

THE  
LIFE OF JOHN CALVIN,

CAREFULLY WRITTEN BY

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SHOULD any one suppose that I have engaged in writing this Life of John Calvin from any other motive than zeal to maintain the truth, the present state of human affairs will, I hope, easily vindicate me from the calumny. For there is scarcely any shorter road to all kinds of disaster than to praise virtue; and it were extreme folly voluntarily to bring down on one's self evils which mere silence may avert. But if the wicked allow no kind of virtue to be proclaimed with impunity, what must those expect, whose object it is to proclaim piety, which is of a higher order than virtue, and is not only opposed by the wicked, but is also very often assailed even by persons who are most desirous to appear, and sometimes also to be, honest? For piety has no enemies more inveterate than those who have sincerely embraced a false religion, thinking it true. But these things, however formidable in appearance, have not at all deterred me. For it were shameful if, from fear of the wicked, the good were not to be spoken of, and if the voice of religion were to be suppressed by the clamours of the superstitious.

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\* John Calvin, Theodore Beza, and Henry Beveridge, *Tracts Relating to the Reformation*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844), xvi–lxxxiv.

But should any one object, that to write the Life of Calvin is a very different thing from defending the truth, I will at once admit that man and truth are very different things; this, however, I will not hesitate to say, that He who is truth itself did not speak rashly when he said, “As the Father hath sent me, so send I you,” (John 20:21,) and “whoso heareth you heareth me,” (Luke 10:16.) Let men, therefore, (both those who believe through ignorance, and those who so speak from malice,) cry out, that Luther, Zuinglius, and Calvin, are regarded by us as gods, though we are continually charging the worshippers of saints with idolatry; let them, I say, cry out as much and as long as they please,—we are prepared with our answer, viz., that to commemorate the labours which holy men have undertaken in behalf of religion, together with their words and actions, (through the knowledge of which the good become better, while the wicked are reprov'd, our only aim in this kind of composition,) is a very different thing from doing as they do, when they either bring disgrace on the lives of men who were truly pious, by narratives not less impious than childish, (as an obscure individual called Abdias did with the history of the Apostles,) or compose fabulous histories filled with the vilest falsehoods, (they, in their barbarous jargon, call them Golden Legends, I call them abominable trash,) and endeavour, moreover, to bring back the idols of the ancient Gods, the only difference being a change of name.

We are as far from these worshippers of the dead as light is from darkness. Against conduct such as theirs, the Lord denounces the severest threatenings; ours, on the contrary, he commends, when he bids us keep both our bodily and mental eye intent upon his works. Nobody, I presume, will deny, that of all the works of God, men best deserve to be known and observed, and of men, those of them who have been distinguished at once for learning and piety. It is not without cause Daniel (Dan. 12:3) compares holy men of God to stars, since they by their brightness show the way of happiness to others. Those who allow that brightness to be entirely extinguished by death, deserve to be themselves plunged in thicker darkness than before. I have no intention, however, to imitate those who, in their eagerness for declamation and panegyric, have not so much adorned the truth as brought it into suspicion. Trying not how elegantly, but how truly I could write, I have preferred the style of simple narrative.

JOHN CALVIN was born at Noyons, a celebrated town in Picardy, or at least on the confines of Picardy, on the 27th July, in the year of our Lord 1509. His father's name was Gerard Calvin, his mother's Joan Franc, both of them persons of good repute, and in easy circumstances. Gerard being a person of no small judgment and prudence, was highly esteemed by most of the nobility of the district, and this was the reason why young Calvin was from a boy very liberally educated, though at his father's expense, in the family of the Mommors, one of the most distinguished in that quarter. Having afterwards accompanied them to Paris in the prosecution of his studies, he had for his master in the College of La Marche, Maturinus Corderius, a man of great worth and erudition, and in the highest repute in almost all the schools of France as a teacher of youth. He attained the age of 85, and died (the same year as Calvin) at Geneva, while a professor in the Academy of that city. Calvin afterwards removed to the College of Mont Aigu, and there had for his master a Spaniard, a man of considerable attainments. Under him Calvin, who was a most diligent student, made such progress, that he left his fellow-students behind in the Grammar course, and was promoted to the study of Dialectics, and what is termed Arts.

His father had at first intended him for the study of Theology, to which he inferred that he was naturally inclined; because, even at that youthful age, he was remarkably religious, and was also a strict censor of every thing vicious in his companions. This I remember to have heard from some Catholics, unexceptionable witnesses, many years after he had risen to celebrity.

Being thus, as it were, destined to the sacred office, his father procured a benefice for him from the Bishop of Noyons, in what is called the Cathedral church, and thereafter the cure of a parish connected with a suburban village called Pont-Eveque, the birth-place of his father, who continued to live in it till his removal to the town. It is certain that Calvin, though not in priest's orders, preached several sermons in this place before he quitted France. The design of making him a priest was interrupted by a change in the views both of father and son—in the former, because he saw that the Law was a surer road to wealth and honour, and in the latter, because, having been made acquainted with the reformed faith, by a relation named Peter Robert Olivet, (the person to whom the churches of France owe that translation of the Old Testament, from the Hebrew, which was printed at Neufchatel,) he had begun to devote himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and, from an abhorrence at all kinds of superstition, to discontinue his attendance on the public services of the Church.

Having set out for Orleans, to study law, which was there taught by Peter De l'Etoile, by far the first French lawyer of that period, Calvin, in a short time, made such astonishing progress, that he very often officiated for the professors, and was considered rather a teacher than a pupil. On his departure, he was presented with a Doctor's degree, free of expense, and with the unanimous consent of all the professors, as a return for the services which he had rendered to the Academy. Meanwhile, however, he diligently cultivated the study of sacred literature, and made such progress, that all in that city who had any desire to become acquainted with a purer religion, often called to consult him, and were greatly struck both with his learning and his zeal. Some persons, still alive, who were then on familiar terms with him, say, that, at that period, his custom was, after supping very frugally, to continue his studies until midnight, and on getting up in the morning, to spend some time meditating, and, as it were, digesting what he had read in bed, and that while so engaged, he was very unwilling to be interrupted. By these prolonged vigils he no doubt acquired solid learning, and an excellent memory; but it is probable he also contracted that weakness of stomach, which afterwards brought on various diseases, and ultimately led to his untimely death.

The Academy of Bourges had, at this time, acquired great celebrity through Andrew Alciat, (undoubtedly the first lawyer of his age,) who had been invited to it from Italy. Calvin thought it right to study under him also. He accordingly went thither, and on grounds, both religious and literary, formed a friendship with Melchior Wolmar, a German from Rothweil, and professor of Greek. I have the greater pleasure in mentioning his name, because he was my own teacher, and the only one I had from boyhood up to youth. His learning, piety, and other virtues, together with his admirable abilities as a teacher of youth, cannot be sufficiently praised. On his suggestion, and with his assistance, Calvin learned Greek. The recollection of the benefit which he thus received from Wolmar, he afterwards publicly testified by dedicating to him his Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

While engaged in these studies, Calvin still diligently cultivated sacred literature, and also occasionally preached in Liniere, a village near Bourges, in the presence, and with the approbation, of its proprietor.

A sudden intimation of the death of his father called him back to his native town. Shortly after, in his twenty-fourth year, he went to Paris, and there wrote his excellent Commentary on Seneca's Treatise, De Clementia. This very grave writer being obviously in accordance with Calvin's disposition, was a great favourite with him. A few months' residence here made him known to all who desired a reform in religion. Among others, I have heard him mention, with strong testimony to his piety, Stephen Forge, a distinguished merchant, who afterwards suffered

martyrdom in the cause of Christ, and to whose name Calvin gave celebrity in the work which he published against the Libertines.

About this time, Calvin renouncing all other studies, devoted himself to God, to the great delight of all the pious who were then holding secret meetings in Paris. It was not long before an occasion occurred for strenuous exertion. The person who at this time held the office of Rector in the University of Paris was Nicholas Cop, son of William Cop of Bâsle, physician to the King. He having, according to custom, to deliver an oration on the 1st of November, the day on which the festival of All Saints is celebrated by the Papists, Calvin furnished him with one in which religion was treated more purely and clearly than it was previously wont to be. This could not be tolerated by the Sorbonne, and being also disapproved by the Senate, or Parliament, that body cited the Rector to appear before them. He accordingly set out with his officers, but being warned on the way to beware of his enemies, turned back, and afterwards quitting the country, retired to Bâsle. Search was made at the College of Fortret, where Calvin was then residing. He happened not to be at home, but his papers were seized, and among them numerous letters from his friends. However, the worst which happened was, that the lives of many of them were brought into the greatest jeopardy—so very bitter were those judges against the Church, and, in particular, one of their number, called John Morin, whose savage proceedings are well remembered. This tempest the Lord dispersed by the instrumentality of the Queen of Navarre, (only sister of Francis, the reigning monarch,) a woman of distinguished genius, and at this time a great patroness of the Reformers. Inviting Calvin to her Court, she received him, and listened to him with the greatest respect.

Calvin after this left Paris, and removing to the province of Saintonge, became assistant to a friend, at whose request he wrote certain brief Christian exhortations, which in some parishes were read during divine service, in order that the people might be gradually trained to the investigation of the truth. About this time also he went to Nerac, in Gascony, to pay a visit to old James Lefevre of Estaples, whose life had been brought into danger by the babbling Sorbonnists, who had attacked him for his animadversions on scholastic theology, and his pursuits in mathematics, and other branches of philosophy, which have been restored to the University of Paris, but not without a very long and bitter contest. This good old man, whom the Queen of Navarre had delivered out of the hands of the Sorbonnists, and placed in Nerac, which was subject to her authority, was delighted with young Calvin, and predicted that he would prove a distinguished instrument in restoring the kingdom of heaven in France. Calvin, after some time, returned to Paris, brought thither as it seemed directly by the hand of God. For the impious Servetus, who had already begun to circulate his venomous attacks on the Holy Trinity, had arrived. As he pretended to be most desirous of a conference, Calvin fixed the time and place, though at the greatest risk of his life, (the rage of the enemy compelling him at that time to be in hiding,) but Servetus never came. A mere sight of Calvin was more than he could bear. This was in the year 1534, a year rendered famous by savage proceedings against many of the Reformers—Gerard Roussel, a Doctor of Sorbonne, but a great favourer of the new doctrines, and also Corald, of the order of St Augustine, who, aided by the Queen of Navarre, had done much during this and the previous year to promote the cause of Christ in Paris, having been not only driven from the pulpit, but thrown into prison. And to such a degree was the rage of the infatuated monarch Francis inflamed, on account of certain squibs against the mass which had been circulated over the city, and even fixed to the door of his own bed-chamber, that a public fast having been appointed, during which he went to church along with his three children, with his head uncovered, and carrying a blazing torch as a kind of expiation, he ordered thirty-two

martyrs to be burned alive, (eight at each of the four most public places in the city,) and also declared with solemn oath that he would not spare even his own children, if they were infected with those dire heresies, as he called them.

