith. In 1563 came her famous edict, dated from her castle at Pau, abolishing the Popish service throughout Bearn, and introducing the Protestant worship. The majority of her subjects were already prepared for this change, and the priests, though powerful, did not venture openly to oppose the public sentiment. A second royal edict confiscated a great part of the temporalities of the Church, but without adding them to the crown. They were divided into three parts. One-third was devoted to the education of the youth, another third to the relief of the poor, and the remaining third to the support of the Protestant worship. The private opinion of the Roman Catholic was respected, and only the public celebration of this worship forbidden. All trials and punishment for differences of religious opinions were abolished. Where the majority of the inhabitants were Protestant, the cathedrals were made over to them for their use, the images, crucifixes, and relics being removed. Where the inhabitants were equally divided, or nearly so, the two faiths were permitted the alternate use of the churches. The monasteries were converted into schools, thus anticipating by three centuries a measure long afterwards adopted by the Italian and other Continental Governments. Colleges were founded for the higher education. Jeanne caused the

Bible to be translated into the dialects of her dominions. She sent to Geneva for ministers, and recalled the native evangelists who had been driven out of Navarre, in order to the more perfect instruction of her subjects in the doctrines of the Word of God. Thus did she labor for the Reformation of her kingdom. The courage she displayed may be judged of, when we say that the Pope was all the while thundering his excommunications against her; and that the powerful Kings of Spain and France affronted by the erection of an heretical establishment on the frontiers of their dominions, were threatening to overrun her territory, imprison her person in the dungeons of the Inquisition, and raze her kingdom from the map of Europe.

In the midst of these distractions the Queen of Navarre gave herself to the study of the principles of jurisprudence. Comparing together the most famous codes of ancient and modern times, she produced, after the labor of seven years, a body of laws for the government of her kingdom, which was far in advance of her times. She entertained the most enlightened views on matters then little cared for by kings or parliaments. By her wise legislation she encouraged husbandry, improved the arts, fostered intelligence, and in a short time the beautiful order and amazing prosperity of her principality attracted universal admiration, and formed a striking contrast to the disorder, the violence, and misery that overspread the lands around it. In her dominions not a child was permitted to grow up uneducated, nor could a beggar be seen. The flourishing condition of Bearn showed what the mightier realms of Spain and France would have become, had their peoples been so wise as to welcome the Reformation. The code of the wise queen continued in operation in the territories of the House of D'Albret down to almost our own times. She is still remembered in these parts, where she is spoken of as the "good queen."

We have dwelt the longer upon these portraits because one main end of history is to present us with such. The very contemplation of them is ennobling. In a recital like the present, which brings before us some of the worst of men that have ever lived, and portrays some of the darkest scenes that have ever been enacted, to meet at times and characters, like those we have just passed in review, helps to make us forget the wickedness and worthlessness on which the mind is apt to dwell disproportionately, if not exclusively. All is

not dark in the scene we are surveying; beams of glory break in through the deep shadows. Majestic and kingly spirits pass across the stage, whose deeds and renown shall live when the little and the base among their fellows, who labored to defame their character and to extinguish their fame, have gone down into oblivion, and passed for ever from the knowledge of the world. Thus it is that the good overcomes the evil, and that the heroic long survives the worthless. The example of great men has a creative power: they reproduce, in the ages that come after, their own likeness, and enrich the world with men cast in their own lofty and heroic mould. Humanity is thus continually receiving seeds of greatness into its bosom, and the world is being led onwards to that high platform where its Maker has destined that it shall ultimately stand.

Chapter 5 : The Guises, and the Insurrection of Amboise

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Francis II-Pupilage of the King-The Guises Masters of France-Their Tool, the Mob-Chambres Ardentes -Wrecking -Odious Slanders—Confiscation of Huguenot Estates-Retribution- Conspiracy of Amboise-Its Failure-Executions—Tragedies on the Loire—Carrier of Nantes Renews these Tragedies in 1790-Progress of Protestantism- Condemnation of Conde-Preparations for his Execution -Abjuration Test-Death of Francis II-His Funeral

Picture: Mouchares Band Attacking the Protestants at the Hostelry in the Faubourg St. Germain.

Picture: The Chateau of Amboise.

Henry II smitten by a sudden blow, has disappeared from the scene. Francis II is on the throne of France. The Protestants are fondly cherishing the hope that with a change of men will come a change of measures, and that they have seen the dawn of better times. “Alas! under the reign of this monarch,” says Beza, “the rage of Satan broke out beyond all former bounds.”¹ No sooner had Henry breathed his last, than the Queen-mother and the two Guises carried the young king to the Louvre, and, installing him there, admitted only their own partisans to his presence. Now it was that the star of the Guises rose proudly into the ascendant. The duke assumed the command of the army; the cardinal, head of the Church, took also upon him the charge of the finances—thus the two brothers parted between them the government of France. Francis wore the crown; a sort of general superintendence was allowed to the Queen-mother; but it was the Guise and not the Valois that governed the country.²

One of the last acts of Henry II had been to arrest Counsellor Du Bourg and issue a commission for his trial. One of the first

¹Beza, livr. 3, p. 133.

²Maimbourg, livr. 2, p. 121.

acts of the son was to renew that commission. Du Bourg, shut up in his iron cage, and fed on bread and water, was nevertheless continually singing psalms, which he sometimes accompanied on the lute. His trial ended in his condemnation as a heretic, and he was first strangled and then burned in the Place de Greve.

His high rank, his many accomplishments, and his great character for uprightness fixed the eyes of all upon his stake, and made his death serviceable in no ordinary degree to the cause of Protestantism.

³

The power of the Guises, now in full blossom, was wholly put forth in the extirpation of heresy. Their zeal in this good work was not altogether without alloy. “Those of the religion,” as the Protestants were termed, were not less the enemies of the House of Guise than of the Pope, and to cut them off was to consolidate their own power at the same time that they strengthened the foundations of the Papacy. To reclaim by argument men who had fallen into deadly error was not consonant with the habits of the Guises, scarcely with the habits of the age. The sword and the fanatical mob were their quickest and readiest weapons, and the only ones in which they had any confidence. They were the masters of the king’s person; they carried him about from castle to castle; they took care to gratify his tastes; and they relieved him of all the cares of government, for which his sickly body, indolent disposition, and weak intellect so thoroughly indisposed him.

While the monarch lived in this inglorious pupilage, the Guises appended his seal to whatever edict it pleased them to indite. In the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis, our readers will remember, there was a special clause binding the late king to exert himself to the utmost of his power to extirpate heresy. Under pretense of executing that treaty, the Guises fulminated several new and severe edicts against the Reformed. Their meetings were forbidden on pain of death, without any other form of judgment, and informers were promised half the forfeitures. Other rewards were added to quicken their diligence. The commissaries of the various wards of Paris were commanded to pay instant attention to the informations lodged before them by the spies, who were continually on the search, and the Lieutenant-Crim-

³Beza, livr. 3, p. 156. Laval, volume 1, pp. 176-181.

inal was empowered by letters patent to judge without appeal, and execute without delay, those brought before him. And the vicars and cures were set to work to thunder excommunication and anathema in their parishes against all who, knowing who among their neighbors were Lutherans, should yet refrain from denouncing them to the authorities. ⁴

The Protestant Church in Paris in this extremity addressed the Queen-mother, Catherine de Medici. A former interview had inspired the members of that Church with the hope that she was disposed to pursue a moderate policy. They had not yet learned with what an air of sincerity, and even graciousness, the niece of Clement VII could cover her designs - how bland she could look while cherishing the most deadly purpose. They implored Catherine to interpose and stay the rigor of the government, and, with a just and sagacious foresight, which the centuries since have amply justified, they warned her that "if a stop was not speedily put to those cruel proceedings, there was reason to fear lest people, provoked by such violences, should fall into despair, and break forth into civil commotions, which of course would prove the ruin of the kingdom: that these evils would not come frets those who lived under their direction, from whom she might expect a perfect submission and obedience; but that the far greater number were of those who, knowing only the abuses of Popery, and having not as yet submitted to any ecclesiastical discipline, could not or would not bear persecution: that they had thought proper to give this warning to her Majesty, that if any mischief should happen it might not be put to their account."

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⁵ It suited the Queen-mother to interpret the warning of the Protestants, among whom were Coligny and other nobles, as a threat; and the persecution, instead of abating, grew hotter every day. ⁶

We have already related the failure of the priests and the Sorbonne to establish the Inquisition in Paris. Paul IV, whose fanaticism had grown in his old age into frenzy, had forwarded a bull for that purpose, but the Parliament put it quietly aside. The project was renewed by the Guises, and if the identical forms of the Spanish tribunal were not copied in the courts which they succeeded in erecting,

⁴Laval, volume 1, pp. 194,195.

⁵Laval, volume 1, pp. 193,194.

⁶Felice, volume 1, p. 91.

a procedure was adopted which gained their end quite as effectually. These courts were styled *Chambres Ardentes*, nor did their name belie their terrible office, which was to dispatch to the flames all who appeared before them accused of the crime of heresy. They were presided over by three judges or inquisitors, and, like the Spanish Court, they had a body of spies or familiars in their employment, who were continually on the hunt for victims. The sergeants of the Chatelet, the commissaries of the various quarters of Paris, the officers of the watch, the city guard, and the vergers and beadles of the several ecclesiastical jurisdictions—a vast body of men—were all enjoined to aid the spies of the *Chambres Ardentes*, by day or night.⁷ These ruffians made domiciliary visits, pried into all secrets, and especially put their ingenuity on the rack to discover the Conventicle. When they succeeded in surprising a religious meeting, they fell on its members with terrible violence, maltreating and sometimes murdering them, and those unable to escape they dragged to prison. These miscreants were by no means discriminating in their seizures; they must approve their diligence to their masters by furnishing their daily tale of victims. Besides, they had grudges to feed, and enmities to avenge, and their net was thrown at times over some who had but small acquaintance with the Gospel. A certain *Mou-chares*, or *Mouchy*, became the head of a band who made it their business to apprehend men in the act of eating flesh on Friday, or violating some other equally important command of the Church. This man has transmitted his name and office to our day in the term *mouchard*, a spy of the police. The surveillance of *Mouchares'* band was specially exercised over the *Faubourg St. Germain*, called, from the number of the Reformed that lived in it, “the Little Geneva.” A hostelry in this quarter, at which the Protestants from Geneva and Germany commonly put up, was assailed one Friday by *Mouchares'* men. They found the guests to the number of sixteen at table. The Protestants drew their swords, and a scuffle ensued. *Mouchares'* crew was driven off, but returning reinforced, they sacked the house, dragged the landlord and his family to prison, and in order to render

⁷Beza, *livr. 1*, p. 145.

them odious to the mob, they carried before them a larded capon and a piece of raw meat.⁸

The footsteps of these wretches might be traced in the wreckings of furniture, in the pillage and ruins which they left behind them, fit those quarters of Paris which were so unfortunate as to be visited by them. “Nothing was to be seen in the streets,” says Beza, describing the violences of those days, “but soldiers carrying men and women, and persons of all ages and every rank, to prison. The streets were so encumbered with carts loaded with household furniture, that it was hardly possible to pass. The houses were abandoned, having been pillaged and sacked, so that Paris looked like a city taken by storm. The poor had become rich, and the rich poor. What was more pitiable still was to see the little children, whose parents had been imprisoned, famishing at the doors of their former homes, or wandering through the streets crying piteously for bread, and no man giving it to them, so odious had Protestantism become to the Parisians. Still more to inflame the populace, at the street-corners certain persons in priests’ habits barangered the crowd, telling them that those heretics met together to feast upon children’s flesh, and to commit all kinds of impurity after they had eaten a pig instead of the Paschal lamb. The Parliament made no attempt to stop these outrages and crimes.”⁹ Nor were these violences confined to the capital; the same scenes were enacted in many other cities, as Poitiers, Toulouse, Dijon, Bordeaux, Lyons, Aix, and other places of Languedoc.¹⁰

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This terror, which had so suddenly risen up in France, struck many Romanists as well as Protestants with affright. Some Popish voices joined in the cry that was now raised for a moderate Reform; but instead of Reform came new superstitions. Images of the Virgin were set up at the corners of streets, tapers were lighted, and persons stationed near on pretense of singing hymns, but in reality to watch the countenance of the passer-bys. If one looked displeased, or if he refused to uncover to the Virgin, or if he did not drop a coin into the box for defraying the cost of the holy candle that was kept burning before “our Lady,” the cry of heretic was raised, and the obnoxious individual was straightway surrounded by the mob, and if not torn

⁸Ibid., livr. 1, p. 146. Laval, volume 1, p. 198.

⁹Beza, livr. 1, p. 147.

¹⁰Laval, volume 1, p. 200. Felice, volume 1, p. 91.

to pieces on the spot, was carried off to the prison of the Chatelet. The apprehensions were so numerous that the prisons were filled to overflow, and the trials of the incarcerated had to be hurried through to make room for fresh victims. The cells emptied in the morning were filled before night. "It was one vast system of terror," says Felice, "in which even the shadow of justice was no longer visible."¹¹

[542] No arts were neglected by the Guises and the priests to maintain at a white heat the fanaticism of the masses, on which their power to a large extent was based. If any public calamity happened-if a battle was lost, if the crops were destroyed by hail-storms, or if a province or city was ravaged by disease-"Ah!" it was said, "see what judgments these heretics are bringing on France!" Odious calumnies were put in circulation against those of the "religion." To escape the pursuit of the spies by whom on all sides they were beset, the Reformed sought for retreats yet more secret in which to assemble - the darkest alley in city, the gloomiest recess of forest, the most savage ravine of wilderness. "Ah!" said their enemies, "they seek the darkness to veil their monstrous and unnatural wickedness from the light of heaven and from the eyes of men." It was the story of pagan times over again. The long-buried calumny of the early persecutor was raked up from old histories, and flung at the French Protestant. Even the Cardinal of Lorraine was mean enough to have recourse to these arts. His own unchaste life was no secret, yet he had the effrontery to advance, not insinuations merely, but open charges against ladies of illustrious rank, and of still more illustrious virtue - ladies whose lives were a rebuke of the profligacy with which his lawn was be-spotted and bemired. The cardinal knew how pure was the virtue which he labored to blacken. Not so the populace. They believed these men and women to be the atheists and monsters which they had been painted as being, and they thought that in massacring and exterminating them, they were cleansing France from what was at once a defilement of the earth, and a provocation of Heaven.

Avarice came to the aid of bigotry. Not a few of the Reformed were persons of position and property, and in their case confiscation of goods was added to loss of life. Their persecutors shared their

¹¹Felice, volume 1, p. 91.

estates among them, deeming them doubtless a lawful prize for their orthodox zeal; and thus the purification of the kingdom, and the enriching of the court and its myrmidons, went on by equal stages. The history of these manors and lands cannot in every case be traced, but it is known that many of them remained in possession of the families which now appropriated them till the great day of reckoning in 1789, and then the wealth that had been got by confiscation and injustice went as it had come. Indeed, in perusing the era of Francis II we seem to be reading beforehand the history of the times of the Great Revolution. The names of persons and parties changed, the same harrowing tale will suit both periods. The machinery of injustice and oppression, first constructed by the Guises, was a second time set a-working under Danton and Robespierre. Again is seen a Reign of Terror; again are crowds of spies; again are numberless denunciations, with all their terrible accompaniments—prison cells emptied in the morning to be filled before night, tribunals condemning wholesale, the axe incessantly at work, a triumphant tyranny wielding the mob as its tool, confiscations on a vast scale, and a furious political fanaticism madly driving the nation into civil war.

It was evident that a crisis was approaching. The king was a captive in the hands of the Guises. The laws were not administered—wrong and outrage stalked defiantly through the kingdom; and to complain was to draw upon oneself the punishment which ought to have visited the acts of which one complained. None were safe except the more bigoted of the Roman Catholics, and the rabble of the great cities, the pliant tools of the oppressor. Men began to ask one another, “What right have these strangers from Lorraine to keep the king a captive, and to treat France like a conquered country? Let us hurl the usurpers from power, and restore the government to its legitimate channels.” This led to what has been called the “Conspiracy of Amboise.”

This movement, in its first origin, was entirely political. It was no more formed in the interest of the Reformed religion than of the Popish faith. It was devised in the interests of France, the emancipation of which from a tyrannous usurpation was its sole aim. It was promoted by both Roman Catholics and Protestants, because both were smarting from the oppression of the Guises. The

testimony of Davila, which is beyond suspicion, is full to this effect, that the plot was not for the overthrow of the royal house, but for the liberation of the king and the authority of the laws.¹² The judgment of the German and Swiss pastors was asked touching the lawfulness of the enterprise. Calvin gave his voice against it, foreseeing “that the Reformation might lose, even if victorious, by becoming in France a military and political party.”¹³ Nevertheless, the majority of the pastors approved the project, provided a prince of the blood were willing to take the lead, and that a majority of the estates of the nation gave it their sanction. Admiral de Coligny stood aloof from it.

[543] It was resolved to proceed in the attempt. The first question was, Who should be placed at the head of the movement? The King of Navarre was the first prince of the blood; but he was too apathetic and too inconstant to bear the weight of so great an affair. His brother, the Prince of Conde, was believed to have the requisite talents, and he was accordingly chosen as the chief of the enterprise. It was judged advisable, however, that he should meanwhile keep himself out of sight, and permit Godfrey du Barry, Lord of La Renaudie, to be the ostensible leader.¹⁴ Renaudie was a Protestant gentleman of broken fortunes, but brave, energetic, and able. Entering with prodigious zeal into the affair, Renaudie, besides travelling over France, visited England,¹⁵ and by his activity and organizing skill, raised a little army of 400 horse and a body of foot, and enlisted not fewer than 200 Protestant gentlemen in the business. The confederates met at Nantes, and the 10th of March, 1560, was chosen as the day to begin the execution of their project. On that day they were to march to the Castle of Blois, where the king was then residing, and posting their soldiers in the woods around the castle, an unarmed deputation was to crave an audience of the king, and present, on being admitted into the presence, two requests, one for liberty of worship, and the other for the dismissal of the Guises. If these demands were rejected, as they anticipated they would be, they would give the signal, their

¹²Davila, livr. 1, p. 33. With Davila on this point agree Pasquier, De Thou, and D’Aubigne.

¹³Bungener, Calvin’s Life, etc., p. 304; Calvin’s Letters, 4. 107.

¹⁴Davila, livr. 1, p. 35.

¹⁵Ibid., livr. 1, p. 36. Laval, volume 1, p. 223.

men-at-arms would rush in, they would arrest the Guises, and place the Prince of Conde at the head of the government. The confederates had taken an oath to hold inviolable the person of the king. The secret, though entrusted to thousands, was religiously kept till it was on the very eve of execution. A timorous Protestant, M. d'Avenelles, an attorney in Paris, revealed it to the court just at the last moment.¹⁶

The Guises, having come to the knowledge of the plot, removed to the stronger Castle of Amboise, carrying the king thither also. This castle stood upon a lofty rock, which was washed by the broad stream of the Loire. The insurgents, though disconcerted by the betrayal of their enterprise, did not abandon it, nevertheless they postponed the day of execution from the 10th to the 16th of March.

Renaudie was to arrive in the neighborhood of Amboise on the eve of the appointed day. Next morning he was to send his troops into the town, in small bodies, so as not to attract notice; he himself was to enter at noon. One party of the soldiers were to seize the gates of the citadel, and arrest the duke and the cardinal; this done, they were to hoist a signal on the top of the tower, and the men-at-arms, hidden in the neighboring woods, would rush in and complete the revolution.¹⁷

But what of the king while these strange events were in progress? Glimpses of his true condition, which was more that of a captive than a monarch, at times dawned upon him. One day, bursting into tears, he said to his wife's uncles, "What have I done to my people that they hate me so? I would like to hear their complaints and their reasons I hear it said that people are against you only. I wish you could be away from here for a time, that we might see whether it is you or I that they are against." The men to whom he had made this touching appeal gruffly replied, "Do you then wish that the Bourbon should triumph over the Valois? Should we do as you desire, your house would speedily be rooted out."¹⁸

We return to affairs outside the walls of Amboise. Among those to whom the secret was entrusted was a Captain Lignieres, who repairing to Amboise revealed the whole matter to the Queen-mother.

¹⁶Laval, volume 1, p. 222.

¹⁷Laval, volume 1, p. 226.

¹⁸Guizot, volume 3, pp. 302,303.

He made known the names of the confederates, the inns at which they were to lodge, the roads by which they were to march on Amboise-in short, the whole plan of the assault. The Guises instantly took their measures for the security of the town. They changed the king's guards, built up the gate of the city-wall, and dispatched troops to occupy the neighboring towns. Renaudie, surrounded as he was advancing by forced marches to Amboise, fell, fighting bravely, while his followers were cut in pieces, or taken prisoners. Another body of troops under Baron de Castelnau was overpowered, and their leader, deeming farther resistance useless, surrendered on a written promise that his own life and that of his soldiers should be spared.

The insurgents were now in the power of the Guises, and their revenge was in proportion to their former terror, and that had been great. The market-place of the town of Amboise was covered with scaffolds. Fast as the axe and the gallows could devour one batch of victims, another batch was brought out to be dispatched in like manner. Crowding the windows of the palace were the Cardinal of Lorraine and the duke, radiant with victory; the ladies of the court, including the Scottish Mary Stuart, in their gayest attire; the young king and his lords, all feasting their eyes on the terrible scenes which were being enacted in front of the palace. The blood of those that fell by the axe overflowed the scaffolds, filled the kennels, and poured in rushing torrents to the Loire. ¹⁹ That generous blood, now shed like water, would in after-years have enriched France with chivalry and virtue. Not fewer than 1,200 persons perished at this time. Four dismal weeks these tragedies were continued. At last the executioners grew weary, and bethought them of a more summary way of dispatching their victims. They tied their hands and feet, and flung them into the Loire. The stream went on its way with its ghastly freight, and as it rolled past corn-field and vineyard, village and city, it carried to Tours and Nantes, and other towns, the first horrifying news of the awful tragedies proceeding at Amboise. Castelnau and his companions, despite the promise on which they had surrendered, shared the fate of the other prisoners. One of the gentlemen of his company, before bowing his head to the axe,

¹⁹Laval, volume 1, p. 234. Davila, lib. 1, p. 40.

dipped his hands in the blood of his already butchered comrades, and holding them up to heaven, exclaimed, "Lord, behold the blood of thy children unjustly slain; thou wilt avenge it."²⁰ That appeal went up to the bar of the great Judge; but the answer stood over for 230 years. With the Revolution of 1789, came Carrier of Nantes, a worthy successor of the Cardinal of Lorraine, and then it was seen that the cry had been heard at the great bar to which it ascended. On the banks of the same river did this man enact, in the name of liberty, the same horrible butcheries which the cardinal had perpetrated in the name of religion. A second time did the Loire roll onward a river of blood, bearing on its bosom a ghastly burden of corpses. When we look down on France in 1560, and see her rivers reddening the seas around her coasts, and when again we look down upon her in 1790, and see the same portentous spectacle renewed, we seem to hear the angel of the waters saying, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, who art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. And I heard another angel out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."²¹

The Reformation continued to advance in the face of all this violence.²² "There were many even among the prelates," Davila tells us, "that inclined to Calvin's doctrine."²³ The same year that witnessed the bloody tragedy we have just recorded, witnessed also the establishment of the public celebration of Protestant worship in France. Up till this time the Reformed had held their assemblies for worship in secret; they met over-night, and in lonely and hidden places; but now the very increase of their numbers forced them into the light of day. When whole cities, and well-nigh entire provinces, had embraced the Reformation, it was no longer possible for the confessors of Protestant truth to bury themselves in dens and forests. Why should the population of a whole town go out of its gates to worship? why not assemble in its own cathedrals, seeing in many places there were not now Papists to occupy them? The

²⁰Beza, livr. 3, pp. 162-166. Laval, volume 1, p. 236.

²¹Revelation 16.

²²Beza, livr. 3, pp. 183,184.

²³Davila, livr. 2, pp. 47,48.

very calumnies which their enemies invented and circulated against them compelled them to this course. They would worship in open day, and with open doors, and see who should dare accuse them of seeking occasion for unnatural and abominable crimes. But this courageous course on the part of the Reformed stung the Guises to madness, and their measures became still more violent. They got together bands of ruffians, and sent them into the provinces where the Calvinists abounded, with a commission to slay and burn at their pleasure. The city of Tours was almost entirely Protestant. So, too, were Valence and Romans. The latter towns were surprised, the principal inhabitants hanged, and the Protestant pastors beheaded with a label on their breasts, "These are the chiefs of the rebels."²⁴ These barbarities, as might have been expected, provoked reprisals. Some of the less discreet of the Protestants made incursions, at the head of armed bands, into Provence and Dauphine. Entering the cathedrals, and turning the images and priests to the door, they celebrated Protestant worship in them, sword in hand; and when they took their departure, they carried with them the gold and silver utensils which had been used in the Romish service.

Such was now the unhappy condition of France. The laws were no longer administered. The land, scoured by armed bands, was full of violence and terror, of rapine and blood. The anarchy was complete; the cup of the ruler's oppression, and the people's suffering, was full and running over.

[545] The Guises, intent on profiting to the utmost from the suppression of the "Conspiracy of Amboise," pushed hard to crush their rivals before they had time to rally, or set on foot a second and, it might be, more formidable insurrection. In order to this, they resolved on two measures—first, to dispatch the Prince of Conde, the head of the Protestant party; and, secondly, to compel every man and woman in the kingdom to abjure Protestantism. In prosecution of the first, having lured the prince to Orleans, they placed him under arrest, and brought him to trial for complicity in the Amboise Conspiracy. As a matter of course he was condemned, and the Guises were now importuning the king to sign the death-warrant and have him executed. The moment Conde's head had fallen on the scaffold,

²⁴Beza, livr. 3, pp. 220-222.

they would put in force the second measure—the abjuration, namely. A form of abjuration was already drawn up, and it was resolved that on Christmas Day the king should present it to all the princes and officers of the court for their signature; that the queen, in like manner, should present it to all her ladies and maids of honour; the chancellor to all the deputies of Parliament and judges; the governors of provinces to all the gentry; the cures to all their parishioners; and the heads of families to all their dependents. The alternative of refusing to subscribe the abjuration oath was to be immediate execution. The cardinal, who loved to mingle a little grim pleasantry with his bloody work, called this cunning device of his “the Huguenot’s rat-trap.”²⁵

All was prospering according to the wish of the government. The scaffold was already erected on which Conde was to die. The executioner had been summoned, and was even now in Orleans. The abjuration formula was ready to be presented to all ranks and every individual the moment the prince had breathed his last; the year would not close without seeing France covered with apostasies or with martyrdoms. Verily, it seemed as if the grave of the French Reformation were dug.

When all was lost, as it appeared, an unseen finger touched this complicated web, woven with equal cruelty and cunning, and in an instant its threads were rent—the snare was broken. The king was smitten with a sudden malady in the head, which defied the skill of all his physicians. The Guises were thrown into great alarm by the illness of the king. “Surely,” said the duke to the physicians, “your art can save one who is only fit the flower of his age.” And when told that the royal patient would not live till Easter, he stormed exceedingly, and accused the physicians of killing the king, and of having taken the money of the heretics for murdering him. His brother, the cardinal, betook him to the saints of Paradise. He ordered prayers and processions for his recovery. But, despite the prayers that ascended in the temples—despite the images and relics that were carried in solemn procession through the streets—the king rapidly sank, and before Conde’s death-warrant could be signed, or

²⁵Laval, volume 1, pp. 318,319.

the abjuration test presented for subscription, Francis II had breathed his last. ²⁶

The king died (5th December, 1560) at the age of seventeen, after a reign of only as many months. The courtiers were too busy making suit for their places, or providing for their safety, to care for the lifeless body of the king. It lay neglected on the bed on which he had expired. Yesterday they had cringed and bowed before him, today he was nothing more to them than so much carrion. A few days thereafter we see a funeral procession issuing from the gates of Orleans, and proceeding along the road to the royal vaults at St. Denis. But what a poor show! What a meager following!

910 We see none of the usual pageantry of grief-no heralds; no nodding plumes, no grandees of State in robes of mourning; we hear no boom of cannon, no toiling of passing bell-in short, nothing to tell us that it is a king who is being borne to the tomb. A blind bishop and two aged domestics make up the entire train behind the funeral car. ²⁷ It was in this fashion that Francis II was carried to his grave.

²⁶Beza, livr. 3, p. 249.

²⁷Laval, volume 1, p. 338.

Chapter 6 : Charles IX-The Triumvirate-Colloquy [546] at Poissy

Mary Stuart-Charles IX-Catherine de Medici Regent-Meeting of States-General-Chancellor de l'Hopital on Toleration-Speeches of the Deputies-The Church's Advocate calls for the Sword-Sermons at Fontainebleau-The Triumvirate-Debt of France-Colloquy at Poissy-Roman Members-Protestant Deputies-Beza-His Appearance-Points of Difference-Commotion in the Conference- Cardinal of Lorraine's Oration-End of Colloquy-Lesson-Impulse to Protestantism- Preaching of Pierre Viret-Dogmas and their Symbols-Huguenot Iconoclasts

Picture: Louis de Bourbon: Prince of Conde.

Picture: Beza Presenting the Confession of the French Protestant Church to the King at the Colloquy of Poissy.

Picture: View of Metz.

We have seen Francis II carried to the tomb with no more pomp or decency than if, instead of the obsequies of a king, it had been the funeral of a pauper. There followed a sudden shifting of the scenes at court. The day of splendor that seemed to be opening to Mary Stuart was suddenly overcast. From the throne of France she returned to her native country, carrying with her to the Scottish shore her peerless beauty, her almost unrivalled power of dissembling, and her hereditary and deeply cherished hatred of the Reformation. To her uncles, the Guises, the death of the king brought a not less sad reverse of fortune. Though they still retained their offices and dignities, they were no longer the uncontrolled masters of the State, as when Francis occupied the throne and their niece sat by his side. But in the room of the Guises there stood up one not less the enemy of the Gospel, and whose rule was not less prolific of woes to France.

Catherine de Medici was now supreme in the government; her day had at last arrived. If her measures were less precipitate, and her violence less open, her craft was deeper than that of the Guises,

and her stroke, if longer delayed, was the more deadly when it fell. Her son, Charles IX, who now occupied the throne, was a lad of only nine and a half years; and, as might have been expected in the case of such a mother and such a son, Charles wore the crown, but Catherine governed the kingdom. The sudden demise of Francis had opened the prison doors to Conde. Snatching him from a scaffold, if, restored him to liberty. As a prince of the blood, the Regency of France, during the minority of Charles, by right belonged to him; but Catherine boldly put him aside, and made herself be installed in that high office. In this act she gave a taste of the rigor with which she meant to rule. Still she did not proceed in too great haste. Her caution, which was great, served as a bridle to her ambition, and the Huguenots,¹ as they began to be called, had now a breathing-space.

The Queen-mother fortified herself on the side of the Guises by recalling the Constable Montmorency, and installing him in all his dignities and offices. The next event of importance was the meeting of the States-General at Orleans (December 13th, 1560), a few days after Charles IX had ascended the throne. The assembly was presided over by the Chancellor Michel de l'Hopital, a man learned in the law, revered on the judgment-seat for the wisdom and equity of his decisions, and tolerant beyond the measure of his times. The words, few but weighty, with which he opened the proceedings, implied a great deal more than they expressed. The Church, he said, that great fountain of health or of disease to a nation, had become corrupt. Reformation was needed. "Adorn yourselves," said he to the clergy, "but let it be with virtues and morality. Attack your foes, by all means, but let it be with the weapons of charity, prayer,

¹The origin of this word has been much discussed and variously determined. In both France and Geneva the Protestants were called Huguenots. Laval tells us that each city in France had a word to denominate a bugbear, or hobgoblin. At Tours they had their King Hugo, who used, they said, every night to ride through the uninhabited places within and without the walls, and carry off those he met. And as the Protestants of Tours used to resort to these places at night to hold their meetings, they were here first of all in France called Huguenots. Beza, De Thou, and Pasquier agree in this etymology of the word. Others, and with more probability, derive it from the German word Eidgenossen, which the French corrupt into Eignots, and which signifies sworn confederates. It strengthens this supposition that the term was first of all applied to the sworn confederates of liberty in Geneva. Of this opinion are Maimbourg and Voltaire.

and persuasion.”² Enlightened counsels these, which needed only wisdom in those to whom they were addressed, to work the cure of many of the evils which afflicted France.

The city of Bordeaux had sent an orator to the Parliament. Lying remote from the court, and not domineered over by the Popish rabble as Paris was, Bordeaux breathed a spirit more friendly to liberty and the Reformation than did the capital, and its deputy was careful to express the sentiments entertained by those who had commissioned him to represent them in this great assembly of the nation. “Three great vices,” he said, “disfigure the clergy-ignorance, avarice, and luxury;” and after dwelling at some length on each, he concluded by saying that if the ministers of religion would undertake to reform themselves, he would undertake to reform the nation. The spokesman of the nobility, the Lord of Rochefort, next rose to express the sentiments of the body he represented. His words were not more palatable to the clergy than had been those of the speakers who preceded him. He complained that the course of justice was obstructed by the interference of the priests. He did not know which was the greater scandal, or the source of greater misery to the country - the prodigious wealth of the clergy, or the astounding ignorance of their flocks. And he concluded by demanding “churches” for the “gentlemen of the religion.” [547]

Thus all the lay speakers in the States-General united as one man in arraigning the Roman Church as pre-eminently the source of the many evils which afflicted France. They all with one voice demanded that the clergy should reform their doctrine, amend their lives, moderate the magnificence and luxury in which they lived, and laying aside their arrogance and bigotry, should labor to instruct their flocks, and to reclaim those who had gone astray, not with the knife and the faggot, but with the weapons of truth and reason.

It was now the turn of the clergy to be heard through the oracle whom they had selected-Jean Quintin, Professor of Canon Law. He had undertaken the cause of an institution laden with abuses, and now arraigned at the bar of the nation, as the cause of the manifold distractions and oppressions under which the country groaned. He took the responsibility lightly. He began by expressing his regret-a [548]

²See Laval, for report of the speeches in the States-General (volume 1, pp. 384-424).

regret, we doubt not, perfectly sincere -that a most unwonted and dangerous innovation had been practiced in permitting the nobility and commons to address the assembly. The Church, he said, was the mouth of the States-General; and had that mouth, and no other, been permitted to address them, they would have been spared the pain of listening to so many hard things of the Church, and so many smooth things of heresy. The heretics, said the orator, had no other Gospel than revolution; and this pestiferous Gospel admitted of no remedy but the sword. Were not all the men who had embraced this Gospel under the excommunication of the Church? and for what end had the sword been put into the hand of the king, if not to execute the deserved vengeance to which "the Church" had adjudged those who had so fatally strayed? And, turning to the young king, he told him that his first and most sacred duty, as a magistrate, was to defend the Church, and to root out her enemies. Coligny, who sat facing the speaker, started to his feet on hearing this atrocious proposal, which doomed to extermination a third of the population of France. He demanded an apology from the speaker. Quintin could doubtless plead the authority of canon law, and many a melancholy precedent to boot, for what he had said; but he had overshot the mark. He found no response in that assembly; even Catherine de Medici felt the speech to be an imprudent one, and the priests, whatever their secret wishes, durst not openly support their orator; and so Quintin was compelled to apologize. Sickening under his mortification, he died three days thereafter.

