

THE
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY
AND
PRINCETON REVIEW.

NEW SERIES, No. 14.—APRIL, 1875.

Art. I.—THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

I Peter III: 18-21.

“ *Οτι καὶ, Χριστὸς, ἅπαξ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν επαθε, δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, ἵνα ἡμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ Θεῷ, θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκί, ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι. Ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν, ἀπειθήσασι ποτὲ, ὅτε ἅπαξ ἀπεξεδέχετο ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ μακροθυμία ἐν ἡμέραις Νῶε, κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ εἰς ἣν ὀλίγοι, τουτὲστιν ὀκτώ ψυχαὶ, διεσώθησαν δι ὕδατος.*”

The horizon of this passage virtually sweeps the whole circle of revealed truth unto salvation. In it, we have theology proper, or the doctrine of God in Trinity. In it, we have soteriology, or the doctrines of the constitution of the person of Christ and of his redeeming work. In it, we have anthropology, or the doctrine concerning man and his relation to Christ, lost and saved. In it, we have ecclesiology, or the doctrine of the Church as the depository of inspired truth and the instrument of its proclamation to men. In it, we have eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things—death, the state of the soul after death, the resurrection from the dead, both for Christ and ourselves, and the final salvation of the righteous

Art. III.—CALVIN'S LIFE AND LABORS.

By PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., Union Theological Seminary.

JOANNIS CALVINI *Opera quæ supersunt omnia*, ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz, E. Reuss, *theologi Argentoratenses*.—Brunsvigæ, 1863 sqq. (in the *Corp. Reform*). So far (1875) 13 vols. 4to.

CALVIN is one of those men who improve upon acquaintance. The more we know of him, the more we must admire and esteem him, as one of the most extraordinary men that ever lived. Luther was long as familiar to Protestants as a household word when Calvin was a comparative stranger. It is only within the last twenty or thirty years that his person and works have been fully revealed to the world. Henry, Stähelin, Bungener, Kampschulte (a liberal Roman Catholic), and Guizot have written his life from a careful study of the sources. Jules Bonnet, Crottet, and Herminjard have brought to light his vast Latin and French correspondence from the archives of Geneva, Berne, Zurich, Basle, Strasburg, Gotha, and Paris. And now we have twelve volumes of what will be, when finished, by far the most complete and critical edition of his works, including the letters. But it is not yet more than half finished.

This invaluable edition was begun in 1863 by the Strasburg professors, William Baum, Edward Cunitz, and Edward Reuss, in connection with the *Corpus Reformatorum*, whose preceding 28 volumes are devoted to the works of Melanchthon, edited by Bretschneider and Bindseil. The *Corpus Reformatorum* is a colossal literary undertaking, which will ultimately embrace all the Reformers, and be scarcely inferior, in extent and importance, to the great Roman Catholic collections of the works of the fathers. The immense editorial labor could not have fallen into better hands. Calvin himself spent three of the most important and fruitful years of his life in Strasburg, the connecting link between France and Germany. The editors are perfectly familiar with the history of the Reformation, equally at home in French and German literature, and honest critical scholars. They belong, indeed, rather to the modern liberal school of theology, especially Reuss, who is best known among us (by his *History of Theology in the Apostolic Age*, and

his *Critical Introduction to the New Testament*), but this fact insures doctrinal impartiality, and does not interfere with their scholarly appreciation of Calvin, whom they justly call the prince and standard-bearer among Protestant theologians.*

Having had occasion recently to study again, with considerable care, the most recent biographies of Calvin, and his works, as brought out in this edition with ample critical Prolegomena, I propose to condense some of the results of my reading in this article.

CALVIN'S LIFE.

After the death of Zwingli and the treaty of Cappel (1531), the progress of the Reformation was checked in German Switzerland, but only to make a more important conquest in French Switzerland, and from thence with the course of empire to move westward to France, Holland, beyond the Channel, and beyond the seas.

The supremacy passed from Zürich to Geneva. Providence had silently prepared the person and the place. The "little corner" on the borders of Switzerland and France, known since the days of Julius Cæsar, was predestinated, by its location and preceding history, for a great international mission, and has nobly fulfilled it, not only in the period of the Reformation of the Church, but also in the nineteenth century on the field of international law and peaceful arbitration. After varying fortunes, Geneva became an independent asylum of civil and religious freedom, and furnished the best base of operation for John Calvin, who, though a Frenchman by birth, and a Swiss by adoption, was a cosmopolitan in spirit, and acted as the connecting link between the Germanic and Latin races in the work of reform. Farel, Viret, and Froment had destroyed the power of Popery, but to Calvin was left the more difficult task of reconstruction and permanent organization.