Calvin perceiving this state of matters, shortly after he had published his admirable Treatise, entitled Psychopannychia, against the error of those who, reviving a doctrine which had been held in the earliest ages, taught that the soul, when separated from the body, falls asleep, determined to withdraw from France. Accordingly, in company with the person whom we have mentioned that he lived with for some time at Saintonge, he set out to Bâsle, by the way of Lorraine; but when not far from the town of Metz, was brought into the greatest difficulty by the perfidy of one of his servants, who ran off with all the money belonging to both, and being mounted on the stronger horse, suddenly fled with such speed that it was impossible to overtake him. His masters were thus left so unprovided with the means of travelling, that they were obliged to borrow ten crowns from the other servant, and in that way arrived with difficulty, first at Strasburgh, and afterwards at Bâsle. There he lived on intimate terms with those two distinguished men, Simon Grynæus and Wolfgang Capito, and devoted himself to the study of Hebrew. Though most desirous to remain in retirement, as appears from a letter which Bucer addressed to him in the following year, he was compelled to publish his Institutes of the Christian Religion, a rude sketch of that most celebrated work. The German princes, who had espoused the cause of the Gospel, and whose friendship Francis was then courting, feeling offended with him at his persecutions of the Protestants, the excuse offered, on the suggestion of William Bellay of Lange, was, that he had not punished any but Anabaptists, who substituted their own spirit for the divine Word, and held all civil magistrates in contempt. Calvin not submitting to have such a stigma fixed on the true religion, seized the opportunity to publish what must be regarded as an incomparable work, accompanying it with an excellent prefatory address to the King himself. Had the monarch read it, I am much mistaken if a severe wound would not even then have been inflicted on the Babylonish harlot. For that prince, unlike those who succeeded him, was very capable of forming an opinion, and had given proof of no small discernment; was a patron of learned men, and not personally disaffected to the Reformers. But the sins of the French people, and also of the King himself, on account of which the wrath of God then impended over them, did not allow him to hear of that work, far less to read it. Calvin, after publishing it, and thereby, as it were, performing his duty to his country, felt an inclination to visit the Duchess of Ferrara, a daughter of Louis XII., whose piety was then greatly spoken of, and, at the same time, pay his respects to Italy as from a distance. He accordingly visited the Duchess, and, in so far as the state of the times permitted, confirmed her in her zeal for true religion. She ever after had a great attachment to him while he was alive, and now surviving him, has recently given a strong proof of grateful respect to his memory.

Calvin left Italy, which he was wont to say he had only entered that he might be able to leave it, and returned to France. After settling his affairs, and taking with him Anthony Calvin, his only surviving brother, his purpose was to return to Bâsle or Strasburgh. Owing to the war, the other roads were shut up, and he was obliged to proceed through Switzerland. In this way he came to Geneva, having himself no thought of this city, but brought thither by Providence, as afterwards appeared. A short time before, the Gospel of Christ had been introduced in a wonderful manner into that city by the exertions of two most illustrious men, viz., William Farel from Dauphiny, (not a monk, as some have pretended, but a scholar of James Lefevre of Estaples,) and Peter Viret of Orb, in the territory of Berne and Friburgh, whose labours the Lord afterwards most abundantly blessed. Calvin having, in passing through Geneva, paid them a visit, as good men

are wont to do to each other, Farel, a person obviously inspired with a kind of heroic spirit, strongly urged him, instead of proceeding farther, to stay and labour with him at Geneva. When Calvin could not be induced to consent, Farel thus addressed him: "You are following only your own wishes, and I declare, in the name of God Almighty, that if you do not assist us in this work of the Lord, the Lord will punish you for seeking your own interest rather than his." Calvin, struck with this fearful denunciation, submitted to the wishes of the Presbytery and the Magistrates, by whose suffrage, the people consenting, he was not only chosen preacher, (this he had at first refused,) but was also appointed Professor of Sacred Literature—the only office he was willing to accept. This took place in August 1536; a year which is also remarkable for the strict alliance that was formed between the two cities of Berne and Geneva, and for the accession of Lausanne to the Reformation, after a free discussion with the Papists, in which Calvin took part.

At this time, Calvin published a short formula of Christian doctrine, adapted to the Church of Geneva, which had just escaped from the pollutions of the Papists. To this he appended a Catechism, not the one that we now have, in the form of question and answer, but another much shorter, containing only the leading heads of religion. Endeavouring afterwards, with Farel and Coral, to settle the affairs of the Church,—most of his colleagues, from timidity, keeping aloof from the contest, and some of them (this gave Calvin the greatest uneasiness) even secretly impeding the work of the Lord,—his first object was to obtain from the citizens, at a meeting attended by the whole body of the people, an open abjuration of the Papacy, and an oath of adherence to the Christian religion and its discipline, as comprehended under a few heads. Although not a few refused, as might have been expected in a city which had just been delivered from the snares of the Duke of Savoy, and the yoke of Antichrist, and in which factions still greatly prevailed, yet by the good hand of the Lord, on the 20th of July 1537, (the clerk of the city taking the lead,) the senate and people of Geneva solemnly declared their adherence to the leading doctrines and discipline of the Christian religion. Satan, exasperated (but in vain) at these proceedings, and thinking that what he had attempted in an endless variety of ways, by foreign enemies, he might be able to accomplish under the cloak of piety, stirred up first the Anabaptists, and afterwards Peter Caroli, to attempt not only to interrupt, but even utterly to destroy and subvert, the work of the Lord. Of this Caroli, to whom this work was most disagreeable, both from its own nature, and because it interfered with views he was proved to have entertained, we will speak by and by. But, as the event showed, the Lord had anticipated Satan. For Calvin and his colleagues having brought the Anabaptists to free discussion in public, so thoroughly refuted them by the Word of God alone, on the 18th of March 1537, that, from that time, (a rare instance of success,) not above one or two appeared in that church.

Peter Caroli, the other disturber of the Church, occasioned greater and longer disturbance, but I will only give the leading heads, because a full history of the contest is extant, and may also be learned from a letter of Calvin to Grynæus. The Sorbonne, the mother who gave birth to this most impudent sophist, having afterwards thrown him off as a heretic, though he little deserved this at her hands, he went, first to Geneva, next to Lausanne, and afterwards to Neufchatel, the spirit of Satan so accompanying him, that in every place to which he came he left manifest traces of his turpitude. Finding himself discovered by our people, he went over to the enemy, and from the enemy again returned to us. His proceedings are well described by Farel in a long letter to Calvin. Ultimately he began to attack our best men, especially Farel, Calvin, and Viret, charging them with error on the subject of the Holy Trinity, and a very full synod having been held at Berne, P. Caroli was convicted of calumny. After this he went to Metz, suborned to impede the

work of the Lord, which Farel had there happily commenced. Subsequently he wrote a letter, in which he openly attacked the Reformers, the object of the hungry dog evidently being to show his perfect readiness to apostatise, and thereby obtain some appointment. He was, however, dispatched to Rome, to give satisfaction in presence of the Beast herself, and being there received with mockery, pressed by poverty and a loathsome disease, he, with difficulty, got admission to an hospital, where he at last obtained from the Man of Sin the due reward of his iniquities, namely—death. Such was the end of this unhappy man.

Meanwhile, in the year 1537, Calvin, seeing many persons in France, though they had a thorough knowledge of the truth, yet consulting their ease, and holding it enough to worship Christ in mind, while they gave outward attendance on Popish rites, published two most elegant letters, one on Shunning Idolatry, addressed to Nicholas Chemin, whose hospitality and friendship he had enjoyed at Orleans, and who afterwards was appointed to an official situation in Lorraine, and the other, on the Popish Priesthood, addressed to Gerard Roussel, whom I mentioned before, and who being presented first to an abbacy, and thereafter to a bishoprick, when the Parisian disturbance was forgotten, not only failed to keep the straight course, but even gradually misled his mistress, the Queen of Navarre.

While Calvin was thus engaged, most grievous trials befel him at home. The gospel had, as we have said, been admitted into the city, and Popery been abjured, but, at the same time, there were many who had not renounced the flagrant immoralities which had long prevailed in a city, subject for so many years to monks and a corrupt clergy; while old feuds, which had originated during the war of Savoy, between some of the first families, still subsisted. Calvin tried to remove these feuds, first by gentle admonition, and afterwards by graver rebuke; but both proved unavailing. The evil continued to increase,—so much so, that, through the factious proceedings of certain private individuals, the city was split into parties, not a few positively refusing, on any account, to conform to the order which they had sworn to observe. Matters came to such a pass, that Farel and Calvin, men endowed with a noble and heroic spirit, together with their colleague Corald, (he whom we formerly mentioned as having contended strenuously for the truth at Paris, and whom Calvin had brought first to Bâsle, and afterwards to Geneva, after he himself became stationed there,) openly declared, that they could not duly dispense the Lord's Supper to a people so much at variance among themselves, and so much estranged from all ecclesiastical discipline.

To this another evil was added, viz., a difference as to certain ritual matters between the Church of Geneva and that of Berne. The Genevese used common bread in the Lord's Supper. They had, besides, abolished what are called *baptisteries* as unnecessary for the performance of baptism, and also all feast days, with the exception of the Lord's day. The Synod of Lausanne, urged by the people of Berne, being decided in favour of unleavened bread, and of its restitution at Geneva, thought it only fair that the Consistory of Geneva should first be heard. For that purpose, another synod was appointed to meet at Zurich. Availing themselves of these occasions, the ringleaders of faction and discord, who had been elected Syndics, (this is an annual appointment, and is the highest office in the magistracy in the Genevese Republic,) convened the people, and carried matters with so high a hand, (Calvin and three of his colleagues, who agreed with him in opinion, in vain offering to render an account of all their proceedings,) that the greater part overcoming the better, those three faithful servants of God were ordered to quit the city, within two days, for having refused to celebrate the Lord's Supper. This decision being intimated to Calvin, "Certainly," says he, "had I been the servant of men I had obtained a poor reward, but it is well that I have served Him who never fails to perform to his servants whatever he has promised." Who would not have supposed that these things would prove certain

destruction to the Genevese Church? On the contrary, the event showed that the purpose of Divine Providence was partly, by employing the labours of his faithful servant elsewhere, to train him, by various trials, for greater achievements, and partly, by overthrowing those seditious persons, through their own violence, to purge the city of Geneva of much pollution. So admirable does the Lord appear in all his works, and especially in the government of his Church! This was fully manifested by what afterwards happened.

At that time, however, the three ministers having, in obedience to the edict, to the great grief of all good men, first proceeded to Zurich, and there, after holding a synod of certain of the Helvetic Churches, and by decree of the senate, attempted, through the mediation of the Bernese, but in vain, to conciliate the Genevese, Calvin proceeded to Bâsle, and shortly afterwards to Strasburgh. Having been appointed, with a competent salary, to the chair of theology in that city, with the consent of the senate, by the distinguished men who shone like bright lights in that Church, viz., Bucer, Capito, Niger, and their colleagues, he not only taught theology, with the universal applause of the learned, but also, at the suggestion of the Council, laid the platform of the French Church, establishing also a form of ecclesiastical discipline. Thus, Satan, disappointed in his expectation, saw Calvin received elsewhere, and, as a substitute for the Genevan Church, another Church forthwith erected. The arch-enemy, however, still laboured, as assiduously as ever, to overthrow the Genevese edifice, which already threatened ruin in every part. He, accordingly, soon found certain evil-disposed persons, who, in order to cloak that most iniquitous decree with some pious pretext or other, proposed that unleavened bread should be substituted for the common bread which was formerly used in the Supper. The object was to obtain a handle for new disturbance. Nor would Satan have failed in this, had not Calvin earnestly exhorted some good men who were so offended at the change, that they were even proposing to abstain from the Supper altogether, not to stir up strife about an indifferent matter. The use of unleavened bread thus prevailed, and even Calvin, after he was restored, never thought of contesting the matter, though he was far from disguising that he would have liked much better it had been otherwise. But another evil, of a more dangerous description, arose in the year 1539, and was, at the same time, suppressed by the diligence of Calvin. The Bishop of Carpentras, at that time, was James Sadolet He was a man of great eloquence, which he perverted, especially in suppressing the light of truth, and had been appointed a Cardinal, for no other reason than in order that his respectability as a man might serve to put a kind of gloss on false religion. He then observing his opportunity in the circumstances which had occurred, and thinking that he would easily ensnare the flock, when deprived of its distinguished pastors, under the pretext of neighbourhood, (for the city of Carpentras is in Dauphiny, which again bounds with Savoy,) sent a letter to his, so-styled, most Beloved Senate, Council, and People of Geneva, omitting nothing which might tend to bring them back into the lap of the Romish Harlot. There was nobody at that time in Geneva capable of writing an answer, and it is, therefore, not unlikely, that, had the letter not been written in a foreign tongue, it would, in the existing state of affairs, have done great mischief to the city. But Calvin, having read it at Strasburgh, forgot all his injuries, and forthwith answered it with so much truth and eloquence, that Sadolet immediately gave up the whole affair as desperate. But, indeed, Calvin did not wait so long as this to testify the affection which, as a pastor, he still felt bound to cherish towards the Genevese, and towards his own friends, who were then enduring most grievous hardships in the common cause of piety. Of this affection a lively proof is exhibited in those letters which he addressed to them from Strasburgh, both on the very year of his expulsion, and also in the year after. The sole aim of those letters is to exhort them to repentance before God, and forbearance towards the

wicked, to cultivate peace with their pastors, and, above all, to be earnest in prayer—in this way preparing them for that so much desired light, which it was hoped might yet arise out of the present fearful darkness, and which, eventually, and in a wonderful manner, did arise out of it.