Something had been gained by the meeting of the States-General. The priest-party had suffered a rebuff; Catherine de Medici had felt the pulse of the nation, and was more convinced than ever that the course she had resolved to steer was the wise one. Her supreme object was power; and she would best attain it by being on good terms with both parties. She opened the halls of Fontainebleau to the Protestant preachers, and she and her maids of honour were to be seen at times waiting with edifying seriousness upon the sermons of the Reformed pastors. So far did the Queen Regent carry her favors to the Protestants, that the Roman Catholics took alarm, fearing that she had gone over, not in seeming only, but in reality, to the "religion." There was little cause for their alarm. Catherine had no intention of becoming a Huguenot. She was merely holding the

balance between the two parties-making each weaken the other-judging this to be the most effectual way of strengthening herself.

These favors to the Protestants roused the slumbering zeal of the Romanists. Now arose the Triumvirate. The party so named, which makes some figure in the history of the times, was formed for the defense of the old religion, its members being the Duke of Guise, the Constable Montmorency, and the Marshal St. Andre. These three men had little in common. The bond which held them together was hatred of the new faith, the triumph of which, they foresaw, would strip them of their influence and possessions. There had been a prodigal waste of the public money, and a large confiscation of the estates of the Protestants under the two former reigns; these three men had carried off the lion's share of the spoil; and should Protestantism win the day, they would, in modern phrase, have to recoup, and this touched at once their honour and their purses. As regards the Guises, their whole influence hung upon the Roman Church; her destruction, therefore, would be their destruction. As respects the Constable Montmorency, he prided himself on being the first Christian in France. He was descended in a direct line from St. Louis; and a birth so illustrious-not to speak of the fair fame of his saintly ancestors- imposed upon him the duty of defending the old faith, or if that were impossible, of perishing with it. He was incapable of defending it by argument; but he had a sword, and it would ill become him to let it rust in its scabbard, when the Church needed its service. As regards Marshal St. Andre, the least influential member of the Triumvirate, he was a noted gourmand, a veritable Lucullus, to whom there was nothing in life half so good as a well-furnished table. Marshal St. Andre foresaw that should Roman Catholicism go down in France, he would not only lose his Church-he would lose his dinner. The first might be borne, but the latter was not to be thought of. These men had formerly been at deadly feud among themselves; but now they resolved to sacrifice their differences upon the altar of their country, and to unite together in this holy league for the defense of their religion and their estates. The Triumvirate will again come before us: it has left its mark on the history of France.

The States-General again assembled in the end of 1561. The first thing that came under its notice was the financial state of the

kingdom. The national debt amounted to £48,000,000, and bade fair greatly to exceed that sum in a short time, for the expenditure was a long way in excess of the revenue. What was to be done? A proposal was made that anticipated the measure which was carried out in France in 1789, and adopted long after that date in all the countries in which Roman Catholicism is the established religion. The speaker who made the proposal in question, laid down the principle that the ecclesiastical property belongs to the nation; that the clergy are merely its administrators; and founding on that principle, he proposed that the estates of the Church should be put up for sale, and the proceeds divided as follows:-one-third to go to the support of the Church; one-third to the payment of the national debt; and one-third to the revenues of the crown, to be applied, of course, to national uses. In this way it was hoped the financial difficulty would be got over; but the great difficulty- the religious one-lay behind; how was it to be got over?

It was agreed that a Council should be summoned; but it augured ill for the era of peace it was to inaugurate, that men disputed regarding its name before it had assembled. The priests strongly objected to its being called a Council. That would imply that the Protestant pastors were Christian ministers as well as themselves, entitled to meet them on terms of equality, and that the Reformed bodies were part of the Church as well as the Roman Catholics. The difficulty was got over by the device of styling the approaching assembly a Colloquy. The two parties had a different ideal before their mind. That of the Romanists was, that the Protestants came to the bar to plead, and to have their cause judged by the Church. That of the Protestants was, that the two parties were to debate on equal terms, that the Bible should be the supreme standard, and that the State's authorities should decide without appeal. Knox, in Scotland, drew the line more justly; framing his creed from the Bible, he presented it to the Parliament, just a year before this, and asked the authorities to judge of it, but only for themselves, in order to the withdrawal from the Roman hierarchy of that secular jurisdiction in which it was vested, and which it was exercising for the hindrance of the evangel, and for the destruction of its disciples. The Protestant Church of France had no Knox.

On September 9th, 1561, this Colloquy-for we must not call it a Council -assembled at Poissy. On this little town, which lay a few leagues to the west of Paris, were the eyes of Christendom for the moment fixed. Will the conference now assembling there unite the two religions, and give peace to France? This issue was as earnestly desired by the Protestant States of Germany and England, as it was dreaded by the Pope and the King of Spain.

Nothing was wanting which pomp could give to make the conference a success. The hall in which it was held was the refectory of the convent at Poissy. There was set a throne, and on that throne sat the youthful sovereign of France, Charles IX. Right and left of him were ranged the princes and princesses of the blood, the great ministers of the crown, and the high lords of the court.³ Along two sides of the hall ran a row of benches, and on these sat the cardinals in their scarlet robes. On the seats below them were a crowd of bishops, priests, and doctors. The assembly was a brilliant one. Wherever the eye turned, it fell upon the splendor of official robes, upon the brilliance of rank, upon stars, crosses, and other insignia of academic distinction or of military achievement. It lacked the moral majesty, however, which a great purpose, earnestly and sincerely entertained, only can give. No affluence of embroidered and jeweled attire can compensate for the absence of a great moral end.

The king rose and said a few words. Much could not be looked for from a lad of only ten years. The chancellor, Michel de 'Hopital, followed in a long speech, abounding in the most liberal and noble sentiments; and had the members of the assembly opened their ears to these wise counsels, they would have guided its deliberations to a worthy issue, and made the future of France a happy and glorious one. "Let us not pre-judge the cause we are met to discuss," said in effect the chancellor, "let us receive these men as brethren-they are Christians as well as ourselves; let us not waste time in subtleties, but with all humility proceed to the Reformation of the doctrine of the Church, taking the Bible as the arbiter of all our differences." L'Hopital aimed at striking the key-note of the discussions; but so little were his words in harmony with the sentiments of those to whom they were addressed, that the speech very nearly broke up the

³Laval, volume 1, p. 482.

[550] conference before it had well begun. It called for Reform according to the Bible. “The Bible is enough,” said he; “to this, as to the true rule, we must appeal for the decision of the doctrine. Neither must we be so averse to the Reformed, for they are our brethren, regenerated by the same baptism, and worshipping the same Christ as we do.”⁴ Straightway there arose a great commotion among the cardinals and bishops; angry words and violent gestures bespoke the irritation of their minds; but the firmness of the chancellor succeeded in calming the storm, and the business was proceeded with.

The Protestant deputies had not yet been introduced to the conference. This showed that here all did not meet on equal terms. But now, the Papal members having taken their seats, and the preliminary speeches being ended, there was no excuse for longer delaying the admission of the Protestants. The doors were thrown open, and Theodore Beza, followed by ten Protestant pastors and twenty-two lay deputies, entered the hall. There was a general desire that Calvin, then in the zenith of his fame, should have taken part in the discussions. The occasion was not unworthy of him, and Catherine de Medici had invited him by letter; but the magistrates of Geneva, unable to obtain hostages of high rank as pledges of his safety, refused to let him come, and Theodore Beza was sent in his room. No better substitute could have been found for the illustrious chief of the Reformation than his distinguished disciple and fellow-laborer. Beza was a native of Burgundy, of noble birth; learned, eloquent, courtly, and of a dignified presence. We possess a sketch of the personal appearance of this remarkable man by the traveller Fynes Moryson, who chanced to pass through Geneva in the end of that century. “Here,” says he, “I had great contentment to speak and converse with the reverend Father Theodore Beza, who was of stature something tall and corpulent, or big-boned, and had a long thick beard as white as snow. He had a grave senator’s countenance, and was broad-faced, but not fat, and in general, by his comely person, sweet affability, and gravity, he would have extorted reverence from those that least loved him.”⁵

⁴Ibid. volume 1, pp. 484,485.

⁵Fynes Moryson, *Itinerary*, part 1, p. 181: Lond., 1617.

The Reformed pastors entered, gravely and simply attired. They wore the usual habits of the Geneva Church, which offered a striking contrast to the State robes and clerical vestments in which courtier and cardinal sat arrayed. Unawed by the blaze of stars, crosses, and various insignia of rank and office which met their gaze, the deputies bore themselves with a calm dignity, as men who had come to plead a great cause before a great assembly. They essayed to pass the barrier, and mingle on equal terms with those with whom they were to confer. But, no; their place was outside. The Huguenot pastor could not sit side by side with the Roman bishop. The Reformation must not come nigh the throne of Charles IX and the hierarchy of the Church. It must be made appear as if it stood at the bar to be judged. The pastors, though they saw, were too magnanimous to complain of this studied affront; nor did they refuse on that account to plead a cause which did not rest on such supports as lofty looks and gorgeous robes.

The moral majesty of Beza asserted its supremacy, and carried it over all the mock magnificence of the men who said to him, "Stand afar off, we are holier than thou." Immediately on entering he fell on his knees, the other deputies kneeling around him, and in the presence of the assembly, which remained mute and awed, he offered a short but most impressive prayer that Divine assistance might be vouchsafed in the discussions now to commence, and that these discussions might be guided to an issue profitable to the Church of God. Then rising up he made obeisance to the young monarch, thanking him for this opportunity of defending the Reformation; and next, turning to the prelates, he besought them to seek only to arrive at truth. Having thus introduced himself, with a modest yet dignified courteousness, well fitted to disarm prejudice against himself and his cause, he proceeded to unfold the leading doctrines of the Reformation. He took care to dwell on the spirit of loyalty that animated its disciples, well knowing that the Romanists charged it with being the enemy of princes; he touched feelingly on the rigors to which his co-religionists had been subjected, though no fault had been found in them, save in the matters of their God; and then launching out on the great question which had brought the conference together, he proceeded with much clearness and beauty of statement, and also with great depth of argument, to discuss the

great outstanding points between the two Churches. The speech took the Roman portion of the assembly by surprise. Such erudition and eloquence they had not expected to find in the advocates of the Reform; they were not quite the contemptible opponents they had expected to meet, and they felt that they would do well to look to their own armor. Beza, having ended, presented on bended knee a copy of the Confession of the French Protestant Church to the king.

[551] But the orator had not been permitted to pursue uninterruptedly his argument to its close. In dealing with the controverted points, Beza had occasion to touch on the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It was the center of the controversy. The doctrine he maintained on this head was, in brief, that Christ is spiritually present in the Sacrament, and spiritually partaken of by the faith of the recipient; but that his body is not in the elements, but in heaven. If the modest proposal of the Chancellor de l'Hopital, that the Bible should rule in the discussion, had raised a commotion, the words of Beza, asserting the Protestant doctrine on the great point at issue between Rome and the Reformation, evoked quite a storm. First, murmurs were heard; these speedily grew into a tempest of voices. "He has spoken blasphemy!" cried some. Cardinal Tournon demanded, anger almost choking his utterance, that the king should instantly silence Beza, and expel from France men whose very presence was polluting its soil and imperilling the faith of the "most Christian king." All eyes were turned upon Catherine de Medici. She sat unmoved amid the clamor that surrounded her. Her son, Charles IX, was equally imperturbable. The ruse of the Roman bishops had failed - for nothing else than a ruse could it be, if the Romanists did not expect the Protestant deputies quietly and without striking a blow to surrender their whole cause to Rome-and the assembly by-and-by subsiding into calm, Beza went on with his speech, which he now pursued without interruption to its close.

The feeling among the bishops was that of discomfiture, though they strove to hide it under an air of affected contempt. Beza had displayed an argumentative power, and a range of learning and eloquence, which convinced them that they had found in him a more formidable opponent than they expected to encounter. They regretted that the conference had ever met; they dreaded, above all things, the effect which the reasonings of Beza might have on the mind of the

king. "Would to God," said the Cardinal of Lorraine, "that Beza had been dumb, or we deaf." But regrets were vain. The conference had met, Beza had spoken, and there was but one course-Beza must be answered. They promised a refutation of all he had advanced, in a few days.

The onerous task was committed to the hands of the Cardinal of Lorraine. The choice was a happy one. The cardinal was not lacking in ingenuity; he was, moreover, possessed of some little learning, and a master in address. Claude d'Espenee, accounted one of the most learned of their doctors, was appointed to assist him in the way of collecting materials for his answer. On the 16th of September the Colloquy again met, and the cardinal stood forth before the assembly and delivered an eloquent oration. He confined himself to two points-the Church and the Sacrament. "The Church," he said, "was infallibly guarded from error by the special promise of Christ. True," he said, glancing at the Protestant members of the Colloquy, "individual Christians might err and fall out of the communion of the Church, but the Church herself cannot err, and when any of her children wander they ought to submit themselves to the Pontiff, who cannot fail to bring them back to the right path, and never can lose it himself." In proof of this indefectibility of the Church, the cardinal cast himself upon history, expatiating, as is the wont of Romish controversialists, upon her antiquity and her advance, *pari passu*, with the ages in power and splendor. He painted her as surviving all changes, withstanding the shock of all revolutions, outlasting dynasties and nations, triumphing over all her enemies, remaining unbroken by divisions within, unsubdued by violence without, and apparently as imperishable as the throne of her Divine Founder. So spoke the cardinal. The prestige that encompasses Rome has dazzled others besides Romanists, and we may be sure the picture, in the hands of the cardinal, would lose none of its attractions and illusions. The second point, the Sacrament, did not admit of the same dramatic handling, and the cardinal contented himself with a summary of the usual arguments of his Church in favor of transubstantiation. The orator had not disappointed the expectations formed of him; even a less able speech would have been listened to with applause by all audience so partial; but the cheers that greeted Lorraine when he had ended were deafening. "He has refuted, nay, extinguished Beza,"

shouted a dozen voices. Gathering round the king, "That, sire," said they, "is the true faith, which has been handed down from Clovis; abide in it."

When the noise had a little subsided, Beza rose and requested permission to reply on the spot. This renewed the confusion. "The deputies had but one course," insisted the prelates, "they ought to confess that they were vanquished; and, if they refused, they must be compelled, or banished the kingdom." But the hour was late; the lay members of the council were in favor of hearing Beza, and the bishops, being resolved at all hazards that he should not be heard, broke up the assembly. This may be said to have been the end of the conferences; for though the sittings were continued, they were held in a small chamber belonging to the prior; the king was not permitted to come any more to them; the lay deputies were also excluded; and the debates degenerated into mere devices on the part of the Romanist clergy to entrap the Protestants into signing articles craftily drafted and embodying the leading tenets of the Roman creed. Failing in this, the Cardinal of Lorraine attempted a characteristic ruse. He wrote to the Governor of Metz, desiring him to send to him a few divines of the Augsburg Confession, "holding their opinions with great obstinacy," his design being to set them a-wrangling with the Calvinists on the points of difference. Arriving at Paris, one of them died of the plague, and the rest could not be presented in public. The cardinal consequently was left to manage his little affair himself as best he could. "Do you," said he to Beza, "like the Lutherans of Germany, admit consubstantiation?" "And do you," rejoined Beza, "like them, deny transubstantiation?" The cardinal thought to create a little bad blood between the Protestants of Germany and the Protestants of France, and so deprive the latter of the assistance which he feared might be sent them from their co-religionists of the Fatherland. But his policy of "divide and conquer" did not prosper. ⁶

It was clear that no fair discussion, and no honest adjustment of the controversy on the basis of truth, had from the first been intended.

⁶See very lengthened accounts of the debates and whole proceedings of this Conference in Beza's *Histoire des Eglises Reformees au Royaume de France*, tom. 1, pp. 308-390; Lille, 1841; and Laval's *History of the Reformation in France*, volume 1, pp. 482-587; Lond., 1737.

Nevertheless, the Colloquy had prompted the inquiry, "Is Romanism simply a corruption of the Gospel, or rather, has it not changed in the course of the ages into a system alien from and antagonistic to Christianity, and can there in that case be a possibility of reconciling the two faiths?" The conference bore fruit also in another direction. It set the great Chancellor de l'Hopital to work to solve the problem, how the two parties could live in one country. To unite them was impossible; to exterminate one of them-Rome's short and easy way-was abhorrent to him. There remained but one other device-namely, that each should tolerate the other. Simple as this way seems to us, to the men of the times of L'Hopital, with a few rare exceptions, it was unthought of and untried, and appeared impossible. But, soon after the breakdown of Poissy, we find the chancellor beginning to air though in ungenial times, his favorite theory-that men might be loyal subjects of the king, though not of the king's faith, and good members of the nation, though not of the nation's Church; in short, that difference of religious opinions ought not to infer exclusion from civil privileges, much less ought it to subject men to civil penalties. [554]

Another important result of the Colloquy at Poissy, was that the Reformation stood higher in public estimation. It had been allowed to justify itself on a very conspicuous stage, and all to whom prejudice had left the power of judging, were beginning to see that it was not the disloyal and immoral System its enemies had accused it of being, nor were its disciples the vicious and monstrous characters which the priests had painted them. A fresh impulse was given to the movement. Some important towns, and hundreds of villages, after the holding of the Colloquy, left the communion of Rome. Farel was told by a pastor "that 300 parishes in the Agenois had put down the mass." From all quarters came the cry, "Send us preachers!" Farel made occasional tours into his native France. There arrived from Switzerland another remarkable man to take part in the work which had received so sudden a development. In October, 1561, Pierre Viret came to Nismes. He had been waylaid on the road, and beaten almost to death, by those who guessed on what errand he was travelling; and when he appeared on the scene of his labours, "he seemed," to use his own words, "to be nothing but a dry skeleton covered with skin, who had brought his bones thither to be buried." Nevertheless, on the day after his arrival, he preached to

8,000 hearers. When he showed himself in the pulpit, many among his audience asked; “What has this poor man come to do in our country? Is he not come to die?” But when the clear, silvery tones of his voice rang out upon the ear, they forgot the meager look and diminutive figure of the man before them, and thought only of what he said. There were an unction and sweetness in his address that carried captive their hearts. All over the south of France, and more particularly in the towns of Nismes, Lyons, Montpellier, and Orthez, he preached the Gospel; and the memory of this eloquent evangelist lingers in those parts to this day. ⁷

Nor was Beza in any haste to depart, although the conferences which brought him to Paris were at an end. Catherine de Medici, on whom his learning, address, and courtly bearing had not failed to make an impression, showed him some countenance, and he preached frequently in the neighborhood of the capital. These gatherings took place outside the walls of Paris; the people, to avoid all confusions, going and returning, going and returning by several gates. In the center were the women; next came the men, massed in a broad circular column; while a line of sentinels stationed at intervals kept watch on the outside, lest the fanatical mob of Paris should throw itself upon the congregation of worshippers.

It was impossible that a great movement like this, obstructed by so many and so irritating hindrances, should pursue its course without breaking into occasional violences. In those parts of France where the whole population had passed over to Protestantism, the people took possession of the cathedrals, and, as a matter of course, they cleared out the crucifixes, images, and relics which they contained. In the eyes of the Protestants these things were the symbols of idolatry, and they felt that they had only half renounced Romanism while they retained the signs and symbols of its dogmas. They felt that they had not honestly put away the doctrine while they retained its exponent. A nation of philosophers might have been

⁷The important part played by colporteurs in the evangelization of France is attested by an edict of Francis II, 1559, in which he attributes the troubles of his kingdom to “certain preachers from Geneva,” and also to “the malicious dispersion of condemned books brought from thence, which had infected those of the populace who, through want of knowledge and judgment, were unable to discern doctrines.” (*Memoires de Conde*, tom. 1, p. 9; Londres, 1743.)

able to distinguish between the idea and its symbol, and completely to emancipate themselves from the former without destroying the latter. They might have said, These things are nothing to us but so much wood and metal; it is in the idea that the mischief lies, and we have effectually separated ourselves from it, and the daily sight of these things cannot bring it back or restore its dominancy over us. But the great mass of mankind are too little abstract to feel or reason in this way. They cannot fully emancipate themselves from the idea till its sign has been put away. The Bible has recognized this feebleness, if one may term it so, of the popular mind, when it condemned, as in the second commandment, worship by an image, as the worship of the image, and joining together the belief and the image of the false gods, stringently commanded that both should be put away. And the distinctive feeling of the masses in all revolutions, political as well as religious, has recognised this principle. Nations, in all such cases, have destroyed the symbols represented. The early Christians broke the idols and demolished the temples of paganism. In the revolution of 1789, and in every succeeding revolution in France, the populace demolished the monuments and tore down the insignia of the former regime. If this is too great a price to pay for Reformation, that is another thing; but we cannot have Reformation without it. We cannot have liberty without the loss, not of tyranny only, but its symbols also; nor the Gospel without the loss of idolatry, substance and symbol. Nor can these symbols return without the old ideas returning too. Hence Ranke tells us that the first indication of a reaction against the Reformation in Germany was "the wearing of rosaries." This may enable us to understand the ardour of the French iconoclasts of the sixteenth century. Of that ardour we select, from a multitude of illustrative incidents, the following:-On one occasion, during the first war of religion, news was brought to Conde and Coligny that the great Church of St. Croix in Orleans was being sacked. Hurrying to the spot, they found a soldier mounted on a ladder, busied in breaking an image. The prince pointed an arquebuse at him. "Menseigneur," said the Huguenot, "have patience till I have knocked down this idol, and then I will die, if you please."

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Chapter 7 : Massacre at Vassy and Commencement of the Civil Wars

Spring-time of French Protestantism-Edict of January-Toleration of Public Worship-Displeasure of the Romanists-Extermination-The Duke of Guise-Collects an Army-Massacres the Protestants of Vassy -The Duke and the Bible—He Enters Paris in Triumph-His Sword Supreme-Shall the Protestants take up Arms?-Their Justification- Massacres-Frightful State of France-More Persecuting Edicts- Charlotte Laval-Coligny sets out for the Wars

Picture: Jeanne dAlbret.

Picture: Prince of Conde Entering Orleans.

The failure of the Colloquy of Poissy was no calamity to either Protestantism or the world. Had the young Reform thrown itself into the arms of the old Papacy, it would have been strangled in the embrace. The great movement of the sixteenth century, like those of preceding ages, after illuminating the horizon for a little while, would again have faded into darkness.

By what means and by what persons the Gospel was spread in France at this era it is difficult to say. A little company of disciples would start up in this town, and in that village, and their numbers would go on increasing, till at last the mass was forsaken, and instead of the priest's chant there was heard the Huguenot's psalm. The famous potter, Palissy, has given us in his Memoirs some interesting details concerning the way in which many of these congregations arose. Some poor but honest citizen would learn the way of peace in the Bible; he would tell it to his next neighbor; that neighbor would tell it in his turn; and in a little while a small company of simple but fervent disciples would be formed, who would meet regularly at the midnight hour to pray and converse together. Ere their enemies were aware, half the town had embraced "the religion;" and then, taking courage, they would avow their faith, and hold their worship in public. As the rich verdure spreads over the earth in spring, adding

day by day a new brightness to the landscape, and mounting ever higher on the mountain's side, so, with the same silence, and the same beauty, did the new life diffuse itself throughout France. The sweetness and joy of this new creation, the inspired Idyll alone can adequately depict - "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone: the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the grape give a good smell."

Like that balmy morning, so exquisitely painted in these words, that broke on the heathen world after the pagan night, so was the morning that was now opening on France. Let the words of an eye-witness bear testimony: - "The progress made by us was such," says Palissy, "that in the course of a few years, by the time that our enemies rose up to pillage and persecute us, lewd plays, dances, ballads, gourmandisings, and superfluties of dress and head-gear had almost entirely ceased. Scarcely was there any more bad language to be heard on any side, nor were there any more crimes and scandals. Law-suits greatly diminished..Indeed, the Religion made such progress, that even the magistrates began to prohibit things that had grown up under their authority. Thus they forbade innkeepers to permit gambling or dissipation to be carried on within their premises, to the enticement of men away from their own homes and families.

"In those days might be seen on Sundays bands of workpeople walking abroad in the meadows, in the groves, in the fields, singing psalms and spiritual songs, and reading to and instructing one another. They might also be seen girls and maidens seated in groups in the gardens and pleasant places, singing songs or sacred themes; or boys, accompanied by their teachers, the effects of whose instructions had already been so salutary that those young persons not only exhibited a manly bearing, but a manful steadfastness of conduct. Indeed, these various influences, working one with another, had already effected so much good that not only had the habits and modes of life of the people been reformed, but their very countenances seemed to be changed and improved." ¹

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¹(Ewvres Completes de Bernard Palissy, par Paul-Antoine, Recepte Veritable, p. 108; Paris, 1844.

On the 17th of January, 1562, an Assembly of Notables was convened at St. Germain.² This gave the Chancellor de l'Hopital another opportunity of ventilating his great idea of toleration, so new to the men of that age. If, said the chancellor, we cannot unite the two creeds, does it therefore follow that the adherents of the one must exterminate those of the other? May not both live together on terms of mutual forbearance? An excommunicated man does not cease to be a citizen. The chancellor, unhappily, was not able to persuade the Assembly to adopt his wise principle; but though it did not go all lengths with L'Hopital, it took a step on the road to toleration. It passed an edict, commonly known as the "Edict of January," "by which was granted to the Huguenots," says Davila, "a free exercise of their religion, and the right to assemble at sermons, but unarmed, outside of the cities in open places, the officers of the place being present and assistant."³ Till this edict was granted the Protestants could build no church within the walls of a city, nor meet for worship in even the open country. Doubtless they sometimes appropriated a deserted Popish chapel, or gathered in the fields in hundreds and thousands to hear sermons, but they could plead no statute for this: it was their numbers solely that made them adventure on what the law did not allow. Now, however, they could worship in public under legal sanction.

But even this small scrap of liberty was bestowed with the worst grace, and was lettered by qualifications and restrictions which were fitted, perhaps intended, to annul the privilege it professed to grant. The Protestants might indeed worship in public, but in order to do so they must go outside the gates of their city. In many towns they were the overwhelming majority: could anything be more absurd than that a whole population should go outside the walls of its own town to worship? The edict, in truth, pleased neither party. It conferred too small a measure of grace to awaken the lively gratitude of the Protestants; and as regards the Romanists, they grudged the Reformed even this poor crumb of favor.

Nevertheless, paltry though the edict was, it favored the rapid permeation of France with the Protestant doctrines. The growth of

²Lava1, volume 1, p. 604.

³Davila, lib. 2, p. 78.

the Reformed Church since the death of Henry II was prodigious. At the request of Catherine de Medici, Beza addressed circular letters at this time to all the Protestant pastors in France, desiring them to send in returns of the number of their congregations. The report of Beza, founded on these returns, was that there were then upwards of 2,150 congregations of the Reformed faith in the kingdom. Several of these, especially in the great cities, were composed of from 4,000 to 8,000 communicants. The Church at Paris had no less than 20,000 members. As many as 40,000 would at times convene for sermon outside the gates of the capital. This multitude of worshippers would divide itself into three congregations, to which as many ministers preached; with a line of horse and foot, by orders from Catherine de Medici, drawn round the assembly to protect it from the insults of the mob. ⁴ The number of the Reformed in the provincial cities was in proportion to those of Paris. According to contemporary estimates of the respective numbers of the two communions, the Reformed Church had gathered into its bosom from one fourth to one half of the nation-the former is the probable estimate; but that fourth embraced the flower of the population in respect of rank, intelligence, and wealth.

The chiefs of Romanism beheld, with an alarm that bordered on panic, all France on the point of becoming Lutheran. The secession of so great a kingdom from Rome would tarnish the glory of the Church, dry up her revenues, and paralyse her political arm. Nothing must be left undone that could avert a calamity so overwhelming. The Pope, Philip II of Spain, and the Triumvirate at Paris took counsel as to the plan to be pursued, and began from this hour to prosecute each his part, in the great task of rolling back the tide of a triumphant Huguenotism. They must do so at all costs, or surrender the battle. The Pope wrote to Catherine de Medici, exhorting her as a daughter of Italy to rekindle her dying zeal-not so near extinction as the Pope feared-and defend the faith of her country and her house. The wily Catherine replied, thanking her spiritual father, but saying that the Huguenots were, meanwhile, too powerful to permit her to follow his advice, and to break openly with Coligny. The King of

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⁴Laval, volume 1, p. 623. Felice, volume 1, pp. 139,140. Bayle, Dict., art. Hospital, note 45.

Navarre, the first prince of the blood, was next tampered with. The Romanists knew his weak point, which was all inordinate ambition to be what nature-by denying him the requisite talents-had ordained he should not be, a king in his own right, and not a titular sovereign merely. They offered him a kingdom whose geographical position was a movable one, lying sometimes in Africa, sometimes in the island of Sardinia, seeing the kingdom itself was wholly imaginary. They even flattered him with hopes that he might come to wear the crown of Scotland. The Pope would dissolve his marriage with Jeanne d'Albret, on the ground of heresy, and he would then secure him the hand of the young and beautiful Mary Stuart. Dazzled by these illusions, which he took for realities, the weak, unstable, unprincipled Antoine de Bourbon passed over to the Roman camp, amid the loud vauntings of those who knew how worthless, yet how handy, the prize was.⁵

The way was thus prepared so far for the execution of bolder measures. The Duke of Guise, quitting Paris, spent the winter on his family estates in Lorraine, and there, unobserved, began to collect an army, to cooperate with the troops which the King of Spain had promised to send him. He hoped to take the field in spring with such a force as would enable him to root out Huguenotism from the soil of France, and restore the supremacy of the old faith.

But matters so fell out that the duke was obliged to begin his campaign sooner than he had intended. All that winter (1562) the populace of Paris had been kept in a state of great excitement. The Romanists believed that they were being betrayed. They saw the Queen-mother, whose present policy it was to play off the Huguenots against the Triumvirate, favoring the "religion." Then there was the Edict of January, permitting the free exercise of the Protestant worship. In the eyes of every Roman Catholic this edict was abomination-a disgrace to the statute-book-a bulwark to the Huguenots, whom it protected in their psalm-singing and sermonizing. The pulpits of Paris thundered against the edict. The preachers expatiated on the miseries, temporal and eternal, into which it was dragging down France. They told how they were nightly besieged by souls from purgatory, dolefully lamenting the cruelty of their relations

⁵Davila, lib. 2, p. 80. Felice, volume 2, p. 146.

who no longer cared to say mass for their deliverance. Visions of hell, moreover, had been made to them and they saw it filled with Huguenots. They turned their churches into arsenals, and provided the mob with arms.⁶ The Duke of Guise had been heard to say that he “would cut the knot of the edict with his sword,”⁷ and when the Parisians saw the Huguenots in thousands, crowding out at the city gates to sermon, and when they heard their psalm borne back on the breeze, they said, “Would that the duke were here, we would make these men pipe to another tune.” These were unmistakable signs that the moment for action was come. The duke was sent for.

The message found him at his Chateau of Joinville. He lost no time in obeying the summons. He set out on Saturday, the 28th of February, 1562, accompanied by his brother the cardinal, 200 gentlemen, and a body of horse. Three leagues on the road to Paris is the town of Vassy. It contained in those days 3,000 inhabitants, about a third of whom had embraced the Reformed faith. It stood on lands which belonged to the duke’s niece, Mary Stuart of Scotland, and its Protestant congregation gave special umbrage to the Dowager-Duchess of Guise, who could not brook the idea that the vassals of her granddaughter should profess a different faith from that of their feudal superior. The duke, on his way to this little town, recruited his troop at one of the villages through which he passed, with a muster of foot-soldiers and archers. “The Saturday before the slaughter,” says Crespin, “they were seen to make ready their weapons-arquebuses and pistols.”⁸

On Sunday morning, the 1st of March, the duke, after an early mass, resumed his march. “Urged by the importunities of his mother,” says Thaurus, “he came with intention to dissolve these conventicles by his presence.”⁹ He was yet a little way from Vassy when a bell began to ring. On inquiring what it meant, seeing the hour was early, he was told that it was the Huguenot bell ringing for sermon. Plucking at his beard, as his wont was when he was choleric, he swore that he would Huguenot them after another fashion,

⁶Laval, volume 1, p. 625.

⁷Davila, lib. 3, p. 86.

⁸Crespin, *Hist. des Martyrs*, livr. 8, p. 615; Geneve, 1619.

⁹Thaurus, *Hist.*, lib. 29, p. 78.

[558] ¹⁰ Entering the town, he met the provost, the prior, and the curate in the market-place, who entreated him to go to the spot where the Protestants were assembled. ¹¹ The Huguenot meeting-house was a barn, about 100 yards distant, on the city wall. A portion of the duke's troop marched on before, and arrived at the building. The Protestants were assembled to the number of 1,200; the psalm and the prayer were ended, and the sermon had begun. The congregation were suddenly startled by persons outside throwing stones at the windows, and shouting out, "Heretics! rebels! dogs!" Presently the discharge of fire-arms told them that they were surrounded by armed men. The Protestants endeavored to close the door, but were unable from the crowd of soldiers pressing in, with oaths and shouts of "Kill, kill!" "Those within," says Crespin, "were so astonished that they knew not which way to turn them, but running hither and thither fell one upon another, flying as poor sheep before a company of ravening wolves. Some of the murderers shot of their pieces at those that were in the galleries; others cut in pieces such as they lighted upon; others had their heads cleft in twain, their arms and hands cut off, and thus did they what they could to hew them all in pieces, so as many of them gave up the ghost even in the place. The walls and galleries of the said barn were dyed with the blood of those who were everywhere murdered."

Hearing the tumult, the duke hastened to the spot. On coming up he was hit with a stone in the face. On seeing him bleeding, the rage of his soldiers was redoubled, and the butchery became more horrible. Seeing escape impossible by the door or window, many of the congregation attempted to break through the roof, but they were shot down as they climbed up on the rafters. One soldier [559] savagely boasted that he had brought down a dozen of these pigeons. [560] Some who escaped in this way leaped down from the city walls, and escaped into the woods and vineyards. The pastor, M. Morel, on his knees in the pulpit invoking God, was fired at. Throwing off his gown, he attempted to escape, but stumbling over a dead body, he received two sabre-cuts, one on the shoulder, another on the head. A soldier raised his weapon to hough him, but his sword broke at

¹⁰ Felice, volume 1, p. 151.

¹¹ Thaurus, Hist., lib. 29, p. 78.

the hilt. Supported by two men the pastor was led before the duke. “Who made you so bold as to seduce this people?” demanded the duke. “Sir,” replied

M. Morel, “I am no seducer, for I have preached to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” “Go,” said the duke to the provost, “and get ready a gibbet, and hang this rogue.” These orders were not executed. The duke’s soldiers were too busy sabreing the unarmed multitude, and collecting the booty, to hang the pastor, and none of the town’s-people had the heart to do so cruel a deed. ¹²

When the dreadful work was over, it was found that from sixty to eighty persons had been killed, and 250 wounded, many of them mortally. The streets were filled with the most piteous spectacles. Women were seen with dishevelled hair, and faces besmeared with blood from their streaming wounds, dragging themselves along, and filling the air with their cries and lamentations. The soldiers signalled their triumph by pulling down the pulpit, burning the Bibles and Psalters, plundering the poor’s-box, spoiling the killed of their raiment; and wrecking the place. The large pulpit Bible was taken to the duke. He examined the title-page, and his learning enabled him to make out that it had been printed the year before. He carried it to his brother the cardinal, who all the time of the massacre had been loitering by the wall of the churchyard, and presented the Bible to him as a sample of the pestiferous tenets of the Huguenots. “Why, brother,” said the cardinal, after scanning its title-page a moment, “there is no harm in this book, for it is the Bible-the Holy Scripture.” “The duke being offended at that answer,” says Crespin, “grew into a greater rage than before, saying, ‘Blood of God! -what!-how now!-the Holy Scripture! It is a thousand and five hundred years ago since Jesus Christ suffered his death and passion, and it is but a year ago since these books were imprinted; how, then, say you that this is the Gospel?’” ¹³

The massacre at Vassy was the first blow struck in the civil wars of France, and it is important to note that it was the act of the Romanists. Being done in violation of the Edict of January, which covered the Protestants of Vassy, and never disowned or punished

¹²Crespin, livr., 8, p. 616.