CALVIN'S BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

John Calvin, the greatest theologian and disciplinarian of the giant race of the Reformers, and for commanding intellect, lofty character, and far-reaching influence, one of the foremost

* Opera, vol. I. Praef. p. IX. "*Calvinum jure vocaris theologorum principem et aulesianum.*" This is followed by an eloquent eulogy.

leaders in the history of Christianity, was born at Noyon, in Picardy, July 10, 1509. His father, Gerard Chauvin, a man of severe morals, was secretary to the bishop of Noyon; his mother, was a beautiful and devout, but otherwise not remarkable woman. He received his first training with the children of a noble family (de Momor), to which he was gratefully attached. His ambitious father destined him for the clerical profession, and secured him even in his twelfth year the benefice of a chaplaincy of the cathedral—an abuse not infrequent in those days of decay of ecclesiastical discipline. He received the tonsure, but not the ordination for the priesthood; while Zwingli and Knox were once priests, and Luther both priest and doctor, in the Church they were called to reform. His elder brother, Charles, became a priest at Noyon, and died a libertine and an infidel in the same year in which John proclaimed his faith to the world (1536)—as if to repeat the startling contrast of Esau and Jacob, reprobation and election, from the same womb. Another remarkable coincidence is the fact that the Reformer studied scholastic philosophy under the same Spanish instructor of the College de Montaigu at Paris in which a few years afterwards Ignatius Loyola, the famous founder of Jesuitism—the very opposite pole of Calvinism—laid the foundation of his counter-reformation.

Calvin received the best education which France could afford, in the Universities of Orleans, Bourges, and Paris, first for the priesthood, then, at the request of his father, for the law. He early distinguished himself by excessive industry, which undermined his constitution, severe self-discipline, and a certain censoriousness, for which he was called by his fellow students "the Accusative Case." He made rapid progress. Even as a student of nineteen he was often called to the chair of an absent professor, so that (as Beza says) he was considered a doctor rather than an auditor. When he left the university he was the most promising literary man of the age. He might have attained the highest position in France, had not his religious convictions undergone such a radical change.

Protestant ideas were then pervading the atmosphere and agitating the educated classes of France, even at the court, which was divided on the question of religion. Two of Calvin's teachers, Cordier (or Corderius, who afterwards followed him to

Geneva) and Wolmar, were friendly to reform, and one of his relatives, Olivétan, became soon afterwards (1534) the first Protestant translator of the Bible into French. He seems, however, to have exerted as much influence on them as they exerted on him.

His first work was a commentary on Seneca's book on *Mercy*, which he published at his own expense, April 1532. It moves in the circle of classical philology and moral philosophy, and reveals a characteristic love for the nobler type of Stoicism, great familiarity with Greek and Roman literature, masterly Latinity, rare exegetical skill, clear and sound judgment, and a keen insight into the evils of despotism and the defects of the courts of justice, but makes no allusion to Christianity. Hence it is quite improbable that it was an indirect plea for toleration and clemency intended to operate on the King of France in dealing with his Protestant subjects. His earliest letters, from 1530 to 1532, are likewise silent on religious subjects, and refer to humanistic studies, and matters of friendship and business.

CALVIN'S CONVERSION.

His conversion to the cause of the Reformation seems to have taken place in the latter part of 1532, about one year after the death of Zwingli. The precise date and circumstances are unknown. It was, as he himself characterizes it, a sudden change (*subita conversio*) from Papal superstition to the evangelical faith, yet not without previous struggles. He tenaciously adhered to the Catholic Church until he was able to disconnect the true idea and invisible essence of the Church from its outward organization. Like Luther, he strove in vain to attain peace of conscience by the methods of Romanism, and was driven to a deeper sense of sin and guilt. "Only one haven of salvation is left for our souls," he says, "and that is the mercy of God in Christ. We are saved by grace—not by our merits, not by our works." After deep and earnest study of the Scriptures, the knowledge of the truth, like a bright light from heaven, burst upon his mind with such force that there was nothing left for him but to abjure his sins and errors, and to obey the will of God. He consulted not with flesh and blood, and burned the bridge after him.

There never was a change of conviction purer in motive,

more radical in character, more fruitful and permanent in result. It bears a striking resemblance to that still greater event near Damascus, which transformed a fanatical Pharisee into an apostle of Jesus Christ. And, indeed, Calvin was not unlike St. Paul in his intellectual and moral constitution; and the apostle of sovereign grace and evangelical freedom never had a more sympathetic expounder than the Reformer of Geneva.

With this step Calvin renounced all prospects of a brilliant career, upon which he had already entered, and exposed himself to the danger of persecution and death. Though naturally bashful and retiring, and seeking one quiet hiding-place after another, he was forced to come forward. He exhorted and strengthened the timid believers, usually closing with the words of St. Paul: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" There is no evidence that he ever was ordained by human hands to the ministry of the gospel; but he had an extraordinary call, like that of the prophets of old, and the Apostle of the Gentiles. This was felt by his brethren, and about a year after his conversion he was the acknowledged leader of the Protestant party in France.

CALVIN A FUGITIVE AND TRAVELING EVANGELIST.