At this time, also, he published a greatly enlarged edition of his *Christian Institutes*, and a *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, dedicated to his dear friend, Simon Grynée, together with a little golden *Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, for the use of his countrymen the French. This was afterwards translated into Latin by Galars. The subject of the Lord's Supper is here expounded with so much ability and erudition, that a determination of those most unhappy controversies, in which all the learned and all the good deservedly acquiesced, is chiefly to be ascribed under God to that treatise. Nor had Calvin less success in bringing back many Anabaptists to the right path, and in particular two, the one, Paul Volve, to whom Erasmus had dedicated his *Manual of a Christian Soldier*, and whom the Church of Strasburgh afterwards enjoyed as its pastor; the other, John Storder of Liege, who afterwards died of the plague, and whose widow, Idelleta, a grave and honourable woman, Calvin married by the advice of Bucer.

These were Calvin's studies at Strasburgh until the year 1541, in which year the Emperor convened a Diet, first at Worms, and afterwards at Ratisbon, for the purpose of settling the differences in religion. This Diet, agreeably to the wish of the Theological Consistory of Strasburgh, Calvin attended, and, as it appears, not without great advantage to the churches, especially that of his native country, and to the great delight of Master Philip Melancthon and Gasper Cruciger, of blessed memory. The former often called Calvin the "Theologian," and the latter, after a private conference with him on the subject of the Supper, in which he was made acquainted with Calvin's opinion, distinctly approved of it.

But the time had arrived when the Lord had determined to take pity on the Church of Geneva. Accordingly, one of the Syndics, who had laboured to procure the decree by which the faithful pastors were ejected, so misconducted himself in the administration of the republic, that he was accused of sedition. Attempting to escape by a window, he fell, and being a large overgrown man, was so much injured, that he died a few days after. Another of them was executed for murder. Two others being accused of misconducting themselves on a certain embassy on which they had been sent by the Republic, took flight, and were condemned in absence. The city being thus rid of its filth and froth, began to long for its Farel and its Calvin. As there seemed, very little hope of getting back Farel from Neufchatel, the State turns its whole attention to Calvin, and employing the mediation of Zurich, sends an embassy to Strasburgh to obtain the consent of the inhabitants to his return. These expressed great reluctance to part with him. Calvin himself, although the injuries which he had received at the instigation of certain wicked men, had made no change upon his affection for the Genevese, yet having an aversion to disturbances, and seeing that the Lord had blessed his ministry in the Church of Strasburgh, stated plainly that he would not return. Bucer also, and others, declared that they would have the greatest objection to part with him. The Genevese, however, persisting, Bucer came to be of opinion that their prayers should be complied with; but he never would have obtained Calvin's consent; had he not given warning of Divine judgment, and appealed to the example of Jonah. These things having occurred about the time when Calvin had to go with Bucer to the Diet of Ratisbon, (for so it had been determined,) his return was postponed, and the Genevese obtained the consent of the people of Berne, that Peter Viret, of Lausanne, should go for a short time and officiate at Geneva. This made Calvin the less reluctant to return, inasmuch as he was to have a colleague, whose aid and advice would be of the greatest use to him in restoring the Church. Accordingly, after the lapse of several months, Calvin returned to Geneva on the 13th of

September 1541, amid the congratulations of the whole people, and especially of the Senate, who then sincerely acknowledged the singular goodness of God towards them, and who never ceased to urge the people of Strasburgh to expunge a reservation which they had made, making the return only temporary. This they at length conceded, on condition, however, that the honorary freedom of the city which they had conferred on Calvin should remain unimpaired, and that he should continue to draw yearly what they call the *præbend*. The former condition Calvin approved, but being a person who had no desire whatever for wealth, he could never be induced to accept the latter.

Calvin being thus restored at the urgent entreaty of his Church, proceeded to set it in order. Seeing that the city stood greatly in need of a curb, he declared, in the first place, that he could not properly fulfil his ministry, unless, along with Christian doctrine, a regular presbytery with full ecclesiastical authority were established. At that time, therefore, (but this matter will be more fully explained farther on,) laws for the election of a presbytery, and for the due maintenance of that order, were passed, agreeably to the Word of God, and with the consent of the citizens themselves. These laws Satan afterwards made many extraordinary attempts to abolish, but without success. Calvin also wrote a Catechism in French and Latin, not at all differing in substance from the former one, but much enlarged, and in the form of question and answer. This may well be termed an admirable work, and has been so much approved in foreign countries, that it has not only been translated into a great number of living languages, such as the German, English, Scotch, Flemish, and Spanish, but also into Hebrew by Emanuel Tremmelius, a Christian Jew, and most elegantly into Greek by Henry Stephen. What his ordinary labours at this time were will be seen from the following statement. During the week he preached every alternate and lectured every third day, on Thursday he met with the Presbytery, and on Friday attended the ordinary Scripture meeting, called "The Congregation," where he had his full share of the duty. He also wrote most learned Commentaries on several of the books of Scripture, besides answering the enemies of religion, and maintaining an extensive correspondence on matters of importance. Any one who reads these attentively, will be astonished how one man could be fit for labours so numerous and so great. He availed himself much of the aid of old Farel and Viret, while, at the same time, he was also of great service to them. This friendship and intimacy was not less hateful to the wicked than delightful to all the pious, and, in truth, it was a most pleasing spectacle to see and hear those three distinguished men, carrying on the work of God so harmoniously, and yet differing so much from each other in the nature of their gifts. Farel excelled in a certain sublimity of mind, so that nobody could either hear his thunders without trembling, or listen to his most fervent prayers without feeling almost as it were carried up into heaven. Viret possessed such winning eloquence, that his entranced audience hung upon his lips. Calvin never spoke without filling the mind of the hearer with most weighty sentiments. I have often thought that a preacher compounded of the three would have been absolutely perfect.

To return to Calvin,—in addition to these employments, he had many others, arising out of circumstances domestic and foreign. For the Lord so blessed his ministry, that persons flocked from all parts of the Christian world, some to take his advice in matters of religion, and others to hear him. Hence, we have seen an Italian, an English, and, finally, a Spanish Church at Geneva, one city seeming scarcely sufficient to entertain so many guests. But though at home he was courted by the good, and feared by the bad, and matters had been admirably arranged, yet there were not wanting individuals who gave him great annoyance. These disputes we will explain in order, that posterity may have a singular example of fortitude, which each may imitate according to his ability.

To resume our narrative, as soon as he returned to the city, calling to mind the saying, (Matth. 6:33,) "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all other things will be added unto you," the first thing he did was to obtain the consent of the Senate to a form of ecclesiastical polity, which was agreeable to the Word of God, and from which neither ministers nor people should afterwards be permitted to depart. The form which had been formerly approved was hated by some among the common people, and also by some of the leading citizens, who, though they had renounced the Pope, had assumed the name of Christ in name only. Some also of the ministers who had remained in the city when these good men were driven out of it, (the chief of them, indeed, being afterwards accused of flagrant misconduct, had basely deserted their posts,) although they did not dare to resist the testimony of their conscience, yet secretly opposed it, not easily allowing themselves to be reduced into order. Nor did they want a pretext for their malice, viz., the example of other Churches in which there was no excommunication. In short, there were not wanting some who cried out that a Popish tyranny was re-established. But Calvin's firmness, combined with singular moderation, overcame these difficulties. He demonstrated that not only doctrines, but also the form of Church government, must be sought for in Scripture, and appealed, in support of his views, to the expressed opinion of the most distinguished men of the age, as Œcolampadius, Zuinglius, Zuichius, Philip, Bucer, Capito, and Myconius; still not condemning as antichristian those Churches which had not proceeded the same length, or those pastors who thought that their flocks did not require to be so curbed. In fine, he demonstrated how great the difference was between Popish tyranny and the yoke of the Lord. In this way he was successful in getting those laws of ecclesiastical polity, which that Church still observes, to be drawn up with universal consent, read over, and finally approved by the suffrages of the people, on the 20th of November.

Although these things had been happily begun, yet as Calvin perceived that they could not be carried into practice without considerable difficulty, he felt exceedingly desirous that Viret, whom the Bernese had only parted with for a time, and Farel, whom the inhabitants of Neufchatel had received on his ejection, should be appointed his perpetual colleagues. In this, however, he did not succeed, Viret having shortly after returned to Lausanne, and Farel again fixed his residence at Neufchatel. Hence the merit of restoring the Genevan Church is almost entirely due to Calvin alone. In the following year, (1542,) Calvin had no few sources of annoyance. For, in addition to those which he had at home, the inflamed fury of the enemies of the gospel expelling numbers of persons from France and Italy, and bringing them into a neighbouring city of so much celebrity, it is wonderful with what zeal he exerted himself to counsel and refresh the exiles, by every kind of attention, to say nothing of the letters which he wrote for the consolation of those who continued in the very lion's jaws. The same year, two very grievous evils were added, viz., a scarcity of corn, and its usual attendant the plague. At that time the custom in Geneva was, to send those suffering by the plague to an hospital outside the city. But as the assistance of a steady and careful pastor was required, and the greater part declined from fear of infection, three volunteered themselves, viz., Calvin, Sebastian Castellio, (of whom we will afterwards speak,) and Peter Blanchet. Lots were cast, but when the lot fell upon Castellio, he changed his mind, and impudently declined to undertake the office. Calvin wished to do it, but the Senate interposing to prevent him, Blanchet, who still volunteered, was appointed. Other grievous evils also occurred at this time. For Peter Toussain, a pastor of Montbelliard, revived the controversy concerning the Lord's Supper, while, at Bâsle, there were not wanting persons who, notwithstanding of the opposition of Myconius, sought to overthrow the foundations of ecclesiastical discipline before they were well laid. Two conferences were

held with Calvin on the subject. At Metz, where Farel, who had been invited thither, was labouring with great success, the work of the Lord was greatly impeded, partly by the apostate Peter Caroli, whom we have already mentioned. How much Calvin laboured on these occasions, by writing, admonishing, exhorting, &c., may be understood from his published letters, and is also attested by many still in manuscript.

But the Sorbonne, growing more audacious than they had ever been before, in consequence of the patronage of Peter Liser, President of the Parliament of Paris, (a man whose memory is still in detestation,) ventured on an attempt, at which the Bishops, or at least the Pope himself, would scarcely have connived, had they not been occupied in dividing the spoils of the Church among themselves, in the manner in which robbers are wont to do, and so leaving their own special duty of administering the word to be performed by those worthies whom they call doctors; on the same terms, however, on which dogs serve their masters, viz., the being permitted to gnaw the bones which come from the table, after being exceedingly well-picked. The Sorbonne then, supported by no authority human or divine, had dared to prescribe articles of Christian faith, and of such a kind, that both by their falsehood and by the extreme childishness so common to that body, they must have lost all authority with men not utterly devoid of sense. Many, however, came forward to subscribe them—some through fear and others through ignorance. Calvin, therefore, wrote an answer, in which, with great learning and solid argument, he refuted their errors, and wittily exposed their folly to the derision of all not absolutely stupid. In this manner that year passed away, and the next (1543) was in no respects of a milder nature. The same evils, viz., scarcity of corn and the plague, raging in Savoy, Calvin again exerted himself at home in confirming his people, and abroad, in strenuously opposing the enemies of the Church. This he did, especially by the publication of four books on the controversy relating to free-will. These, which he dedicated to Philip Melancthon, were in answer to Albert Pighius of Campen, who was the first sophist of the age, and had selected Calvin for an antagonist, in the hope, that, by gaining a distinguished victory, he might obtain a Cardinal's hat from the Pope. But his labour proved vain. The only tiling he obtained was just what the enemies of the truth deserve,—he excited the disgust of all men of sense and learning, and was deceived by Satan himself. Philip (Melancthon) has declared how high a value he set upon these books, by his letter which we thought it right to publish, in order that posterity might have a sure and clear testimony with which to refute the calumniators of both.