¹³Fe1ice, volume 1, p. 153.

by any constituted authority of the nation, it proclaimed that the rule of law had ceased, and that the reign of force had begun. A few days afterwards the duke entered Paris, more like a conqueror who had routed the enemies of France, than a man dripping with the blood of his fellow-subjects. Right and left of him rode the Constable and the Marshal St. Andre, the other two members of the Triumvirate, while the nobles, burgesses, and whole populace of the capital turned out to grace his entry, and by their enthusiastic cheers proclaim his welcome. As if he had been king, they shouted, "Long life to Guise!"¹⁴ The blood of Vassy, said the mob of Paris, be on us, and on our children.

The Protestants of France had for some time past been revolving the question of taking up arms and standing to their defense, and this deplorable massacre helped to clear their minds. The reverence, approaching to a superstition, which in those days hedged round the person of a king, made the Huguenots shrink with horror from what looked like rebellion. But the question was no longer, Shall we oppose the king? The Triumvirate had, in effect, set aside both king and regent, and the duke and the mob were masters of the State. The question was, Shall we oppose the Triumvirate which has made itself supreme over throne and Parliament? Long did the Huguenots hesitate, most unwilling were they to draw the sword; especially so was the greatest Huguenot that France then contained, Coligny. Ever as he put his hand upon his sword's hilt, there would rise before him the long and dismal vista of battle and siege and woe through which France must pass before that sword, once unsheathed, could be returned into its scabbard. He, therefore, long forbore to take the irrevocable step, when one less brave or less foreseeing would have rushed to the battle-field. But even Coligny was at last convinced that farther delay would be cowardice, and that the curse of liberty would rest on every sword of Huguenot that remained longer in its scabbard.

Had the Edict of January, which gave a qualified permission for the open celebration of the Reformed worship, been maintained, the Protestants of France never would have thought of carrying their appeal to the battle-field. Had argument been the only weapon

¹⁴Laval, volume 1, p. 34.

with which they were assailed, argument would have been the only weapon with which they would have sought to defend themselves; but when a lawless power stood up, which trampled on royal authority, annulled laws, tore up treaties, and massacred Protestant congregations wholesale; when to them there no longer existed a throne, or laws, or tribunals, or rights of citizenship; when their estates were confiscated, their castles burned, the blood of their wives and children spilt, their names branded with infamy, and a price put upon their heads, why, surely, if ever resistance was lawful in the case of any people, and if circumstances could be imagined in which it was dutiful to repel force by force, they were those of the French Protestants at that hour. Even when it is the civil liberties only of a nation that are menaced by the tyrant or the invader, it is held the first duty of the subject to gird on his sword, and to maintain them with his blood; and we are altogether unable to understand why it should be less his duty to do so when, in addition to civil liberty, the battle is for the sanctity of home, the freedom of conscience, and the lives and religion of half a nation. So stood the case in France at that hour. Every end for which government is ordained, and society exists, was attacked and overthrown. If the Huguenots had not met their foes on the battle-field, their name, their race, their faith would have been trodden out in France.

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Far and wide over the kingdom flew the news of the Massacre of Vassy. One party whispered the dreadful tale in accents of horror; another party proclaimed it in a tone of exultation and triumph. The impunity, or rather applause, accorded to its author emboldened the Romanists to proceed to even greater excesses. In a few weeks the terrible scenes of Vassy were repeated in many of the towns of France. At Paris, at Senlis, at Meaux, at Amiens, at Chalons, at Tours, at Toulouse, and many other towns, the fanatic mob rose upon the Protestants and massacred them, pillaging and burning their dwellings. All the while the cathedral bells would be tolled, and the populace would sing songs of triumph in the streets. At Tours 300 Protestants were shut up in their church, where they were kept three days without food, and then brought out, tied two and two, led to the river's brink, and butchered like sheep. Children were sold for a crown a-piece. The President of Tours was tied to

two willow-trees, and disembowelled alive.¹⁵ At Toulouse the same horrible scenes were enacted on a larger scale. That city contained at this time between 30,000 and 40,000 Protestants-magistrates, students, and men of letters and refinement. The tocsin was rung in all the churches, the peasantry for miles around the city was raised en masse; the Huguenots took refuge in the Capitol of Toulouse, where they were besieged, and finally compelled to surrender. Then followed a revolting massacre of from 3,000 to 4,000 Protestants.¹⁶ The Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne were dyed with Protestant blood, and ghastly corpses, borne on the bosom of the stream, startled the dwellers in distant cities and castles, and seemed to cry for justice, as they floated away to find burial in the ocean.

The Duke of Guise now repaired to Fontainebleau, whither the King and the Queen-mother had fled, and compelled them to return to Paris. Catherine de Medici and her son were now wholly in the hands of the duke, and when they entered the Castle of Vincennes, about a mile from Paris, “the queen bore a doleful countenance, not able to refrain from tears; and the young king crying like a child, as if they had been both led into captivity.”¹⁷ The Parliament was not less obsequious. Its humble office was to register arrets at the duke’s bidding. These persecuting edicts followed each other with alarming rapidity during the terrible summer of 1562, than which there is no more doleful year in the French annals, not even excepting perhaps the outstanding horror of 1572-the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The Popish mob was supplied with arms and formed into regiments. The churches served as club-houses. When the tocsin sounded, 50,000 men would turn out at the summons. All Huguenots were ordered to quit Paris within twenty-four hours;¹⁸ after this, any one seen in the streets, and suspected of being a Huguenot, was mobbed and dispatched. Advantage was in some cases taken of this to gratify private revenge. One had only to raise the cry of Huguenot against those at whom one happened to have a spite, or to whom one owed money, and the bystanders did the rest. On the 8th of June the Parliament passed a law empowering any one who should meet

¹⁵Laval, volume 2, pp. 57,58.

¹⁶Felice, volume 1, pp. 174-176.

¹⁷Laval, volume 2, p. 42.

¹⁸Memoires de Conde, tom. 1, p. 89.

a Huguenot to kill him on the spot. The edict was to be read by the curés every Sunday after the sermon that follows high mass.¹⁹ The peasantry provided themselves with scythes, pikes, cutlasses, knives, and other cruel weapons, and scoured the country as if they had been ridding it of wild beasts. The priests facetiously called this “letting slip the big hound.”²⁰ They selected as captain, sometimes a monk, sometimes a brigand; and on one occasion, at least, a bishop was seen marching at their head.

Their progress over the country, especially in the south, where the Protestants were numerous, could be traced in the frightful memorials they left on their track—corpses strewed along the roads, bodies dangling from the trees, mangled victims dyeing the verdure of the fields with their blood, and spending their last breath in cries and supplications to Heaven.

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On the 18th of August, 1562, the Parliament issued yet another decree, declaring all the gentlemen of “the religion” traitors to God and the king. From this time the conflict became a war of province against province, and city against city, for the frightful outrages to which the Protestants were subjected provoked them into reprisals. Yet the violence of the Huguenot greatly differed from the violence of the Romanist. The former gutted Popish cathedrals and churches, broke down the images, and drove away the priests. The latter burned houses, tore up vines and fruit-trees, and slaughtered men and women, often with such diabolical and disgusting cruelty as forbids us to describe their acts. In some places rivulets of Huguenot blood, a foot in depth, were seen flowing. Those who wish to read the details of the crimes and woes that then overwhelmed France will find the dreadful recital, if they have courage to peruse it, in the pages of Agrippa d’Aubigne, De Thou, Beza, Crespin, and other historians.²¹

But before these latter edicts were issued the Huguenots had come to a decision. While Coligny, shut up in his Castle of Chatilion, was revolving the question of civil war, events were solving that question for him. Wherever he looked he saw cities sacked, castles

¹⁹Felice, volume 1, p. 163.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹The terrible array of these edicts and outrages may be seen in *Memoires de Conde*, tom. 1, pp. 70-100.

in flames, and men and women slaughtered in thousands; what was this but civil war? The tidings of to-day were ever sadder than those of yesterday, and the tidings of tomorrow would, he but too surely guessed, be sadder than those of to-day. The heart of his wife, the magnanimous Charlotte Laval, was torn with anguish at the thought of the sufferings her brethren and sisters in the faith were enduring. One night she awoke her husband from sleep by her tears and sobs. "We lie here softly," said she, "while our brethren's bodies, who are flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, are some of them in dungeons, and others lying in the open fields, food for dogs and ravens. This bed is a tomb for me, seeing they are not buried. Can we sleep in peace, without hearing our brethren's last groanings?" "Are you prepared," asked the admiral in reply, "to hear of my defeat, to see me dragged to a scaffold and put to death by the common hangman? are you prepared to see our name branded, our estates confiscated, and our children made beggars? I will give you," he continued, "three weeks to think on these things, and when you have fortified yourself against them, I will go forth to perish with my brethren." "The three weeks are gone already," was the prompt and noble reply of Charlotte Laval. "Go in God's name and he will not suffer you to be defeated."²²

A few mornings only had passed when Admiral Coliguy was seen on his way to open the first campaign of the civil wars.

²²Agrippa d'Aubigne, *Univ. Hist.*, tom. 1, lib. 3, cap. 2.

Chapter 8 : Commencehent of the Huguenot Wars

Conde Seizes Orleans-His Compatriot Chiefs—Prince of Porcian-Rochefoucault-Rohan-Grammont-Montgomery-Soubise-St. Phale -La Mothe-Genlis-Marvellous Spread of the Reformed Faith-The Popish Party-Strength of Protestantism in France—Question of the Civil Wars—Justification of the Huguenots-Finance-Foreign Allies

Picture: View of St. Ouen Cathedral Rouen.

The Protestant chiefs having resolved to take up the gage which the Triumvirate had thrown down, the Prince of Conde struck the first blow by dispatching Coligny's brother D'Andelot, with 5,000 men, to make himself master of Orleans. In a few days thereafter (April 2nd, 1562), the prince himself entered that city, amid the acclamations of the inhabitants, who accompanied him through the streets chanting grandly the 124th Psalm, in Marot's meter, ¹ Admiral Coligny, on arriving at head-quarters, found a brilliant assemblage gathered round Conde. Among those already arrived or daily expected was Anthony of Croy, Prince of Perclan. Though related to the House of Lorraine, the Prince of Perclan was a firm opponent of the policy of the Guises, and one of the best captains of his time. He was married to Catherine of Cleves, Countess of Eu, niece to the Prince of Conde, by whom he was greatly beloved for his amiable qualities as well as for his soldierly accomplishments. And there was also Francis, Count of La Rochefoucault, Prince of Marcillac. He was by birth and dignity the first noble of Guienne, and the richest and most potent man in all Poitou. He could have raised an army among his relations, friends, and vassals alone. He was an experienced soldier: valiant, courageous, generous, and much beloved by Henry II, in whose wars he had greatly distinguished himself. It was his fate to be inhumanly slaughtered, as we shall see, in the St. Bartholomew Massacre. There was Rene, Viscount of Rohan. He was by the mother's side related to the family of

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¹Laval, volume 2. p. 49.

Navarre, being cousin-german to Jeanne d'Albret. Being by her means instructed in the Reformed faith, that queen made him her lieutenant-general during the minority of her son Henry, afterwards King of France, whom he served with inviolable fidelity. There was Anthony, Count of Grammont, who was in great esteem among the Reformed on account of his valor and his high character. Having embraced the Protestant faith, he opposed uncompromisingly the Guises, and bore himself with great distinction and gallantry among the Huguenot chiefs in the civil wars. No less considerable was Gabriel, Count of Montgomery, also one of the group around the prince. His valor, prudence, and sagacity enabled him, in the absence of large estates or family connections, to uphold the credit of the Protestant party and the luster of the Protestant arms after the fall of Conde, of Coligny, and of other leaders. It was from his hand that Henry II had received his death-blow in the fatal tournament-as fatal in the end to Montgomery as to Henry, for Catherine de Medici never forgave him the unhappy accident of slaying her husband; and when at last Montgomery fell into her hands, she had him executed on the scaffold. And there was John, Lord of Soubise, of the illustrious House of Partenay of Poitou, and the last who bore the name and title. Soubise had borne arms under Henry II, being commander-in-chief in the army of Tuscany. This gave him an opportunity of visiting the court of Rene at Ferrara, where he was instructed in the Reformed doctrine. On his return to France he displayed great zeal in propagating the Protestant faith, and when the civil wars broke out the Prince de Conde sent him to command at Lyons, where, acquitting himself with equal activity and prudence, he fully answered the expectations of his chief. Louis of Vadray, known in history by the name of Lord of Mouy St. Phale, was one of the more considerable of the patriot-heroes that followed the banners of Conde. Of great intrepidity and daring, his achievements are amongst the most brilliant feats of the civil wars. He was assassinated in 1569 by the same person - Manrevel of Brie - who wounded the Admiral Coligny in Paris in 1572. Nor must we omit to mention Anthony Raguier, Lord of Esternay and of La Mothe de Tilly. Not only did he place his own sword at the service of Conde, he brought over to the standard of the prince and the profession of the Protestant faith, his brother-in-law Francis of Bethune, Baron of Rosny, father of the

Duke of Sully. And there was the head of the ancient and illustrious House of Picardy, Adrian de Hangest, Lord of Genlis, who was the father of thirty-two children by his wife Frances du Maz. Like another Hamilcar leading his numerous sons to the altar, he devoted them to the defense of their country's laws, and the maintenance of its Protestant faith. The enthusiasm and bravery of the sons, as displayed under the banners of Conde, amply rewarded the devotion and patriotism of the father. All of them became distinguished in the campaigns that followed.²

Nothing could more conclusively attest the strength of the position which Protestantism had conquered for itself in France than this brilliant list. The men whom we see round the Huguenot chief are the flower of a glorious land. They are no needy adventurers, whom the love of excitement, or the hope of spoil, or the thirst for distinction has driven to the battle-field. Their castles adorn the soil, and their names illustrate the annals of their country; yet here we see them coming forward, at this supreme hour, and deliberately staking the honour of their houses, the revenues of their estates, the glory of their names, and even life itself! What could have moved them to this but their loyalty to the Gospel—their deep, thorough, and most intelligent conviction that the Reformed doctrine was based on Scripture, and that it had bound up with it not more their own personal salvation than the order, the prosperity, and the glory of their country?

The Protestant cause had attractions not alone for the patricians of France; it was embraced by the intelligence and furthered by the energy of the middle classes. It is well to remember this. Bankers and men of commerce; lawyers and men of letters; magistrates and artists; in short, the staple of the nation, the guides of its opinion, the creators of its wealth, and the pillars of its order, rallied to the Protestant standard. In every part of France the Reformed faith spread with astonishing rapidity during the reigns of Francis II and Charles IX. It was embraced by the villages scattered along at the foot of the Alps and the base of the Pyrenees. It established itself in the powerful city of Grenoble. The Parliament and magistracy of that prosperous community took special interest in the preaching of

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²Memoirs of Castlenau; Le Labereaur's Additions-apud Laval, volume 2, pp. 59-64.

the Protestant doctrine in their town; and the example of Grenoble had a great influence on the whole of that rich region of which it was the capital. The city of Marseilles on the Mediterranean shore; the flourishing seaports on the western coast; the fertile and lovely valleys of central France; the vine-clad plains on the east; the rich and populous Picardy and Normandy on the north—all were covered with the churches and congregations of the Reformed faith. “Climate, custom, prejudice, superstition,” says Gaberel, “seemed to have no power to resist or modify the spread of the Protestant doctrines. No sooner was a church provided with a pastor, than the inhabitants of the villages and towns in the neighborhood demolished their Popish altars, and flocked to hear the preaching of the Protestant doctrine. The occupants of the castles and rich houses followed the example of their tenantry, and opened their mansions for worship when the church stood at too great a distance.”³ Many of the prelates, even, had perused the writings of Calvin, and were favorable to the Reformed doctrine, although, for obvious reasons, they had to be careful in avowing their convictions and preferences.

When we turn from the grand phalanx of nobles, warrior’s, jurists, literary men, merchants, and cities around the Protestant standard, to contemplate the opposing ranks which still remained loyal to Rome, and were now challenging the Reformed to do battle for their faith, we are forcibly struck with the vast inferiority, in all the elements of real power, on the Popish side. First on that side came the crown. We say the crown, for apart from it Charles IX had no power. Next to the crown came the Queen-mother, who, despite certain caprices which at times excited the hopes of the Protestants and awakened the fears of the Pope, remained staunchly loyal at heart to the cause of Rome—for what else could be expected of the niece of Clement VII? After the Queen-mother came the Triumvirate. It embraced one grand figure, the bluff, honest, awful Constable, so proud of his ancient blood and his ancient Christianity! Over against him we may set the weak and wicked St. Andre, who was continually enriching himself with plunder, and continually sinking deeper in debt. Then came the Guises -truculent, thoroughly able, and as athirst for blood as the Marshal St. Andre for money. These

³Gaberel, *Histoire de l’Eglise de Geneve*, tom. 1, pp. 352-354.

strangers in France seem to have taken kindly to the soil, if one may judge from the amazing rapidity with which their power and their honors had flourished since their arrival in it. We assign the last place here to the King of Navarre, though as a prince of the blood he ought to have had the first place after the crown, but for his utter insignificance, which made him be fully more contemned even by the Papists than by the Protestants.

The Popish party were numerically the majority of the nation, but in respect of intelligence and virtue they were by much the smaller portion of it. There was, of course, a moiety of the nobility, of professional men, and of the middle orders still attached to the Roman worship, and more or less zealous in its behalf; but the great strength of the Triumvirate lay in another quarter. The Sorbonne, the secular priests, and the cloistered orders continued unwavering in their attachment to the Pope. And behind was a yet greater force—without which, the zeal of Triumvirate, of cure, and of friar would have effected but little—the rabble, namely, of Paris and many of the great cities. This was a very multifarious host, more formidable in numbers than in power, if names are to be weighed and not counted. Protestantism in France was not merely on the road to victory, morally it had already achieved it.

And further, to form a true estimate of the strength of the position which Protestantism had now won, we must take account of the situation of the country, and the endowments of the people in which it had so deeply rooted itself. Placed in the center of Christendom, France acted powerfully on all the nations around it. It was, or till a few years ago had been, the first of the European kingdoms in letters, in arts, in arms. Its people possessed a beautiful genius. Since the intellect of classic days there had appeared, perhaps, no finer mental development than the French mind; none that came so near the old Roman type. Without apparent labor the French genius could lay open with a touch the depths of an abstruse question, or soar to the heights of a sublime one. Protestantism had begun to quicken the French intellect into a marvellous development of strength and beauty, and but for the sudden and unexpected blight that overtook it, its efflorescence would have rivalled, it may be eclipsed, in power and splendor that extraordinary outburst of intellect that followed the

Reformation in England, and which has made the era of Elizabeth forever famous.

Nor was it the least of the advantages of French Protestantism that its head-quarters were not within, but outside the kingdom. By a marvellous Providence a little territory, invisibly yet inviolably guarded, had been called into existence as an asylum where, with the thunders of the mighty tempests resounding on every side of it, the great chief of the movement might watch the execution of his plans in every part of the field, but especially in France. Calvin was sufficiently distant from his native land to be undisturbed by its convulsions, and yet sufficiently near to send daily assistance and succour to it, to commission evangelists, to advise, to encourage - in short, to do whatever could tend to maintain and advance the work. The Reformer was now giving the last touches to his mighty task before retiring from the view of men, but Geneva, through her Church, through her schools, and through her printing-presses, would, it was thought, continue to flood France with those instrumentalities for the regeneration of Christendom, which the prodigious industry and mighty genius of Calvin had prepared.

[566] But the very strength of Protestantism in France at this era awakens doubts touching the step which the Protestants of that country were now about to take, and compels us to pause and review a decision at which we have already arrived. How had Protestantism come to occupy this position, and what were the weapons which had conquered for it so large a place in the national mind? This question admits of but one answer: it was the teachings of evangelists, the blood of martyrs, and the holy lives of confessors. Then why not permit the same weapons to consummate the victory? Does it not argue a criminal impatience to exchange evangelists for soldiers? Does it not manifest a sinful mistrust of those holy instrumentalities which have already proved their omnipotency by all but converting France, to supersede them by the rude appliances of armies and battle-fields? In truth, so long as the Protestants had it in their power to avoid the dire necessity of taking up arms, so long, in short, as the certain ruin of the cause did not stare them in the face in the way of their sitting still, they were not justified in making their appeal to arms. But they judged, and we think rightly, that they had now no alternative; that the Triumvirate had decided this question for them; and that nothing

remained, if the last remnants of conscience and liberty were not to be trodden out, but to take their place on the battle-field. The legitimate rule of the king had been superseded by the usurpation of a junto, the leading spirits of which were foreigners. The Protestants saw treaties torn up, and soldiers enrolled for the work of murder. They saw their brethren slaughtered like sheep, not in hundreds only, but literally in thousands. They saw the smoke of burning cities and castles darkening the firmament, unburied corpses tainting the air, and the blood of men and women dyeing their rivers, and tinting the seas around their coasts. They saw groups of orphans wandering about, crying for bread, or laying themselves down to die of hunger. The touching words of Charlotte Laval addressed to her husband, which we have already quoted, show us how the noblest minds in France felt and reasoned in the presence of these awful tragedies. To remain in peace in their houses, while these oppressions and crimes were being enacted around them—were being done, so to speak, in their very sight—was not only to act a cowardly part, it was to act an inhuman part. It was to abnegate the right, not of citizens only, but of men. If they should longer refuse to stand to their defense, posterity, they felt, would hold them guilty of their brethren's blood, and their names would be coupled with those of the persecutors in the cry of that blood for vengeance.

The pre-eminence of France completes the justification of the Huguenots, by completing the necessity for the step to which they now had recourse. Rome could not possibly permit Protestantism to triumph in a country so central, and whose influence was so powerfully felt all over Europe. The Pope must needs suppress the Reformation in France at all costs. The Popish Powers, and especially Spain, felt equally with the Pope the greatness of the crisis, and willingly contributed the aid of their arms to extinguish Huguenotism. Its triumph in France would have revolutionized their kingdoms, and shaken their thrones. It was a life-and-death struggle; and but for the stand which the Protestant chiefs made, the soldiers of the Triumvirate, and the armies of Spain, would have marched from the Seine to the Mediterranean, from the frontier of Lorraine to the western seaboard, slaughtering the Huguenots like sheep, and Protestantism would have been as completely trampled out in France as it was in Spain.

Both sides now began to prepare with rigor for the inevitable conflict. On the Huguenot banner was inscribed "Liberty of Worship," and the special grievance which compelled the unfurling of that banner was the flagrant violation of the Edict of January-which guarantee them that liberty-in the dreadful massacre of the Protestants as they were worshipping at Vassy under the supposed protection of that edict. This was specially mentioned in the manifesto which the Huguenots now put forth, but neither was regret expressed by the Triumvirate for the violation of the edict, nor promise given that it would be observed in time to come, which made the Protestant princes conclude that the Massacre of Vassy would be repeated again and again, till not a Huguenot was left to charge the Government with its shameful breach of faith. "To arms!" must therefore be their watchword.

Wars, although styled religious, must be gone about in the ordinary way; soldiers must be enrolled, and money collected, without which it is impossible to fight battles. The Prince of Conde wrote circular letters to the Reformed Churches in France, craving their aid in men and money to carry on the war about to be commenced.⁴ Several of the Churches, before voting the desired assistance, sent deputies to Paris to ascertain the real state of matters, and whether any alternative was left them save the grave one of taking up arms. As a consequence, funds and fighting men came in slowly. From La Rochelle came neither men nor money, till after the campaign had been commenced; but that Church, and others, finding on careful inquiry that the state of matters was such as the Huguenot manifesto had set forth, threw themselves afterwards with zeal into the conflict, and liberally supported it.

[567] The Huguenot chiefs, before unsheathing the sword, sat down together and partook of the Lord's Supper. After communion they subscribed a bond, or "Act of Association," in which they pledged themselves to fidelity to God and to one another, and obedience to Conde as head of the Protestant League, and promised to assist him with "money, arms, horses, and all other warlike equipages." They declared themselves in arms for "the defense of the king's honour and liberty, the maintenance of the pure worship of God,

⁴Laval, volume 1, p. 64.

and the due observance of the edicts.”⁵ They swore also to promote reformation of manners and true piety among themselves and followers, to punish blasphemy, profanation, and vice, and to maintain the preaching of the Gospel in their camp.⁶ This deed, by which the Huguenot wars were inaugurated, tended to promote confidence among the confederates, and to keep them united in the presence of a crafty enemy, who continually labored to sow jealousies and disdains among them; and further, it sanctified and sublimed the war by keeping its sacred and holy object in the eye of those who were in arms.

Another matter which the Calvinist lords deemed it prudent to arrange before coming to blows, was the important one of succors from abroad. On this point their opponents enjoyed great advantages. Not only could they draw upon the national treasury for the support of the war, having the use of the king’s name, but they had powerful and zealous friends abroad who, they knew, would hasten to their aid. The Triumvirate had promises of large succors from the then wealthy governments of Spain, Italy, and Savoy; and they had perfect confidence in these promises being kept, for the cause for which the Triumvirate was in arms was the cause of the Pope and Philip of Spain quite as much as it was that of the Guises. The Huguenots, in like manner, cast their eyes abroad, if haply they might find allies and succorers in those countries where the Protestant faith was professed. The war now commencing was not one of race or nationality; it was no war of creed in a narrow sense; it was a war for the great principle of Protestantism in both its Lutheran and Reformed aspects, and which was creating a new commonwealth, which the Rhine could not divide, nor the Alps bound. That was not a Gallic commonwealth, nor a Teutonic commonwealth, but a great spiritual empire, which was blending in sympathy and in interest every kindred and tribe that entered its holy brotherhood. Therefore, in the war now beginning neither Germany nor England could, with due regard to themselves, be neutral, for every victory of the Roman Catholic Powers, now confederate for the suppression of the Reformation, not in France only, but in all countries, was a step in the triumphant march of these

⁵Davila, lib. 3, p. 93. Mem. de Conde volume 3, pp. 222,319.

⁶Laval, volume 2, pp. 71,72.

powers towards the frontiers of the other Reformed countries. The true Policy of England and Germany was clearly to fight the battle at as great a distance as Possible from their own doors.

To Coligny the project of bringing foreign soldiers into France was one the wisdom of which he extremely doubted. He feared the effect which such a step might have on a people naturally jealous and proud, and to whom he knew it would be distasteful. For every foreign auxiliary he should obtain he might lose a home soldier. But again events decided the matter for him. He saw the Savoyards, the Swiss, and the Spaniards daily arriving to swell the royalist ranks, and slaughter the children of France, and if he would meet the enemy, not in equal numbers for he saw no likelihood of being able to bring man for man into the field but if he would meet him at the head of such a force as should enable him to fight with some chance of success, he must do as his opponents were doing, and accept help from those who were willing to give it. Accordingly two ambassadors were dispatched on the errand of foreign aid, the one to Germany and the other to England, and both found a favorable reception for their overtures. The one succeeded in negotiating a treaty for some thousands of German Reiter, or heavy cavalry-so well known in those days for the execution they did on the field, where often they trampled down whole ranks of the

946 lighter troops of France; and the other ambassador was able to persuade Queen Elizabeth so careful both of her money and her subjects, for England was not then so rich in either as she long years afterwards became into aid the Huguenots with 140,000 crowns and 6,000 soldiers, in return for which the town of Havre was put in her keeping.

Chapter 9 : The First Huguenot War, and Death of the Duke of Guise [568]

Final Overtures-Rejection-The Two Standards-Division of France- Orleans the Huguenot Head-quarters-Conde the Leader-Coligny- The Two Armies Meet-Catherine's Policy-No Battle-Rouen Besieged-Picture of the Two Camps-Fall of Rouen- Miseries—Death of the King of Navarre-Battle of Dreux—Duke of Guise sole Dictator-Conde a Prisoner-Orleans Besieged-The Inhabitants to be put to the Sword-The Duke of Guise Assassinated- Catherine de Medici Supreme-Pacification of Amboise

Picture: Assassination of the Duke of Guise.

Unwilling to commit himself irrevocably to war, the Prince of Conde made yet another overture to the court, before unsheathing the sword and joining battle. He was willing to furl his banner and dismiss his soldiers, provided a guarantee were given him that the Edict of January would be observed till the king attained his majority, and if then his majesty should be pleased no longer to grant liberty of conscience to his subjects, the prince and his confederates were to have liberty to retire into some other country, without prejudice to their estates and goods. And further, he demanded that the Triumvirs meanwhile should withdraw from court, adding that if the Government did not accept these reasonable terms, it would be answerable for all the calamities that might befall the kingdom. ¹ These terms were not accepted; and all efforts in the interest of peace having now been exhausted, the several provinces and cities of the kingdom made haste to rally, each under its respective standard. Once again France pronounces upon the question of its future; and unhappily it repeats the old answer: it confirms the choice it had made under Francis I. A second time it takes the downward road - that leading to revolution and the abyss. France is not unanimous, however; it is

¹Laval, volume 2, pp. 77,86.

nearly equally divided. Speaking generally, all France south of the Loire declared for the Protestant cause. All the great cities of the Orleanois-Tours, Poitiers, Bourges, Nismes, Montauban, Valence, Lyons, Toulouse, Bordeaux- opened their gates to the soldiers of Conde, and cordially joined his standard: as did also the fortified castles of Languedoc and Dauphine. In the north, Normandy, with its towns and castles, declared for the same side.² The cities and provinces just enumerated were the most populous and flourishing in France. It was in these parts that the Reformation had struck its roots the most deeply, and hence the unanimity and alacrity with which their inhabitants enrolled themselves on the Protestant side.

Coligny, though serving as Conde's lieutenant, was the master-genius and director of the campaign. His strength of character, his long training in military affairs, his resource, his prudence, his indomitable resolution, all marked him out as the man pre-eminently qualified to lead, although the notions of the age required that such an enterprise should be graced by having as its ostensible head a prince of the blood. Coligny, towering above the other princes and nobles around Conde, inspired the soldiers with confidence, for they knew that he would lead them to victory, or if that were denied, that he could do what may seem more difficult, turn defeat into triumph. His sagacious eye it was that indicated Orleans as the true center of the Huguenot strategy. Here, with the broad stream of the Loire rolling in front of their position, and the friendly provinces of the south lying behind it, they would lack neither provisions nor soldiers. Supplies to any amount would be poured into their camp by the great highway of the river, and they could recruit their army from the enthusiastic populations in their rear. But further, the Huguenots made themselves masters of Rouen in Normandy, which commands the Seine; this enabled them to isolate Paris, the camp of the enemy; they could close the gates of the two main arteries through which the capital procured its supplies, and afflict it with famine: by shutting

²It is a curious fact that the Franco-German war of 1870 divided France almost exactly as the first Huguenot war had done. The Loire became the boundary of the German conquests to the south, and the region of France beyond that river remained almost untouched by the German armies: the provinces that rallied round the Triumvirate in 1562, to fight the battle of Romanism, were exactly those that bore the brunt of the German arms in the campaign of 1870.

the Loire they could cut off from it the wine and fruits of the fertile south; and their command of the Seine enabled them to stop at their pleasure the transportation of the corn and cattle of the north.

With these two strong positions, the one in the south and the other in the north of the capital, it seemed as if it needed only that the Huguenots should make themselves masters of Paris in order to end the campaign. “Paris,” says Devils, “alone gave more credit to its party than half the kingdom would have done.” It was a stronghold of Romanism, and its fanatical population furnished an unrivaled recruiting-field for the Triumvirate. The advantage which the possession of Paris would give the Huguenots, did not escape the sagacious glance of Coligny, and he counselled Conde to march upon it at once, and strike before the Guises had had time to complete their preparations for its defense. The Prince unhappily delayed till the golden opportunity had passed. ³

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In the end of June, Conde and Coligny set out from Orleans to attack Paris, and almost at the same moment the Triumvirs began their march from Paris to besiege the Huguenots in Orleans. The two armies, which consisted of about 10,000 each, met half-way between the two cities. A battle was imminent, and if fought at that moment would probably have been advantageous to the Huguenot arms. But the Queen-mother, feigning a horror of bloodshed, came forward with a proposal for a conference between the leaders on both sides. Catherine de Medici vaunted that she could do more with her pen than twenty generals with their swords, and her success on this occasion went far to justify her boast. Her proposal entangled the Protestants in the meshes of diplomacy. The expedient which Catherine’s genius had hit upon for securing peace was that the leaders of the two parties should go into exile till the king had attained his majority, and the troubles of the nation had subsided. But the proposed exile was not equal. Coligny and his confederates were to quit France, the Guises and their friends were only to retire from court. ⁴ One obvious consequence of this arrangement was that Catherine would remain in sole possession of the field, and would rule without a compeer. The Triumvirs were to remain within call,

³Felice, volume 1, p. 161.

⁴Ibid. p. 162. Laval, volume 2, pp. 114,115.

should the Queen-mother desire their presence; Conde and Coligny, on the other hand, were to remove beyond the frontier; and once gone, a long time would elapse before they should be told that their services were needed, or that the soil of France was able to bear their steps. The trap was too obvious for the Huguenot chiefs to fall into it. The Queen had gained her end, however; her adroitness had shielded Paris, and it had wasted time in favor of the Government, for the weeks as they sped past increased the forces of the royalists, and diminished those of the Huguenots.

It was the Triumvirs that made the next move in the campaign, by resolving to attack Rouen. Masters of this town, the Huguenots, as we have said, held the keys of the Seine, and having cut off the supplies from Paris, the Triumvirs were greatly alarmed, for it was hard to say how long the fanaticism and loyalty of the Parisians would withstand the sobering influences of starvation. The Seine must be kept open at all costs; the Government, moreover, was not free from fear that the Queen of England would send troops into Normandy, and occupy that province, with the help of the Huguenots. Should this happen, Paris itself would be in danger. Accordingly the Duke of Guise was dispatched with his army to besiege Rouen. While he is digging his trenches, posting his forces, and preparing the assault, let us observe the state of discipline and sobriety in the the camps.

We are all familiar with the pictures of Cromwell's army. We have read how his camp resounded with the unwonted sounds of psalms and prayers, and how his soldiers were animated by a devotion that made them respond as alertly to a summons to sermon, which they knew would be of two hours' length, as to a summons to scale the breach, or join battle. A century before the great English Puritan, similar pictures might be witnessed in the camp of the French Huguenots. The morale of their armies was high, and the discipline of their camp strict, especially in their early campaigns. The soldier carried the Bible a-field, and this did more than the strictest code or severest penalty to check disorder and excess. The Huguenots had written up on their banners, "For God and the Prince," and they felt bound to live the Gospel as well as fight for it. Their troops were guilty of no acts of pillage, the barn of the farmer and the store of the merchant were perfectly safe in their neighborhood, and everything

which they obtained from the inhabitants they paid for. Cards and dice were banished their camp; oaths and blasphemies were never heard; acts of immorality and lewdness were prohibited under very severe penalties, and were of rare occurrence. One officer of high rank, who brought disgrace upon the Huguenot army by an act of libertinism, was hanged. ⁵

Inside the town of Rouen, round which there now rose a bristling wall of hostile standards and redoubts, the same beautiful order prevailed. Besides the inhabitants, there were 12,000 choice foot-soldiers from Conde's army, four squadrons of horse, and 2,000 English in the place, with 100 gentlemen who had volunteered to perish in the defense of the town. ⁶ The theatres were closed. There needed no imaginary drama, when one so real was passing before the inhabitants. The churches were opened, and every day there was sermon in them. In their houses the citizens chanted their daily psalm, just as if battle had been far distant from their gates. On the ramparts, the inspired odes of Hebrew times were thundered forth with a chorus of voices that rose loud above the shouting of the captains, and the booming of the cannon.