From a letter which Calvin himself addressed in the same year to the Church of Montbelliard, any person may know what answer to give to those who complain of his excessive severity in enforcing the laws of ecclesiastical polity. The following year was 1544, in course of which, Calvin explained his opinion of the course pursued by the people of Neufchatel in the matter of ecclesiastical censures. But at home, Sebastian Castellio, to whose levity we have already adverted, and who, though he had an air of mock humility, yet, from his most absurd ambition, plainly belonged to the class of people whom the Greeks call *ιδιογνωμονες*, (wise in their own conceit,) being filled with indignation, because Calvin had not approved of his sillinesses in the French translation of the New Testament, effervesced to such a degree, that, not contented with teaching certain strange doctrines, he publicly insisted that Solomon's Song should be expunged from the Canon, as impure and obscene. When the ministers refused to comply, he assailed them with the bitterest reproaches. Justly thinking that such conduct was not to be borne, they called him before the Senate on the 30th of June, when, after a most patient hearing and full discussion, he was convicted of calumny, and ordered to quit the city. How he conducted himself after going to Bâsle, where he was at length admitted, will be described elsewhere.

The year before, Charles V. having, in the view of turning all his strength against the French, promised the Germans, that for a short period, until a General Council were held, which he engaged to see done, neither party should suffer prejudice on account of religious differences, but both enjoy equal laws, the Roman Pontiff, Paul III., was exceedingly offended, and addressed a very severe expostulation to the Emperor, because, forsooth, he had put heretics on a footing with Catholics, and, as it were, put his sickle into another man's corn. Cæsar gave what answer seemed proper, but Calvin, because the truth of the gospel, and the innocence of the godly, was deeply injured by that letter, repressed the audacity of the Pontiff. A diet of the empire was at this time held at Spire, and Calvin, availing himself of the occasion, published a short treatise on the Necessity of Reforming the Church. I know not if any writing on the subject, more nervous or solid, has been published in our age. The same year, Calvin, in two short treatises, so effectually refuted both the Anabaptists and the Libertines, (in whom all the most monstrous heresies of ancient times were renewed,) that I believe no one who reads them attentively will ever be deceived by these people, unless it be with his eyes open, or if he have been deceived, will not forthwith return to the right path. The treatise against the Libertines, however, gave offence to the Queen of Navarre, because (the thing is almost incredible) she had been fascinated to such a degree by two ringleaders of that horrible sect, viz., Quintin and Pocquet, on whom Calvin had expressly animadverted, that, although she did not embrace their heresy, she held them to be good men, and therefore thought herself, in a manner, stabbed through their side. When Calvin understood this, he replied to her with admirable moderation, as became her rank, and the remembrance of the benefits which she had conferred upon the Church of Christ, and yet ingenuously and frankly, as became a faithful servant of God, censuring her imprudence, in receiving men of such a character, and asserting the authority of his ministry. In short, it was owing to him, that the professors of this horrid sect of Libertines, who had begun to spread as far as France, afterwards kept within the confines of Holland, and the adjacent provinces.

While Calvin was worn out with all the labours of this year, the following year (1545) commenced with contests, and these by far the most grievous in which he had been involved. For, as if the plague sent from heaven had not sufficiently exhausted the city and its neighbourhood, avarice prevailed to such a degree in some poor wretches, whom the richer class had employed to take care of the sick, and purify their houses, that having entered into a horrid conspiracy together, they besmeared the door-posts and thresholds, and all the passages of houses, with a pestilential ointment, which immediately produced a dreadful plague. They had come under a solemn oath to each other to become the bond-slaves of Satan, in the event of being induced, by any tortures, to betray their accomplices. Not a few, however, were apprehended, as well in the city as in the neighbouring districts, and suffered condign punishment. It is almost incredible how much obloquy Satan, by this device, brought upon Geneva, and especially on Calvin, people believing that the arch-enemy was obviously reigning in the very place, where, in truth, he was most powerfully opposed.

This year was also infamous for that savage butchery which the parliament of Aix committed on the Waldensian brethren of Merindol and Cabrier, and the whole of that district, not on one or two individuals, but on the whole population, without distinction of age or sex, burning down their villages also. These calamities affected Calvin the more deeply, when consoling and refreshing a few who had taken refuge in Geneva, because he had formerly taken care by letters, and by supplying them with pastors, to have them purely instructed in the Gospel; and when they had been brought into jeopardy on a former occasion, had saved them by interceding for them

with the princes of Germany and the Swiss Cantons. At this time also, that unhappy dispute concerning the Lord's Supper again crept in, Osiander, a man of haughty and extravagant temper, stirring up the smothered embers. It certainly was not Calvin's fault that this fire was not extinguished. In proof of this, we have published several of the letters which he wrote to Melancthon. But the intemperance of that man, whom both Calvin and Melancthon surnamed Pericles, left no room for their sound advice. Meanwhile, the plague raging in the city carried off many good men. Calvin did his utmost in thundering from the pulpit against the flagitious lives of certain individuals, and especially against their whoredom, from which they could not even then desist. In this all good men concurred with him, though there were some demagogues who resisted his attempts, until such time as they brought ruin upon themselves, in the manner which will be explained in its own place. To these evils were added unseasonable disputes concerning the rights of citizenship. There were also disputes concerning the ecclesiastical revenues, which had been carried off by the Papists, and which the faithful pastors could not allow to be administered so improperly, as they were in many places. These disputes occasioned much noise, much complaint, and much labour, in speaking and writing, but generally to no purpose—Calvin openly declaring, that he certainly had not the least favour for the numerous acts of, sacrilege, which he felt assured that Heaven would one day punish most severely, but declaring also, that he acknowledged the just judgment of God in not allowing the revenues, which formerly had been so iniquitously acquired by the priesthood, to be brought into the treasury of the Church.

Calvin had, moreover, this same year, a double cause of anxiety both at home and abroad. An individual, old in wickedness, though still young in years, having returned to Geneva, his native place, after he had for some time counterfeited the hermit in France, began with making a great profession of piety. Calvin, who was a sagacious and skilful judge of character, if ever any man was, soon saw through him, and began to admonish him; gently at first, but by and by more freely, and after he had given himself a great many airs before the congregation, to rebuke him openly. He, enraged at this, easily finds out persons against whose iniquities Calvin had been wont to inveigh, and who were quite ready to assist him with their influence and their zeal. Accordingly, when it became necessary to supply a vacancy in the pastoral office, caused by the death of a pastor, he, with his adherents, openly intrigued for it. But why enter more into detail? The Senate interposing its authority, orders him to be taken on trial. Calvin, with his colleagues, resisted, and showing how repugnant his intriguing for the office was to the Word of God, succeeded in obtaining the concurrence of the Senate to maintain the ecclesiastical laws as they had been enacted. At this time also there were some persons in France who, having fallen away at first from fear of persecution, had afterwards begun to be so satisfied with their conduct as to deny that there was any sin in giving bodily attendance on Popish rites, provided their minds were devoted to true religion. This most pernicious error, which had been condemned of old by the Fathers, Calvin refuted with the greatest clearness, though, as they alleged, with too much severity, adding the opinions of the most learned theologians, Philip Melancthon, Bucer, Peter Martyr, and the church of Zurich. The consequence was, that from that time the name of Nicodemite was held in detestation by all good men. This name of Nicodemite was applied to those who pretended to find a sanction for their misconduct in the example of that most holy man Nicodemus.

The succeeding year (1546) was in no respect milder than its predecessor. For while it was necessary to confirm the minds of the citizens against frequent rumours of preparations which the Emperor was said to be making against religion, and against the wiles of the Pope, who was said to have incendiaries in his pay, the state of the city was particularly deplorable in this

respect, that the petulance of the wicked, so far from being tamed by the many chastisements they had received, on the contrary, continued to increase, and at length broke out openly. For they had obtained for their leader one Ami Perrin, an exceedingly foolish, but daring and ambitious man, (whom, for this reason, Calvin in his letters nicknames the “Comic Cæsar,”) and who some time before had succeeded in getting the people to vote him into the office of Captain-General. Thinking, as he well might, that himself, and those like himself, could have no footing while the laws were in vigour, and especially while Calvin was constantly thundering against their licentiousness, he began at length, in this year, openly to show what he and his faction were meditating. This being at once rebuked and repressed by the authority of the senate, he became silent, indeed, but in a manner which more clearly betrayed his dishonesty. For a short time after, at a pretty full meeting of the senate, one of the members, secretly instigated, it is supposed, by two ministers of the Consistory, both of them given to drunkenness, and not less afraid than others of the rigour of the law, accuses Calvin of preaching false doctrine. Calvin gave himself no trouble with this barking dog, who was, however, put upon his trial, and after due investigation convicted of calumny. The two false pastors in league with him were deposed, and even the tipping-houses were interdicted; so far were these bad men from succeeding in their malice. But the fire which had been suppressed this year blazed forth in that which succeeded, viz., 1547. Nor did any year of that age prove more calamitous. The churches of Germany were reduced to such extremity, that some of the princes and cities surrendered voluntarily, and others of them were taken by force, so that the structure which had been reared in the course of so many years, and after so great exertions, seemed to be in one moment overthrown. Those were generally considered most happy who, by an opportune death, had been delivered from these disasters. In this calamitous condition of the churches, we may easily suppose how that pious breast was tormented, which, even when in the enjoyment of peace itself, felt as much for the remotest churches, as if the whole burden of them had been entrusted to its care. How could it be otherwise? What pain must he have felt when he saw the most distinguished men, his dearest friends, I mean Melancthon, Bucer, and Martyr, in such peril, that they were more in death than in life! But that the strong mind of Calvin rose above these storms, is both attested by his writings, and was also proved by his conduct. At home, when vexed to the utmost by the wicked, he did not turn from his course so much as a hairbreadth.

To return to domestic strife; his sole object being to show that the gospel which he preached did not consist in mere speculation, but in Christian practice, he, of course, experienced the hostility of those who had declared war against all piety, and, in short, against their country itself. The chief of these, as I have already observed, was Perrin. His condition, and that of his party, was such, that they were determined at all hazards to insist that the cognisance of all matters of discipline should be transferred from the Presbytery to the Senate. The Presbytery, on the contrary, maintained that the laws enacted relative to ecclesiastical discipline were agreeable to the Word of God, and therefore implored the assistance of the Senate, to prevent the church from suffering harm. The Senate decided that the ecclesiastical laws were to be enforced, and passed an enactment to that effect. At last Perrin having, by his audacity, brought himself into the greatest jeopardy, the result of the whole affair was, that he was expelled from the senate, and deprived of his office of captain, and reduced to the rank of a private citizen. But though all these things were transacted in open court, it is impossible to describe the trouble which they gave to Calvin. Indeed, on one occasion, in the Court of the Two Hundred, the quarrel rose to such a height that they were on the point of drawing their swords, and staining the court itself with mutual slaughter. During the disturbance, Calvin coming in with his colleagues, suppressed it,

though at the risk of his life, as the factious proceedings of these men were directed specially against him. He proceeded, nevertheless, to express his utter detestation of their crimes, and rebuked them with the severity which they deserved. Nor did his denunciation of Divine judgment prove vain. For about this time, one of them having been detected to have written, and to have fixed to the pulpit, an infamous libel, in which, along with many nefarious attacks on the sacred ministry, it was said that Calvin ought to be thrown headlong into the Rhone, was, after due investigation, unexpectedly found guilty of an infinite number of other blasphemies, and punished with death. Nay, after his execution, a book was found in his own handwriting, expressly attacking Moses, and even Christ himself. It, moreover, appeared that he had succeeded in infecting others with his horrid impiety. In this year, amid all these contentions, Calvin wrote his Antidote to the Seven Sessions of the so-called Council of Trent, and also by letter confirmed the church of Rouen, in opposition to the fraudulent proceedings of a certain Franciscan, who had begun to spread the poisonous errors of Carpocrates, as renewed by the Libertines.

In the following year, viz., 1548, the old faction again burst forth, Satan, for that purpose, (the thing is almost incredible,) making use especially of the very persons who were most desirous of suppressing it; I mean Farel and Viret. They having arrived at Geneva at the beginning of the year, had delivered formal addresses in the Senate, with a view to the settlement of the prevailing dissensions, Calvin merely insisting on a reformation of manners, while Perrin and his party were willing to make any concession, for the purpose of reinstating him in his former situation. At this time every thing appeared settled, but the result shortly proved that these good men had merely been duped. Perrin being restored, the malignity of the wicked rose to such a height, that some of them openly used collars cut into the form of a cross, for the purpose of mutual recognition, while others gave the name of Calvin to their dogs, or playing upon the name, changed Calvin into Cain. Finally, not a few, from enmity to him, declared that they would not join in the Lord's Supper. All these proceedings were sharply rebuked by him and his colleagues, and the parties being brought before the Senate, the good cause easily prevailed. Ultimately, on the 18th of December, the amnesty was again ratified by solemn oath. But in Perrin and his party all these things were mere pretence; their only object being, as the event proved, to procure the Syndicate for him, and so furnish them with the means of doing more mischief. During all this strife, not only was Calvin not idle, but, as if he had been living in retirement, wrote most learned commentaries on six of Paul's Epistles, and in a most solid treatise refuted what is called the Interim, (which had been published for the purpose of corrupting the German churches,) and pointed out the true method of renewing the Church. Lastly, in a very elegant little treatise he exposed the falsehood and vanity of what is called Judicial Astrology, in which not a few seemed to put too much faith. At this time, also, having been written to by Brentius, who was living in exile at Bâsle, he returned an answer, condoling with him in the most friendly terms. I wish Brentius had continued this connection. He also wrote to Bucer, who was then in exile in England, candidly exhorting him to write and speak more clearly on the subject of the Lord's Supper; and at the same time expressing the greatest sympathy with him. At the same time, in a carefully written letter, addressed to the Duke of Somerset, Protector of England, who was afterwards most unjustly put to death, he gave a warning, which, if it had been duly attended to, might, perhaps, have enabled the Church of England to escape many storms.

During these contests the Church of Geneva wonderfully increased. This, as it exceedingly vexed Satan and the wicked, so it put Calvin in greater spirits to entertain those who were living

in exile for the cause of Christ. His anxiety on this head was so favoured of the Lord in the following year, that the rage of the wicked, though not altogether extinguished, seemed, at least, to be temporarily suppressed. And, in truth, he stood in need of a truce, the more especially that he had sustained a grievous domestic calamity, in the death of his most excellent wife. This affliction he bore with a firmness which made him in this respect also a shining example to the whole Church. In this year, (1549,) a dispute having arisen in the Saxon churches, concerning matters of indifference, called *Adiaphora*, Calvin being asked for his advice, gave a candid statement of his sentiments to Philip Melancthon, and at the same time reminded him of his duty. Some accused Melancthon of being too easy in this matter, but undeservedly, as Calvin was afterwards convinced on more accurate information. For it was not known at the time what was the spirit which animated the evil genius of Flacius and his whole tribe, who afterwards produced such disturbances, and even now impede the work of the Lord, assuredly with no less impudence and fury than if they were actually in the pay of the Roman Pontiff. But the wound thus inflicted on the German churches the Lord compensated, on the other hand, by his kindness to the Swiss.

Some having thought that Calvin was countenancing the doctrine of consubstantiation, he and Farel set out together for Zurich, in order to give a full explanation of the matter, and settle it with the common consent of all the Swiss churches. Good men and those who love truth had no difficulty in coming to an agreement. And, accordingly, a Confession was drawn up with the perfect approbation of all the Swiss and Rhætian churches. This Confession knit Bulinger and Calvin, and the churches of Zurich and Geneva in the closest ties. It is the Confession we all still hold, and I hope will, with the favour of God, continue to hold even to the end. This year, when compared with others, passed away happily, and I have the greater pleasure in remembering it, because it was that in which I first entered on my ministerial functions, in consequence of a call given me by the Church of Lausanne, and urged on my acceptance by Calvin. About this time Calvin wrote two very learned letters to Lælius Socinus of Sienna, who long lived at Zurich, and ultimately died there. From these letters any one will easily discern what the temper of that man was,—obviously that of an academic, although it was long (indeed not till after his death) before the fact was fully established. He had travelled over the churches, and imposed on all their most learned men, more especially Melancthon, Calvin, and Joachim Camerarius, who, in his *Life of Melancthon*, bears very honourable testimony to him, contrary to his deserts. It was afterwards discovered that he was the chief author of the Bellian farrago, of which we will speak in its own place, and favoured the mad dogmas of Servetus, Castellio, and Ochin. In his *Commentary on the celebrated First Chapter of John*, which is still extant, he went far beyond the impiety of other heretics.

The following year, viz., 1550, in so far as regards the Church, was tranquil enough, and therefore it was determined that the ministers should at a certain season of the year, attended by an elder and a deacon, go round all the wards of the city, to instruct the people, and examine every individual briefly as to his faith. This they were to do, not only in sermons, which some neglected, and others attended, without much benefit, but also in each house and family. It is scarcely credible how great benefit ensued. Another arrangement was, that the celebration of our Saviour's nativity should be deferred to the Sabbath-day following, and that there should be no other feast-days, except one in seven, which we call the Lord's Day. This gave offence to a very great number of persons, so that there were not wanting some who gave out that even the Lord's Day was suppressed by Calvin. Their object was to bring odium upon him, although the fact was, that the matter had been discussed before the people, not only in the absence of any request from the Consistory, but even without their knowledge. Calvin, however, did not think it worth while

to make a quarrel about it; but the offence which some had taken at Calvin was the occasion of his writing his treatise “On Offences,” dedicated to his old and faithful friend, Lawrence Normand.

The dissensions of the following year, viz., 1551, far more than overbalanced the two years of tranquillity. For besides the grief occasioned to the whole Church, and particularly to Calvin, by the death of Bucer, to whom he was very strongly attached, and also by the death of Joachim Vadian, consul of St Gal, a man of singular piety and learning, the wickedness of the factious broke out the more furiously the longer it had been smothered; in so much that they openly refused to confer the freedom of the city on the exiles who had arrived in it. Not contented with this, they jostled Calvin himself, as he was returning, after having preached on the other side of the Rhone; and almost threw Raymond his colleague into the river, as he was one night passing the bridge, by secretly removing one of the props. In fine, they stirred up no small tumult in the church of St Jervas, because the minister refused to give the name of Balthasar to a child which had been presented for baptism—that name being for a certain reason prohibited by an express law. Calvin had nothing to oppose to these evils but strong and invincible patience; for about this time another new evil assailed the Genevese Church.

The occasion of it was furnished by one Jerome Bolsec, a monk of the order of Carmelites, from Paris, from which he had fled several years before. He had cast away his cowl, but retained his monkism, and having been also, for imposition, turned adrift by the Duchess of Ferrara, was converted into a physician in the course of three days. Having come to Geneva, and found there was no room for him among the learned physicians of that place, in order to show that he was a divine, he began to babble out errors and absurdities concerning predestination. This he at first did in private to certain individuals, but at length even in public before the congregation. Calvin had at first refuted him, and been contented to give him a gentle reprimand; and afterwards sending for him endeavoured to teach him the true doctrine. But either owing to the monkish ambition engrained in his nature, or spurred on by factious individuals, who were looking out for some one through whom they might assail Calvin, he openly dared, in presence of the congregation, when that passage of John was expounded, “He who is of God heareth the words of God; and in that you hear not, ye are not of God,” to bring forward free-will, and the foresight of works, in order to subvert the doctrine of an eternal decree of predestination prior in order to all other causes whatever. He even added insult and mere seditious invective against the true doctrine.

He is thought to have acted with the greater boldness, because, from not seeing Calvin in his place, he thought he was absent. And so, indeed, he was, at the commencement; but coming in after he had begun his harangue, had kept standing behind some other persons. The monk’s oration being ended, Calvin suddenly appeared, and although it was obvious he had nothing premeditated, he certainly then showed, if ever, what kind of man he was. For he so confuted, mauled, and overwhelmed him with proofs from Scripture, quotations from authors, especially from Augustine, and, in fine, by numerous weighty arguments, that all felt exceedingly ashamed for the brasen-faced monk, except the monk himself. One of the judge’s assessors, whose office it is to apprehend culprits in the city, happening to be among the hearers, when the meeting was dismissed lays hold of him, on a charge of sedition, and delivers him into custody. But why dwell upon it? After a long discussion, the Senate, having taken the opinion of the Swiss churches, on the 23d of December, publicly condemned him as a seditious man, and a mere Pelagian, and banished him the city, threatening him with scourging if he were again caught in it, or within its territory.

He afterwards went into a neighbouring town, and caused much disturbance, until he was twice expelled from the Bernese territory. He afterwards intrigued for a cure in the French Church, which he thought would then be at peace, and went first to Paris, and then to Orleans, making artful professions of repentance, and voluntarily begging to be reconciled to the Genevese Church. But when, contrary to his expectation, he perceived that the churches were in affliction, he went back to his medicine, and openly revolted to the enemies of the gospel, allowing his wife to become a prostitute to the canons of Augusta, where he is this good day assailing the truth, with whatever calumnies he can. Meanwhile, the Consistory of Geneva, at a public meeting, declared the true doctrine of predestination, and afterwards approved of it, as comprehended in a public document drawn up by Calvin. All that Satan gained by these dissensions was, that this article of the Christian religion, which was formerly most obscure, became clear and transparent to all not disposed to be contentious.

In the following year, (1552,) it became more apparent how great a flame had been kindled by that worthless man, notwithstanding of his having been condemned by the common judgment of so many churches. For the mere difficulty of a question which had not been duly explained by most of the ancients, nor always discussed with the same result, incited curious minds in particular to engage in the discussion of it, while the factious thought an admirable opportunity was afforded them of throwing every thing into confusion, by getting Calvin expelled. Accordingly, it is impossible to describe the contentions which ensued, not only in the city, but also in every quarter, as if Satan himself had blown the trumpet. For although the pastors of the leading churches were admirably agreed, yet there were not wanting some in the churches bordering on the Bernese territory who would fain have picked a quarrel with Calvin, on the allegation that he made God the author of sin. Their memory must have been short, not to remember that this most pestilential dogma had been long ago refuted by Calvin, in his Treatise against the Libertines. But at Bâsle, that worthy and single-minded man, Castellio, although it was his wont to do every thing secretly, was open enough in his defence of Pelagianism. Nay, even Melancthon had begun to write on these matters in such terms, that though he had before distinctly subscribed to Calvin's Treatise against Pighius, he seemed to some to insinuate that the Genevese were introducing the fatalism of the Stoics. I say nothing of the Papists, who are even now repeating calumnies that have been a thousand times refuted. These things, as might have been expected, stung the mind of Calvin; and that the more keenly, that at this time the power of error was occasionally so strong, that truth seemed sometimes compelled, even by public authority, to shut her mouth.

The controversy thus raised was not short-lived; for in this very year the good hermit whom we have mentioned above came forth to dispute with Calvin. Some years before, having met with a repulse when he was intriguing for the ministry, he had turned lawyer, and taken the factious under his patronage. The matter was keenly discussed by the parties before the Senate; the hermit finding his armour in his impudence and the favour of the wicked, while Calvin, in defending his doctrine, trusted solely to the power of truth. Truth, therefore, prevailed; and the writings of Calvin were again approved as pious and orthodox, and, strange to say, by the suffrages even of his enemies. But we must not omit to mention the repentance which this enemy manifested some years after, and of which he was so desirous to have Calvin for a witness, that he said he could have no peace of conscience, unless he felt in his dying moments that Calvin, whom he acknowledged he had formerly unjustly assailed, was reconciled to him. This Calvin not only did not refuse, but consoled him in the kindest manner in his last moments.