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The enthusiasm for the defense pervaded all ranks, and both sexes. The daughters and wives of the citizen-soldiers hastened to the walls, and regardless of the deadly shot falling thick around them, they kept their fathers and husbands supplied with ammunition and weapons. ⁷ They would maintain their liberties or die. The town was under the command of the Count Montgomery. ⁸ Pursued by the implacable resentment of Catherine de Medici, he had fled to England, where he embraced the Reformed religion, and whence he returned to France to aid the Huguenots in their great struggle. He was a skillful and courageous general, and knowing that he would receive no quarter, he was resolved rather than surrender to make Rouen his grave.

Let us turn to the royalist camp. The picture presented to us there is the reverse of that which we have been contemplating. "There," says Felice, "the grossest licentiousness prevailed." Catherine de

⁵Felice, volume 1, p. 172.

⁶Davila, lib. 3, p. 105.

⁷Laval, volume 2, p. 171.

⁸Mem. de Conde, tom. 1, p. 97.

Medici was present with her maids of honour, who did not feel themselves under any necessity to practice severer virtues in the trenches than they usually observed in the Louvre. Games and carousals filled up the leisure hours of the common soldiers, while tournaments and intrigues occupied the captains and knights. These two widely different pictures are parted not by an age, but simply by the city walls of Rouen.

The King of Navarre commanded in the royalist camp. The besiegers assaulted the town not less than six times, and each time were repulsed. At the end of the fifth week a mine was sprung, great part of the wall was laid in ruins, and the soldiers scaling the breach, Rouen was taken. It was the first to drink that bitter cup which so many of the cities of France were afterwards called to drain. For a whole week it was given up to the soldiers. They did their pleasure in it, and what that pleasure was can be conceived without our describing it. Permitting the veil to rest on the other horrors, we shall select for description two deaths of very different character. The first is that of Pastor Augustin Marlorat. Of deep piety and great erudition, he had figured conspicuously in the Colloquy of Poissy, where the Reformation had vindicated itself before the civil and ecclesiastical grandees of France. Present in the city during the five memorable weeks of the siege, his heroic words, daily addressed to the citizens from the pulpit, had been translated by the combatants into heroic deeds on the wall. "You have seduced the people," said Constable de Montmorency to him, when he was brought before him after the capture of the town. "If so," calmly replied Marlorat, "God first seduced me, for I have preached nothing to them but the Gospel of his Son." Placed on a hurdle, he was straightway dragged to the gallows and hanged, sustaining with meekness and Christian courage the indignities and cruelties inflicted on him at the place of execution.⁹

The other death-scene is that of Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre. Ensnared, as we have already said, by the brilliant but altogether delusive promises of the King of Spain, he had deserted the Protestants, and consented to be the ornamental head of the Romanist party. He was mortally wounded in the siege, and seeing

⁹Laval, volume 2, p. 194. Felice, volume 1, p. 165.

death approaching, he was visited with a bitter but a late repentance. He implored his physician, who strove in vain to cure his wound, to read to him out of the Scriptures; and he protested, the tears streaming clown his face, that if his life were spared he would cause the Gospel to be preached all throughout his dominions. ¹⁰ He died at the age of forty-four, regretted by neither party.

After the fall and sack of Rouen, seven weeks passed away, and then the two armies met (19th December) near the town of Dreux. This was the first pitched battle of the civil wars, and the only regular engagement in the first campaign. The disparity of force was considerable, the Huguenots having only 10,000 of all arms, while the royalists had 20,000, horse and foot, on the field. Battle being joined, the Huguenots had won the day when a stratagem of the Duke of Guise snatched victory from their grasp. All the time that the battle was raging—that is, from noon till five in the afternoon—Guise sat in the rear, surrounded by a chosen body of men-at-arms, intently watching the progress of the action, and at times sending forward the other Triumvirs with succors. At last the moment he had waited for came. The duke rode out to the front, rose in his stirrups, cast a glance over the field, and bidding his reserves follow, for the day was theirs, dashed forward. The Huguenots had broken their ranks and were pursuing the routed royalists all over the field. The duke was upon them before they had time to reform, and wearied with fighting, and unable, to sustain this onset of fresh troops, they went down before the cavalry of the duke. ¹¹ Guise's stratagem had succeeded. Victory passed over from the Huguenot to the royalist side.

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The carnage was great. Eight thousand dead covered the field, among whom was La Brosse, who had begun the massacre at Vassy. The rank not less than the numbers of the slain gave great political consequence to the battle. The Marshal St. Andre was killed; Montmorency, severely wounded, had surrendered himself prisoner; and thus, of the three Triumvirs, Guise alone remained. The battle of Dreux had crowned him with a double victory, for his immediate

¹⁰Laval, volume 2, p. 182.

¹¹Brantome, volume 3, p. 112. Laval, volume 2, p. 221. Brown-ing, Hist. of the Huguenots, volume 1, p. 151; Lond., 1829.

appointment as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and commander-in-chief of the army, placed France in his hands.

This battle left its mark on the Huguenot side also. The Prince of Conde was taken prisoner at the very close of the action. Being led to the head-quarters of Guise, the duke and the prince passed the night in the same bed; ¹² the duke, it is said, sleeping soundly, and Conde lying awake, ruminating on the strange fortune of war which had so suddenly changed him from a conqueror into a captive. The prince being now a prisoner, Coligny was appointed generalissimo of the Huguenots. The two Bourbons were removed, and Guise and Coligny stood face to face.

It chanced that a messenger who had left the field at the moment that the battle was going against the Government, brought to the Louvre the news that the Huguenots had won the day. The remark of Catherine de Medici, who foresaw that the triumph of Coligny would diminish the power of Guise-whose authority had begun to over-shadow her own-was imperturbably cool, and shows how little effort it cost her to be on either side, if only she could retain power. "Well, then," she said, on hearing the messenger's report, "Well, then, we shall have to say our prayers in French." ¹³

The war went on, although it had to be waged on a frozen earth, and beneath skies often dark with tempest; for it was winter. All France was at this hour a battle-field. Not a province was there, scarce even a city, in which the Roman Catholics and Huguenots were not arrayed in arms against each other. We must follow the march of the main army, however, without turning aside to chronicle provincial conflicts. After the defeat at Dreux, Coligny-now commander-in-chief - formed the Huguenot forces into two armies, and with the one he marched into Normandy, and sent his brother D'Andelot at the head of the other to occupy Orleans- that great center and stronghold of the Huguenot cause. The Duke of Guise followed close on the steps of the latter, in order to besiege Orleans. Having sat down before the town on the 5th of February, 1563, the siege was prosecuted with great rigor. The bridge of the Loire was taken. Next two important suburbs fell into the hands of the duke.

¹²Laval, volume 2, p. 225.

¹³Ibid., volume 2, p. 224. Guizot, volume 3, p. 335.

On the 18th all was ready for the capture of Orleans on the morrow, he wrote to the Queen-mother, telling her that his purpose was to put every man and woman in Orleans to the sword, and sow its foundations with salt. ¹⁴ This good beginning he would follow up by summoning all the nobles of France, with their retainers, to his standard, and with this mighty host he would pursue the admiral into Normandy, and drive him and all his followers into the sea, and so stamp out the Huguenot insurrection. "Once unearth the foxes," said he, "and we will hunt them all over France." ¹⁵

Such was the brief and terrible program of the duke for purging France of the Huguenot heresy. Where today stood the fair city of Orleans, tomorrow would be seen only a blackened heap; and wherever this leprosy had spread, thither, all over France, would the duke pursue it with fire and sword, and never rest till it was burned out. A whole hecatomb of cities, provinces, and men would grace the obsequies of Huguenotism.

The duke had gone to the trenches to see that all was ready for the assault that was to give Orleans to him on the morrow. Of all that he had ordered to be done, nothing had been omitted. Well pleased the duke was returning along the road to his chateau in the evening twilight. Behind him was the city of Orleans, the broad and deep Loire rolling beneath its walls, and the peaceful darkness gathering round its towers. Alas! before another sun shall set, there will not be left in that city anything in which is the breath of life. The blood of mother and helpless babe, of stern warrior, grey patriarch, and blooming maiden, will be blent in one red torrent, which shall rival the Loire in depth. It is a great sacrifice, but one demanded for the salvation of France. By the side of the road, partly hidden by two walnut-trees that grow on the spot, sits a figure on horseback, waiting for the approach of some one. He hears the sound of horses' hoofs. It is the duke that is coming; he knows him by his white plume; he permits him to pass, then slipping up close behind him, discharges his pistol. The ball entered the right shoulder of the duke-for he wore no cuirass-and passed through the chest. The duke bent for a moment upon his horse's mane, but instantly resuming his erect

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¹⁴Laval, volume 2, p. 234.

¹⁵Felice, volume 1, p. 166.

position in the saddle, he declared his belief that the wound was slight, and added good-humoredly, "They owed me this." It was soon seen, however, that the wound was mortal, and his attendants crowding round him, carried him to his house, and laid him on the bed from which he was to rise no more.

The assassin was John Poltrot, a petty nobleman of Angoumois, whom the duke's butcheries, and his own privations, had worked up into a fanaticism as sincere and as criminal as that of the duke himself. The horror of the crime seems to have bewildered him, for instead of making his escape on his fine Spanish horse, he rode round and round the spot where the deed had been done, all night,¹⁶ and when morning broke he was apprehended. He at first charged Coligny with being privy to the murder, and afterwards denied it. The admiral indignantly repudiated the accusation, and demanded to be confronted with Poltrot.¹⁷ The Government hurried on the execution of the assassin, and thus showed its disbelief in the charge he had advanced against Coligny, by preventing the opportunity of authenticating an allegation which, had they been able to substantiate it, would have done much to bring strength and credit to their cause, and in the same proportion to disgrace and damage that of the Huguenots.

We return to the duke, who was now fast approaching his latter end. Death set some things in a new light. His belief in Roman Catholicism it did not shake, but it filled him with remorse for the cruel measures by which he had endeavored to support it. He forgave his enemies, he asked that his blood might not be revenged, he confessed his infidelities to his duchess,¹⁸ who stood beside him dissolved in tears, and he earnestly counselled Catherine de Medici to make peace with the Huguenots, saying "that it was so necessary, that whoever should oppose it ought to be deemed an impious man, and an enemy to the king and the kingdom."¹⁹ The death of the Duke of Guise redeems somewhat the many dark passages in his life, and the sorrow into which he was melted at his latter end moderates the horror we feel at his bigotry and the cruel excesses into which

¹⁶Laval, volume 2, pp. 237, 238.

¹⁷Mem. de Conde, tom. 1, p. 125.

¹⁸Guizot, volume 3, p. 339.

¹⁹Thaun., Hist., lib. 34, p. 234. Laval, volume 2, p. 235.

it hurried him. But it more concerns us to note that he died at the moment when he had attained that proud summit he had long striven to reach. He was sole Triumvir: he was at the head of the army: all the powers of government were gathered into his single hand: Huguenotism was at his feet: his arm was raised to crush it, when, in the words of Pasquier, his "horn was lowered."

The death of the Duke of Guise threw the government into the hands of Catherine de Medici. It was now that this woman, whom death seemed ever to serve, reached the summit of her wishes. Her son, Charles IX, reigned, but the mother governed. In presence of the duke's bier, Catherine was not indisposed to peace with the Protestants, but it was of her nature to work crookedly in all that she undertook. She had the Prince of Conde in the Louvre with her, and she set herself to weave her toils around him. Taken prisoner on the battle-field, as we have already said, "he was breathing," says Hezeray, "the soft air of the court," and the Queen-mother made haste to conclude the negotiations for peace before Coligny should arrive, who might not be so pliant as Conde. The prince had a conference with several of the Protestant ministers, who were unanimously of opinion that no peace could be satisfactory or honorable unless it restored, without restriction or modification, the Edict of January, which gave to all the Reformed in France the liberty of public worship. The Queen-mother and Conde, however, patched up a Pacification of a different kind. They agreed on a treaty, of which the leading provisions were that the nobles should have liberty to celebrate the Reformed worship in their castles, that the same privilege should be granted to certain of the gentry, and that a place should be set apart in certain only of the towns, where the Protestants might meet for worship. This arrangement came far short of the Edict of January, which knew no restriction of class or place in the matter of worship, but extended toleration to all the subjects of the realm. This new treaty did nothing for the pastors: it did nothing for the great body of the people, save that it did not hinder them from holding opinions in their own breasts, and celebrating, it might be, their worship at their own firesides. This peace was signed by the king at Ambose on the 19th April, 1563; it was published before the camp at Orleans on the 22nd, amid the murmurs of the soldiers, who gave vent to their displeasure by the demolition of

some images which, till that time, had been permitted to repose quietly in their niches. ²⁰ This edict was termed the “Pacification of Amboise.” When the Admiral de Coligny was told of it he said indignantly, “This stroke of the pen has ruined more churches than our enemies could have knocked down in ten years.” ²¹ Returning by forced marches to Orleans in the hope of finding better terms, Coligny arrived just the day after the treaty had been signed and sealed.

Such was the issue of the first Huguenot war. If the Protestants had won no victory on the battle-field, their cause nevertheless was in a far stronger position now than when the campaign opened. The Triumvirs were gone; the Roman Catholic armies were without a leader, and the national exchequer was empty; while, on the other side, at the head of the Huguenot host was now the most skillful captain of his age. If the Huguenot nobles had had the wisdom and the courage to demand full toleration of their worship, the Government would not have dared to refuse it, seeing they were not in circumstances at the time to do so; but the Protestants were not true to themselves at this crisis, and so the hour passed, and with it all the golden opportunities it had brought. New enemies stood up, and new tempests darkened the sky of France.

²⁰Laval, volume 2, p. 255.

²¹Fe1ice, volume 1. p. 169.

Chapter 10 : Catherine de Medici and her Son, Charles IX- Conference at Bayonne-The St. Bartholomew Massacre Plotted

The Peace Satisfactory to Neither Party-Catherine de Medici comes to the Front-The Dance of Death at the Louvre-What will Catherine's Policy be-the Sword or the Olive-branch?-Charles IX-His Training-A Royal Progress-Iconoclast Outrages-Indignation of Charles IX-The Envoys of the Duke of Savoy and the Pope- Bayonne-Its Chateau-Nocturnal Interviews between Catherine de Medici and the Duke of Alva-Agreed to Exterminate the Protestants of France and England-Testimony of Davila-of Tavannes-of Maimbourg-Plot to be Executed at Moulins, 1566-Postponed

Picture: Charles IX.

Picture: View of Bayonne.

The Pacification of Amboise (1563) closed the first Huguenot war. That arrangement was satisfactory to neither party. The Protestants it did not content; for manifestly it was not an advance but a retrogression. That toleration which the previous Edict of January had extended over the whole kingdom, the Pacification of Amboise restricted to certain bodies, and to particular localities. The Huguenots could not understand the principle on which such an arrangement was based. If liberty of worship was wrong, they reasoned, why permit it in any part of France? but if right, as the edict seemed to grant, it ought to be declared lawful, not in a few cities only, but in all the towns of the kingdom.

Besides, the observance of the Amboise edict was obviously impracticable. Were nine-tenths of the Protestants to abstain altogether from public worship? This they must do under the present law, or undertake a journey of fifty or, it might be, a hundred miles to the nearest privileged city. A law that makes itself ridiculous courts contempt, and provokes to disobedience.

Moreover, the Pacification of Amboise was scarcely more to the taste of the Romanists. The concessions it made to the Huguenots, although miserable in the extreme, and accompanied by restrictions that made them a mockery, were yet, in the opinion of zealous Papists, far too great to be made to men to whom it was sinful to make any concession at all. On both sides, therefore, the measure was simply unworkable; perhaps it never was intended by its devisers to be anything else. In places where they were numerous, the Protestants altogether disregarded it, assembling in thousands and worshipping openly, just as though no Pacification existed. And the Roman Catholics on their part assailed with violence the assemblies of the Reformed, even in those places which had been set apart by law for the celebration of their worship; thus neither party accepted the arrangement as a final one. Both felt that they must yet look one another in the face on the battle-field; but the Roman Catholics were not ready to un-sheathe the sword, and so for a brief space there was quiet—a suspension of hostilities if not peace.

It was now that the star of Catherine de Medici rose so triumphantly into the ascendant. The clouds which had obscured its luster hitherto were all dispelled, and it blazed forth in baleful splendor in the firmament of France. It was thirty years since Catherine, borne over the waters of the Mediterranean in the gaily-decked galleys of Pisa, entered the port of Marseilles, amid the roar of cannon and the shouts of assembled thousands, to give her hand in marriage to the second son of the King of France. She was then a girl of sixteen, radiant as the country from which she came, her eyes all fire, her face all smiles, a strange witchery in her every look and movement; but in contrast with these fascinations of person was her soul, which was encompassed with a gloomy superstition, that might more fittingly be styled a necromancy than a faith. She came with a determined purpose of making the proud realm on which she had just stepped bow to her will, and minister to her pleasures, although it should be by sinking it into a gulf of pollution or drowning it in an ocean of blood. Thirty years had she waited, foreseeing the goal afar off, and patiently bending to obstacles she had not the power summarily to annihilate.

Death had been the steady and faithful ally of this extraordinary woman. Often had he visited the Louvre since the daughter of the

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~~House of Medici came to live under its roof; and each visit had~~
advanced the Florentine a stage on her way to power. First, the death of the Dauphin—who left no child—opened her way to the throne. Then the death of her father-in-law, Francis I, placed her on that throne by the side of Henry II. She had the crown, but not yet the kingdom; for Diana of Poitiers, as the mistress, more than divided the influence which ought to have been Catherine's as the wife. The death of her husband took that humiliating impediment out of her way. But Mary Stuart, the niece of the Guises, and the wife of the weak-minded Francis II, profited by the imbecility through which Catherine had hoped to govern. Death, however, removed this obstacle, as he had done every previous one, by striking down Francis II only seventeen short months after he had ascended the throne. Once more there stood up another rival, and Catherine had still to wait. Now it was that the Triumvirate rose and grasped with powerful hand the direction of France, Was the patience of the Italian woman to be always baulked? No: Death came again to her help. The fortune of battle and the pistol of the assassin rid her of the Triumvirate.

The Duke of Guise was dead: rival to her power there no longer existed. The way so long barred was open now, and Cathelqne boldly placed herself at the head of affairs; and this position she continued to hold, with increasing calamity to France and deepening infamy to herself, till almost her last hour. This long delay, although it appeared to be adverse, was in reality in favor of the Queen-mother. If it gave her power late, it gave it her all the more securely. When her hour at last came, it found her in the full maturity of her faculties. She had had time to study, not only individual men, but all the parties into which France was divided. She had a perfect comprehension of the genius and temper of the nation. Consummate mistress of an art not difficult of attainment to an Italian—the art of dissembling—with an admirable intellect for intrigue, with sense enough not to scheme too finely, and with a patience long trained in the school of waiting, and not so likely to hurry on measures till they were fully ripened, it was hardly possible but that the daughter of the Medici would show herself equal to any emergency, and would leave behind her a monument which should tell the France of after times that Catherine de Medici had once governed it.

Standing as she now did on the summit, it was natural that Catherine should look around her, and warily choose the part she was to play. She had outlived all her rivals at court, and the Huguenots were now the only party she had to fear. Should she, after the example of the Guises, continue to pursue them with the sword, or should she hold out to them the olive-branch? Catherine felt that she never could be one with the Huguenots. That would imply a breach with all the traditions of her house, and a change in the whole habits of her life, which was not to be thought of. Nor could she permit France to embrace the Protestant creed, for the country would thus descend in the scale of nations, and would embroil itself in a war with Italy and Spain. But, on the other side, there were several serious considerations which had to be looked at. The Huguenots were a powerful party; their faith was spreading in France; their counsels were guided and their armies were led by the men of the greatest character and intellect in the nation. Moreover, they had friends in Germany and England, who were not likely to look quietly on while they were being crushed by arms. To continue the war seemed very unadvisable. Catherine had no general able to cope with Coligny, and it was uncertain on which side victory might ultimately declare itself. The Huguenot army was inferior in numbers to that of the Roman Catholics, but it surpassed it in bravery, in devotion, and discipline; and the longer the conflict lasted, the more numerous the soldiers that flocked to the Huguenot standard.

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It was tolerably clear that Catherine must conciliate the Protestants, yet all the while she must labor to diminish their numbers, to weaken their influence, and curtail their privileges, in the hope that at some convenient moment, which future years might bring, she might be able to fall upon them and cut them off, either by sudden war or by secret massacre. Doubtless what she now sketched was a policy of a general kind: content to fix its great outlines, and leave its details to be filled in afterwards, as circumstances might arise and opportunity offer. Accordingly, the Huguenots had gracious looks and soft words, but no substantial benefits, from the Queen-mother. There was a truce to open hostilities; but blood was flowing all the time. Private murder stalked through France; and short as the period was since the Pacification had been signed, not fewer than three thousand Huguenots had fallen by the poignard of the assassin. In

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truth, there was no longer in France only one nation. There were now two nations on its soil. The perfidy and wrong which had marked the whole policy of the court had so deeply parted the Huguenot and Romanist, that not the hope only, but the wish for conciliation had passed away. The part Catherine de Medici had imposed upon herself-of standing well with both, and holding the poise between the two, yet ever making the preponderance of encouragement and favor to fall on the Roman Catholic side-was an extremely difficult one; but her Italian nature and her discipline of thirty years made the task, which to another would have been impossible, to her comparatively easy.

Her first care was to mould her son, Charles IX, into her own likeness, and fit him for being an instrument, pliant and expert, for her purposes. Intellectually he was superior to his brother Francis II, who during his short reign had been treated by both wife and mother as an imbecile, and when dead was buried like a pauper. Charles IX is said to have discovered something of the literary taste and aesthetic appreciation which were the redeeming features in the character of his grandfather Francis I. In happier circumstances he might have become a patron of the arts, and have found scope for his fitful energy in the hunting-field; but what manly grace or noble quality could flourish in an air so fetid as that of the Louvre? The atmosphere in which he grew up was foul with corruption, impiety, and blood. To fawn on those he mortally disliked, to cover bitter thoughts with sweet smiles and to caress till ready to strike, were the unmanly and un-kingly virtues in which Charles was trained. His mother sent all the way to her own native city of Florence for a man to superintend the education of the prince-Albert Gondi, afterwards created Duke of Retz. Of this man, the historian Brantome has drawn the following character: - "Cunning, corrupt, a liar, a great dissembler, swearing and denying God like a sergeant." Under such a teacher, it is not difficult to conceive what the pupil would become; by no chance could he contract the slightest acquaintance with virtue or honour. What a spectacle we are contemplating! At the head of a great nation is a woman without moral principle, without human pity, without shame: a very tigress, and she is rearing her son as the tigress rears her cubs. Unhappy France, what a dark future begins to project its shadow across thee!

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In the summer of 1565, Catherine and her son made a royal progress through France. A brilliant retinue, composed of the princes of the blood, the great officers of state, the lords and ladies of the court—the dimness of their virtues concealed beneath the splendor of their robes followed in the train of the Queen-mother and the royal scion. The wondering provinces sent out their inhabitants in thousands to gaze on the splendid cavalcade, as it swept comet-like past them. This progress enabled Catherine to judge for herself of the relative strength of the two parties in her dominions, and to shape her measures accordingly. Onward she went from province to province, and from city to city, scattering around her prodigally, yet judiciously, smiles, promises, and frowns; and who knew so well as she when to be gracious, and when to affect a stern displeasure? In those places where the Protestants had avenged upon the stone images the outrages which the Roman Catholics had committed upon living men, Catherine took care to intimate emphatically her disapproval. Her piety was hurt at the sight of the demolition of objects elevated to sacred uses. She took special care that her son's attention should be drawn to those affecting mementoes of Huguenot iconoclast zeal. In some parts monasteries demolished, crosses overturned, images mutilated, offered a spectacle exceedingly depressing to pious souls, and over which the devout and tender-hearted daughter of the Medici could scarcely refrain from shedding tears. How detestable the nature of that religion—so was the king taught to view the matter—which could prompt to acts so atrocious and impious! He felt that his kingdom had been polluted, and he trembled— not with a well-reigned terror like his mother, but a real dread lest God, who had been affronted by these daring acts of sacrilege, should smite France with judgment; for in that age stone statues and crosses, and not divine precepts or moral virtues, were religion. The impression made upon the mind of the young king, especially in the southern provinces, where it seemed as if this impiety had reached its climax in a general sack of holy buildings and sacred furniture, was never, it is said, forgotten by him. It is believed to have inspired his policy in after-years. ¹

¹Davila, lib. 3, p. 147.

—The Queen-mother had another object in view in the progress she was now making. It enabled her, without attracting observation, to gather the sentiments of the neighboring sovereigns on the great question of the age - namely, Protestantism - and to come to a common understanding with them respecting the measures to be adopted for its suppression. The kings of the earth were “plotting against the Lord and his anointed,” and although willingly submitting to the cords with which the chief ruler of the Seven-hilled City had bound them, they were seeking how they might break the bands of that King whom God hath set upon the holy hill of Zion. The great ones of the earth did not understand the Reformation, and trembled before it. A power which the sword could slay would have caused them little uneasiness; but a power which had been smitten with the sword, which had been trodden down by armies, which had been burned at the stake, but which refused to die—a power which the oftener it was defeated the mightier it became, which started up anew to the confusion of its enemies from what appeared to be its grave, was a new thing in the earth. There was a mystery about it which made it a terror to them. They knew not whence it came, nor whereunto it might grow, nor how it was “to be met.” Still the sword was the only weapon they knew to wield, and this caused them to meet often together to consult and plot. The Council of Trent, which had just closed its sittings, had recommended—indeed enjoined—a league among the Roman Catholic sovereigns and States for the forcible suppression of the Reformed opinions; and Philip II of Spain took the lead in this matter, as became his position. His morose and fanatical genius scarcely needed the prompting of the Council. Catherine de Medici was now on her way to meet the envoy of this man, and to agree on a policy which should bind together in a common action the two crowns of Spain and France. Her steps were directed to Bayonne, the south-western extremity of her dominions; but her route thither was circuitous—being so on purpose that she might, under show of mutual congratulations, collect the sentiments of neighboring rulers. As she skirted along by the Savoy Alps, she had an interview with the ambassador of the Duke of Savoy, who carried back Catherine’s good wishes, and other things besides, to his master. At Avignon, the capital of the Papacy when Rome was too turbulent to afford safe residence to her Popes, Catherine halted

to give audience to the Papal legate. She then pushed forward to Bayonne, where she was to meet the Duke of Alva, who, as the spokesman of the then mightiest monarch in Christendom, was a more important personage than the other ambassadors to whom she had already given audience. There a final decision was to be come to.

[579] The royal calvacade now drew nigh that quiet spot on the shores of the Bay of Biscay where, amid flourishing plantations and shrubs of almost tropical luxuriance, and lines of strong forts, nestles the little town of Bayonne-the "good bay"-a name its history has sadly belied. A narrow firth, which terminates in a little bay, admits the waters of the Atlantic within the walls of the town, and permits the ships of friendly Powers to lie under the shelter of its guns. The azure tops of the Pyrenees appearing in the south notify to the traveller that he has almost touched the frontier of Spain. Here, in the chateau which still stands crowning the height on the right of the harbor, Catherine de Medici met the plenipotentiary of Philip

II. ² The King of Spain did not come in person, but sent his wife Elizabeth, the daughter of this same Catherine de Medici, and sister of Charles IX. Along with his queen came Philip's general, the well-known Duke of Alva. This man was inspired with an insane fury against Protestantism, which, meeting a fanaticism equally ferocious on the part of his master, was a link between the two. Alva was the right hand of Philip; he was his counsellor in all evil; and by the

²This chateau has a special and dreadful interest, and as the Author had an opportunity on his way to Spain, in 1869, to examine it, he may here be permitted to sketch the appearance of its exterior. It is situated on a low mound immediately adjoining the city ramparts, hard by the little harbor on which it looks down. The basement storey is loopholed for cannon and musketry, and the upper part is simply a two-story house in the style of the French chateau of the period, with two rows of small windows, with their white jalousies, and a roof of rusty brown tiles. The front is ornamented with two terminating round towers: the whole edifice being what doubtless Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, was in the days of Queen Mary Stuart-that is, a quadrangular building with a castellated front. The place is now a barrack, but the French sentinel at the gate kindly gives permission for the visitor to inspect the interior. It is a small paved court, having a well in the center, shaded by two tall trees, while portions of the wall are clothed with a vine and a few flowering shrubs. Such is the aspect of this old house, neglected now, and abandoned to the occupancy of soldiers, but which in its time has received many a crowned head, and whose chief claim to glory or infamy must lie in this-that it is linked for ever with one of the greatest crimes of an age of great crimes.

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sword of Alva it was that Philip shed those oceans of blood in which he sought to drown Protestantism. Here, in this chateau, the dark sententious Spaniard met the crafty and eloquent Italian woman. Catherine made a covered gallery be constructed in it, that she might visit the duke whenever it suited her without being observed. ³ Their meetings were mostly nocturnal, but as no one was admitted to them, the precise schemes discussed at them, and the plots hatched, must, unless the oaken walls shall speak out, remain secrets till the dread Judgment-day, save in so far as they may be guessed at from the events which flowed from them, and which have found a place on the page of history. It is certain from an expression of Alva's, caught up by the young son of the Queen of Navarre, the future Henry IV-whose sprightliness had won for him a large place in Catherine's affections, and whom she at times permitted to go with her to the duke's apartments, thinking the matters talked of there altogether beyond the boy's capacity-that massacre was mooted at these interviews, and was relied upon as one of the main methods for cleansing Christendom from the heresy of Calvin. The expression has been recorded by all historians with slight verbal differences, but substantial identity. The idea was embodied by the duke in a vulgar but most expressive metaphor- namely, "The head of one salmon is worth that of ten thousand frogs." This expression, occurring as it did in a conversation in which the names of the Protestant leaders figured prominently, explained its meaning sufficiently to the young but precocious Henry of Navarre. He communicated it to the lord who waited upon him. This nobleman sent it in cipher to the prince's mother, Jeanne d'Albret, and by her it was communicated to the heads of Protestantism. All the Protestant chiefs, both in France and Germany, looked upon it as the foreshadowing of some terrible tragedy, hatched in this chateau, between the daughter of the fanatical House of Medici and the sanguinary lieutenant of Philip II. Retained meanwhile in the darkness of these two bosoms, and it might be of one or two others, the secret was destined to write itself one day on the face of Europe in characters of blood; whispered in the deep stillness of these oaken chambers, it was soon to break in a thunder-crash upon the world, and roll its dread reverberations

³De Thou, livr. 37 (volume 5, p. 35).

along history's page till the end of time. This, in all probability, was what was resolved upon at these conferences at Bayonne. The conspirators did not plan a particular massacre, to come off on a particular day of a particular year; what they agreed upon was rather a policy towards the Protestants of treachery and murder, which however, should circumstances favor, might any day explode in a catastrophe of European dimensions.

"The Queen of Spain," says Davila, narrating the meeting at Bayonne, "being come to this place, accompanied with the Duke of Alva and the Count de Beneventa, whilst they made show with triumphs, tournaments, and several kinds of pastimes, as if they had in eye nothing but amusement and feasting, there was held a secret conference in order to arrive at a mutual understanding between the two crowns. Their common interest being weighed and considered, they agreed in this, that it was expedient for one king to aid and assist the other in pacifying their States and purging them from diversity of religions. But they were not of the same opinion as to the way that was most expeditious and secure for arriving at this end... The duke said that a prince could not do a thing more unworthy or prejudicial to himself than to permit liberty of conscience to his people, bringing as many varieties of religion into a State as there are fancies in the minds of men; that diversities of opinion never faded to put subjects in arms, and stir up grievous treacheries and rebellions; therefore, he concluded that they ought by severe remedies, no matter whether by fire or sword, to cut away the roots of that evil." ⁴

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The historian says that the Queen-mother was inclined to milder measures, in the first place, being indisposed to embroil her hands in the blood of the royal family, and of the great lords of the kingdom, and that she would reserve this as the last resort. "Both parties," says he, "aimed at the destruction of the Huguenots, and the establishment of obedience. Wherefore, at last they came to this conclusion, that the one king should aid the other either covertly or openly, as might be thought most conducive to the execution of so difficult and so weighty an enterprise, but that both of them should be free to work

⁴Ibid., lib. 3, p. 146.

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by such means and counsels as appeared to them most proper and
seasonable.” ⁵

Tavannes, whose testimony is above suspicion, confirms the statement of Davila. “The Kings of France and Spain at Bayonne,” says he in his Memoires, “through the instrumentality of the Duke of Alva, resolved on the destruction of the Huguenots of France and Spain.” ⁶ Maimbourg reiterates the same thing. “The two kings came to an agreement,” says he, “to exterminate all the Protestants in their dominions.” ⁷

The massacre, it is now believed, was to have been executed in the year following (1566) at the Assembly of Notables at Moulins. But meanwhile the dark secret of Bayonne had oozed out in so many quarters, that Conde and Coligny could not with prudence disregard it, and though they came, with their confederates, to Moulins, in obedience to the royal summons, they were so well armed that Catherine de Medici durst not attempt her grand stroke.

⁵Ibid., lib. 3, p. 146.

⁶Mem. de Tavannes, p. 282.

⁷Maimbourg, Hist. du Calvinisme, livr. 5, p. 354.

Chapter 11 : Second and Third Huguenot Wars

Peace of Longjumeau-Second Huguenot War-Its One Battle-A Peace which is not Peace—Third Huguenot War-Conspiracy-An Incident -Protestant Chiefs at La Rochelle-Joined by the Queen of Navarre and the Prince of Bearn-Battle of Jarnac-Death of the Prince of Conde- Heroism of Jeanne d’Albret-Disaster at Montcontour—A Dark Night -Misfortunes of Coligny-His Sublimity of Soul

Picture: Cradle of Henry Prince of Bearn (afterwards Henry IV.), in the Castle of Pau.

Picture: Jeanne d’Albret Queen of Navarre Addressing the Huguenot Soldiers.

We return to the consideration of the condition of the Protestants of France. The Pacification of Amboise, imperfect from the first, was now flagrantly violated. The worshipping assemblies of the Protestants were dispersed, their persons murdered, their ministers banished or silenced; and for these wrongs they could obtain no redress. The iron circle was continually narrowing around them. Were they to sit still until they were inextricably enfolded and crushed? No; they must again draw the sword.

The court brought matters to extremity by hiring 6,000 Swiss mercenaries. On hearing of this, the Prince de Conde held a consultation with the Huguenot chiefs. Opinions were divided. Coligny advised a little longer delay. “I see perfectly well,” said he, “how we may light the fire, but I do not see the water to put it out.” His brother D’Andelot counselled instant action. “If you wait,” he exclaimed, “till you are driven into banishment in foreign countries, bound in prisons, hunted doom by the mob, of what avail, will our patience be? Those who have brought 6,000 foreign soldiers to our very hearths have thereby declared war already.” Conde and Coligny went to the Queen to entreat that justice might be done the Reformed. Catherine was deaf to their appeal. They next-acting on a

precedent set them by the Duke of Guise five years before-attempted to seize the persons of the King and Queen-mother, at their Castle of Monceaux, in Brie. The plot being discovered, the court saved itself by a hasty flight. The Swiss had not yet arrived, and Catherine, safe again in Paris, amused the Protestants with negotiations. "The free exercise of their religion" was the one ever-reiterated demand of the Huguenots. At last the Swiss arrived, the negotiations were broken off, and now nothing remained but all appeal to arms.