The following year, viz., 1553, while the malice of the factious, which was hastening to its close, was so boisterous, that not only the Church, but even the Republic itself, was brought into extreme jeopardy, they proceeded to such lengths with clamour and menaces, and, in fine, by oppressing the liberty of the good, that they changed the ancient edicts with regard to the appointment of senators, (on this subject, the good afterwards took the greater care to provide for themselves, the Lord favouring them therein,) expelled some from the Senate, and pretending fear of the foreign exiles, deprived them of all weapons, except their swords, when they happened to go beyond the city; so that it seemed nothing could prevent them from accomplishing the design for which they had long agitated, as they had every thing in their power. And even at this time Satan furnished them with another occasion. For that declared enemy of the sacred Trinity, that is, of the whole Godhead, and therefore a monster compounded of all heresies, however rank and portentous,—I mean Michael Servetus,—after he had wandered up and down for several years, professing medicine, concealing himself under the name of Michael Villanovanus, had circulated his blasphemies, which he afterwards published at Vienne in a thick volume. The printer was one Arnoldi, a bookseller in Lyons, and what is called the corrector for the press was one William Guerot, who had formerly been devoted to the factious among the Genevese, but a few months before had left Geneva for Lyons, to avoid punishment for fornication and other crimes. Servetus having published this large volume of blasphemy, and having, for that reason, been imprisoned at Vienne, escaped I know not how, and, by a kind of fatality, came to Geneva, intending to pass through it for some more distant place, had he not been providentially recognised by Calvin, to whom he was well known long before, and on his information to the magistracy consigned to prison. The contest which then arose, and the important matters to which they related, are most fully explained in a work published with that view. The result of the whole was, that this abandoned man, (into whose ear one of the factious, an assessor of the then Prætor, was said to have whispered something which confirmed him in his wickedness,) being betrayed by his own vain confidence, was convicted of impiety and endless blasphemies, conformably to the opinion of all the Swiss churches. On the 27th of October, the unhappy man, who gave no sign of repentance, was burned alive. In this year Farel was so seriously indisposed that Calvin, who went to Neufchatel to visit him, left him for dead. Contrary to all expectation he recovered, and was able shortly after to refresh the Church.

So far this year seems to have been divided between hope and fear, the former, however, prevailing in the end. But while the cause of Servetus was under discussion, one of the factious, Bertelier by name, a man of the most consummate impudence, whom the Presbytery, for his many iniquities, excluded from the Lord's Table, comes before the Senate, and prays to be absolved by their authority. Had this been done, there cannot be a doubt that the bond of ecclesiastical discipline being forthwith dissolved, everything would instantly have gone to wreck. Therefore Calvin, in name of the Presbytery, made strenuous and unremitting opposition, showing that magistrates ought to be the vindicators, not the destroyers, of sacred laws. In short, he omitted nothing which a contest of so much moment demanded. However, the false clamours of those who said that the Presbytery were in some things arrogating to themselves the authority of the magistrates prevailed, and it was, accordingly, resolved, in the Council of the Two Hundred, that, in excommunication, the ultimate right belonged to the Senate, who were entitled to absolve whom they pleased. In consequence of this resolution having been passed by the Senate, who had then given little attention to the subject, Bertelier surreptitiously obtained letters of absolution under the seal of the Republic. Perrin, with his followers, hoped that one of two

consequences would follow—that if Calvin refused to obey the Senate, he would be able to overwhelm him by means of a mob; that if Calvin obeyed, he would have no difficulty in depriving the Presbytery of all authority, in other words, in removing every restraint upon wickedness.

But Calvin, though he had been informed of what was done only two days before the usual period of celebrating the Lord's Supper, raising his voice and his hand in the course of his sermon, after he had spoken at some length of the despisers of sacred mysteries, exclaimed, in the words of Chrysostom, "I will die sooner than this hand shall stretch forth the sacred things of the Lord to those who have been judged despisers." These words, strange to say, had such an effect upon these men, however lawless, that Perrin secretly advised Bertelier not to come forward to the Table. The sacrament was celebrated with extraordinary silence, not without some degree of trembling, as if the Deity himself were actually present. In the afternoon Calvin, taking for his text the celebrated passage in the Acts of the Apostles, in which Paul bids farewell to the Church of Ephesus, declared that he was not a man who knew or taught others to fight against magistrates; and after exhorting his audience at great length to persevere in the doctrine which they had heard, as if it was the last sermon he was to deliver at Geneva, concluded thus:—"Since these things are so, allow me also, brethren, to use these words of the Apostle, 'I commend you to the Lord, and to the Word of his grace.' "

These words made a wonderful impression even on the most abandoned, while they, at the same time, seriously warned good men what their duty was. The next day Calvin, with his colleagues and the Presbytery, firmly demanded of the Senate, and also of the Two Hundred, that they should have an audience before the people, since the point under discussion related to the abrogation of a law which had been passed by the people. Their views having undergone no slight change, they came to be of opinion that the decree of the Two Hundred should be suspended—that the opinion of the four Swiss Cantons should be taken, and that, in the meanwhile, no prejudice should be done to the existing laws.

In this way that storm was rather dispersed than calmed. For the factious seeing it, contrary to all expectation, averted from the head of Calvin, endeavoured to take advantage of a circumstance which had arisen to turn it upon the head of Farel. For Farel, who had been suffering by severe disease, in the month of March, hastening to Geneva as soon as his health permitted, and trusting partly to the goodness of the cause, and partly to his age, and the authority which he had long possessed in Geneva, delivered a sermon, in which he very sharply rebuked the factious. They, complaining that injustice was done them, cited him, after his return to Neufchatel, and obtained letters from the Senate to the inhabitants of that town, requesting them to allow Farel to appear on the day named in the citation. Farel accordingly came, though not without personal risk, the factious exclaiming that he deserved to be thrown into the Rhone. A right-hearted young man among the citizens, after warning Perrin again and again to take care that Farel, who was, as it were, the common father of the citizens, should suffer no harm, taking with him another young companion, gave information to others whom they knew to be well-affected. Accordingly, when Farel made his appearance in court, a great part of the city had assembled. The accusers, astonished, and now alarmed for their own safety, after Farel was heard, withdrew the accusation.

Thus the whole of this year was spent in contention with the wicked, and in defence both of doctrine and discipline, and everywhere with a prosperous issue, if we except the wound which not only England but all Christian churches received by the death of the most religious King Edward. Yet in this very year Calvin was so diligent a student that he published his excellent

Commentary upon John. I may here be permitted (I wish it were without cause) to say of Servetus, what the ancient Fathers, who spoke from experience, wrote concerning that twin monster, Paul Samosatenus and Arius of Alexandria, viz., that with them originated those fires by which the whole churches of Christendom were afterwards in a blaze. For punishment was most deservedly inflicted on Servetus at Geneva, not because he was a sectary, but a monstrous compound of mere impiety and horrid blasphemy, with which he had for the whole period of thirty years, by word and writing, polluted both heaven and earth. Even now it is impossible to say how much the influence of Satan has been increased by that flame which seized first upon Poland, then Transylvania and Hungary, and I fear may have proceeded farther still. Indeed, it would seem that Servetus prophesied under the influence of a Satanic spirit, when taking a passage of the Apocalypse and interpreting it in his usual way, he placed it in front of his book: "There was great war in heaven—Michael and his angels fighting with the dragon." This is, indeed, true if you give the word "*with*" not the meaning of the Greek *κατα*, (*against*.) but of *συν*, (*together with*.)

Scarcely, therefore, were the ashes of that unhappy man cold when questions began to be agitated concerning the punishment of heretics—some maintaining that they ought indeed to be coerced, but could not justly be put to death; others, as if the nature of heresy could not be clearly ascertained from the Word of God, or as if it were lawful to judge in academic fashion of all the heads of religion, maintaining that heretics ought to be left to the judgment of God only. This opinion was defended even by some good men, who were afraid that if a different view were adopted they might seem to sanction the cruelty of tyrants against the godly. The chief abettors of that opinion (and they were thereby pleading their own cause) were Sebastian Castellio and Lælius Socinus; the latter, indeed, more secretly, but the former more openly, having in a certain treatise, which he prefixed to his translation, or rather perversion, of the sacred books, plainly studied to deprive the Divine Word of clear authority, and expressly maintained, in his Annotations on the First Epistle of Corinthians, as if for the express purpose of leading us away from the written Word as imperfect, that Paul had taught his perfect disciples—(who they were I know not)—a more recondite theology than he had delivered in his writings. Calvin having, in the beginning of the year 1544, drawn up a full refutation of the doctrine of Servetus, which was subscribed by all his colleagues; and having also added reasons, showing why and how far it was the duty of magistrates, after due investigation, to punish heretics, these men opposed him with a farrago, raked together partly from misquotations from the writings of pious doctors, and partly from the lucubrations of certain fanatics, otherwise of unknown name. The farrago bore to be written by one Martin Bellius. This was Castellio himself, although he afterwards swore it was not. The name of the town where it was said to be published was also fictitious. To that libellous production, containing not that error only, but teeming with many other blasphemies, I wrote an answer, with the view of relieving Calvin from the trouble, while occupied with far better business; I mean in writing his most learned Commentaries on Genesis and others, of which we will afterwards speak, and in warding off the dangers which threatened his church.

For the factious, who were bent on innovations, still proceeded; and though a second amnesty was solemnly ratified, in presence of the Senate, in the month of February, yet their conduct every day became worse. Calvin was thus much occupied, both in endeavouring to bring them to a better mind, by rebuking them as he was wont, and in confirming the good, so as to enable them to withstand their wickedness; for to such lengths did the wicked proceed, that they transformed the Word of God into obscene songs, and beat any of the foreigners whom they met

in the dark, and sometimes even robbed them. Privately, and appropriately, they called in the assistance of Bolsec, Castellio, and certain others, (men, no doubt, very solicitous for the truth!) to renew the controversy concerning predestination. Not contented with having circulated an infamous and anonymous libel, in which they offered the grossest insults to the faithful servant of God, Castellio caused another edition of it in Latin to be secretly printed at Paris. To this I afterwards replied; and Calvin himself also refuted certain frivolities on the subject, which had been drawn up under certain heads. His time was also at this period occupied by certain exiles from England, who had settled at Wesel, Embden, and Frankfort, and who were every now and then applying to Calvin for advice. Another thing which gave him not a little vexation, was the audacity of certain pastors (secretly aided by the favour of others) in the French Church of Strasburgh, which he himself had formerly planted. In short, the extent of his labours during this year, in behalf of various churches, is attested by the numerous letters by which he stirred up many men in power to embrace the gospel, and with the best results confirmed many of the brethren, some of whom were exposed to extreme peril, and others actually in bonds.

We formerly mentioned the consent of all the Swiss and Rhætian churches as to the doctrine of the sacrament, and its publication, to the great delight of all the learned and good. This concord was displeasing to the spirit of error, whose great influence we have already seen. It was, therefore, easy to find out one who was willing to stir up the smothered embers. Accordingly, Joachim, a Westphalian, sounded the trumpet, which was afterwards echoed by Heshusius, then a minister of the Word, and now a bishop. We will speak of both by and by. An Exposition of the consent of the Churches, which Calvin published at this time, exasperated the rage of these men the more, the more profitable it proved to all the lovers of truth.