This brings us to the second civil war, which we shall dispatch in a few sentences. The second Huguenot war was a campaign of but one battle, which lasted barely an hour. This affair, styled the Battle of St. Denis, was fought under the walls of Paris, and the field was left in possession of the Huguenots,¹ who offered the royalists battle on the following day, but they declined it, so giving the Protestants the right of claiming the victory. The veteran Montmorency, who had held the high office of Constable of France during four reigns, was among the slain. The Duke of Anjou, the favorite son of Catherine, succeeded him as generalissimo of the French army, and thus the chief authority was still more completely centred in the hands of the Queen-mother. The winter months passed without fighting. When the spring opened, the Protestant forces were so greatly reinforced by auxiliaries from Germany, that the court judged it the wiser part to come to terms with them, and on March 20th, 1568, the short-lived Peace of Longjumeau was signed. "This peace," says Mezeray, "left the Huguenots at the mercy of their enemies, with no other security than the word of an Italian woman."²

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The army under Conde melted away, and then Catherine forgot her promise. All the while the peace lasted, which was only six short months, the Protestants had to endure even greater miseries than if they had been in the field with arms in their hands. Again the pulpits thundered against heresy, again the passions of the mob broke out, again the dagger of the assassin was set to work, and the blood of the Huguenots ceased not to flow in all the cities and provinces of France. It is estimated that not fewer than ten thousand persons perished during this short period. The court did nothing to restrain,

¹Davila, lib. 4, p. 168.

²Ibid, lib. 4, pp. 173-175. Mezeray, tom. 5, p. 104.

but much, it is believed, to instigate to these murders. One gets weary of writing so monotonous a recital of outrage and massacre. This bloodshed, it must be acknowledged, was not all confined to one side. Some two hundred Roman Catholics, including several priests, were massacred by the Protestants. This is to be deplored, but it need surprise no one. Of the hundreds of thousands of Huguenots in France, all were not pious men; and further, while these two hundred or so of Romanists were murdered, the Huguenots were perishing in tens of thousands by every variety of cruel death, and of shocking and shameful outrage. There was no justice in the land. The crew that occupied the Louvre, and styled themselves the Government, were there, as the Thug is in his den, to entrap and dispatch his victim. There were men in France doubtless who reasoned that, although the laws of society had fallen, the laws of nature were still in force.

Matters were brought to a head by the discovery of a plot which was to be immediately executed. At a council in the Louvre, it was resolved to seize the two Protestant chiefs, the Prince of Conde and Admiral Coligny- and put them out of the way, by consigning the first to a dungeon for life, and sending the second to the scaffold. The moment they were informed of the plot, the prince and the admiral fled with their wives and children to La Rochelle. The road was long and the journey toilsome. They had to traverse three hundred miles of rough country, obstructed by rivers, and beset by the worse dangers of numerous foes. An incident which befel them by the way touched their hearts deeply, as showing the hand of God. Before them was the Loire-a broad and rapid river. The bridges were watched. How were they to cross? A friendly guide, to whom the by-paths and fords were known, conducted them to the river's banks opposite Sancerre, and at that point the company, amounting to nearly two hundred persons, crossed without inconvenience or risk. They all went over singing the psalm, When Israel went out of Egypt. Two hours after, the heavens blackened, and the rain falling in torrents, the waters of the Loire, which a little before had risen only to their horses' knees, were now swollen, and had become impassable. In a little while they saw their pursuers arrive on the further side of the river; but their progress was stayed by the deep and angry flood, to which they dared not commit themselves.

“Escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers,” the company of Coligny exchanged looks of silent gratitude with one another.³ What remained of their way was gone with lighter heart and nimbler foot; they felt, although they could not see, the Almighty escort that covered them; and so, journeying on, they came at last safely to La Rochelle.

La Rochelle was at this period a great mark of trade. Its inhabitants shared the independence of sentiment which commerce commonly brings in its train, having early embraced the Reformation, the bulk of its inhabitants were by this time Protestants. An impression was abroad that another great crisis impended; and under this belief, too well founded, all the chiefs and captains of the army were repairing with their followers to this stronghold of Huguenotism. We have seen Conde and Coligny arrive here; and soon thereafter came another illustrious visitor—Jeanne d’Albret. The Queen of Navarre did not come alone; she brought with her, her son Henry, Prince of Bearn, whose heroic character was just then beginning to open, and whom his mother, in that dark hour, dedicated to the service of the Protestant cause. This arrival awakened the utmost enthusiasm in La Rochelle among both citizens and soldiers. Conde laid his command of the Huguenot army at the feet of the young Prince of Bearn—magnanimously performing an act which the conventional notions of the age exacted of him, for Henry was nearer the throne than himself. The magnanimity of Conde evoked an equal magnanimity. “No,” said Jeanne d’Albret; “I and my son are here to promote the success of this great enterprise, or to share its disaster. We will joyfully unite beneath the standard of Conde. The cause of God is dearer to me than my son.”

At this juncture the Queen-mother published an edict, revoking the Edict of January, forbidding, on pain of death, the profession of Protestantism, and commanding all ministers to leave the kingdom within a fortnight.⁴ If anything was wanting to complete the justification of the Protestants, in this their third war, it was now supplied. During the winter of 1569, the two armies were frequently in presence of one another; but as often as they essayed to join battle,

³Vie de Coligny, p. 346. Davila, lib. 4, p. 193. Guizot, tom. 3, p. 353.

⁴Davila, lib. 4, p. 196.

storms of unprecedented violence broke out, and the assailants had to bow to the superior force of the elements. At last, on the 15th March, they met on the field of Jarnac. The day was a disastrous one for the Protestants. Taken at unawares, the Huguenot regiments arrived one after the other on the field, and were butchered in detail, the enemy assailing in overwhelming numbers. The Prince of Conde, after performing prodigies of valor, wounded, unhorsed, and fighting desperately on his knees, was slain.⁵ Coligny, judging it hopeless to prolong the carnage, retired with his soldiers from the field; and the result of the day as much elated the court and the Roman Catholics, as it engendered despondency and despair in the hearts of the Protestants.

While the Huguenot army was in this mood-beaten by their adversaries, and in danger of being worse beaten by their fears-the Queen of Navarre suddenly appeared amongst them. Attended by Coligny, she rode along their ranks, having on one hand her son, the Prince of Bearn, and on the other her nephew, Henry, son of the fallen Conde. "Children of God and of France," said she, addressing the soldiers, "Conde is dead; but is all therefore lost? No; the God who gave him courage and strength to fight for this cause, has raised up others worthy to succeed him. To those brave warriors I add my son. Make proof of his valor. Soldiers! I offer you everything I have to give-my dominions, my treasures, my life, and what is dearer to me than all, my children. I swear to defend to my last sigh the holy cause that now unites us!" With these heroic words she breathed her own spirit into the soldiers. They looked up; they stood erect; the fire returned to their eyes. Henry of Navarre was proclaimed general of the army, amid the plaudits of the soldiers; and Coligny and the other chiefs were the first to swear fidelity to the hero, to whom the whole realm was one day to vow allegiance.

Thus the disaster of Jarnac was so far repaired; but a yet deeper reverse awaited the Huguenot arms. The summer which opened so ominously passed without any affair of consequence till the 3rd of October, and then came the fatal battle of Montcontour. It was an inconvenient moment for Coligny to fight, for his German auxiliaries had just mutinied; but no alternative was left him. The Huguenots

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⁵Ibid., lib. 4, p. 211.

rushed with fury into action; but their ranks were broken by the firm phalanxes on which they threw themselves, and before they could rally, a tremendous slaughter had begun, which caused something like a panic amongst them. Coligny was wounded at the very commencement; his lower jaw was broken, and the blood, oozing from the wound and trickling down his throat, all but choked him. Being unable to give the word of command, he was carried out of the battle. A short hour only did the fight rage; but what disasters were crowded into that space of time! Of the 25,000 men whom Coligny had led into action, only 8,000 stood around their standards when it was ended. Ammunition, cannon, baggage, and numerous colors were lost. Again the dark night was closing in around French Protestantism.

As Coligny was being carried out of the field, another litter in which lay a wounded soldier passed him by. The occupant of that other litter was Lestrangle, an old gentleman, and one of the admiral's chief counsellors. Lestrangle, happening to draw aside the curtains and look out, recognised his general. "Yes," said he, brushing away a tear that dimmed his eye—"Yes, God is very sweet." This was all he spoke. It was as if a Divine hand had dropped a cordial into the soul of Coligny. Speaking afterwards to his friends of the incident, he said that these words were as balm to his spirit, then more bruised than his body. There is here a lesson for us-nay, many lessons, though we can particularize only one. We are apt to suppose that those exemplify the highest style of piety, and enjoy most of the Spirit's presence, who are oftenest in the closet engaged in acts of devotion, and that controversy and fighting belong to a lower type of Christianity. There are exceptions, of course; but the rule, we believe, is the opposite. We must distinguish between a contentious lot and a contentious spirit; the former has been assigned to some of the most loving natures, and the most spiritual of men. That is the healthiest piety that best endures the wear and tear of hard work, just as those are the healthiest plants which, in no danger of pining away without the shelter of a hot-house, flourish in the outer air, and grow tall, and strong, and beautiful amid the rains and tempests of the open firmament. So now: breaking through the clouds and dust of the battle-field, a ray from heaven shot into the soul of Coligny.

The admiral had now touched the lowest point of his misfortunes. We have seen him borne out of the battle, vanquished and wounded almost to death. His army lay stretched on the field. The few who had escaped the fate of their comrades were dispirited and mutinous. Death had narrowed the circle of his friends, and of those who remained, some forsook him, and others even blamed him. To crown these multiplied calamities, Catherine de Medici came forward to deal him the coup de grace. At her direction the Parliament of Paris proclaimed him an outlaw, and set a price of 30,000 crowns upon his head. His estates were confiscated, his Castle of Chatillon was burned to the ground, and he was driven forth homeless and friendless. Were his miseries now complete? Not yet. Pius V cursed him as “all infamous, execrable man, if indeed he deserved the name of man.” It was now that Coligny appeared greatest. Furious tempests assailed him from all quarters at once, but he did not bow to their violence. In the presence of defeat, desertion, outlawry, and the bitter taunts and curses of his enemies, his magnanimity remained unsubdued, and his confidence in God unshaken. A glorious triumph yet awaited the cause that was now so low. Perish it could not, and with it he knew would revive his now sore-tarnished name and fame.

He stood upon a rock, and the serenity of soul which he enjoyed, while these tempests were raging at his feet, is finely shown in the letters which at that time he addressed to his children for his wife, the heroic Charlotte Laval, was dead two years, and saw not the evil that came upon her house. “We must follow Jesus Christ,” wrote Coligny (October 16th, 1569), “our Captain, who has marched before us. Men have stripped us of all they could; and if this is still the will of God, we shall be happy, and our condition good, seeing this loss has not happened through any injury we have done to those who have inflicted it, but solely through the hatred they bear toward me, because it has pleased God to make use of me to aid his Church. For the present, it suffices that I admonish and conjure you, in the name of God, to persevere courageously in the study of virtue.”

Chapter 12 : Synod of La Rochelle

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Success as Judged by Man and by God-Coligny's Magnanimous Counsels-A New Huguenot Army-Dismay of the Court-Peace of St. Germain-en-Laye-Terms of Treaty-Perfidiousness-Religion on the Battle-field-Synod of La Rochelle—Numbers and Rank of its Members -It Ratifies the Doctrine and Constitution of the French Church as Settled at its First Synod

Picture: Admiral Gaspard de Coligny.

We left Protestantism in France, and its greatest champion, Admiral de Coligny, reeling under what seemed to be a mortal blow. The Prince of Conde was dead; the battle of Montcontour had been lost; the army mostly lay rotting on the field; and a mere handful of soldiers only remained around the standard of their chief. Many who had befriended the cause till now abandoned it in despair, and such as still remained faithful were greatly disheartened, and counseled submission. Catherine de Medici, as we have seen, thinking that now was the hour of opportunity, hastened to deal what she did not doubt would be the finishing blow to the Protestant cause, and to the man who was preeminently its chief. It was now, in the midst of these misfortunes, that Coligny towered up, and reached the full stature of his moral greatness; and with him, rising from its ashes, soared up anew the Protestant cause.

Success in the eye of the world is one thing; success in the eye of God is another and a different thing. When men are winning battles, and every day adding to the number of their friends, and the greatness of their honoured- "These men," says the world, "are marching on to victory." But when to a cause or to a party there comes defeat after defeat, when friends forsake, and calamities thicken, the world sees nothing but disaster, and prognosticates only ruin. Yet these things may be but the necessary steps to success.

Chastened by these sore dispensations, they who are engaged in the work of God are compelled to turn from man, and to fortify them-

selves by a yet more entire and exclusive reliance on the Almighty. They cleanse themselves from the vitiating stains of flattery and human praise; they purge out the remaining leaven of selfishness; God's Spirit descends in richer influences upon them; the calm of a celestial power fills their souls; they find that they have been cast down in order that they may be lifted up, and that, instead of ruin, which the world's wise men and their own fears had foretold, they are now nearing the goal, and that it is triumph that awaits them. So was it with Protestantism in France at this hour. The disaster which had overtaken it, and in which its enemies saw only ruin, was but the prelude to its vindicating for itself a higher position than it had ever before attained in that nation.

The heads of the Protestant cause and the captains of the army gathered round Admiral de Coligny, after the battle, but with looks so crestfallen, and speaking in tones so desponding, that it was plain they had given up all as lost. Not so Coligny. The last to unsheathe the sword, he would be the last to return it to its scabbard, nor would he abandon the enterprise so long as a single friend was by his side.

"No," said Coligny, in answer to the desponding utterances of the men around him, "all is not lost; nothing is lost; we have lost a battle, it is true; but the burial trenches of Montcontour do not contain all the Huguenots; the Protestants of France have not been conquered; those provinces of the kingdom in which Protestantism has taken the deepest root, and which have but slightly felt the recent reverses, will give us another army." The Protestants of Germany and England, he reminded them, were their friends, and would send them succors; they must not confine their eye to one point, nor permit their imagination to dwell on one defeat; they must embrace in their survey the whole field; they must not count the soldiers of Protestantism, they must weigh its moral and spiritual forces, and, when they had done so, they would see that there was no cause to despair of its triumph. By these magnanimous words Coligny raised the spirit of his friends, and they resolved to continue the struggle. ¹

The result justified the wisdom as well as the courage of the admiral. He made his appeal to the provinces beyond the Loire, where the friends of Protestantism were the most numerous. Kin-

¹Davila, lib. 5, pp. 243,244.

dling into enthusiasm at his call, there flocked to his standard from the mountains of Bearn, from the cities of Dauphine, and the region of the Cevennes, young and stalwart warriors, who promised to defend their faith and liberties till death. ² When the spring opened the brave patriot-chief had another army, more numerous and better disciplined than the one he had lost, ready to take the field and strike another blow. The fatal fields of Jarnac and Montcontour were not to be the grave of French Huguenotism.

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When the winter had passed, and after some encounters with the enemy, which tested the spirit of his army, Coligny judged it best to march direct on Paris, and make terms under the walls of the capital. The bold project was put in instant execution. The tidings that Coligny was approaching struck the Government with consternation. The court, surrendering itself to the pleasant dream that Protestantism lay buried in the gory mounds of its recent battle-fields, had given itself up to those pleasures which ruin, body and soul, those who indulge in them. The court was at its wits' end. Not only was the redoubtable Huguenot chief again in the field, he was on his road to Paris, to demand a reckoning for so many Pacifications broken, and so much blood spilt. The measure which the court adopted to ward off the impending danger was a weak one. They sent the Duke of Anjou-the third son of Catherine de Medici, the same who afterwards ascended the throne under the title of Henry III-with an army of gallants, to stop Coligny's march. The stern faces and heavy blows of the mountain Huguenots drove back the emasculated recruits of Anjou. Coligny continued his advance. A few days more and Paris, surrounded by his Huguenots, would be enduring siege. A council of war was immediately held, attended by the King, the Queen-mother, the Duke of Anjou, and the Cardinal of Lorraine. It was resolved, says Davila, to have recourse to the old shift, that namely of offering peace to the Huguenots.

The peace was granted, Davila tells us-and he well knew the secrets of the court-in the hope "that the foreign troops would be sent out of France, and that artifice and opportunity would enable them to take off the heads of the Protestant faction, when the common

²Fe1ice, volume 1, p. 193.

people would yield, and return to their obedience.”³ This ending of the matter, by “artifice and opportunity,” the historian goes on to remark, had been long kept in view. Catherine de Medici now came to terms with Coligny, the man whom a little time ago she had proclaimed an outlaw, setting a price upon his head; and on the 8th of August, 1570, the Peace of St. Germain-en-Laye was signed.

The terms of that treaty were unexpectedly favorable. Its general basis was an amnesty for all past offenses; the right of the Huguenots to reside in any part of France without being called in question for their religious opinions; liberty of worship in the suburbs of two towns in each province; admissibility of the Protestants to most of the offices of state, and the restoration of all confiscated property. As a guarantee for the faithful execution of the treaty, four cities were put into the hands of the Protestants—La Rochelle, La Charite, Cognac, and Montauban. The torn country had now a little rest; sweet it was for the Huguenots to exchange camps and battle-fields for their peaceful homes. There was one drawback, however, the remembrance of the many Pacifications that had been made only to be broken. This was the third in the space of seven years. Meanwhile the daughter of the Medici held out the olive-branch: but so little was she trusted that none of the Huguenot chiefs presented themselves at court, nor did they even deem themselves secure in their own castles; they retired in a body within the strongly fortified city of La Rochelle.

Davila admits that the Protestants had good grounds for these suspicions. The peace was the gift of the Trojans; and from this time the shadow of the St. Bartholomew massacre begins to darken the historian’s page. “The peace having been concluded and established,” says he, “the stratagem formed in the minds of the king and queen for bringing the principal Huguenots into the net began now to be carried out, and they sought to compass by policy that which had so often been attempted by war, but which had been always found fruitless and dangerous.”⁴ Davila favors us with a glimpse of that policy, which it was hoped would gain what force had not effected. The king “being now come to the age of two-and-twenty,

³Davila, lib. v., p. 253.

⁴Cominciarono ad adoporarsi le machine destinate nell’ animo del Re, edella Reina condurre nella fete i principali Ugonotti.” (Davila, lib. 5, p. 254.)

of a resolute nature, a spirit full of resentment, and above all, an absolute dissembler,” scrupulously observed the treaty, and punished the Roman Catholic mobs for their infractions of it in various places, and strove by “other artifices to lull to sleep the suspicions of Coligny and his friends, to gain their entire confidence, and so draw them to court.” Maimbourg’s testimony, which on this head may be entirely trusted, is to the same effect. “But not to dissemble,” says he, “as the queen did in this treaty, there is every appearance that a peace of this kind was not made in good faith on the part of this princess, who had her concealed design, and who granted such things to the Huguenots only to disarm them, and afterwards to surprise those upon whom she wished to be revenged, and especially the admiral, at the first favorable opportunity she should have for it.”⁵

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When from the stormy era at which we are now arrived—the eighth year of the civil wars—we look back to the calm day-break under Lefevre, we are touched with a tender sorrow, and recall, with the din of battle in our ears, the psalms that the reapers, as they rested at mid-day, were wont to sing on the harvest-fields of Meaux. The light of that day-break continued to wax till the morning had passed into almost noon-day. But with the war came an arrest of this most auspicious progress. Piety decayed on the battle-field, and the evangelization began to retrograde. “Before the wars” says Felice, “proselytism was conducted on a large scale, and embraced whole cities and provinces; peace and freedom allowed of this; afterwards proselytes were few in number, and obtained with difficulty, now many corpses were there heaped up as barriers between the two communions; how many bitter enemies, and cruel remembrances, watched around the two camps to forbid approach.”⁶ Still, if the root of that once noble vine which stretched its branches on the one side to the Pyrenees, and on the other to the English sea, is still in the soil of France, we owe it to the heroes of the Huguenot wars. Different circumstances demand the display of different graces. Psalms and hymns became the first Protestants of France. Strong cries to God, trust in his arm, and strivings unto blood formed the worship of the Huguenots. They were martyrs, though they died in armor. The

⁵Maimbourg, *Hist. du Calvinisme*, lib. 6, p. 453.

⁶Felice, volume 1, pp. 195,196.

former is the lovelier picture, the latter is the grander. In truth, times like those in which Coligny lived, act on the spiritual constitution much as a stern climate acts on the physical. The sickly are dwarfed by it, the robust are nourished into yet greater robustness. The oak that battles with the winds, shows its boughs sorely gnarled, and its trunk sheathed in a bark of iron, but within there flows a current of living sap, which enables it to live and ripen its acorns through a thousand years. And so of the Christian who is exposed to such tempests as those amid which Coligny moved; what his piety loses in point of external grace, it acquires in respect of an internal strength, which is put forth in acts of faith in God, and in deeds of sacrifice and service to man.

Meanwhile the great winds were holden that they might not blow on the vine of France, and during these two tranquil years a synod of the Reformed Church was held at La Rochelle (1571). This synod marks the acme of Protestantism in France. To borrow a figure from classic times, the doors of the temple of Janus were closed; war's banner was furled; and the Huguenots went up to their strong city of La Rochelle, and held their great convocation within its gates. The synod was presided over by Theodore Beza. Calvin was dead, having gone to the grave just as these troubles were darkening over France; but his place was not unworthily filled by his great successor, the learned and eloquent Beza. The synod was attended by the Queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret, who was accompanied by her son, the Prince of Bearn, the future Henry IV. There were present also Henry, the young Prince of Conde; Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France; the Count of Nassau; the flower of the French noblesse; the pastors, now a numerous body; the captains of the army, a great many lay deputies, together with a miscellaneous assemblage composed of the city burghers, the vine-dressers of the plains, and the herdsmen of the hills. They sat day by day to receive accounts of the state of Protestantism in the various provinces, and to concert measures for the building up of the Reformed Church in their native land.

We have already related the meeting of the first synod of the French Protestant Church at Paris, in 1559. At that synod were laid the foundations of the Church's polity; her confession of faith was compiled, and her whole order and organization were settled. Five national synods had assembled in the interval, and this at La

Rochelle was the seventh; but neither at this, nor at the five that preceded it, had any alteration of the least importance been made in the creed or in the constitution of the French Church, as agreed on at its first national synod, in 1559. This assembly, so illustrious for the learning, the rank, and the numbers of its members, set the seal of its approval on what the eleven pastors had done at Paris twelve years before. There is no synod like this at La Rochelle, before or since, in the history of the French Protestant Church. It was a breathing-time, short, but beyond measure refreshing. “The French Church,” says one, “now sat under the apple-tree; God spread a table for her in the presence of her enemies.”

[588] **Chapter 13 : The Promoters of the St. Bartholomew
Massacre**

Theocracy and the Punishment of Heresy-The League-Philip II- Urges Massacre-Position of Catherine de Medici-Hopelessness of Subduing the Huguenots on the Battle-field—Pius V—His Austerities- Fanaticism-Becomes Chief Inquisitor-His Habits as Pope-His Death -Correspondence of Pius V with Charles IX and Catherine de Medici- Massacre distinctly Outlined by the Pope

Picture: View of the Town of Blois.

The ever-memorable Synod of La Rochelle has closed its sittings; the noon of Protestantism in France has been reached; and now we have sadly to chronicle the premature decline of a day that promised to be long and brilliant. Already we are within the dark shadow of a great coming catastrophe.

The springs and causes of the St. Bartholomew Massacre are to be sought for outside the limits of the country in which it was enacted. A great conjunction of principles and politics conspired to give birth to a tragedy which yields in horror to no crime that ever startled the world. The first and primary root of this, as of all similar massacres in Christendom, is the divine vicegerency of the Pope. So long as Christendom is held to be a theocracy, rebellion against the law of its divine monarch, in other words heresy, is and must be justly punishable with death.

[589] But, over and above, action in this special direction had been plotted and solemnly enjoined by the Council of Trent. “Roman Catholic Europe,” says Gaberel, “was to erase Reformed Europe, and proclaim the two principles -the sovereign authority of the kings in political affairs, and the infallibility of the Pope in religious questions. The right of resisting the temporal, and the right of inquiring into the spiritual, were held to be detestable crimes, which the League wished to banish from the world.”¹ At the head of the League was

¹Gaberel, volume 2, p. 311.

Philip II; and the sanguinary ferocity of the King of Spain made the vast zeal of the French court look but as lukewarmness. A massacre was then in progress in the Low Countries, which took doubtless the form of war, but yielded its heaps of corpses almost daily, and which thrills us less than the St. Bartholomew only because, instead of consummating its horrors in one terrible week, it extended them over many dismal years. Philip never ceased to urge on Catherine de Medici and Charles IX to do in France as he was doing in Flanders. These reiterated exhortations were doubtless the more effectual inasmuch as they entirely coincided with what Catherine doubted her truest policy. The hopelessness of overcoming the Huguenots in the field was now becoming very apparent. Three campaigns had been fought, and the position of the Protestants was stronger than at the beginning of the war. No sooner was one Huguenot army defeated and dispersed, than another and a more powerful took the field. The Prince of Conde had fallen, but his place was filled by a chief of equal rank. The court of France had indulged the hope that if the leaders were cut off the people would grow disheartened, and the contest would languish and die out; but the rapidity with which vacancies were supplied, and disasters repaired, at last convinced the King and Queen-mother that these hopes were futile. They must lay their account with a Huguenot ascendancy at an early day, unless they followed the counsels of Philip of Spain and by a sudden and sweeping stroke cut off the whole Huguenot race. But the time and the way, as Catherine told Philip, must be left to herself.

At this great crisis of the Papal affairs-for if Huguenotism had triumphed in France it would have carried its victorious arms over Spain and Italy-a higher authority than even Philip of Spain came forward to counsel the steps to be taken-nay, not to counsel only, but to teach authoritatively what was Duty in the matter, and enjoin the performance of that duty under the highest sanctions, This brings the reigning Pontiff upon the scene, and we shall try and make clear Pope Pius V's connection with the terrible event we are approaching. It will assist us in understanding this part of history, if we permit his biographers to bring before us the man who bore no inconspicuous part in it.

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The St. Bartholomew Massacre was plotted under the Pontificate of Pius V, and enacted under that of his immediate successor,

Gregory XIII. Michael Ghislisri (Pius V) was born in the little town of Bosco, on the plain of Piedmont, in the year 1504. His parents were in humble station. "The genius of the son," says his biographer Gabutius, "fitted him for higher things than the manual labours that occupied his parents. The spirit of God excited him to that mode of life by which he might the more signally serve God and, escaping the snares of earth, attain the heavenly felicity."² He was marked from his earliest years by an austere piety. Making St. Dominic, the founder of the Inquisition, his model, and having, it would seem, a natural predilection for this terrible business, he entered a Dominican convent at the age of fourteen. He obeyed, body and soul, the laws of his order. The poverty which his vow enjoined he rigidly practiced. Of the alms which he collected he did not retain so much as would buy him a cloak for the winter; and he fortified himself against the heats of summer by practising a severe abstinence. He labored to make his fellow-monks renounce their slothful habits, their luxurious meals, and their gay attire, and follow the same severe, mortified, and pious life with himself. If not very successful with them, he continued nevertheless to pursue these austerities himself, and soon his fame spread far and near. He was appointed confessor to the Governor of Milan, and this necessitated an occasional journey of twenty miles, which was always performed on foot, with his wallet on his back.³ On the road he seldom spoke to his companions, "employing his time," says his biographer, "in reciting prayers or meditating on holy things."⁴ His devotion to the Roman See, and the zeal with which he combated Protestantism, recommended him to his superiors, and his advancement was rapid. Of several offices which were now in his choice, he gave his decided preference to that of inquisitor, "from his ardent desire," his biographer tells us, "to exterminate heretics, and extend the Roman Catholic faith." The district including Como and the neighboring towns was committed to his care, and he discharged the duties of this fearful office with such indefatigable, and indeed ferocious zeal, as often to imperil his own life. The Duchy of Milan was then being inoculated with

²De Vita et Rebus Gestis Pii V, Pont. Maz. Auctore Io Antonio Gabutio, Novariensi Presbytero Congregationis Clericorum Regularium S. Pauli. Lib. 1, p. 5; Rome, 1605.

³Ibid., lib. 1, p. 7.

⁴Ibid., lib. 1, p. 8.

“the pernicious and diabolical doctrines,” as Gabutius styles them, of Protestantism; and Michael Ghislieri was pitched upon as the only man fit to cope with the evil. Day and night he perambulated his diocese on the quest for heretics. This was judged too narrow a sphere for an activity so prodigious, and Paul IV, himself one of the greatest of persecutors, nominated Ghislieri to the office of supreme inquisitor. This brought him to Rome; and here, at last, he found a sphere commensurate with the greatness of his zeal. He continued to serve under Pius IV, adding to the congenial office of inquisitor, the scarlet of the cardinalate.⁵ On the death of Pius IV, Ghislieri was elevated to the Popedom, his chief recommendation in the eyes of his supporters, including Cardinal Borromeo and Philip II, being his inextinguishable zeal for the suppression of heresy. Rome was then in the thick of her battle, and Ghislieri was selected as the fittest man to preside over and infuse new rigor into that institution on which she mainly relied for victory. The future life of Pius V justified his elevation. His daily fare was as humble, his clothing as mean, his fasts as frequent, and his household arrangements as economical, now that he wore the tiara, as when he was a simple monk. He rose with the first light, he kneeled long in prayer, and often would he mingle his tears with his supplications; he abounded in alms, he forgot injuries, he was kind to his domestics; he might often be seen with naked feet, and head uncovered, his white beard sweeping his breast, walking in procession, and receiving the reverence of the populace as one of the holiest Popes that had ever trodden the streets of Rome.⁶ But one formidable quality did Pius V conjoin with all this—even an intense, unmitigated detestation of Protestantism, and a fixed, inexorable determination to root it out. In his rapid ascent from post to post, he saw the hand of God conducting him to the summit, that there, wielding all the arms, temporal and spiritual, of Christendom, he might discharge, in one terrible stroke, the concentrated vengeance of the Popedom on the hydra of heresy. Every hour of every day he occupied in the execution of what he believed to be his predestined work. He sent money and soldiers to France to carry on the war against the Huguenots; he addressed continual

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⁵Gabutius, *Vita Pii V*, lib. 1, cap. 5.

⁶*Ibid.*, lib. 6, cap. 13-17.

letters to the kings and bishops of the Popish world, inciting them to yet greater zeal in the slaughter of heretics; ever and anon the cry "To massacre!" was sounded forth from the Vatican; but not a doubt had Pius V that this butchery was well-pleasing to God, and that he himself was the appointed instrument for emptying the vials of wrath upon a system which he regarded as accursed, and believed to be doomed to destruction.

Such was the man who at this era filled the Papal throne. But let us permit Pius V himself to speak. In 1569, the Pope, despairing of overcoming the French heretics in open war, darkly suggests a way more secret and more sure. "Our zeal," says he, in his letter to the Cardinal of Lorraine, "gives us the right of earnestly exhorting and exciting you to use all your influence for procuring a definite and serious adoption of the measure most proper for bringing about the destruction of the implacable enemies of God and the king."⁷ After the victory of Jarnac the French Government acknowledged the help the Pope had given them in winning it, by sending to Rome some Huguenot standards taken on the field, to be displayed in the Lateran. Pius V replied in a strain of exultation, and labored to stimulate the court to immediate and remorseless massacre. "The more the Lord has treated you and me with kindness," so wrote he to Charles IX, "the more you ought to take advantage of the opportunity this victory offers to you for pursuing and destroying all the enemies that still remain; for tearing up entirely all the roots, and even the smallest fibers of the roots, of so terrible and continued an evil. For unless they are radically extirpated, they will be found to shoot up again; and, as it has already happened several times, the mischief will reappear when your majesty least expects it. You will bring this about if no consideration for persons, or worldly things, induces you to spare the enemies of God - who have never spared yourself. For you will not succeed in turning away the wrath of God, except by avenging him rigorously on the wretches who have offended him, by inflicting on them the punishment they have deserved."⁸

These advices, coming from such a quarter were commands, and they could take no practical shape but that of massacre; and

⁷Epp. Pii V a Goubau. The letters of Pius V were published at Antwerp in 1640, by Francis Goubau, Secretary to the Spanish Embassy at Rome.

⁸Epp. Pii V a Goubau. This letter is dated 28th March, 1569.

to make it unmistakable that this was the shape the Pope meant his counsels to take, he proceeds to cite a case in point from Old Testament history.

“Let your majesty take for example, and never lose sight of, what happened to Saul, King of Israel. He had received the orders of God, by the mouth of the prophet Samuel, to fight and to exterminate the infidel Amalekites, in such a way that he should not spare one in any case, or under any pretext. But he did not obey the will and the voice of God... therefore he was deprived of his throne and his life.” If for Saul we read Charles IX, and for the prophet Samuel we substitute Pius V, as the writer clearly intended should be done, what is this but a command addressed to the King of France, on peril of his throne, to massacre all the Huguenots in his realm, without sparing even one? “By this example,” continues the Pope, “God has wished to teach all kings that to neglect the vengeance of outrages done to him is to provoke his wrath and indignation against themselves.”

To Catherine de Medici, Pius V writes in still plainer terms, as if he knew her wolfish nature, as well as her power over her son, promising her the assistance of Heaven if she would pursue the enemies of the Roman Catholic religion “till they are all massacred,⁹ for it is only by the entire extermination of heretics¹⁰ that the Roman Catholic worship can be restored.”¹¹

There follow letters to the Duke of Anjou, and the Cardinal of Lorraine, and another to the king, all breathing the same sanguinary spirit, and enjoining the same inexorability towards the vanquished heretics.¹²

At Bayonne, in 1565, Catherine met the Duke of Alva, as we have already seen, to consult as to the means of ridding France of heretics. “They agreed at last,” says the contemporary historian Adriani, “in the opinion of the Catholic king, that this great blessing could not have accomplishment save by the death of all the chiefs of the Huguenots, and by a new edition, as the saying was, of the

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⁹“Ad internecionem usque.”

¹⁰“Deletis omnibus.”

¹¹Edit. Goubau, livr. 3, p. 136.

¹²These letters are dated 13th April, 1569.

Sicilian Vespers.”¹³ “They decided,” says Guizot, “that the deed should be done at Moulins, in Bourbonnes, whither the king was to return. The execution of it was afterwards deferred to the date of the St. Bartholomew, in 1572, at Paris, because of certain suspicions which had been manifested by the Huguenots, and because it was considered easier and more certain to get them all together at Paris than at Moulins.” This is confirmed by Tavannes, who says: “The Kings of France and of Spain, at Bayonne, assisted by the Duke of Alva, resolved on the destruction of the heretics in France and Flanders.”¹⁴ La Noue in his *Memoires* bears witness to the “resolution taken at Bayonne with the Duke of Alva, to extirpate the Huguenots of France and the beggars of Flanders, which was brought to light by intercepted letters coming from Rome to Spain.”¹⁵

“Catherine de Medici,” says Guizot, “charged Cardinal Santa Croce to assure Pope Pius V ‘that she and her son had nothing more at heart than to get the admiral and all his confidants together some day, and make a massacre [un macello] of them; but the matter,’ she said, ‘was so difficult, that there was no possibility of promising to do it at one time more than at another.’” “De Thou,” adds the historian, “regards all these facts as certain, and after having added some details, he sums them all up in the words, ‘This is what passed at Bayonne in 1565.’”¹⁶

We have it, thus, under the Pope’s own hand, that he enjoined on Charles IX and Catherine de Medici the entire extermination of the French Protestants, on the battle-field if possible; if not, by means more secret and more sure; we have it on contemporary testimony, Popish and Protestant, that this was what was agreed on between Catherine and Alva at Bayonne; and we also find the Queen-mother, through Santa Croce, promising to the Pope, for herself and for her son, to make a massacre of the Huguenots, although, for obvious reasons, she refuses to bind herself to a day. From this time that policy was entered on which was designed to lead up to the grand

¹³Adriani (continuator of Guicciardini) drew his information from the *Journal of Cosmo de Medici*, who died in 1574. (Guizot, volume 3, p. 376.)

¹⁴*Memoires de Tavannes*, p. 282.

¹⁵Guizot, volume 3, p. 376. Noue, *Discours Polit. et Milit.*, p. 65.

¹⁶Guizot, volume 3, pp. 376,377.

denouement so unmistakably shadowed forth in the letters of the Pope, and in the agreement between Alva and Catherine.

Chapter 14 : Negotiations of the Court with the Huguenots

Dissimulation on a Grand Scale—Proposed Expedition to Flanders- The Prince of Orange to be Assisted-The Proposal brings Coligny to Court-The King's Reception of him—Proposed Marriage of the King's Sister with the King of Navarre-Jeanne d'Albret comes to Court—Her Sudden Death-Picture of the French Court-Interview between Charles IX and the Papal Legate-The King's Pledge-His Doublings

Picture: Pope Pius V.

Picture: Coligny, Wounded surrounded by his Friends.

Great difficulties, however, lay in the path of the policy arranged between the Queen-mother and Alva. The first was the deep mistrust which the Protestants cherished of Catherine and Charles IX. Not one honest peace had the French court ever made with them. Far more Protestants had perished by massacre during the currency of the various Pacifications, than had fallen by the sword in times of war. Accordingly, when the Peace of St. Germain-en-Laye was made, the Huguenot chiefs, instead of repairing to court, retired within the strongly fortified town of La Rochelle. They must be drawn out; their suspicions must be lulled to sleep, and their chief men assembled in Paris. This was the point to be first effected, and nothing but patience and consummate craft could achieve it.

No ordinary illusion could blind men who had been so often and so deeply duped already. This the French court saw. A new and grander style of stratagem than any heretofore employed was adopted. Professions, promises, and dignities were profusely lavished upon the Huguenots, but, over and above, great schemes of national policy were projected, reaching into the future, embracing the aggrandisement of France, coinciding with the views of the Huguenot chiefs, and requiring their cooperation in order to their successful execution. This gave an air of sincerity to the professions

of the court which nothing else could have done, for it was thought impossible that men who were cogitating plans so enlightened, were merely contriving a cunning scheme, and weaving a web of guile. But Catherine was aware that she was too well known for anything less astute to deceive the Huguenot leaders. The proposal of the court was that the young King of Navarre should marry Margaret de Valois, the sister of Charles IX, and that an armed intervention should be made in the Low Countries in aid of the Prince of Orange against Philip of Spain, and that Coligny should be placed at the head of the expedition. These were not new ideas. The marriage had been talked of in Henry II's time, while Margaret and Henry of Navarre were yet children; and as regards the intervention in behalf of the Protestants of the Low Countries, that was a project which the Liberal party, which had been forming at the Louvre, headed by Chancellor l'Hopital, had thrown out. They were revived by Catherine as by far her best stratagem: "the King and Queen-mother," says Davila, "imparting their private thoughts only to the Duke of Anjou, the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Duke of Guise, and Alberto Gondi, Count of Retz." ¹

Charles IX instantly dispatched Marshal de Biron to La Rochelle, to negotiate the marriage of his sister with the Prince of Bearn, and to induce his mother, the Queen of Navarre, to repair to court, that the matter might be concluded. The king sent at the same time the Marshal de Cosse to La Rochelle, to broach the project of the Flanders expedition to the Admiral de Coligny, "but in reality," says Sully, "to observe the proceedings of the Calvinists, to sound their thoughts, and to beget in them that confidence which was absolutely necessary for his own designs." ² After the repeated violations of treaties, Pacifications, and oaths on the part of Catherine and her son, it was no easy matter to overcome the deeply-rooted suspicions of men who had so often smarted from the perfidy of the king and his mother. But Catherine and Charles dissembled on this occasion with an adroitness which even they had never shown before. Admiral de Coligny was the first to be won. He was proverbial for his wariness, but, as sometimes happens, he was now conquered on

¹Davila, lib. 5, p. 254.

²Memoires de Sully, tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 28; Londres, 1752.

the point where he was strongest. Setting out from La Rochelle, in despite of the tears and entreaties of his wife, he repaired to Blois (September, 1571), where the court was then residing. On entering the presence of the king, Coligny went on his knee, but Charles raised and embraced him, calling him his father. The return of the warrior to court put him into a transport of joy. "I hold you now," exclaimed the king; "yes, I hold you, and you shall not leave me again; this is the happiest day of my life." "It is remarkable," says the Popish historian Davila, after relating this, "that a king so young should know so perfectly how to dissemble."³ The Queen-mother, the Dukes of Anjou and Alencon, and all the chief nobles of the court, testified the same joy at the admiral's return. The king restored him to his pensions and dignities, admitted him of his council, and on each succeeding visit to the Louvre, loaded him with new and more condescending caresses and flatteries.

Charles IX was at this time often closeted with the admiral. The topic discussed was the expedition to Flanders in aid of William of Orange in his war with Spain. The king listened with great seeming respect to the admiral, and this deference to his sentiments and views, in a matter that lay so near his heart, inspired Coligny doubtless with the confidence he now began to feel in Charles, and the hopes he cherished that the king was beginning to see that there was something nobler for himself than the profligacies in which his mother, for her own vile ends, had reared him, and nobler for France than to be dragged, for the Pope's pleasure, at the chariot-wheel of Spain. The admiral would thus be able to render signal service to Protestantism in all the countries of Europe, as well as rescue France from the gulf into which it was fast descending; and this hope made him deaf to the warnings, which every day he was receiving from friends, that a great treachery was meditated. And when these warnings were reiterated, louder and plainer, they only drew forth from Coligny, who longed for peace as they only long for it who have often gazed upon the horrors of the stricken field, protestations that rather would he risk massacre - rather would he be dragged as a corpse through the streets of Paris, than rekindle the flames of civil

³Davila, lib. 5, p. 262.

war, and forego the hope of detaching his country from the Spanish alliance.

The admiral, having been completely gained over, used his influence to win Jeanne d'Albret to a like confidence. Ever as the marriage of her son to the daughter of Catherine de Medici was spoken of, a vague but dreadful foreboding oppressed her. She knew how brilliant was the match, and what important consequences might flow from it. It might lead her son up the steps of the throne of France, and that would be tantamount to the establishment of Protestantism in that great kingdom; nevertheless she could not conquer her instinctive recoil from the union. It was a dreadful family to marry into, and she trembled for the principles and the morals of her son. Perefice, afterwards Archbishop of Paris, who cannot be suspected of having made the picture darker than the reality, paints the condition of the French court in one brief but terrible sentence. He says that "impiety, atheism, necromancy, most horrible pollutions, black cowardice, perfidy, poisonings, and assassinations reigned there in a supreme degree." But Catherine de Medici urged and re-urged her invitations. "Satisfy," she wrote to the Queen of Navarre, "the extreme desire we have to see you in this company; you will be loved and honoured therein as accords with reason, and what you are." At last Jeanne d'Albret gave her consent to the marriage, and visited the court at Blois in March, 1572, to arrange preliminaries. The Queen-mother but trifled with and insulted her after she did come. Jeanne wrote to her son that she could make no progress in the affair which had brought her to court. She returned to Paris in the beginning of June. She had not been more than ten days at court, when she sickened and died. The general belief, in which Davila and other Popish historians concur, was that she died of subtle poison, which acted on the brain alone, and which exuded from certain gloves that had been presented to her. This suspicion was but natural, nevertheless we are inclined to think that a more likely cause was the anxiety and agitation of mind she was then enduring, and which brought on a fever, of which she died on the fifth day.⁴ She was but little cared for during her illness, and after death her

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⁴Davila, lib. 5, p. 266. Davila says that she died on the fourth day. Sully says, "le cinquieme jour de sa maladie," and that the reputed poisoner was a Florentine named Rene. perfumer to the Queen-mother. (Memoires, tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 53.)

[595] corpse was treated with studied neglect. “This,” says Davila, “was
[596] the first thunderbolt of the great tempest.”

The king was dissembling so perfectly that he awakened the suspicions of the Papists. Profound secrecy was absolutely necessary to the success of the plot, and accordingly it was disclosed, in its details, to only two or three whose help was essential to its execution. Meanwhile the admirable acting of the king stumbled the Romanists: it was so like sincerity that they thought it not impossible that it might turn out to be so, and that themselves and not the Huguenots would be the victims of the drama now in progress. The courtiers murmured, the priests were indignant, the populace expected every day to see Charles go over to the “religion;” and neither the Pope nor the King of Spain could comprehend why the king was so bent on marrying his sister to the son of the Protestant Queen of Navarre. That, said the direct and terrible Pius V, was to unite light and darkness, and to join in concord God and Belial. Meanwhile, Charles IX, who could not drop the mask but at the risk of spoiling all, contemplated with a certain pride the perfection of his own dissimulation. “Ah, well,” said he one evening to his mother, “do I not play my role well?” “Yes, very well, my son,” replied Catherine, “but it is nothing if it is not maintained to the end.”⁵ And Charles did maintain it to the end, and even after the St. Bartholomew, for he was fond of saying with a laugh, “My big sister Margot caught all these Huguenot rebels in the bird-catching style. What has grieved me most is being obliged to dissimulate so long.”⁶

The marriage, we have said, was the hinge on which the whole plot turned; for ordinary artifices would never have enabled Catherine and Charles to deceive on a great scale. But Pius V either did not quite comprehend this, or he disapproved of it as a means of bringing about the massacre, for he sent his legate, Cardinal Alexandrino, to Paris to protest against the union. At his interview with the legate, Charles IX pleaded the distractions of his kingdom, and the exhaustion of his treasury, as his reasons for resorting to the marriage rather than continuing the civil wars. But these excuses the

⁵Sully, tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 36.

⁶Guizot, volume 3, p. 380.

legate would not accept as sufficient. "You are in the right," replied Charles. "And if I had any other means of taking vengeance on my enemies, I would never consent to this marriage; but I can find no other way." And he concluded by bidding the legate assure the Pope that all he was doing was with the best intention, and for the aggrandizement of the Roman Catholic religion; and taking a valuable ring from his finger he offered it to Alexandrino as "a pledge of his indefectible obedience to the 'Holy See,' and his resolution to implement whatever he had promised to do in opposition to the impiety of these wicked men."⁷ The legate declined the ring on the pretext that the word of so great a king was enough. Nevertheless, after the massacre, Charles IX sent the ring to Rome, with the words *ne pietas possit mea sanguine salvi engraven* upon it. Clement VIII, who was auditor and companion to Alexandrino on his mission to France, afterwards told Cardinal d'Ossat that when the news of the St. Bartholomew Massacre reached Rome, the cardinal exclaimed in transport of joy, "Praise be to God, the King of France has kept his word with me!"⁸

Action was at the same time taken in the matter of supporting the Protestant war in the Low Countries, for the dissimulation had to be maintained in both its branches. A body of Huguenot soldiers, in which a few Papists were mingled, was raised, placed under Senlis, a comrade of Coligny's in faith and arms, and dispatched to the aid of William of Orange. Senlis had an interview with Charles IX before setting out, and received from him money and encouragement. But the same court that sent this regiment to fight against the Duke of Alva, sent secret information to the duke which enabled him to surprise the Protestant soldiers on the march, and cut them in pieces. "I have in my hands," wrote the Duke of Alva to his master, Philip II, "a letter from the King of France, which would strike you dumb if you were to see it; for the moment it is expedient to say

⁷Gabutius, *Vita Pii V*, lib. 4, cap. 10, p. 150; Romae, 1605.

⁸Lettr. d'Ossat a Roma, 1599. Besides the letters of Cardinal d'Ossat, ambassador of Henry IV at Rome, which place the facts given in the text beyond all reasonable doubt, there is also the work of Camillo Capilupi, published at Rome in October, 1572, entitled, *Lo Stratagemma di Carolo IX, Re di Francia, contra gli Ugonotti rebelli di Dio et suoi*: descritto dal Signor Camillo Capilupi. See also Mendham. *Life of Pius V*, pp. 184-187; Lond., 1832.

nothing about it.”⁹ Another piece of equal dissimulation did Charles IX practice about this time. The little Party at the French court which was opposed to the Spanish alliance, and in the same measure favored the success of William of Orange in Flanders, was headed by the Chancellor l’Hopital. At the very time that Charles IX was making Coligny believe that he had become a convert to that plan, Chancellor l’Hopital was deprived of the seals, and banished from court.¹⁰

The inconsistencies and doublings of Charles IX. are just enough to give some little color to a theory which has found some advocates - namely, that the St. Bartholomew Massacre was unpremeditated, and that it was a sudden and violent resolve on the part of Catherine de Medici and the Guises, to prevent the king yielding to the influence of Admiral de Coligny, and putting himself at the head of a Huguenot crusade in favor of Protestantism.¹¹ Verily there never was much danger of this; but though the hesitations of Charles impart some feasibility to the theory, they give it no solid weight whatever. All the historians, Popish and Protestant, who lived nearest the time, and who took every care to inform themselves, with one consent declare that the massacre was premeditated and arranged. It had its origination in the courts of Paris, Madrid, and the Vatican. A chain of well-established facts conducts us to this conclusion. Most of

⁹Guizot, volume 3, p. 383.

¹⁰Sully, tom. 1, livr. 1, pp. 37,38.

¹¹The Abbe Anquetil was the first, or among the first, to propound this theory of the massacre in the interests of the Church of Rome. He lays the blame entirely on Catherine, who was alarmed at the confidence her son placed in the admiral. The same theory has since been elaborately set forth by others, especially by the historian Lingard. The main evidence on which it rests is the statement of the Duke of Anjou to his physician Miron, on his journey to Poland, which first appeared in the *Memoires d’Etat de Villeroy*. That statement is exceedingly apocryphal. There is no proof that it ever was made by Anjou. The same is to be said of the reported conversation of Charles IX with his mother on their return from visiting Coligny. It is so improbable that we cannot believe it. Opposed to these we have the clear and decided testimony of all contemporary historians, Popish and Protestant, confirmed by a hundred facts. The interior mechanism of the plot is shrouded in mystery, but the result establishes premeditation. The several parts of this plan all coincide: each piece falls into its place, each actor does his part, and the one end aimed at is effected, so that we no more can doubt pre-arrangement than, to use Paley’s illustration, we can doubt design when we see a watch. If farther it is asked, Who is the arranger in this case? the argument of *Cui bono?* leaves only one answer possible.

these have already come before us, but some of them yet remain to be told. But even irrespective of these facts, looking at the age, at Charles IX., and at the state of Christendom, can any man believe that the King of France should have seriously contemplated, as he must have done if his

994 professions to the Huguenots were sincere, not only proclaiming toleration in France, but becoming the head of an armed European confederation in behalf of Protestantism? This is wholly inconceivable.

Chapter 15 : The Marriage, and Preparations for the Massacre

Auguries-The King of Navarre and his Companions arrive in Paris- The Marriage-The Rejoicings-Character of Pius V-The Admiral Shot- The King and Court Visit him-Behavior of the King-Davila on the Plot -The City-gates Closed-Troops introduced into Paris-The Huguenot Quarter Surrounded-Charles IX Hesitates-Interview between him and his Mother-Should Navarre and Conde be Massacred?

The Queen of Navarre, the magnanimous Jeanne d'Albret, was dead; moreover, news had reached Paris that the Protestant troop which had set out to assist the Prince of Orange had been overpowered and slain on the road; and further, the great advocate of toleration, L'Hopital, dismissed from office, had been banished to his country-seat of Vignay. All was going amiss, save the promises and protests of the King and the Queen-mother, and these were growing louder and more emphatic every day. Some of the Huguenots, alarmed by these suspicious occurrences, were escaping from the city, others were giving expression to their fears in prognostications of evil. The Baron de Rosny, father of the celebrated Duke of Sully, said that "if the marriage took place at Paris the wedding favours would be crimson."¹ In the midst of all this the preparations for the marriage went rapidly on.

[598] The King of Navarre arrived in Paris in deep mourning, "attended by eight hundred gentlemen all likewise in mourning." "But," says Margaret de Valois herself, "the nuptials took place a few days afterwards, with such triumph and magnificence as none others of my quality; the King of Navarre and his troop having changed their mourning for very rich and fine clothes, and I being dressed royally, with crown and corset of tufted ermine, all blazing with crown jewels, and the grand blue mantle with a train four ells long, borne by

¹Sully, tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 43.

three princesses, the people choking one another down below to see us pass.”² The marriage was celebrated on the 18th of August by the Cardinal of Bourbon, in a pavilion erected in front of the principal entrance of Notre Dame. When asked if she accepted Henry of Navarre as her husband, Margaret, it is said, remained silent;³ whereupon the king, putting his hand upon her head, bent it downward, which being interpreted as consent, the ceremony went on. When it was over, the bride and her party entered Notre Dame, and heard mass; meanwhile the bridegroom with Coligny and other friends amused themselves by strolling through the aisles of the cathedral. Gazing up at the flags suspended from the roof, the admiral remarked that one day soon these would be replaced by others more appropriate; he referred, of course, to the Spanish standards to be taken, as he hoped, in the approaching war. The four following days all Paris was occupied with fetes, ballets, and other public rejoicings. It was during these festivities that the final arrangements were made for striking the great meditated blow.

Before this, however, one of the chief actors passed away, and saw not the work completed which he had so largely helped to bring to pass. On the 5th of May, 1572, Pope Pius V died. There was scarcely a stormier Pontificate in the history of the Popes than that of the man who descended into the tomb at the very moment when he most wished to live. From the day he ascended the Papal throne till he breathed his last, neither Asia nor Europe had rest. His Pontificate of seven years was spent in raising armaments, organizing expeditions, giving orders for battles, and writing letters to sovereigns inciting them to slay to the last man those whom he was pleased to account the enemies of God and of himself. Now it was against the Turk that he hurled his armed legionaries, and now it was against the Lutherans of Germany, the Huguenots of France, and the Calvinists of England and Scotland that he thundered in his character of Vicar of God. Well was it for Christendom that so much of the military furor of Pius was discharged in all eastern direction. The Turk became the conducting-rod that drew off the lightning of the Vatican and helped to shield Europe. Pius' exit from the world was a dreadful one, and

²Gulzot, volume 3, p. 378.

³Margaret is thought to have had a preference for the young Duke of Guise.

bore a striking resemblance to the Moody malady of which the King of France expired so soon there-after. ⁴ The Pontiff, however, bore up wonderfully under his disease, which was as painful as it was loathsome.

The death of the Pope opened a free path to the marriage which we have just seen take place. The dispensation from Rome, which Pius V had refused, his successor Gregory XIII conceded. Four days after the ceremony-Friday, the 22nd of August-as Coligny was returning on foot from the Louvre, occupied in reading a letter, he was fired at from the window of a house in the Rue des Fosses, St. Germain. One of the three balls with which the assassin had loaded his piece, to make sure of his victim, smashed the two fore-fingers of his right hand, while another lodged in his left arm. The admiral, raising his wounded hand, pointed to the house whence the shot had come. It belonged to an old canon, who had been tutor to Henry, Duke of Guise; but before it could be entered, the assassin had escaped on a horse from the king's stables. which was waiting for him by the cloisters of the Church of L'Auxerrois. ⁵ It was Maurevel who had fired the shot, the same who was known as the king's assassin. He had posted himself in one of the lower rooms of the house, and covering the iron bars of the window with an old cloak, he waited three days for his victim.

The king was playing tennis with the Duke of Guise and Coligny, the admiral's son-in-law, when told of what had happened; Charles threw down his stick, and exclaiming with all oath, "Am I never to have peace?" rushed to his apartment. Guise slunk away, and Coligny went straight to the admiral's house in the adjacent Rue de Betizy.

Meanwhile Ambrose Pare had amputated the two broken fingers of Coligny. Turning to Merlin, his chaplain, who stood by his bedside, the admiral said, "Pray that God may grant me the gift of patience." Seeing Merlin and other friends in tears, he said, "Why do you weep for me, my friends? I reckon myself happy to have received these wounds in the cause of God." Toward midday Marshals de Damville and de Cosse came to see him. To them he protested,

⁴Platina, Vit. Sore. Pont., p. 300; Venetia, 1600. Both Platina and Gabutius have given us lives of Pius V; they are little else than a record of battles and bloodshed.

⁵Sully, tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 54.

“Death affrights me not; but I should like very much to see the king before I die.” Damville went to inform his majesty.

About two of the afternoon the King, the Queen-mother, the Duke of Anjou, and a number of the gentlemen of the court entered the apartments of the wounded man. “My dear father,” exclaimed Charles, “the hurt is yours, the grief and the outrage mine; but,” added he, with his usual oaths, “I will take such vengeance that it shall never be effaced from the memory of man.” Coligny drew the king towards him, and commenced an earnest conversation with him, in a low voice, urging the policy he had so often recommended to Charles, that namely of assisting the Prince of Orange, and so lowering Spain and elevating France in the councils of Europe.

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Catherine de Medici, who did not hear what the admiral was saying to the king, abruptly terminated the interview on pretense that to prolong it would be to exhaust the strength and endanger the life of Coligny. The King and Queen-mother now returned to the Louvre at so rapid a pace that they were unobservant of the salutations of the populace, and even omitted the usual devotions to the Virgin at the corners of the streets. On arriving at the palace a secret consultation was held, after which the king was busied in giving orders, and making up dispatches, with which couriers were sent off to the provinces. When Charles and his suite had left Coligny’s hotel, the admiral’s friends expressed their surprise and pleasure at the king’s affability, and the desire he showed to bring the criminal to justice. “But all these fine appearances,” says Brantome, “afterwards turned to ill, which amazed every one very much how their majesties could perform so counterfeit a part, unless they had previously resolved on this massacre.”⁶

They began with the admiral, says Davila, “from the apprehension they had of his fierceness, wisdom, and power, fearing that were he alive he would concert some means for the safety of himself and his confederates.”⁷ But as the Popish historian goes on to explain, there was a deeper design in selecting Coligny as the first victim. The Huguenots, they reasoned, would impute the murder of the admiral to the Duke of Guise and his faction, and so would avenge

⁶Brantome, volume 8, p. 184.

⁷Davila, lib. 5, p. 269.

it upon the Guises. This attack upon the Guises would, in its turn, excite the fury of the Roman Catholic mob against the Huguenots. The populace would rise en masse, and slaughter the Protestants; and in this saturnalia of blood the enemies of Charles and Catherine would be got rid of, and yet the hand of the court would not be seen in the affair. The notorious Retz, the Florentine tutor of Charles, is credited with the authorship of this diabolically ingenious plan. But the matter had not gone as it was calculated it would. Coligny lived, and so the general melee of assassination did not come off. The train had been fired, but the mine did not explode.

The king had already given orders to close all the gates of Paris, save two, which were left open to admit provisions. The pretense was to cut off the escape of Maurevel. If this order could not arrest the flight of the assassin, who was already far away on his fleet steed, it effectually prevented the departure of the Huguenots. Troops were now introduced into the city.

The admiral had earnestly asked leave to retire to Chatilion, in the quiet of which place he hoped sooner to recover from his wounds; but the king would not hear of his leaving Paris. He feared the irritation of the wounds that might arise from the journey; he would take care that neither Coligny nor his friends should suffer molestation from the populace. Accordingly, bidding the Protestants lodge all together in Coligny's quarter,⁸ he appointed a regiment of the Duke of Anjou to guard that part of Paris.⁹ Thus closely was the net drawn round the Huguenots. These soldiers were afterwards the most zealous and cruel of their murderers.¹⁰

Friday night and Saturday were spent in consultations on both sides. To a few of the Protestants the designs of the court were now transparent, and they advised an instant and forcible departure from Paris, carrying with them their wounded chief. Their advice was over-ruled mainly through the over-confidence of Coligny in the king's honour, and only a few of the Huguenots left the city. The deliberations in the Louvre were more anxious still. The blow, it was considered, should be struck immediately, else the Huguenots would

⁸Maimbourg says that the former occupants were turned out to make room for the new-comers. (*Hist. de Calvinisme*, livr. 6, p. 469.)

⁹Davila, livr. 5, p. 270. Mezeray.

¹⁰Ag. d'Aubigne, *Mem.*, p. 30.

escape, or they would betake them to arms. But as the hour drew near the king appears to have wavered. Nature or conscience momentarily awoke. Now that he stood on the precincts of the colossal crime, he seems to have felt a shudder at the thought of going on; as well he might, fierce, cruel, vindictive though he was. To wade through a sea of blood so deep as that which was about to flow, might well appall even one who had been trained, as Charles had been, to look on blood. It is possible even that the nobleness of Coligny had not been without its effect upon him. The Queen-mother, who had doubtless foreseen this moment of irresolution on the part of her son when the crisis should arrive, was prepared for it. She instantly combated the indecision of Charles with the arguments most fitted to influence his weak mind. She told him that it was now too late to retreat; that the attempt on the admiral's life had aroused the Protestants, that the plans of the court were known to them, and that already messengers from the Huguenots were on their way to Switzerland and Germany, for assistance, and that to hesitate was to be lost. If he had a care for his throne and house he must act; and with a well-reigned dread of the calamities she had so vividly depicted, she is said to have craved leave for herself and her son, the Duke of Anjou, to retire to some place of safety before the storm should burst. This was enough. The idea of being left alone in the midst of all these dangers, without his mother's strong arm to lean upon, was frightful to Charles. He forgot the greatness of the crime in the imminency of his own danger. His vulpine and cowardly nature, incapable of a brave course, was yet capable of a sudden and deadly spring. "He was seized with an eager desire," says Maimbourg, "to execute the resolution already taken in the secret council to massacre all the Huguenots."¹¹ "Then let Coligny be killed," said Charles, with an oath, "and let not one Huguenot in all France be left to reproach me with the deed."

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One other point yet occasioned keen debates in the council. Shall the King of Navarre and the Prince of Conde be slain with the rest of the Huguenots? "The Duke of Guise," says Davila, "was urgent for their death; but the King and the Queen-mother had a horror at embruing their hands in royal blood;"¹² but it would seem that

¹¹Maimbourg, Livr. 6, p. 471

¹²Davila, lib. 5, p. 271.

the resolution of the council was for putting them to death. The Archbishop of Paris, Perefice, and Brantome inform us that “they were down on the red list” on the ground of its being necessary “to dig up the roots,” but were afterwards saved, “as by miracle.” Queen Margaret, the newly-married wife of Navarre, throwing herself on her knees before the king and earnestly begging the life of her husband, “the King granted it to her with great difficulty, although she was his good sister.”¹³ Meanwhile, to keep up the delusion to the last, the king rode out on horseback in the afternoon, and the queen had her court circle as usual.

¹³Perefice, *Hist. de Henri le Grand - Brantome*, volume 1, p. 261.

Final Arrangements-The Tocsin-The First Pistol-shot-Murder of Coligny-His Last Moments-Massacre throughout Paris-Butchery at the Louvre-Sunrise, and what it Revealed-Charles IX Fires on his Subjects-An Arquebus-The Massacres Extend throughout France- Numbers of the Slain-Variouly Computed-Charles IX Excusing Accuses himself-Reception of the News in Flanders-in England—in Scotland-Arrival of the Escaped at Geneva-Rejoicings at Rome-The Three Frescoes—The St. Bartholomew Medal

Picture: The Massacre of St. Bartholomew: Attack on Coligny's Lodgings.

Picture: The Night of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

It was now eleven o'clock of Saturday night, and the massacre was to begin at daybreak. Tavannes was sent to bid the Mayor of Paris assemble the citizens, who for some days before had been provided with arms, which they had stored in their houses. To exasperate them, and put them in a mood for this unlimited butchery of their countrymen, in which at first they were somewhat reluctant to engage, they were told that a horrible conspiracy had been discovered, on the part of the Huguenots, to cut off the king and the royal family, and destroy the monarchy and the Roman Catholic religion.

¹ The signal for the massacre was to be the tolling of the great bell of the Palace of Justice.

As soon as the tocsin should have flung its ominous peal upon the city, they were to hasten to draw chains across the streets, place pickets in the open spaces, and sentinels on the bridges. Orders were also given that at the first sound of the bell torches should be placed in all the windows, and that the Roman Catholics, for distinction, should wear a white scarf on the left arm, and affix a white cross on their hats.

¹Maimbourg, livr. 6, p. 472.

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“All was now arranged,” says Maimbourg, “for the carnage;” and they waited with impatience for the break of day, when the tocsin was to sound. In the royal chamber sat Charles IX, the Queen-mother, and the Duke of Anjou. Catherine’s fears lest the king should change his mind at the last minute would not permit her to leave him for one moment. Few words, we may well believe, would pass between the royal personages. The great event that impended could not but weigh heavily upon them. A deep stillness reigned in the apartment; the hours wore wearily away; and the Queen-mother feeling the suspense unbearable, or else afraid, as Maimbourg suggests, that Charles, “greatly disturbed by the idea of the horrible butchery, would revoke the order he had given for it,” anticipated the signal by sending one at two o’clock of the morning to ring the bell of St. Ger-main l’Auxerois,² which was nearer than that of the Palace of Justice. Scarcely had its first peal startled the silence of the night when a pistol shot was heard. The king started to his feet, and summoning an attendant he bade him go and stop the massacre.³ It was too late; the bloody work had begun. The great bell of the Palace had now begun to toll; another moment and every steeple in Paris was sending forth its peal; a hundred tocsins sounded at once; and with the tempest of their clamor there mingled the shouts, oaths, and howlings of the assassins. “I was awakened,” says Sully, “three hours after midnight with the ringing of all the bells, and the confused cries of the populace.”⁴ Above all were heard the terrible words, “Kill, kill!”

The massacre was to begin with the assassination of Coligny, and that part of the dreadful work had been assigned to the Duke of Guise. The moment he heard the signal, the duke mounted his horse and, accompanied by his brother and 300 gentlemen and soldiers, galloped off for the admiral’s lodging. He found Anjou’s guards with their red cloaks, and their lighted matches, posted round it; they gave the duke with his armed retinue instant admission into the court-yard. To slaughter the halberdiers of Navarre, and force open the inner entrance of the admiral’s lodgings, was the work of but a few minutes. They next mounted the stairs, while the duke

²De Thou, livr. 52.

³Villeroy, volume 2, p. 88.

⁴Sully, Memoires. tom. 1, livr. 1, p. 62.

and his gentlemen remained below. Awakened by the noise, the admiral got out of bed, and wrapping his dressing-gown round him and leaning against the wall, he bade Merlin, his minister, join with him in prayer. One of his gentlemen at that moment rushed into the room. "My lord," said he, "God calls us to himself!" "I am prepared to die," replied the admiral; "I need no more the help of men; therefore, farewell, my friends; save yourselves, if it is still possible." They all left him and escaped by the roof of the house. Coligny, his son-in-law, fleeing in this way was shot, and rolled into the street. A German servant alone remained behind with his master. The door of the chamber was now forced open, and seven of the murderers entered, headed by Behme of Lorraine, and Achille Petrucci of Sienna, creatures of the Duke of Guise. "Art thou Coligny?" said Behme, presenting himself before his victim, and awed by the perfect composure and venerable aspect of the admiral. "I am," replied Coligny; "young man, you ought to respect my grey hairs; but do what you will, you can shorten my life only by a few days." The villain replied by plunging his weapon into the admiral's breast; the rest closing round struck their daggers into him. "Behme," shouted the duke from below, "hast done?" "Tis all over," cried the assassin from the window. "But M. d' Angouleme," replied the duke, "will not believe it till he see him at his feet." Taking up the corpse, Behme threw it over the window, and as it fell on the pavement, the blood spurted on the faces and clothes of the two lords. The duke, taking out his handkerchief and wiping the face of the murdered man, said, "Tis he sure enough," and kicked the corpse in its face. A servant of the Duke of Nevers cut off the head, and carried it to Catherine de Medici and the king. The trunk was exposed for some days to disgusting indignities; the head was embalmed, to be sent to Rome; the bloody trophy was carried as far as Lyons, but there all trace of it disappears. ⁵

⁵Davila, Maimbourg, De Thou, and others, all agree in these facts. - "After having been subjected, in the course of three centuries, at one time to oblivion, and at others to diverse transferences, these sad relics of a great man, a great Christian, and a great patriot have been resting for the last two-and-twenty years in the very Castle of Chatillon-sur-Loing, his ancestors' own domain having once more become the property of a relative of his family, the Duke of Luxembourg." (Guizot, volume 3, p. 398; Lond., 1874.)

The authors of the plot having respect to the maxim attributed to Alaric, that “thick grass is more easily mown than thin,” had gathered the leading Protestants that night, as we have already narrated, into the same quarter where Coligny lodged. The Duke of Guise had kept this quarter as his special preserve; and now, the admiral being dispatched, the guards of Anjou, with a creature of the duke’s for their captain, were let loose upon this battue of ensnared Huguenots.

[603] Their work was done with a summary vengeance, to which the flooded state of the kennels, and the piles of corpses, growing ever larger, bore terrible witness. Over all Paris did the work of massacre by this time extend. Furious bands, armed with guns, pistols, swords, pikes, knives, and all kinds of cruel weapons, rushed through the streets, murdering all they met. They began to thunder at the doors of Protestants, and the terrified inmates, stunned by the uproar, came forth in their night-clothes, and were murdered on their own thresholds. Those who were too affrighted to come abroad, were slaughtered in their bed-rooms and closets, the assassins bursting open all places of concealment, and massacring all who opposed their entrance, and throwing their mangled bodies into the street. The darkness would have been a cover to some, but the lights that blazed in the windows denied even this poor chance of escape to the miserable victims. The Huguenot as he fled through the street, with agonized features, and lacking the protection of the white scarf, was easily recognised, and dispatched without mercy.

The Louvre was that night the scene of a great butchery. Some 200 Protestant noblemen and gentlemen from the provinces had been accommodated with beds in the palace; and although the guests of the king, they had no exemption, but were doomed that night to die with others. They were aroused after midnight, taken out one by one, and made to pass between two rows of halberdiers, who were stationed in the underground galleries. They were hacked in pieces or poniarded on their way, and their corpses being carried forth were horrible to relate, piled in heaps at the gates of the Louvre. Among those who thus perished were the Count de la Rochefoucault, the Marquis de Renel, the brave Piles—who had so gallantly defended St. Jean D’Angely-Francourt, chancellor to the King of Navarre, and

others of nearly equal distinction. An appeal to the God of Justice was their only protest against their fate.⁶

By-and-by the sun rose; but, alas! who can describe the horrors which the broad light of day disclosed to view? The entire population of the French capital was seen maddened with rage, or aghast with terror. On its wretched streets what tragedies of horror and crime were being enacted! Some were fleeing, others were pursuing; some were supplicating for life, others were responding by the murderous blow, which, if it silenced the cry for mercy, awoke the cry for justice. Old men, and infants in their swaddling clothes, were alike butchered on that awful night. Our very page would weep, were we to record all the atrocities now enacted. Corpses were being precipitated from the roofs and windows, others were being dragged through the streets by the feet, or were piled up in carts, and driven away to be shot into the river. The kennels were running with blood. Guise, Tavannes, and D'Angouleme-traversing the streets on horseback, and raising their voices to their highest pitch, to be audible above the tolling of the bells, the yells of the murderers, and the cries and moanings of the wounded and the dying-were inciting to yet greater fury those whom hate and blood had already transformed into demons. "It is the king's orders!" cried Guise. "Blood, blood!" shouted out Tavannes. Blood! every kennel was full; the Seine as it rolled through Paris seemed but a river of blood; and the corpses which it was bearing to the ocean were so numerous that the bridges had difficulty in giving them passage, and were in some danger of becoming choked and turning back the stream, and drowning Paris in the blood of its own shedding. Such was the gigantic horror on which the sun of that Sunday morning, the 24th of August, 1572 -St. Bartholomew's Day-looked down.