The following year, (1555,) by the wonderful goodness of God, put an end to domestic strife, and gave the Republic and Church of Geneva desired repose. The factious had ruined themselves by their own hands, a dreadful conspiracy having been very opportunely discovered, through the petulant audacity of certain of the conspirators when in a state of drunkenness. Some of them were capitally punished, and others exiled; and although the latter continued for some time after to trouble the State, they all at last came to a shameful end; thus affording a singular example of tardy, indeed, but still just punishment from God. No sooner was the republic thus freed from those pests, when, by another act of the Divine goodness, in consequence of the reply of the four Helvetian cities, (we mentioned that their opinion had on the previous year been asked by the Senate when making inquiry into the ecclesiastical discipline of Geneva,) all the ancient edicts relating to ecclesiastical polity were, contrary to the expectation of the factious, put to the vote, and carried by the common suffrages of the citizens. Calvin, however, did not want occasion for strenuous exertion. Abroad he was both engaged, at the request of the King of Poland, in establishing the churches of that kingdom, and also with that furious tempest produced by a change of affairs in England, and by which those three bishops and martyrs of incomparable piety, John Hopper, Nicholas Ridley, and Hugh Latimer, with others almost innumerable, and at last also the great Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, were driven to heaven. He also exerted himself greatly in consoling his brethren who were in bonds in France, and especially five most devoted martyrs who were this year burned with the greatest cruelty at Cambray.

At home the ashes of Servetus began again to sprout one Matthew Gribald, a lawyer of some eminence, being detected favouring his blasphemies. He had accidentally come to Geneva, (he was the owner of Fargias, a village in the neighbourhood of Geneva,) and been introduced to Calvin by certain Italians, who had been his pupils at Padua. Calvin, however, refusing to give him the right hand of fellowship unless they were previously agreed as to the primary article of

the Christian faith, viz., the Holy Trinity, left no room for admonition or argument. Accordingly, he afterwards experienced that of which Calvin even then forewarned him, viz., that the heavy judgment of God was impending over him for his obstinate impiety. He first fled to Tubingen, where he had been introduced by the favour of Vergerius, and being afterwards taken up at Berne, was liberated on abjuring his heresy. Returning again to his former course, and becoming the patron and host of Gentilis, of whom we will speak by and by, he was at last seized with the plague, and in that way anticipated the punishment which otherwise awaited him.

Another circumstance which occurred this year did not allow Calvin's joy to be complete. A faction, composed of a few neighbouring ministers, who in themselves felt inclined to oppose Calvin, and were, moreover, instigated by Bolsec, to gain some degree of reputation, by attacking an individual so celebrated, men, moreover, whose characters had already many stigmas attached to them, raged like Bacchanalians against him, alleging that he made God the author of evil, by excluding nothing from His eternal providence and ordination. These calumnies, to which we have already alluded, although they did not move him from his course, yet, from the slanderous manner in which they were urged, obliged him to obtain permission from the Senate to proceed to Berne with deputies, and plead the cause of truth before the Bernese themselves. The cause was accordingly pleaded; the result being, that Sebastian was convicted of infamy, and banished, and Bolsec also was ordered to leave the country; but it was not thought proper to give any express decision on the subject itself. The Lord thus consulted for the good of his Church. Had a decision been given, Calvin might have seemed to have obtained, by authority and influence, that which he afterwards obtained voluntarily. For not long after, (not, however, till Calvin's death,) all those calumnies vanished into smoke, and Andrew Zebedee, the bitterest of the accusers, when on his death-bed, in the town of Newburgh, about four miles distant from Geneva, sending for the principal citizens, made a voluntary confession of the truth which he had opposed, and in detestation of his own conduct, ordered all his papers to be burned in their presence. This was assuredly a better decision in Calvin's favour, than if it had been given by a thousand decrees of the Senate.

In the following year, (1556,) Calvin, while preaching, was suddenly seized with ague, and ultimately obliged to leave the pulpit. Many false rumours arose on the subject, and the Papists were so delighted, that during public service at Noyon, Calvin's native city, the monks gave thanks to their idols for his death. But the prayers of the good prevailed; and so far was Calvin from dying of this attack, that, on the contrary, as if he had renewed his strength, he undertook an unusually long journey, viz., to Frankfort, whither he had been invited, in order to allay the dissensions which had arisen in the French church. On his return, (1557,) although still weakly in health, he, however, omitted none of his daily labours, and published in the following year his most learned Commentaries on the Psalms, with a truly valuable preface. Part of this year, which was very turbulent, in consequence of tumults excited by some of these factious ministers, and distressing from the dearness of corn, he spent in maintaining the truth against Joachim the Westphalian. After he had written his last answer to the Westphalian, who, however, continued his endless prating, I took the task upon myself, with a success of which, by the favour of God, I have certainly no reason to repent. At this time also, both he and I refuted the calumnies which Castellio had caused to be anonymously circulated against the eternal predestination of God.

But the thing which grieved him most of all was the very cruel persecution of the godly at Paris, by breaking in upon their meeting in St James's Street, where they had assembled to celebrate the Lord's Supper. About eighty of their number were taken, (the rest having escaped by the darkness of the night,) and were dragged to the prisons at daybreak, amid reproach and

insult, although several ladies of the highest rank were among them. The rage of the king had been inflamed, not only by those who surrounded him, but also by the circumstances of the times; for this occurrence took place just after the news had arrived of the great defeat at St Quentin. The godly having assembled at night, because it was not in their power to do so by day, those old and stale calumnies devised against the Christians, in ancient times, were again revived by one Demochares, a Doctor of Sorbonne, who, forsooth, insinuated that all these calamities were truly to be ascribed to the Christians alone. Witnesses were even suborned to prove the putting out of lights and prostitution; this persons were found credulous enough to believe. Seven martyrs were therefore led forth to the flames, and this was thrice repeated; the list including a certain lady of rank, whose fortitude, as well as that of the other six, and among them two very young men, was truly admirable.

But the calumny of the Sorbonnists was exposed, though by no means suppressed, by a matron who voluntarily came forward to court investigation for her imprisoned daughters, who were said to have been violated, and also by the very excellent and learned individual who had officiated there as pastor for some months before, and who, in an admirable little book, completely refuted all those lies. Calvin also procured an embassy to be sent with the utmost dispatch from the German princes. By these means the storm was somewhat calmed. The year which followed, (1558,) was a happy one for the Republic of Geneva, a perpetual confederation having been entered into between the Bernese and the Genevese, to the great disappointment of those who had been banished. A variety of circumstances attended this successful result, among others a last fruitless attempt of the banished. But on this I have determined not to enlarge. Abroad persecution was again renewed in France, and at home the abominable heresy of the Tritheists arose, as from the ashes of Servetus, under the auspices of one Valentine Gentilis, a native of Cosenza. To obviate these evils, deputies were sent to the princes of Germany, with a letter from Calvin, explaining the many calamities of the churches, and requesting their interposition, and he himself, meanwhile, wrote numerous letters to confirm the sufferers. The course which was taken in the case of Gentilis, and the end of that monster, I will relate briefly; because a full account of the whole matter, partly drawn up by Calvin himself from the public proceedings, and partly written with fidelity by Benedict Aretius, a minister of Berne, with an appendix, containing a refutation of his blasphemy, together with all and every thing pertaining to the subject, was published in this city in the year 1567.

This unhappy man, then, who was endowed with a shrewd but also with a crafty and sophisticated turn of mind, a considerable time after punishment had been inflicted on Servetus, having fallen in with his treatise, as well as Calvin's refutation, easily perceived that neither the phantoms nor ideas with which he had coloured the heresy of the Samosatene, nor the confounding of the persons with the essence as introduced by Sabellius, nor, in fine, the Divinity of Christ, as it was held by the impure Arius, could be reconciled with the Word of God. On the other hand, he saw that what was delivered in Scripture concerning the one essence of God, and the three hypostases, with distinct differences from each other, could not be made to accord with human reason. He therefore did what minds of his description are wont to do, that is, instead of submitting to the wisdom of God, he persuaded himself that nothing was true that did not accord with human reason. Therefore, assigning supremacy to the person of the Father only, whom he maintained to be alone the sole and only self-existing God, he began openly to profess what he called *Essentiation*, that is, a propagation of essences, three in number, both, as persons and as essences, that is, in other words, three Gods, three eternal, omnipotent, and infinite Beings. In this way he impudently placed himself in opposition, not only to the holy Word of God, but also

to the Council of Nice, (repudiating the Athanasian Creed,) and the authority of the most ancient writers, also such as Ignatius, Tertullian, and Lactantius. For he not only rejected all orthodox writers who followed the Council of Nice, but even charged them with impiety. This blasphemy was followed by others concerning the hypostatic union. These articles he brought forward secretly at first to a few individuals, the principal being John Paul Alciat, a military man from Milan, and George Blandrata of Salusses, a physician by profession. Having at last submitted his views to the Italian Presbytery, an extraordinary meeting was held, where, being patiently heard in presence of certain select senators, and of all the ministers and presbyters, and refuted by Calvin out of the Word of God, as to everything which he thought proper to adduce, the result was, that the Italians immediately subscribed the orthodox faith, with only six exceptions, and even these afterwards, on being taken aside, subscribed with their hand indeed, but, as it afterwards appeared, not with the heart also. Gentilis then returning to his old course, is detected circulating his former blasphemy, and when apprehended makes no attempt at concealment, but is heard as long and as much as he chose. At length, as if vanquished, (for he had nothing but obstinacy to oppose to Calvin,) he pretends to be exceedingly penitent, and, indeed, a copy of his recantation, in his own handwriting, is still extant. In short, having gone through the streets abjuring his heresy, he is dismissed, after binding himself by oath not to go beyond the gates of the city. Shortly, however, breaking faith, he runs off to Savoy to Matthew Gribald, and is followed some time after by Alciat and Blandrata, the future devastators of Transylvania and the neighbouring countries. But Gentilis (the judgment of God even then impending over him) continued to reside with Gribald—for they both despised the other two as ignorant and unlearned men—and began to print a small work against Athanasius and Calvin. He proceeded afterwards to Lyons, where he got the printing finished, prefixing a dedication to the Prefect of Gez, who was altogether unaware of his wickedness. Being afterwards apprehended at Lyons by the Papists, (I know not why,) he told them that he was writing against Calvin, and was set at liberty as one who deserved well of the Catholic Church. After this he went into Moravia to Blandrata and Alciat, and others of the same stamp. Afterwards, when they could not come to an agreement among themselves, (most of them having gone over from Tritheism to the doctrine of Paul of Samosata,) as if the hand of Christ himself were leading him to punishment, he returns to Savoy to his friend Gribald. But that plague another plague had already carried off. Calvin, too, had by this time been taken from us. Then, as if he had been altogether infatuated, or because he trusted that since Calvin's death there was nobody remaining by whom he could be convicted, he goes directly to the Prefect of Gez, who was deservedly offended with him, and being immediately recognised, and, by the just judgment of God for his former tergiversation, sent to Berne to plead his cause, was there convicted of perjury and manifest dishonesty. After many fruitless attempts to bring him back to the right way he was put to death, and so paid the punishment due to his many crimes. Such, then, was the termination of this cause. And yet there are not wanting some excellent defenders of Christianity, forsooth, both among the Catholics and among those worthies the Ubiquitarians, who dare to accuse Calvin as the author of these blasphemies, nay, to calumniate him as one who opened up the way to Atheism and Mahommedanism; though the truth is, that while they were fast asleep, Calvin was the first and almost the only one in our time by whom those very blasphemies were most laboriously confuted. But at Paris the Cardinal, by whose nod the King administered all affairs, attempted to withdraw the cognizance of heresy from the ordinary judges (those whom they call laics) to a triumvirate of cardinals. The Parliament of Paris, opposing by divine rather than human suggestion, inasmuch as they were pleading their own cause and not the cause of Christ, he abandoned his nefarious attempt.

But the end of this year was to us the commencement of a greater sorrow; Calvin being seized, in the month of October, with a quartan fever, a disease which we have at length learned, by too sad experience, is justly regarded by medical men as fatal to those who are advanced in years. For although that disease in Calvin's case continued only eight months, yet it so exhausted his spare body, worn out by labours and exertions, that he never entirely recovered it. Meanwhile the physicians strongly advising, and we also beseeching him to have some regard for his health, he, by necessity, desisted from preaching and lecturing, but continued spending days and nights in dictating and writing letters. He had no expression more frequently in his mouth than that life, as he expressed it, would be bitter to him if spent in indolence, though, indeed, we who were strong might, in comparison with him, have been thought indolent. Of this we have a testimony in the last edition of his Christian Institutes, both in Latin and French, and his Commentaries on Isaiah, not so much an amended edition of those which Galars took down from his Lectures, as an entirely new work.