We have seen how Charles IX stood shuddering for some moments on the brink of his great crime, and that, had it not been for the stronger will and more daring wickedness of his mother, he might after all have turned back. But when the massacre had commenced, and he had tasted of blood, Charles shuddered no longer he became as ravenous for slaughter as the lowest of the mob. He and his mother, when it was day, went out on the palace balcony to feast

⁶Davila, lib. 5, pp. 272,273.

their eyes upon the scene. Some Huguenots were seen struggling in the river, in their efforts to swim across, the boats having been removed. Seizing an arquebus, the king fired on them. "Kill, kill!" he shouted; and making a page sit beside him and load his piece,⁷ he continued the horrible pastime of murdering his subjects, who were attempting to escape across the Seine, or were seeking refuge at the pitiless gates of his palace.⁸

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The same night, while the massacres were in progress, Charles sent for the King of Navarre and the Prince de Conde. Receiving them in great anger, he commanded them with oaths to renounce the Protestant faith, threatening them with death as the alternative of refusal. They demurred: whereupon the king gave them three days to make their choice.⁹ His physician, Ambrose Pare, a Protestant, he kept all night in his cabinet, so selfishly careful was he of his own miserable life at the very moment that he was murdering in thousands the flower of his subjects. Pare he also attempted to terrify by oaths and threats into embracing Romanism, telling him that the time was now come when every man in France must become Roman Catholic. So apparent was it that the leading motive of Charles IX in these great crimes was the dominancy of the Roman faith and the entire extinction of Protestantism.

For seven days the massacres were continued in Paris, and the first three especially with unabating fury. Nor were they confined within the walls of the city. In pursuance of orders sent from the court,¹⁰ they were extended to all provinces and cities where Protestants were found. Even villages and chateaux became scenes of carnage. For two months these butcheries were continued throughout the kingdom. Every day during that fearful time the poniard reaped a fresh harvest of victims, and the rivers bore to the sea a new and ghastly burden of corpses. In Rouen above 6,000 perished; at

⁷Voltaire states in one of the notes to the *Henriade*, that he heard the Marquis de Tesse say that he had known an old man of ninety, who in his youth had acted as page to Charles IX, and loaded the carbine with which he shot his Protestant subjects.

⁸Maimbourg, livr. 6, p. 478. Brantome, livr. 9, p. 427.-The arquebus is preserved in the museum of the Louvre. Two hundred and twenty years after the St. Bartholomew, Mirabeau brought it out and pointed it at the throne of Louis XVI- "visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children."

⁹Sully, tom. 1, livr,

¹⁰Maimtmurg, livr. 6, p. 485.

Toulouse some hundreds were hewn to pieces with axes; at Orleans the Papists themselves confessed that they had destroyed 12,000; some said 18,000; and at Lyons not a Protestant escaped. After the gates were closed they fell upon them without mercy; 150 of them were shut up in the archbishop's house, and were cut to pieces in the space of one hour and a half. Some Roman Catholic, more humane than the rest, when he saw the heaps of corpses, exclaimed, "They surely were not men, but devils in the shape of men, who had done this."

The whole number that perished in the massacre cannot be precisely ascertained. According to De Thou there were 2,000 victims in Paris the first day; Agrippa d'Aubigne says 3,000. Brantome speaks of 4,000 bodies that Charles IX might have seen floating down the Seine. La Popeliniere reduces them to 1,000. "There is to be found, in the account-books of the city of Paris, a payment to the grave-diggers of the Cemetery of the Innocents, for having inferred 1,100 dead bodies stranded at the turns of the Seine near Chaillot, Antenil, and St. Cloud; it is probable that many corpses were carried still further, and the corpses were not all thrown into the river."¹¹ There is a still greater uncertainty touching the number of victims throughout the whole of France. Mezeray computes it at 25,000; De Thou at 30,000; Sully at 70,000; and Perefice, Archbishop of Paris in the seventeenth century, raises it to 100,000; Davila reduces it to 10,000. Sully, from his access to official documents, and his unimpeachable honour, has been commonly reckoned the highest authority. Not a few municipalities and governors, to their honour, refused to execute the orders of the king. The reply of the Vicomte d'Orte has become famous. "Sire," wrote he to Charles IX, "among the citizens and garrison of Bayonne, you have many brave soldiers, and loyal subjects, but not one hangman."¹²

Blood and falsehood are never far apart. The great crime had been acted and could not be recalled; how was it to be justified? The poor unhappy king had recourse to one dodge after another, verifying the French saying that "to excuse is to accuse one's self." On the evening of the first day of the massacre, he dispatched messengers to

¹¹ Guizot, vol. 3, p. 405.

¹² Sully, livr. 1, p. 74. De Thou, livr. 52,55.

the provinces to announce the death of Coligny, and the slaughters in Paris, attributing everything to the feud which had so long subsisted between Guise and the admiral. A day's reflection convinced the king that the duke would force him to acknowledge his own share in the massacre, and he saw that he must concoct another excuse; he would plead a political necessity. Putting his lie in the form of an appeal to the Almighty, he went, attended by the whole court, to mass, solemnly to thank God for having delivered him from the Protestants; and on his return, holding "a bed of justice," he professed to unveil to the Parliament a terrible plot which Coligny and the Huguenots had contrived for destroying the king and the royal house, which had left him no alternative but to order the massacre. Although the king's story was not supported by one atom of solid truth, but on the other hand was contradicted by a hundred facts, of which the Parliament was cognisant, the obsequious members sustained the king's accusation, and branded with outlawry and forfeiture the name, the titles, the family, and the estates of Admiral de Coligny. The notorious and brazen-faced Retz was instructed to tell England yet another falsehood, namely, that Coligny was meditating playing the part of Pepin, mayor of the palace, and that the king did a wise and politic thing in nipping the admiral's treason in the bud. To the court of Poland, Charles sent, by his ambassador Montluc, another version of the affair; and to the Swiss yet another; in short, the inconsistencies, prevarications, and contradictions of the unhappy monarch were endless, and attest his guilt not less conclusively than if he had confessed the deed

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Meanwhile, the tidings were travelling over Europe, petrifying some nations with horror, awakening others into delirious and savage joy. When the news of the massacre reached the Spanish army in the Netherlands the exultation was great. The skies resounded with salvos of cannon; the drums were beat, the trumpets blared, and at night bonfires blazed all round the camp. The reception which England gave the French ambassador was dignified and most significant. Fenelon's description of his first audience after the news of the massacre had arrived is striking. "A gloomy sorrow," says he, "sat on every face; silence, as in the dead of night, reigned through all the chambers of the royal residence. The ladies and courtiers, clad in deep mourning, were ranged on each side; and as I passed

by them, in my approach to the queen, not one bestowed on me a favorable look, or made the least return to my salutations.”¹³ Thus did England show that she held those whom the King of France had barbarously murdered as her brethren.

We turn to Geneva. Geneva was yet more tenderly related to the seventy thousand victims whose bodies covered the plains of France, or lay stranded on the banks of its rivers. It is the 30th of August, 1572. Certain merchants have just arrived at Geneva from Lyons; leaving their pack-horses and bales in charge of the master of their hotel, they mount with all speed the street leading to the Hotel de Ville, anxiety and grief painted on their faces; “Messieurs,” said they to the counselors, “a horrible massacre of our brethren has just taken place at Lyons. In all the villages on our route we have seen the gibbets erected, and blood flowing; it seems that it is the same all over France. Tomorrow, or the day after, you will see those who have escaped the butchery arrive on your frontier.” The distressing news spread like lightning through the town; the shops were closed, and the citizens met in companies in the squares. Their experience of the past had taught them the demands which this sad occurrence would make on their benevolence. Indoors the women busied themselves providing clothes, medicines, and abundance of viands for those whom they expected soon to see arrive in hunger and sickness. The magistrates dispatched carriages and litters to the villages in the Pays de Gex; the peasants and the pastors were on the outlook on the frontier to obtain news, and to be ready to succour the first arrivals. Nor had they long to wait. On the 1st of September they beheld certain travelers approaching, pale, exhausted by fatigue, and responding with difficulty to the caresses with which they were overwhelmed. They could hardly believe ‘their own safety, seeing that days before, in every village through which they passed, they had been imminent danger of death. The number of these arrivals rapidly increased; they now showed their wounds, which they had carefully concealed, lest they should thereby be known to belong to the Reformed.

They declared that since the 26th of August the fields and villages had been deluged with the blood of their brethren. All of them

¹³Fenelon’s Despatches-apud Carte.

gave thanks to God that they had been permitted to reach a “land of liberty.” Their hearts were full of heaviness, for not one family was complete; when they mustered on the frontier, alas! how many parents, children, and friends were missing! By-and-by this sorrowful group reached the gates of Geneva, and as they advanced along the streets, the citizens contended with each other for the privilege of entertaining those of the travelers who appeared the greatest sufferers. The wounded were conveyed to the houses of the best families, where they were nursed with the most tender care. So ample was the hospitality of the citizens, that the magistrates found it unnecessary to make any public distribution of clothes or victuals. ¹⁴

On the suggestion of Theodore Beza, a day of general fasting was observed, and appointed to be repeated every year on St. Bartholomew’s Day. On the arrival of the news in Scotland, Knox, now old and worn out with labours, made himself be borne to his pulpit, and “summoning up the remainder of his strength,” says McCrie, “he thundered the vengeance of Heaven against ‘that cruel murderer and false traitor, the King of France,’ and desired Le Croc, the French ambassador, to tell his master that sentence was pronounced against him in Scotland; that the Divine vengeance would never depart from him, nor from his house, if repentance did not ensue; but his name would remain an execration to posterity, and none proceeding from his loins would enjoy his kingdom in peace.” ¹⁵

[606] At Rome, when the news arrived, the joy was boundless. The messenger who carried the despatch was rewarded like one who brings tidings of some great victory, ¹⁶ and the triumph that followed was such as old pagan Rome might have been proud to celebrate. The news was thundered forth to the inhabitants of the Seven-hilled City by the cannon of St. Angelo, and at night bonfires blazed on the street. Before this great day, Pius V, as we have already seen, slept with the Popes of former times, and his ashes, consigned to the vaults of St. Peter’s, waited the more gorgeous tomb that was preparing for them in Santa Maria Maggiore; but Gregory XIII conducted the

¹⁴Gaberel, tom. 2, pp, 321,322.

¹⁵McCrie, Life of Knox, vol. 2, p. 217.

¹⁶De Thou informs us that the Cardinal of Lorraine, at that time in Rome, gave the messenger a thousand gold crowns.

rejoicings with even greater splendor than the austere Pius would probably have done. Through the streets of the Eternal City swept, in the full blaze of Pontifical pomp, Gregory and his attendant train of cardinals, bishops, and monks, to the Church of St. Mark, there to offer up prayers and thanksgivings to the God of heaven for this great blessing to the See of Rome and the Roman Catholic Church. Over the portico of the church was hung a cloth of purple, on which was a Latin inscription most elegantly embroidered in letters of gold, in which it was distinctly stated that the massacre had occurred after “counsels had been given.”¹⁷ On the following day the Pontiff went in procession to the Church of Minerva, where, after mass, a jubilee was published to all Christendom, “that they might thank God for the slaughter of the enemies of the Church, lately executed in France.” A third time did the Pope go in procession, with his cardinals and all the foreign ambassadors then resident at his court, and after mass in the Church of St. Louis, he accepted homage from the Cardinal of Lorraine, and thanks in the name of the King of France, “for the counsel and help he had given him by his prayers, of which he had found the most wonderful effects.”

But as if all this had not been enough, the Pope caused certain more enduring monuments of the St. Bartholomew to be set up, that not only might the event be held in everlasting remembrance, but his own approval of it be proclaimed to the ages to come. The Pope, says Bonanni, “gave orders for a painting, descriptive of the slaughter of the admiral and his companions, to be made in the hall of the Vatican by Georgio Vasari, as a monument of vindicated religion, and a trophy of exterminated heresy.” These representations form three different frescoes.¹⁸ The first, in which the admiral is represented as wounded by Maurevel, and carried home, has this inscription—*Gaspar Colignius Amirallius accepto vulnere domura refertur. Greg.*

¹⁷*Consiliorum ad rem datorum.* The Author’s authority for this statement is a book in the Bodleian Library which contains an official account of the “Order of Solemn Procession made by the Sovereign Pontiff in the Eternal City of Rome, for the most happy destruction of the Huguenot party.” The book was printed “At Rome by the heirs of Antonio Blado, printers to the Chamber, 1572.”

¹⁸When the Author was in the Library of the Vatican a few years ago, he observed that the inscriptions below Vasari’s frescoes had been removed. Other travelers have observed the same thing. On that account, the Author has thought right to give them in the text.

XIII, Pontif. Max., 1572. ¹⁹ The second, which exhibits Coligny murdered in his own house, with Teligny and others, has these words below it-Coedes Colignii et sociorum ejus. ²⁰ The third, in which the king is represented as hearing the news, is thus entitled-Rex netera Colignii Frobat. ²¹

The better to perpetuate the memory of the massacre, Gregory caused a medal to be struck, the device on which, as Bonanni interprets it, inculcates that the St. Bartholomew was the joint result of the Papal counsel and God's instrumentality. On the one side is a profile of the Pope, surrounded by the words-Gregorius XIII, Pont. Max., an. I. On the obverse is seen an angel bearing in the one hand a cross, in the other a

1011 drawn sword, with which he is smiting a prostrate host of Protestants; and to make all clear, above is the motto-Ugonot-toturn strages, 1572. ²²

¹⁹“Gaspar Coligny, the Admiral, is carried home wounded. In the Pontificate of Gregory XIII, 1572.”

²⁰“The slaughter of Coligny and his companions.”

²¹“The king approves Coligny's slaughter.”

²²“The slaughter of the Huguenots, 1572.”-The group before the exterminating angel consists of six figures; of which two are dead warriors, the third is dying, the fourth is trying to make his escape, a woman in the background is holding up her hands in an attitude of horror, and a figure draped as a priest is looking on. The letters F.P. are probably the initials of the artist, Frederic Bonzagna, called “Parmanensis,” from his being a native of Parma.

Chapter 17 : Resurrection of Huguenotism-Death of Charles IX. [607]
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After the Storm—Revival-Siege of Sancerre-Horrors-Bravery of the Citizens-The Siege Raised-La Rochelle-The Capital of French Protestantism—Its Prosperous Condition-Its Siege-Brave Defense- The Besiegers Compelled to Retire-A Year after St. Bartholomew-Has Coligny Risen from the Dead?-First Anniversary of the St. Bartholomew—The Huguenots Reappear at Court-New Demands- Mortification of the Court-A Politico-Ecclesiastical Confederation formed by the Huguenots-The Tiers Parti- Illness of Charles IX—His Sweat of Blood—Remorse—His Huguenot Nurse—His Death

Picture: Facsimiles of Medals struck in Rome and Paris in honour of the St. Bartholomew Massacre.

Picture: Henry IV. King Henry of Navarre.

When the terrible storm of the St. Bartholomew Day had passed, men expected to open their eyes on only ruins. The noble vine that had struck its roots so deep in the soil of France, and with a growth so marvellous was sending out its boughs on every side, and promising to fill the land, had been felled to the earth by a cruel and sudden blow, and never again would it lift its branches on high. So thought Charles IX and the court of France. They had closed the civil wars in the blood of Coligny and his 70,000 fellow-victims. The governments of Spain and Rome did not doubt that Huguenotism had received its death-blow. Congratulations were exchanged between the courts of the Louvre, the Escorial, and the Vatican on the success which had crowned their projects. The Pope, to give enduring expression to these felicitations, struck, as we have seen, a commemorative medal. That medal said, in effect, that Protestantism had been! No second medal, of like import, would Gregory XIII, or any of his successors, ever need to issue; for the work had been done once for all; the revolt of Wittemberg and

Geneva had been quelled in a common overthrow, and a new era of splendor had dawned on the Popedom.

In proportion to the joy that reigned in the Romanist camp, so was the despondency that weighed upon the spirits of the Reformed. They too, in the first access of their consternation and grief, believed that Protestantism had been fatally smitten. Indeed, the loss which the cause had sustained was tremendous, and seemed irretrievable. The wise counselors, the valiant warriors, the learned and pious pastors—in short, that whole array of genius, and learning, and influence that adorned Protestantism in France, and which, humanly speaking, were the bulwarks around it—had been swept away by this one terrible blow.

And truly, had French Protestantism been a mere political association, with only earthly bonds to hold its members together, and only earthly motives to inspire them with hope and urge them to action, the St. Bartholomew Massacre would have terminated its career. But the cause was Divine; it drew its life from hidden sources, and so, flourishing from what both friend and foe believed to be its grave, it stood up anew, prepared to fight ever so many battles and mount ever so many scaffolds, in the faith that it would yet triumph in that land which had been so profusely watered with its blood.

The massacre swept the cities and villages on the plains of France with so unsparing a fury, that in many of these not a Protestant was left breathing; but the mountainous districts were less terribly visited, and these now became the stronghold of Huguenotism. Some fifty towns situated in these parts closed their gates, and stood to their defense. Their inhabitants knew that to admit the agents of the government was simply to offer their throats to the assassins of Charles; and rather than court wholesale butchery, or ignominiously yield, they resolved to fight like men. Some of these cities were hard put to it in the carrying out of this resolution. The sieges of La Rochelle and Sancerre have a terribly tragic interest. The latter, though a small town, held out against the royal forces for more than ten months. Greatly inferior to the enemy in numbers, the citizens labored under the further disadvantage of lacking arms. They appeared on the ramparts with slings instead of fire-arms; but, unlike their assailants, they defended their cause with hands unstained with murder. “We light here,” was the withering taunt

which they flung down upon the myrmidons of Catherine - "We fight here: go and assassinate elsewhere." Famine was more fatal to them than the sword; for while the battle slew only eighty-four of their number, the famine killed not fewer than 500. The straits now endured by the inhabitants of Sancerre recall the miseries of the siege of Jerusalem, or the horrors of Paris in the winter of 1870-71. An eye-witness, Pastor Jean de Lery, has recorded in his Journal the incidents of the siege, and his tale is truly a harrowing one. [609] "The poor people had to feed on dogs, cats, mice, snails, moles, grass, bread made of straw, ground into powder and mixed with pounded slate; they had to consume harness, leather, the parchment of old books, title-deeds, and letters, which they softened by soaking in water." These were the revolting horrors of their cuisine. "I have seen on a table," says Lery, "food on which the printed characters were still legible, and you might even read from the pieces lying on the dishes ready to be eaten." The mortality of the young by the famine was frightful; scarce a child under twelve years survived. Their faces grew to be like parchment; their skeleton figures and withered limbs; their glazed eye and dried tongue, which could not even wail, were too horrible for the mother to look on, and thankful she was when death came to terminate the sufferings of her offspring. Even grown men were reduced to skeletons, and wandered like phantoms in the street, where often they dropped down and expired of sheer hunger.¹ Yet that famine could not subdue their resolution. The defense of the town went on, the inhabitants choosing to brave the horrors which they knew rather than, by surrendering to such a foe, expose themselves to horrors which they knew not. A helping hand was at length stretched out to them from the distant Poland. The Protestantism of that country was then in its most flourishing condition, and the Duke of Anjou, Catherine's third son, being a candidate for the vacant throne, the Poles made it a condition that he should ameliorate the state of the French Huguenots, and accordingly the siege of Sancerre was raised.

It was around La Rochelle that the main body of the royal army was drawn. The town was the capital of French Protestantism, and the usual rendezvous of its chiefs. It was a large and opulent city,

¹See Laval, vol. 3, pp. 479-481.

“fortified after the modern way with moats, walls, bulwarks, and ramparts.”² It was open to the sea, and the crowd of ships that filled its harbor, and which rivalled in numbers the royal navy, gave token of the enriching commerce of which it was the seat. Its citizens were distinguished by their intelligence, their liberality, and above all, their public spirit. When the massacre broke out, crowds of Protestant gentlemen, as well as of peasants, together with some fifty pastors, fleeing from the sword of the murderers, found refuge within its walls. Thither did the royal forces follow them, shutting in La Rochelle on the land side, while the navy blockaded it by the sea. Nothing dismayed, the citizens closed their gates, hoisted the flag of defiance on their walls, and gave Anjou, who conducted the siege, to understand that the task he had now on hand would not be of so easy execution as a cowardly massacre planned in darkness, like that which had so recently crimsoned all France, and of which he had the credit of being one of the chief instigators. Here he must fight in open day, and with men who were determined that he should enter their city only when it was a mass of ruins. He began to thunder against it with his cannon; the Rochellese were not slow to reply. Devout as well as heroic, before forming on the ramparts they kneeled before the God of battles in their churches, and then with a firm step, and singing the Psalms of David as they marched onward, they mounted the wall, and looked down with faces undismayed upon the long lines of the enemy. The ships thundered from the sea, the troops assailed on land; but despite this double tempest, there was the flag of defiance still waving on the walls of the beleaguered city. They might have capitulated to brave men and soldiers, but to sue for peace from an army of assassins, from the train-bands of a monarch who knew not how to reward men who were the glory of his realm, save by devoting them to the dagger, rather would they die a hundred times. Four long months the battle raged; innumerable mines were dug and exploded; portions of the wall fell in and the soldiers of Anjou hurried to the breach in the hope of taking the city. It was now only that they realized the full extent of the difficulty. The forest of pikes on which they were received, and the deadly volleys poured into them, sent them staggering down the breach and back

²Davila, lib. 5.

to the camp. Not fewer than twenty-nine times did the besiegers attempt to carry La Rochelle by storm; but each time they were repulsed,³ and forced to retreat, leaving a thick trail of dead and wounded to mark their track. Thus did this single town heroically withstand the entire military power of the government. The Duke of Anjou saw his army dwindling away. Twenty-nine fatal repulses had greatly thinned its ranks. The siege made no progress. The Rochellese still scowled defiance from the summit of their ruined defences. What was to be done?

At that moment a messenger arrived in the camp with tidings that the Duke of Anjou had been elected to the throne of Poland. One cannot but wonder that a nation so brave, and so favorably disposed as the Poles then were towards Protestantism, should have made choice of a creature so paltry, cowardly, and vicious to reign over them. But the occurrence furnished the duke with a pretext of which he was but too glad to avail himself for quitting a city which he was now convinced he never would be able to take. Thus did deliverance come to La Rochelle. The blood spilt in its defense had not been shed in vain. The Rochellese had maintained their independence; they had rendered a service to the Protestantism of Europe; they had avenged in part the St. Bartholomew; they had raised the renown of the Huguenot arms; and now that the besiegers were gone, they set about rebuilding their fallen ramparts, and repairing the injuries their city had sustained; and they had the satisfaction of seeing the flow of political and commercial prosperity, which had been so rudely interrupted, gradually return.

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By the time these transactions were terminated, a year wellnigh had elapsed since the great massacre. Catherine and Charles could now calculate what they had gained by this enormous crime. Much had France lost abroad, for though Catherine strove by enormous lying to persuade the world that she had not done the deed, or at least that the government had been forced in self-defense to do it, she could get no one to believe her. To compensate for the loss of prestige and influence abroad, what had she gained at home? Literally nothing. The Huguenots in all parts of France were coming forth from their hiding-places; important towns were defying the

³Maimbourg, lib. 6, p. 489.

royal arms; whole districts were Protestant; and the demands of the Huguenots were once more beginning to be heard, loud and firm as ever. What did all this mean? Had not Alva and Catherine dug the grave of Huguenotism? Had not Charles assisted at its burial? and had not the Pope set up its gravestone? What right then had the Huguenots to be seen any more in France? Had Coligny risen from the dead, with his mountain Huguenots, who had chased Anjou back to Paris, and compelled Charles to sign the Peace of St. Germain? Verily it seemed as if it were so.

A yet greater humiliation awaited the court. When the 24th of August, 1573-the anniversary of the massacre-came round, the Huguenots selected the day to meet and draw up new demands, which they were to present to the government.

Obtaining an interview with Charles and his mother, the delegates boldly demanded, in the name of the whole body of the Protestants, to be replaced in the position they occupied before St. Bartholomew's Day, and to have back all the privileges of the Pacification of 1570. The king listened in mute stupefaction. Catherine, pale with anger, made answer with a haughtiness that ill became her position. "What!" said she, "although the Prince of Conde had been still alive, and in the field with 20,000 horse and 50,000 foot, he would not have dared to ask half of what you now demand." But the Queen-mother had to digest her mortification as best she could. Her troops had been worsted; her kingdom was full of anarchy; discord reigned in the very palace; her third son, the only one she loved, was on the point of leaving her for Poland; there were none around her whom she could trust; and certainly there was no one who trusted her; the only policy open to her, therefore, was one of conciliation. Hedged in, she was made to feel that her way was a hard one. The St. Bartholomew Massacre was becoming bitter even to its authors, and Catherine now saw that she would have to repeat it not once, but many times, before she could erase the "religion," restore the glories of the Roman Catholic worship in France, and feel herself firmly seated in the government of the country.

To the still further dismay of the court, the Protestants took a step in advance. Portentous theories of a social kind began at this time to lift up their heads in France. The infatuated daughter of the Medici thought that, could she extirpate Protestantism, Roman

Catholicism would be left in quiet possession of the land; little did she foresee the strange doctrines foreshadowings of those of 1789, and of the Commune of still later days- that were so soon to start up and fiercely claim to share supremacy with the Church.

The Huguenots of the sixteenth century did not indeed espouse the new opinions which struck at the basis of government as it was then settled, but they acted upon them so far as to set up a distinct politico-ecclesiastical confederation. The objects aimed at in this new association were those of self-government and mutual defense. A certain number of citizens were selected in each of the Huguenot towns. These formed a governing body in all matters appertaining to the Protestants. They were, in short, so many distinct Protestant municipalities, analogous to those cities of the Middle Ages which, although subject to the sway of the feudal lord, had their own independent municipal government. Every six months, delegates from these several municipalities met together, and constituted a supreme council. This council had power to impose taxes, to administer justice, and, when threatened with violence by the government, to raise soldiers and carry on war. This was a State within a State. The propriety of the step is open to question, but it is not to be hastily condemned. The French Government had abdicated its functions. It neither respected the property nor defended the lives of the Huguenots. It neither executed the laws of the State in their behalf, nor fulfilled a moment longer than it had the power to break them the special treaties into which it had entered. So far from redressing their wrongs, it was the foremost party to inflict wrong and outrage upon them. In short, society in that unhappy country was dissolved, and in so unusual a state of things, it were hard to deny the Protestants the fight to make the best arrangements they could for the defense of their natural and social rights. [611]

At the court even there now arose a party that threw its shield over the Huguenots. That party was known as the Politiques or Tiers Parti. ⁴ It was composed mostly of men who were the disciples of the great Chancellor de l'Hopital, whose views were so far in advance of the age in which he lived, and whose reforms in law and the administration of justice made him one of the pioneers of better

⁴Davila, lib, 5.

and more tolerant times. The chancellor was now dead-happily for himself, before the extinction of so many names which were the glory of his country-but his liberal opinions survived in a small party which was headed by the three sons of the Constable Montmorency, and the Marshals Cose and Biron. These men were not Huguenots; on the contrary, they were Romanists, but they abhorred the policy of extermination pursued toward the Protestants, and they lamented the strifes which were wasting the strength, lowering the character, and extinguishing the glory of France. Though living in an age not by any means fastidious, the spectacle of the court-now become a horde of poisoners, murderers, and harlots-filled them with disgust. They wished to bring back something like national feeling and decency of manners to their country. Casting about if haply there were any left who might aid them in their schemes, they offered their alliance to the Huguenots. They meant to make a beginning by expelling the swarm of foreigners which Catherine had gathered round her. Italians and Spaniards filled the offices at court, and in return for their rich pensions rendered no service but flattery, and taught no arts but those of magic and assassination. The leaders of the Tiers Parti hoped by the assistance of the Huguenots to expel these creatures from the government which they had monopolized, and to restore a national regime, liberal and tolerant, and such as might heal the deep wounds of their country, and recover for France the place she had lost in Europe. The existence of this party was known to Catherine, and she had divined, too, the cleansing they meant to make in the Augean stable of the Louvre. Such a reformation not being at all to her taste, she began again to draw toward the Huguenots. Thus wonderfully were they shielded.

There followed a few years of dubious policy on the part of Catherine, of fruitless schemes on the part of the Politiques, and of uncertain prospects to all parties. While matters were hanging thus in the balance, Charles IX died. His life had been full of excitement, of base pleasures, and of bloody crimes, and his death was full of horrors. But as the curtain is about to drop, a ray-a solitary ray-is seen to shoot across the darkness. No long time after the perpetration of the massacre, Charles IX began to be visited with remorse. The awful scene would not quit his memory. By day, whether engaged in business or mingling in the gaities of the court, the sights and

sounds of the massacre would rise unbidden before his imagination; and at night its terrors would return in his dreams. As he lay in his bed, he would start up from broken slumber, crying out, "Blood, blood!" Not many days after the massacre, there came a flock of ravens and alighted upon the roof of the Louvre. As they flitted to and fro they filled the air with their dismal croakings. This would have given no uneasiness to most people; but the occupants of the Louvre had guilty consciences. The impieties and witchcrafts in which they lived had made them extremely superstitious, and they saw in the ravens other creatures than they seemed, and heard in their screams more terrible sounds than merely earthly ones. The ravens were driven away; the next day, at the same hour, they returned, and so did they for many days in succession.

There, duly at the appointed time, were the sable visitants of the Louvre, performing their gyrations round the roofs and chimneys of the ill-omened palace, and making its courts resound with the echoes of their horrid cawings. This did not tend to lighten the melancholy of the king.

One night he awoke with fearful sounds in his ears. It seemed-so he thought-that a dreadful fight was going on in the city. There were shoutings and shrieks and curses, and mingling with these were the tocsin's knell and the sharp ring of fire-arms-in short, all those dismal noises which had filled Paris on the night of the massacre. A messenger was dispatched to ascertain the cause of the uproar. He returned to say that all was at peace in the city, and that the sounds which had so terrified the king were wholly imaginary. These incessant apprehensions brought on at last an illness. The king's constitution, sickly from the first, had been drained of any original vigor it ever possessed by the vicious indulgences in which he lived, and into which his mother, for her own vile ends, had drawn him; and now his decline was accelerated by the agonies of remorse - thee Nemesis of the St. Bartholomew. Charles was rapidly approaching the grave. It was now that a malady of a strange and frightful kind seized upon him. Blood began to ooze from all the pores of his body. On awakening in the morning his person would be wet all over with what appeared a sweat of blood, and a crimson mark on the bed-clothes would show where he had lain. Mignet and other historians have given us most affecting accounts of the king's last

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hours, but we content ourselves with an extract from the old historian Estoile. And be it known that the man who stipulated orders for the St. Bartholomew Massacre that not a single Huguenot should be left alive to reproach him with the deed, was waited upon on his death-bed by a Huguenot nurse! “As she seated herself on a chest,” [613] says Estoile, “and was beginning to doze, she heard the king moan and weep and sigh. She came gently to his bedside, and adjusting the bed-clothes, the king began to speak to her; and heaving a deep sigh, and while the tears poured down, and sobs choked his utterance, he said, ‘Ah, nurse, dear nurse, what blood, what murders! Ah, I have followed bad advice. Oh, my God, forgive me! Have pity on me, if it please thee. I do not know what will become of me. What shall I do? I am lost; I see it plainly.’ Then the nurse said to him, ‘Sire, may the murders be on those who made you do them; and since you do not consent to them, and are sorry for them, believe that God will not impute them to you, but will cover them with the robe of his Son’s justice. To him alone you must address yourself.’”

Charles IX died on the 30th of May, 1574, just twenty-one months after the St. Bartholomew Massacre, having lived twenty-five years and reigned fourteen. ⁵

⁵“Mourut de chagrin et de langueur en la fleur de son age.” (Maimbourg, lib. 6, p. 490.)

Chapter 18 : New Persecutions-Reign and Death of Henry III. [614]

Henry III-A Sensualist and Tyrant-Persecuting Edict-Henry of Navarre-His Character-The Protestants Recover their Rights-The League-War-Henry III Joins the League-Gallantry of “Henry of the White Plume”-Dissension between Henry III and the Duke of Guise- Murder of Guise-Murder of the Cardinal of Lorraine-Henry III and Henry of Navarre Unite their Arms-March on Paris-Henry III Assassinated-Death of Catherine de Medici

The Duke of Anjou, the heir to the throne, was in Poland when Charles IX died. He had been elected king of that country, as we have stated, but he had already brought it to the brink of civil war by the violations of his coronation oath. When he heard that his brother was dead, he stole out of Poland, hurried back to Paris, and became King of France under the title of Henry III. This prince was shamelessly vicious, and beyond measure effeminate. Neglecting business, he would shut himself up for days together with a select band of youths, debauchers like himself, and pass the time in orgies which shocked even the men of that age. He was the tyrant and the bigot, as well as the voluptuary, and the ascetic fit usually alternated at short intervals with the sensual one. He passed from the beast to the monk, and from the monk to the beast, but never by any chance was he the man. It is true we find no St. Bartholomew in this reign, but that was because the first had made a second impossible. That the will was not wanting is attested by the edict with which Henry opened his reign, and which commanded all his subjects to conform to the religion of Rome or quit the kingdom. His mother, Catherine de Medici, still held the regency; and we trace her hand in this tyrannous decree, which happily the government had not the power to enforce. Its impolicy was great, and it instantly recoiled upon the king, for it advertised the Huguenots that the dagger of the St. Bartholomew was still suspended above their heads, and that they

should commit a great mistake if they did not take effectual measures against a second surprise. Accordingly, they were careful not to let the hour of weakness to the court pass without strengthening their own position.

Coligny had fallen, but Henry of Navarre now came to the front. He lacked the ripened wisdom, the steady persistency, and deep religious convictions of the great admiral; but he was young, chivalrous, heartily with the Protestants, and full of dash in the field. His soldiers never feared to follow wherever they saw his white plume waving "amidst the ranks of war." The Protestants were further reinforced by the accession of the Politiques. These men cared nothing for the "religion," but they cared something for the honour of France, and they were resolved to spare no pains to lift it out of the mire into which Catherine and her allies had dragged it. At the head of this party was the Duke of Alencon, the youngest brother of the king. This combination of parties, formed in the spring of 1575, brought fresh courage to the Huguenots. They now saw their cause espoused by two princes of the blood, and their attitude was such as thoroughly to intimidate the King and Queen-mother. Never before had the Protestants presented a bolder front or made larger demands, and bitter as the mortification must have been, the court had nothing for it but to grant all the concessions asked. Passing over certain matters of a political nature, it was agreed that the public exercise of the Reformed religion should be authorized throughout the kingdom; that the provincial Parliaments should consist of an equal number of Roman Catholics and Protestants; that all sentences passed against the Huguenots should be annulled; that eight towns should be placed in their hands as a material guarantee; that they should have a right to open schools, and to hold synods; and that the States-General should meet within six months to ratify this agreement. This treaty was signed May 6th, 1576. Thus within four years after the St. Bartholomew Massacre, the Protestants, whom it was supposed that that massacre had exterminated, had all their former rights conceded to them, and in ampler measure.

The Roman Catholics opened their eyes in astonishment. Protestant schools; Protestant congregations; Protestant synods! They already saw all France Protestant. Taking the alarm, they promptly formed themselves into an organisation, which has since become

famous in history under the name of "The League." The immediate aim of the League was the prevention of the treaty just signed; its ulterior and main object was the extirpation, root and branch, of the Huguenots. Those who were enrolled in it bound themselves by oath to support it with their goods and lives. Its foremost man was the Duke of Guise; its back-bone was the ferocious rabble of Paris; it found zealous and powerful advocates in the numerous Jesuit fraternities of France; the duty of adhesion to it was vociferously preached from the Roman Catholic pulpits, and still more persuasively, if less noisily, urged in all the confessionals; and we do not wonder that, with such a variety of agency to give it importance, the League before many months had passed numbered not fewer than 30,000 members, and from being restricted to one province, as at the beginning, it extended over all the kingdom. A clause was afterwards added to the effect that no one should be suffered to ascend the throne of France who professed or tolerated the detestable opinions of the Huguenots, and that they should have recourse to arms to carry out the ends of the League. Thus were the flames of war again lighted in France.

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The north and east of the kingdom declared in favor of the League, the towns in the south and west ranged themselves beneath the standard of Navarre. The king was uncertain which of the two parties he should join.

Roused suddenly from his sensualities, craven in spirit, clouded in understanding, and fallen in popular esteem, the unhappy Henry saw but few followers around him. Navarre offered to rally the Huguenots round him, and support the crown, would he only declare on their side. Henry hesitated; at last he threw himself into the arms of the League, and, to cement the union between himself and them, he revoked all the privileges of the Protestants, and commanded them to abjure their religion or leave the kingdom. The treaty so recently framed was swept away. The war was resumed with more bitterness than ever. It was now that the brilliant military genius of Navarre, "Henry of the White Plume," began to blaze forth. Skillful to plan, cool and prompt to execute, never hesitating to carry his white plume into the thick of the fight, and never failing to bring it out victoriously, Henry held his own in the presence of the armies of the king and Guise. The war watered afresh with blood the soil so

often and so profusely watered before, but it was without decisive results on either side. One thing it made evident, namely, that the main object of the League was to wrest the scepter from the hands of Henry III, to bar the succession of Henry of Navarre, the next heir, and place the Duke of Guise upon the throne, and so grasp the destinies of France.

The unhappy country did not yet know rest; for if there was now a cessation of hostilities between the Roman Catholics and the Huguenots, a bitter strife broke out between the king and Guise. The duke aspired to the crown. He was the popular idol; the mob and the army were on his side, and knowing this, he was demeaning himself with great haughtiness. The contempt he felt for the effeminacy and essential baseness of Henry III, he did not fail to express. The king was every day losing ground, and the prospects of the duke were in the same proportion brightening. The duke at last ventured to come to Paris with an army, and Henry narrowly escaped being imprisoned and slain in his own capital. Delaying the entrance of the duke's soldiers by barricades, the first ever seen in Paris, he found time to flee, and taking refuge in the Castle of Blois, he left Guise in possession of the capital. The duke did not at once proclaim himself king; he thought good to do the thing by halves; he got himself made lieutenant of the kingdom, holding himself, at the same time, on excellent terms of friendship with Henry. Henry on his part met the duke's hypocrisy with cool premeditated treachery. He pressed him warmly to visit him at his Castle of Blois. His friends told him that if he went he would never return; but he made light of all warnings, saying, with an air that expressed his opinion of the king's courage, "He dare not." To the Castle of Blois he went.

The king had summoned a council at the early hour of eight o'clock to meet the duke. While the members were assembling, Guise had arrived, and was sauntering carelessly in the hall, when a servant entered with a message that the king wished to see him in his bed-room. To reach the apartment in question the duke had to pass through an ante-chamber. In this apartment had previously been posted a strong body of men-at-arms. The duke started when his eye fell on the glittering halberds and the scowling faces of the men; but disdainful retreat he passed on. His hand was already on the curtain which separated the antechamber from the royal bed-room, with

intent to draw it aside and enter, when a soldier struck his dagger into him. The duke sharply faced his assailants, but only to receive another and another stroke. He grappled with the men, and so great was his strength that he bore them with himself to the floor, where, after struggling a few minutes, he extricated himself, though covered with wounds. He was able to lift the curtain, and stagger into the room, where, falling at the foot of the bed, he expired in the presence of the king. Henry, getting up, looked at the corpse, and kicked it with his foot. [616]

The Queen-mother was also at the Castle of Blois. Sick and dying, she lay in one of the lower apartments. The king instantly descended to visit her. "Madam," he said, "congratulate me, for I am again King of France, seeing I have this morning slain the King of Paris." The tidings pleased Catherine, but she reminded her son that the old fox, the uncle of the duke, still lived, and that the morning's work could not be considered complete till he too was dispatched. The Cardinal of Lorraine, who had lived through all these bloody transactions, was by the royal orders speedily apprehended and slain. To prevent the superstitious respect of the populace to the bodies of the cardinal and the duke, their corpses were tied by a rope, let down through a window into a heap of quicklime, and when consumed, their ashes were scattered to the winds. Such was the end of these ambitious men. ¹ Father, son, and uncle had been bloody men, and their grey hairs were brought down to the grave with blood.

These deeds brought no stability to Henry's power. Calamity after calamity came upon him in rapid succession. The news of his crime spread horror through France. The Roman Catholic population of the towns rose in insurrection, enraged at the death of their favorite, and the League took care to fan their fury. The Sorbonne released the subjects of the kingdom from allegiance to Henry. The Parliament of Paris declared him deposed from the throne. The Pope, dealing him the unkindest cut of all, excommunicated him. Within a year of the duke's death a provisional government, with a younger brother of Guise's at its head, was installed at the Hotel de Ville. Henry, appalled by this outburst of indignation, fled to

¹Laval, vol. 4, p. 530.

Tours, where such of the nobility as adhered to the royalist cause, with 2,000 soldiers, gathered round him.

This force was not at all adequate to cope with the army of the League, and the king had nothing for it but to accept the hand which Henry of Navarre held out to him, and which he had afore-time rejected. Considering that Henry, as Duke of Anjou, had been one of the chief instigators of the St. Bartholomew Massacre, it must have cost him, one would imagine, a severe struggle of feeling to accept the aid of the Huguenots; and not less must they have felt it, we should think, unseemly and anomalous to ally their cause with that of the murderer of their brethren. But the flower of the Huguenots were in their grave; the King of Navarre was not the high-minded hero that Coligny had been. We find now a lower type of Huguenotism than before the St. Bartholomew Massacre; so the alliance was struck, and the two armies, the royalist and the Huguenot, were now under the same standard. Here was a new and strange arrangement of parties in France. The League had become the champion of the democracy against the throne, and the Huguenots rallied for the throne against the democracy. The united army, with the two Henries at its head, now began its march upon Paris; the forces of the League, now inferior to the enemy, retreating before them. While on their march the king and Navarre learned that the Pope had fulminated excommunication against them, designating them “the two sons of wrath,” and consigning them, “in the name of the Eternal King,” to “the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram,” and “to the devil and his angels.” The weak superstitious Henry III was so terrified that for two days he ate no food. “Cheer up, brother,” said the more valorous Henry of Navarre, “Rome’s bolts don’t hurt kings when they conquer.” Despite the Papal bull, the march to Paris was continued. King Henry, with his soldiers, was now encamped at St. Cloud; and Navarre, with his Huguenots, had taken up his position at Meudon. It seemed as if the last hour of the League had come, and that Paris must surrender. The Protestants were overjoyed. But the alliance between the royalist and Huguenot arms was not to prosper. The bull of the Pope was, after all, destined to bear fruit. It awoke all the pulpits in Paris, which began to thunder against excommunicated tyrants, and to urge the sacred duty of taking them off; and not in vain, for a monk of the name of Jacques Clement offered himself

to perform the holy yet perilous deed. Having prepared himself by fasting and absolution, this man, under pretense of carrying a letter, which he would give into no hands but those of the king himself, penetrated into the royal tent, and plunged his dagger into Henry. The League was saved, the illusions of the Huguenots were dispelled, and there followed a sudden shifting of the scenes in France. With Henry III the line of Valois became extinct. The race had given thirteen sovereigns to France, and filled the throne during 261 years.

The last Valois has fallen by the dagger. Only seventeen years have elapsed since the St. Bartholomew Massacre, and yet the authors of that terrible tragedy are all dead, and all of them, with one exception, have died by violence. Charles IX, smitten with a strange and fearful malady, expired in torments. The Duke of Guise was massacred in the Castle of Blois, the king kicking his dead body as he had done the corpse of Coligny. The Cardinal of Lorraine was assassinated in prison; and Henry III met his death in his own tent as we have just narrated, by the hand of a monk. The two greatest criminals in this band of great criminals were the last to be overtaken by vengeance. Catherine de Medici died at the Castle of Blois twelve days after the murder of the Duke of Guise, as little cared for in her last hours as if she had been the poorest peasant in all France; and when she had breathed her last, “they took no more heed of her,” says Estelle, “than of a dead goat.” She lived to witness the failure of all her schemes, the punishment of all her partners in guilt, and to see her dynasty, which she had labored to prop up by so many dark intrigues and bloody crimes, on the eve of extinction. And when at last she went to the grave, it was amid the execrations of all parties. “We are in a great strait about this bad woman,” said a Romanist preacher when announcing her death to his congregation; “if any of you by chance wish, out of charity, to give her a pater or an ave, it may perhaps do her some good.” Catherine de Medici died in the seventieth year of her age; during thirty of which she held the regency of France. Her estates and legacies were all swallowed up by her debts. ²

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²Inventaire des Meubles de Catherine de Medicis. Par Edmond Bonnaffe Pages 3,4. Paris, 1874. (From old MS. in Bib. Nationale.)

Chapter 19 : Henry IV and the Edict of Nantes

Henry IV-Birth and Rearing-Assumes the Crown-Has to Fight for the Kingdom-Victory at Dieppe-Victory at Ivry-Henry's Vacillation- His Double Policy-Wrongs of the Huguenots-Henry turns towards Rome-Sully and Duplessis-Their Different Counsel- Henry's Abjuration-Protestant Organization-The Edict of Nantes- Peace- Henry as a Statesman-His Foreign Policy—Proposed Campaign against Austria-His Forebodings-His Assassination-His Character

Picture: Medal of Catherine de Medici.

Picture: View in Paris: the Place de la Concorde.

The dagger of Jacques Clement had transferred the crown of France from the House of Valois to that of Bourbon. Henry III being now dead, Henry of Navarre, the Knight of the White Plume, ascended the throne by succession. The French historians paint in glowing colors the manly grace of his person, his feats of valor in the field, and his acts of statesmanship in the cabinet. They pronounce him the greatest of their monarchs, and his reign the most glorious in their annals. We must advance a little further into our subject before we can explain the difficulty we feel in accepting this eulogium as fully warranted.

Henry was born in the old Castle of Pau, in Bearn, and was descended in a direct line from Robert, the sixth son of Saint Louis. The boy, the instant of his birth, was carried to his grandfather, who rubbed his lips with a clove of garlic, and made him drink a little wine; and the rearing begun thus was continued in the same hardy fashion.

The young Henry lived on the plainest food, and wore the homeliest dress; he differed little or nothing, in these particulars, from the peasant boys who were his associates in his hours of play. His delight was to climb the great rocks of the Pyrenees around his birth-place, and in these sports he hardened his constitution, familiarized himself

with peril and toil, and nurtured that love of adventure which characterized him all his days. But especially was his education attended to. It was conducted under the eye of his mother, one of the first women of her age, or indeed of any age. He was carefully instructed in the doctrines of Protestantism, that in after-life his religion might be not an ancestral tradition, but a living faith. In the example of his mother he had a pattern of the loftiest virtue. Her prayers seemed the sacred pledges that the virtues of the mother would flourish in the son, and that after she was gone he would follow with the same devotion, and defend with a yet stronger arm, the cause for which she had lived. As Henry grew up he displayed a character in many points corresponding to these advantages of birth and training. To a robust and manly frame he added a vigorous mind. His judgment was sound, his wit was quick, his resource was ready. In disposition he was brave, generous, confiding. He despised danger; he courted toil; he was fired with the love of glory. But with these great qualities he blended an inconvenient waywardness, and a decided inclination to sensual pleasures.

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The king had breathed his last but a few moments, when Henry entered the royal apartment to receive the homage of the lords who were there in waiting. The Huguenot chiefs readily hailed him as their sovereign, but the Roman Catholic lords demanded, beware swearing the oath of allegiance, that he should declare himself of the communion of the Church of Rome. "Would it be more agreeable to you," asked Henry of those who were demanding of him a renunciation of his Protestantism upon the spot, "Would it be more agreeable to you to have a godless king? Could you confide in the faith of an atheist? And in the day of battle would it add to your courage to think that you followed the banner of a perjured apostate?"

Brave words spoken like a man who had made up his mind to ascend the throne with a good conscience or not at all. But these words were not followed up by a conduct equally brave and high-principled. The Roman Catholic lords were obstinate. Henry's difficulties increased. The dissentients were withdrawing from his camp; his army was melting away, and every new day appeared to be putting the throne beyond his reach. Now was the crisis of his fate. Had Henry of Navarre esteemed the reproach of being a Huguenot greater riches than the crown of France, he would have worn that

crown, and worn it with honour. His mother's God, who, by a marvellous course of Providence, had brought him to the foot of the throne, was able to place him upon it, had he had faith in him. But Henry's faith began to fail. He temporized. He neither renounced Protestantism nor embraced Romanism, but aimed at being both Protestant and Romanist at once. He concluded an arrangement with the Roman Catholics, the main stipulation in which was that he would submit to a six months' instruction in the two creeds - just as if he were or could be in doubt-and at the end of that period he would make his choice, and his subjects would then know whether they had a Protestant or a Roman Catholic for their sovereign. Henry, doubtless, deemed his policy a masterly one; but his mother would not have adopted it. She had risked her kingdom for her religion, and God gave her back her kingdom after it was as good as lost. What the son risked was his religion, that he might secure his throne. The throne he did secure in the first instance, but at the cost of losing in the end all that made it worth having. "There is a way that seemeth right in a man's own eyes, but the end thereof is death."

Henry had tided over the initial difficulty, but at what a cost! - a virtual betrayal of his great cause. Was his way now smooth? The Roman Catholics he had not really conciliated, and the Protestants stood in doubt of him. He had two manner of peoples around his standard, but neither was enthusiastic in his support, nor could strike other than feeble blows. He had assumed the crown, but had to conquer the kingdom. The League, whose soldiers were in possession of Paris, still held out against him. To have gained the capital and displayed his standard on its walls would have been a great matter, but with an army dwindled down to a few thousands, and the Roman Catholic portion but half-hearted in his cause, Henry dared not venture on the siege of Paris. Making up his mind to go without the prestige of the capital meanwhile, he retreated with his little host into Normandy, the army of the League in overwhelming numbers pressing on his steps and hemming him in, so that he was compelled to give battle to them in the neighborhood of Dieppe. Here, with the waters of the English Channel behind him, into which the foe hoped to drive him, God wrought a great deliverance for him. With only [619] 6,000 soldiers, Henry discomfited the entire army of the League, 30,000 strong, and won a great victory.

This affair brought substantial advantages to Henry. It added to his renown in arms, already great. Soldiers began to flock to his standard, and he now saw himself at the head of 20,000 men. Many of the provinces of France which had hung back till this time recognized him as king. The Protestant States abroad did the same thing; and thus strengthened, Henry led his army southward, crossed the Loire, and took up his winter quarters at Tours, the old capital of Clovis.

Early next spring (1590) the king was again in the field. Many of the old Huguenot chiefs, who had left him when he entered into engagements with the Roman Catholics, now returned, attracted by the vigor of his administration and the success of his arms. With this accession he deemed himself strong enough to take Paris, the possession of which would probably decide the contest. He began his march upon the capital, but was met by the army of the League (March 14, 1590) on the plains of Ivry. His opponents were in greatly superior numbers, having been reinforced by Spanish auxiliaries and German reiter. Here a second great victory crowned the cause of Henry of Navarre; in fact, the battle of Ivry is one of the most brilliant on record. Before going into action, Henry made a solemn appeal to Heaven touching the justice of his cause. "If thou seest," said he, "that I shall be one of those kings whom thou givest in thine anger, take from me my life and crown together, and may my blood be the last that shall be shed in this quarrel." The battle was now to be joined, but first the Huguenots kneeled in prayer. "They are begging for mercy," cried some one. "No," it was answered, "they never fight so terribly as after they have prayed." A few moments, and the soldiers arose, and Henry addressed some stirring words to them. "Yonder," said he, as he fastened on his helmet, over which waved his white plume, "Yonder is the enemy: here is your king. God is on our side. Should you lose your standards in the battle, rally round my plume; you will always find it on the path of victory and honour." Into the midst of the enemy advanced that white plume; where raged the thickest of the fight, there was it seen to wave, and thither did the soldiers follow. After a terrible combat of two hours, the day declared decisively in favor of the king. The army of the League was totally routed, and fled from the field, leaving its cannon

and standards behind it to become the trophies of the victors.¹

This victory, won over great odds, was a second lesson to Henry of the same import as the first. But he was trying to profess two creeds, and “a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” This fatal instability caused Henry to falter when he was on the point of winning all. Had he marched direct on Paris, the League, stunned by the blow he had just dealt it, would have been easily crushed; the fall of the capital would have followed, and, with Paris as the seat of his government, his cause would have been completely triumphant. He hesitated—he halted; his enthusiasm seemed to have spent itself on the battle-field. He had won a victory, but his indecision permitted its fruits to escape him. All that year was spent in small affairs— in the sieges of towns which contributed nothing to his main object. The League had time to recruit itself. The Duke of Parma— the most illustrious general of the age—came to its help. Henry’s affairs made no progress; and thus the following year (1591) was as uselessly spent as its predecessor. Meanwhile, the unhappy country of France— divided into factions, traversed by armies, devastated by battles—groaned under a combination of miseries. Henry’s great qualities remained with him; his bravery and dash were shown on many a bloody field; victories crowded in upon him; fame gathered round the white plume; nevertheless, his cause stood still. An eclipse seemed to rest upon the king, and a Nemesis appeared to dog his triumphal car.

With a professed Protestant upon the throne, one would have expected the condition of the Huguenots to be greatly alleviated; but it was not so. The concessions which might have been expected from even a Roman Catholic sovereign were withheld by one who was professedly a Protestant. The Huguenots as yet had no legal security for their civil and religious liberties. The laws denouncing confiscation and death for the profession of the Protestant religion, re-enacted by Henry III, remained unrepealed, and were at times put in force by country magistrates and provincial Parliaments. It sometimes happened that while in the camp of the king the Protestant worship was celebrated, a few leagues off the same worship was

¹It is scarcely necessary to remind our readers that this battle formed the subject of Lord Macaulay’s well-known ballad-song of the Huguenots.

forbidden to a Huguenot congregation under severe penalties. The celebrated Mornay Duplessis well described the situation of the Protestants in these few words: "They had the halter always about their necks." Stung by the temporizing and heartless policy of Henry, the Huguenots proposed to disown him as their chief, and to elect another protector of their Churches. Had they abandoned him, his cause would have been ruined. To the Protestants the safety of the Reformed faith was the first thing. To Henry the possession of the throne was the first thing, and the Huguenots and their cause must wait. The question was, How long?

It was now four years since Henry after a sort had been King of France; but the peaceful possession of the throne was becoming less likely than ever. Every day the difficulties around him, instead of diminishing, were thickening. Even the success which had formerly attended his arms appeared to be deserting him. Shorn of his locks, like Samson, he was winning brilliant victories no longer. What was to be done? this had now come to be the question with the king. Henry, to use a familiar expression, was "falling between two stools." The time had come for him to declare himself, and say whether he was to be a Roman Catholic, or whether he was to be a Protestant, There were not wanting weighty reasons, as they seemed, why the king should be the former. The bulk of his subjects were Roman Catholics, and by being of their religion he would conciliate the majority, put an end to the wars between the two rival parties, and relieve the country from all its troubles. By this step only could he ever hope to make himself King of all France. So did many around him counsel. His recantation would, to, a large extent, be a matter of form, and by that form how many great ends of State would be served!

But on the other side there were sacred memories which Henry could not erase, and deep convictions which he could not smother. The instructions and prayers of a mother, the ripened beliefs of a lifetime, the obligations he owed to the Protestants, all must have presented themselves in opposition to the step he now meditated. Were all these pledges to be profaned? were all these hallowed bonds to be rent asunder? With the Huguenots how often had he deliberated in council; how often worshipped in the same sanctuary; how often fought on the same battle-field; their arms mainly it was that raised

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him to the throne; was he now to forsake them? Great must have been the conflict in the mind of the king. But the fatal step had been taken four years before, when, in the hope of disarming the hostility of the Roman Catholic lords, he consented to receive instruction in the Romish faith. To hesitate in a matter of this importance was to surrender—was to be lost; and the choice which Henry now made is just the choice which it was to be expected he would make. There is reason to fear that he had never felt the power of the Gospel upon his heart. His hours of leisure were often spent in adulterous pleasures. One of his mistresses was among the chief advisers of the step he was now revolving. What good would this Huguenotism do him? Would he be so great a fool as to sacrifice a kingdom for it? Listening to such counsels as these, he laid his birth-right, where so many kings before and since have laid theirs, at the feet of Rome.

It had been arranged that a conference composed of an equal number of Roman Catholic bishops and Protestant pastors should be held, and that the point of difference between the two Churches should be debated in the presence of the king. This was simply a device to save appearances, for Henry's mind was already made up. When the day came, the king forbade the attendance of the Protestants, assigning as a reason that he would not put it in the power of the bishops to say that they had vanquished them in the argument. The king's conduct throughout was marked by consummate duplicity. He invited the Reformed to fast, in prospect of the coming conference, and pray for a blessing upon it; and only three months before his abjuration, he wrote to the pastors assembled at Samur, saying that he would die rather than renounce his religion; and when the conference was about to be held, we find him speaking of it to Gabrielle d'Estrees, with whom he spent the soft hours of dalliance, as an ecclesiastical tilt from which he expected no little amusement, and the denouement of which was fixed already. "This morning I begin talking with the bishops. On Sunday I am to take the perilous leap."²

Henry IV had the happiness to possess as counselors two men of commanding talent. The first was the Baron Rosny, better known as the illustrious Sully. He was a statesman of rare genius. Like

²"Le saut perilleux." (Mem. de Sully, tom. 2, livr. 5, p. 234, footnote.)

Henry, he was a Protestant; and he bore this further resemblance to his royal master, that his Protestantism was purely political. The other, Mornay Duplessis, was the equal of Sully in talent, but his superior in character. He was inflexibly upright. These two men were much about the king at this hour; both felt the gravity of the crisis, but differed widely in the advice which they gave. "I can find," said Sully, addressing the king, "but two ways out of your present embarrassments. By the one you may pass through a million of difficulties, fatigues, pains, perils, and labours. You must be always in the saddle; you must always have the corselet on your back, the helmet on your head, and the sword in your hand. Nay, what is more, farewell to repose, to pleasure, to love, to mistresses, to games, to dogs, to hawking, to building; for you cannot come out through these affairs but by a multitude of combats, taking of cities, great victories, a great shedding of blood. Instead of all this, by the other way-that is, changing your religion -you escape all those pains and difficulties in this world," said the courtier with a smile, to which the king responded by a laugh: "as for the other world, I cannot answer for that."

Mornay Duplessis counseled after another fashion. The side at which Sully refused to look-the other world-was the side which Duplessis mainly considered. He charged the king to serve God with a good conscience; to keep Him before his eyes in all his actions; to attempt the union of the kingdom by the Reformation of the Church, and so to set an example to all Christendom and posterity. "With what conscience," said he, "can I advise you to go to mass if I do not first go myself? and what kind of religion can that be which is taken off as easily as one's coat?" So did this great patriot and Christian advise.

But Henry was only playing with both his counselors. His course was already irrevocably taken; he had set his face towards Rome. On Thursday, July 22, 1593, he met the bishops, with whom he was to confer on the points of difference between the two religions. With a half-malicious humor he would occasionally interrupt their harangues with a few puzzling questions. On the following Sunday morning, the 25th, he repaired with a sumptuous following of men-at-arms to the Church of St. Denis. On the king's knocking the cathedral door was immediately opened. The Bishop of Bourges

met him at the head of a train of prelates and priests, and demanded to know the errand on which the king had come. Henry made answer, "To be admitted into the Church of Rome." He was straightway led to the altar, and kneeling on its steps, he swore to live and die in the Romish faith. The organ pealed, the cannon thundered, the warriors that thronged nave and aisle clashed their arms; high mass was performed, the king, as he partook, bowing down till his brow touched the floor; and a solemn *Te Deum* concluded and crowned this grand jubilation. ³

[622] The abjuration of Henry was viewed by the Protestants with mingled sorrow, astonishment, and apprehension. The son of Jeanne d'Albret, the foremost of the Huguenot chiefs, the Knight of the White Plume, to renounce his faith and go to mass! How fallen! But Protestantism could survive apostasies as well as defeats on the battle-field; and the Huguenots felt that they must look higher than the throne of Henry IV, and trusting in God, they took measures for the protection and advancement of their great cause. From their former compatriot and co-religionist, ever since, by the help of their arms, he had come to the throne, they had received little save promises. Their religion was proscribed, their worship was in many instances forbidden, their children were often compulsorily educated in the Romish faith, their last wills made void, and even their corpses dug out of the grave and thrown like carrion on the fields. When they craved redress, they were bidden be patient till Henry should be stronger on the throne. His apostasy had brought matters to a head, and convinced the Huguenots that they must look to themselves. The bishops had made Henry swear, "I will endeavor to the utmost of my power, and in good faith, to drive out of my jurisdiction, and from the lands under my sway, all heretics denounced by the Church." Thus the sword was again hung over their heads; and can we blame them if now they formed themselves into a political organization, with a General Council, or Parliament, which met every year to concert measures of safety, promote unity of action, and keep watch over the affairs of the general body? To Henry's honour it must be acknowledged that he secretly encouraged this Protestant League. An apostate, he yet escaped the infamy of the persecutor.

³Mem. de Sully, tom. 2, livr. 5, p. 239.

The Huguenot council applied to Henry's government for the redress of their wrongs, and the restoration of Protestant rights and privileges. Four years passed away in these negotiations, which often degenerated into acrimonious disputes, and the course of which was marked (1595) by an atrocious massacre—a repetition, in short, of the affair at Vassy. At length Henry, sore pressed in his war with Spain, and much needing the swords of the Huguenots, granted an edict in their favor, styled, from the town from which it was issued, the Edict of Nantes, which was the glory of his reign. It was a tardy concession to justice, and a late response to complaints long and most touchingly urged. "And yet, sire," so their remonstrances ran, "among us we have neither Jacobins nor Jesuits who aim at your life, nor Leagues who aim at your crown. We have never presented the points of our swords instead of petitions. We are paid with considerations of State policy. It is not time yet, we are told, grant us an edict,—yet, O merciful God, after thirty-five years of persecution, ten years of banishment by the edicts of the League, eight years of the present king's reign, and four of persecutions. We ask your majesty for an edict by which we may enjoy that which is common to all your subjects. The glory of God alone, liberty of conscience, repose to the State, security for our lives and property—this is the summit of our wishes, and the end of our requests."

The king still thought to temporise; but new successes on the part of the Spaniards admonished him that he had done so too long, and that the policy of delay was exhausted. The League hailed the Spanish advances, and the throne which Henry had secured by his abjuration he must save by Protestant swords. Accordingly, on the 15th April, 1598, was this famous decree, the Edict of Nantes, styled "perpetual and irrevocable," issued.

"This Magna Charta," says Felice, "of the French Reformation, under the ancient regime, granted the following concessions in brief:—Full liberty of conscience to all; the public exercise of the 'religion' in all those places in which it was established in 1577, and in the suburbs of cities; permission to the lords' high justiciary to celebrate Divine worship in their castles, and to the inferior gentry to admit thirty persons to their domestic worship; admission of the Reformed to office in the State, their children to be received into the schools, their sick into the hospitals, and their poor to share in the alms; and

the concession of a right to print their books in certain cities.” This edict further provided for the erection of courts composed of an equal number of Protestants and Roman Catholics for the protection of Protestant interests, four Protestant colleges or institutions, and the right of holding a National Synod, according to the rules of the Reformed faith, once every three years. ⁴ The State was charged with the duty of providing the salaries of the Protestant ministers and rectors, and a sum of 165,000 livres of those times (495,000 francs of the present day) was appropriated to that purpose. The edict does not come fully up to our idea of liberty of conscience, but it was a liberal measure for the time. As a guarantee it put 200 towns into the hands of the Protestants. It was the Edict of Nantes much more than the abjuration of Henry which conciliated the two parties in the kingdom, and gave him the peaceful possession of the throne during the few years he was yet to occupy it.

[623] The signing of this edict inaugurated an era of tranquillity and great prosperity to France. The twelve years that followed are perhaps the most glorious in the annals of that country since the opening of the sixteenth century. Spain immediately offered terms of peace, and France, weary of civil war, sheathed the sword with joy.

Now that Henry had rest from war, he gave himself to the not less glorious and more fruitful labours of peace. France in all departments of her organization was in a state of frightful disorder—was, in fact, on the verge of ruin. Castles burned to the ground, cities half in ruins, lands reverting into a desert, roads unused, marts and harbors forsaken, were the melancholy memorials which presented themselves to one’s eye wherever one journeyed. The national exchequer was empty; the inhabitants were becoming few, for those who should have enriched their country with their labor, or adorned it with their intellect, were watering its soil with their blood. Some two millions of lives had perished since the breaking out of the civil wars. Summoning all his powers, Henry set himself to repair this vast ruin. In this arduous labor he displayed talents of a higher order and a more valuable kind than any he had shown in war, and proved himself not less great as a statesman than he was as a soldier. There was a debt of three hundred millions of francs pressing

⁴Mem. de Sully, tom. 3, livr. 10, pp. 204,353.

on the kingdom. The annual expenditure exceeded the revenue by upwards of one hundred millions of francs. The taxes paid by the people amounted to two hundred millions of francs; but, owing to the abuses of collection, not more than thirty millions found their way into the treasury. Calling Sully to his aid, the king set himself to grapple with these gigantic evils, and displayed in the cabinet no less fertility of resource and comprehensiveness of genius than in the field. He cleared off the national debt in ten years. He found means of making the income not only balance the expenditure, but of exceeding it by many millions. He accomplished all this without adding to the burdens of the people. He understood the springs of the nation's prosperity, and taught them to flow again. He encouraged agriculture, promoted industry and commerce, constructed roads, bridges, and canals. The lands were tilled, herds were reared, the silkworm was introduced, the ports were opened for the free export of corn and wine, commercial treaties were framed with foreign countries; and France, during these ten years, showed as conclusively as it did after the war of 1870-71, how speedily it can recover from the effects of the most terrible disasters, when the passions of its children permit the boundless resources which nature has stored up in its soil and climate to develop themselves.

Henry's views in the field of foreign politics were equally comprehensive. He clearly saw that the great menace to the peace of Europe, and the independence of its several nations, was the Austrian power in its two branches - the German and Spanish. Philip II was dead; Spain was waning; nevertheless that ambitious Power waited an opportunity to employ the one half of Christendom of which she was still mistress, in crushing the other half. Henry's project, formed in concert with Elizabeth of England, for humbling that Power was a vast one, and he had made such progress in it that twenty European States had promised to take part in the campaign which Henry was to lead against Austria. The moment for launching that great force was come, and Henry's contingent had been sent off, and was already on German soil. He was to follow his soldiers in a few days and open the campaign. But this deliverance for Christendom he was fated not to achieve. His queen, Marie de Medici, to whom he was recently married, importuned him for a public coronation, and Henry resolved to gratify her. The ceremony, which was gone about with

great splendor, was over, and he was now ready to set out, when a melancholy seized him, which he could neither account for nor shake off. This pensiveness was all the more remarkable that his disposition was naturally gay and sprightly. In the words of Schiller, in his drama of "Wallenstein" -

"The king Felt in his heart the phantom of the knife Long ere Ravaillac armed himself therewith. His quiet mind forsook him; the phanasma Startled him in his Louvre, chased him forth Into the open air: like funeral knells Sounded that coronation festival; And still, with boding sense, he heard the tread Of those feet that even then were seeking him Throughout the streets of Paris."

When the coming campaign was referred to, he told the queen and the nobles of his court that Germany he would never see-that he would die soon, and in a carriage. They tried to laugh away these gloomy fancies, as they accounted them. "Go to Germany instantly," said his minister, Sully, "and go on horseback." The 19th of May, 1610, was fixed for the departure of the king. On the 16th, Henry was so distressed as to move the compassion of his attendants. After dinner he retired to his cabinet, but could not write; he threw himself on his bed, but could not sleep. He was overheard in prayer. [624] He asked, "What o'clock is it?" and was answered, "Four of the afternoon. Would not your Majesty be the better of a little fresh air?" The king ordered his carriage, and, kissing the queen, he set out, accompanied by two of his nobles, to go to the arsenal.⁵

He was talking with one of them, the Duke d'Epernon, his left hand resting upon the shoulder of the other, and thus leaving his side exposed. The carriage, after traversing the Rue St. Honore, turned into the narrow Rue de la Ferroniere, where it was met by a cart, which compelled it to pass at a slow pace, close to the kerbstone. A monk, Francois Ravaillac, who had followed the royal cortege unobserved, stole up, and mounting on the wheel, and leaning over the carriage, struck his knife into the side of Henry, which it only grazed. The monk struck again, and this time the dagger took the direction of the heart. The king fell forward in his carriage, and uttered a low cry. "What is the matter, sire?" asked one of his lords. "It is nothing," replied the king twice, but the second time so low

⁵P. de L'Estoile, apud Mem. de Sully, tom. 7, pp. 406,407.

as to be barely audible. Dark blood began to ooze from the wound, and also from the mouth. The carriage was instantly turned in the direction of the Louvre. As he was being carried into the palace, Sieur de Cerisy raised his head; his eyes moved, but he spoke not. The king closed his eyes to open them not again any more. He was carried upstairs, and laid on his bed in his closet, where he expired.

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Ravaillac made no attempt to escape: he stood with his bloody knife in his hand till he was apprehended; and when brought before his judges and subjected to the torture he justified the deed, saying that the king was too favorable to heretics, and that he purposed making war on the Pope, which was to make war on God.⁷ Years before, Rome had launched her excommunication against the “two Henries,” and now both had fallen by her dagger.

On the character of Henry IV we cannot dwell. It was a combination of great qualities and great faults. He was a brave soldier and an able ruler; but we must not confound military brilliance or political genius with moral greatness. Entire devotion to a noble cause the corner-stone of greatness - he lacked. France-in other words, the glory and dominion of himself and house-was the supreme aim and end of all his toils, talents, and manueverings. The great error of his life was his abjuration. The Roman Catholics it did not conciliate, and the Protestants it alienated. It was the Edict of Nantes that made him strong, and gave to France almost the only ten years of real prosperity and glory which it has seen since the reign of Francis I. Had Henry nobly resolved to ascend the throne with a good conscience, or not at all had he not paltered with the Jesuits-had he said, “I will give toleration to all, but will myself abide in the faith my mother taught me”-his own heart would have been stronger, his life purer, his course less vacillating and halting; the Huguenots, the flower of French valor and intelligence, would have rallied round him and borne him to the throne, and kept him on it, in spite of all his enemies. On what different foundations would his throne in that case have rested, and what a different glory would have encircled

⁶L’Estoile, Mathieu, Perefixe, etc.-apud Mem. de Sully, tom. 7, pp, 404-412. Malherbe, apud Guizot, vol. 3, pp. 623,624.

⁷Mem. de Sully, tom. 7, p. 418.

his memory! He set up a throne by abjuration in 1593, to be cast down on the scaffold of 1793!

We have traced the great drama of the sixteenth century to its culmination, first in Germany, and next in Geneva and France, and we now propose to follow it to its new stage in other countries of Europe.