The following year, viz., 1559, was remarkable for the peace and very close affinity contracted between the two most powerful kings, and would, perhaps, have been the last year of the Genevese Republic, had not the counsels of the Papists, who were abusing the simplicity of King Henry, been providentially frustrated. For it is certain that Henry, after issuing the most severe edicts, and throwing some of the senators into prison, merely for giving it as their opinion that in the meanwhile, until a general council was called, more leniency should be shown in matters of religion, had it especially in view to restore the Duke of Savoy, and completely overthrow Geneva. Calvin, on the contrary, though in bad health, laboured at Geneva to defeat his designs. He confirmed the Churches and all the brethren, who, on account of the prospect before them, were in the greatest distress, and was incessant in prayer imploring assistance from the Lord. In the midst of the terror which prevailed both at home and abroad, the monarch, while in the very act of preparing for the celebration of the marriage by which he was to confirm the peace, received a fatal wound in a mock combat, and that from the hand of the very man to whom, as commander of the Royal Guards, he had formerly assigned the office of apprehending those senators. This death Cardinal Lorraine wished it to be thought he had afterwards expiated by the most iniquitous murder of Annas de Bourge, a most learned lawyer, a most upright senator, and, in fine, a most holy martyr of Christ.

But Geneva, by the singular providence of God, as if the Lord were again and again causing the purest light to arise out of the thickest darkness, felt so confident in these times, (the thing is scarcely credible,) that in the very year, and almost at the very instant, when these powerful princes were conspiring her destruction, it gave orders, on the suggestion of Calvin, for the erection of a magnificent building for a school, provided with eight teachers of youth, and public professors of Hebrew, Greek, Philosophy, and Theology. The dedication to Almighty God took place in due form in a full assembly of the people in the principal church, wherein, for the first time, were read and established those laws which related to the appropriation and perpetual maintenance of this most useful and sacred institution.

In the following year (1560) much obloquy was thrown upon Calvin by some, who charged him with instigating certain persons against Francis II., the heir to his father's dominions; the persons meant being those from whose fate the tumult has received the name of Amboise. I know for certain that Calvin had no part or portion in this matter, and even openly disapproved it, both by word, and by letters written to his friends. This same year, one Stancarus of Mantua (Italy seeming fatal to the Poles) began to assert that Christ is not a Mediator, except according to the flesh, bringing a charge of Arianism against all who held that he was a Mediator as God.

The ground of the charge was, that they, in this way, made the Son inferior to the Father. This calumny, and the whole heresy, was solidly refuted, among others by Melancthon and Martyr. Calvin also, at the request of the Poles, confuted it very briefly, but with great force; and at the same time foreseeing what shortly happened, viz., that some unskilful persons, in their zeal to refute Stancarus, would, if they did not take care, fall into the error of the Tritheists, he distinctly forewarned them of the danger, and exhorted them, while standing on their guard against Blandrata and his followers, and asserting that Christ was Mediator in both natures, not to multiply the Godhead. In so far, however, as regarded those who were to perish, this exhortation was given in vain.

At this time also, the Bohemian Waldenses having sent two of their brethren to Calvin, and put some questions to him concerning religion, he, of course, kindly answered them, and also advised them to enter into full connection with other churches. At the same time, not a few Frenchmen having taken refuge in England, after the death of Queen Mary, trusting to the singular piety and humanity of her Most Serene Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, and several of the clergy having, with the consent of Edmund Grindall, Bishop of London, requested that some one should be sent to constitute a French church there, it was agreed to send Galars.

In the end of the year 1560, Francis the Second having suddenly died, at the very time when all things seemed so utterly desperate that God alone could give a remedy, Charles the Ninth had no sooner succeeded to the crown than a messenger arrived from him with a letter, in which he complained that persons were sent from Geneva to disturb his kingdom of France, and demanded that they should be forthwith recalled; or that, otherwise, he would not overlook the very just cause he had to avenge the injury. Calvin being called upon by the Senate, replied in his own name and that of his colleagues, that on the petition of the French churches they had given their advice to certain men of known faith and integrity, whom they thought fit for the purpose, not to be wanting to their country, when imploring their assistance in a cause so holy as that of training up a pure church; that this advice had been acted upon, not in order to disturb the kingdom, but to teach the gospel of peace; and that, moreover, if they were accused of having done any thing of the kind, they were prepared to answer their accusers, in presence of the king himself. The matter went no farther. The same year, Calvin and myself answered the book of that most troublesome man, Tilemann Heshusius. Calvin next refuted the blasphemies which Valentine Gentilis had printed at Lyons, against the Athanasian Creed. He also published his Prælections on Daniel, dedicating them to the churches of France. In these he was, indeed, an interpreter of the prophet; but he also, in the dedication, became himself a prophet, predicting impending storms at the very time when the meeting of the bishops was held at Poissy, and when, at a very full Convention of the Estates of the Kingdom, an approved Confession of the Gallic churches was by me submitted to the king. At this time most people were flattering themselves that an immediate blow was to be given to the Papacy. At this period also, one Francis Baldwin, afterwards surnamed Ecebolius, (changeling,) on account of his having changed his religion at least three or four times, (for, even before the last calamity, which befel the French churches on the 24th of August 1572, we have the testimony of most excellent and venerable men, nay, even Baldwin's own letter to that effect, exhibited to the Synod, that he was exceedingly desirous to be one day connected with us;) this man, I say, being suborned by a cardinal, and by wicked arts reconciled to the Navarrene, circulated at court a short treatise, either published by himself or by one Cassander, who (by his own account) was a pious and moderate man; a book worse even than the Interim of Charles the Fifth, in this respect, that under the semblance of a moderate reform, it defended all the corruptions of the Papacy. Calvin having been made aware of this

matter by me, published a refutation, to which additions were shortly after made, sufficient to make all aware of the temper and the intentions of Baldwin. Neither this, however, nor any other reply, could suppress his ravings; nor did he from that time desist from assailing Calvin with his vile invectives, until at the end of the year, hated by God, and by men of both religions, whom he had so often deceived, while prosecuting some lawsuit or other at Paris, or pining with envy, because he saw another preferred to him to accompany Henry III., when setting out to visit the kingdom of Poland, he ceased at the same time to slander and to live.

But in the year 1562, after not only peace but also liberty had been granted to the French churches on certain conditions, by a formal edict of the king, the Navarrene being forthwith seduced by the wiles of the Papists, and the Duke of Guise, after committing the savage slaughter at Vassy, having sounded the trumpet and commenced that civil war, which has now been raging for twelve successive years in miserable France, it is impossible to describe the many heavy cares which weighed upon Calvin; his infirmities also increasing so much, that it might then have been seen he was advancing with rapid step to a better life. He, however, ceased not to comfort and exhort, nay, also to preach and deliver his lectures on Theology. He, moreover, drew up that most admirable Confession of Faith which was presented to the States of the Empire at Frankfort, in the name of the Prince of Condé and all the pious, who, in addition to the injury of being most unjustly involved in war, had been also most undeservedly traduced to the Germans, as holding certain false doctrines.

It will not be disagreeable to the reader here to mention a circumstance not unworthy of observation. On the 19th of December, which happened to be a Sabbath, Calvin was confined to bed with the gout. The north wind having continued to blow, with the greatest violence, for two successive days, Calvin, in the hearing of several persons, says, "I know not what the cause of it is, but during the night I thought I heard martial music sounding aloud, and could not persuade myself that it was not really so. Let us pray, I beseech you; for some matter of great moment is going forward." It turned out that on that very day a fierce battle was fought at Dreux, though the news of it did not arrive for some days after. In the following year, (1563,) Calvin's diseases had so much increased, and were so numerous, as to make it almost impossible to believe that so strong and noble a mind could be any longer confined in a body so fragile, so exhausted by labour, and, in fine, so broken down by suffering. But even then he could not be persuaded to spare himself. Nay, if at any time he abstained from public duty, (and he never did so without the greatest reluctance,) he still at home gave answers to those who consulted him, or wore out his amanuenses by dictating to them, though unfatigued himself. In testimony of this, we have his two very serious Admonitions to the Poles against the blasphemers of the Holy Trinity; also the answers which he gave, both by word and writing, to those brethren who were sent to him from the Synod of Lyons; the Commentary on the Four Books of Moses, which he wrote in Latin, and which he afterwards himself translated into French; and, finally, his Commentary on the Book of Joshua, which was the last of his labours. He began it at this time, and brought it to a close just before his death.

The year 1564 was to him the commencement of perpetual felicity, and to us of the greatest and best founded grief. On the 6th of February, the asthma impeding his utterance, he delivered his last sermon; and from that time, with the exception of his being sometimes carried to the meeting of the congregation, where he delivered a few sentences, (the last occasion was on the last day of March,) he entirely desisted from his office of preaching. His diseases, the effect of incredible exertions of body and mind, were various and complicated, as he himself states in a letter which he addressed to the physicians of Montpellier. Besides being naturally of a feeble and

spare body, inclining to consumption, he slept almost waking, and spent a great part of the year in preaching, lecturing, and dictating. For at least ten years he never dined, taking no food at all till supper; so that it is wonderful he could have so long escaped consumption. Being subject to *hemicrania*, for which starvation was the only cure, he, in consequence, sometimes abstained from food for thirty-six hours in succession. Partly also from overstraining his voice, and partly from the immoderate use of aloes, a circumstance not attended to till it was too late, he became afflicted with ulcerated hæmorrhoids, and occasionally, for about five years before his death, discharged considerable quantities of blood. When the quartan fever left him, his right limb was seized with gout; every now and then he had attacks of colic; and, last of all, he was afflicted with the stone, though he had never been aware of its existence till a few months before his death. The physicians used what remedies they could; and there was no man who attended more carefully to the prescriptions of his physicians, except that in regard to mental exertions he was most careless of his health, not even his headaches preventing him from taking his turn in preaching. While oppressed with so many diseases, no man ever heard him utter a word unbecoming a man of firmness, far less unbecoming a Christian. Only raising his eyes towards heaven, he would say, "O Lord, how long;" for even when he was in health this was an expression which he often used in reference to the calamities of his brethren, which night and day affected him much more than his own sufferings. We advising and entreating him that while sick he should desist from all fatigue of dictating, or at least of writing,—“What,” he would say, “would you have the Lord to find me idle?”

On the 10th of March, having gone to him in a body, as we were wont to do, we found him dressed, and sitting at his little table, where he usually wrote or meditated. On seeing us, after he had remained silent for some time, with his forehead leaning on one hand, as was his custom in studying, he at length, with a voice now and then interrupted, but with a bland and smiling countenance, says, “My dearest brethren, I feel much obliged to you for your great anxiety on my account, and hope that in fifteen days (it was the stated day for censure of manners) I will be present for the last time at your meeting; for I think that by that time the Lord will manifest what he has determined to do with me, and that the result will be that he is to take me to himself.”

Accordingly, on the 24th of same month, he was present at the censures, as he had been wont to be; and these having been quietly performed, he said that he felt that the Lord had given him a short respite, and taking a French New Testament into his hands, he read some passages from the notes which are appended to it, and asked the opinion of the brethren respecting them, because he had undertaken to get them corrected. The next day he felt worse, as if fatigued by the previous day’s labour; but on the 27th, being conveyed to the door of the senate-house, he went up, leaning on two attendants, into the hall, and there having introduced a new rector of the school, uncovered his head, and returned thanks for the kindness he had received, and especially for the attention which the Senate had shown him during this his last illness; “for I feel,” says he, “that I am now in this place for the last time.” Having thus spoken, with faltering voice, he took his leave, amidst sobs and tears. On the 2d day of April, which was Easter day, although much exhausted, he was carried to the church in a chair, and was present during the whole service. He received the Lord’s Supper from my hand, and sung the hymn along with the others, though with tremulous voice, yet with a look in which joy was not obscurely indicated on his dying countenance.