For a while matters seemed to take a favorable turn at the court. His friend, Nicholas Cop, a learned physician, was even elected Rector of the University of Paris. At his request Calvin prepared for him an inaugural address on Christian philosophy, which Cop delivered on All-Saints' Day, in 1533, in the Church of the Mathurins, before a large assembly. He embraced this public occasion to advocate the reform of the Church on the basis of the pure gospel. Such a provocation Catholic France had never before received. The Sorbonne ordered the address to be burned. Cop was warned, and fled to Basle; Calvin—as tradition says—escaped in a basket from a window, and left Paris in the garb of a vine-dresser, scarcely knowing whither he was going. A few months afterwards the king himself took a decided stand against the Reformation, and between Nov. 10, 1534, and May 3, 1535, twenty-four Protestants were burned alive in Paris, while many more were condemned to less cruel sufferings.

For more than two years Calvin wandered a fugitive and

evangelist, assumed names, from place to place. We find him for some time at Angoulême with his learned friend, the young canon Louis du Tillet, using his excellent library, and probably preparing his "Institutes;" then at the court of Queen Margaret of Navarre, the sister of Francis I., where he met Le Fèvre d'Estaples (Faber Stapulensis), the aged patriarch of French Protestantism, and Gérard Roussel, her chaplain, who advised him "to purify the house of God, but not to destroy it;" at Noyon (May, 1534), where he parted with his ecclesiastical benefices; at Poitiers, where he celebrated, with a few friends, for the first time, the Lord's Supper according to the evangelical rite, in a cave near the town, called to this day, "Calvin's Cave;" at Orleans, where he published his first theological work, a tract against the Anabaptist doctrine of the sleep of the soul between death and the resurrection, using exclusively scriptural arguments with rare exegetical and polemical skill; again (towards the close of 1534) at Paris, where he met for the first time the unfortunate Michael Servetus, and challenged him to a disputation on the Trinity. But the persecution then breaking out against the Protestants forced him to forsake the soil of France. With his friend Du Tillet he fled to Strasburg, where he arrived utterly destitute, having been robbed by an unfaithful servant, and formed an intimate friendship with Bucer. Thence he went to Basle, where he quietly studied Hebrew with Capito and Grynæus, and published the first edition of his "Institutes" (1536). The long dispute about the priority of the Latin or French edition of this immortal system of theology is now settled in favor of the former. In the spring of 1536 he spent a short time at the court of the Duchess Renée of Ferrara, the daughter of Louis XII., a little, deformed, but highly intelligent, noble, and pious lady, who gathered around her a circle of friends of the Reformation, and continued to correspond with him as her guide of conscience. Returning from Italy, where he was threatened by the Inquisition, he paid a flying visit to Noyon, and had the pleasure to gain his only remaining younger brother Anthony and his sister Mary to the Reformed faith. With them he proceeded to Switzerland, intending to settle at Basle or Strasburg, and to lead the quiet life of a scholar and an author, without the slightest inclination to a public career. But God had decreed otherwise.

CALVIN'S FIRST SOJOURN AT GENEVA.

Passing through Geneva in August, 1536, where he expected to spend only a night, Calvin was held fast by William Farel, the fearless evangelist, who threatened him with the curse of God if he preferred his studies to the work of the Lord. "These words," says Calvin (in the Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms), "terrified and shook me, as if God from on high had stretched out his hand to stop me, so that I renounced the journey which I had undertaken." Farel, a French nobleman, twenty years older than Calvin, and like him driven by persecution to Switzerland, where he destroyed the strongholds of idolatry with the zeal of a prophet, did a great work when "he gave Geneva to the Reformation," but a still greater one when "he gave Calvin to Geneva."

This was the turning-point in Calvin's life. Once resolved to obey the voice from heaven, the timid and delicate youth shrunk from no danger. Geneva was then a city of only twelve or fifteen thousand inhabitants, but within its narrow limits it was to become "the scene of every crisis and every problem, great or small, which can agitate human society." It then represented "a tottering republic, a wavering faith, a nascent Church." Calvin felt that a negative state of freedom from the tyranny of Savoy and Popery was far worse than Popery itself, and that positive faith and order alone could save the city from political and religious anarchy. He insisted on the abolition of immoral habits, the adoption of an evangelical confession of faith and catechism, the introduction of a strict discipline, Psalm singing, and monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper, with the right of excluding unworthy communicants.

The magistrate refused to comply, and forbade Calvin and Farel the pulpit; but they, preferring to obey God rather than men, preached at Easter, 1538, to an armed crowd, and declared their determination not to administer the holy communion, lest it be desecrated. On the following day they were deposed and expelled from the city by the great Council of the Two Hundred.

CALVIN AT STRASBURG.

Calvin, again an exile, though now for the principle of authority and discipline rather than doctrine, spent three

quiet and fruitful years (1538-41) with Bucer at Strasburg, as teacher of theology and preacher to a congregation of several hundred French refugees. Here he became acquainted with the German Reformation, for Strasburg was the connecting link between Germany and France, as also between Lutheranism and Zwinglianism. But he was disagreeably impressed with the want of church discipline, and the slavish dependence of the German clergy on the secular rulers. His French congregation was admired for its activity and order. In Strasburg he wrote his tract on the Lord's Supper, his Commentary on the Romans, his masterly answer to Cardinal Sadolet's letter to the Genevese, and his revision of Olivétan's French translation of the Bible. Some of these books attracted the favorable notice of Luther, whom he never met in this world, but always esteemed, with a full knowledge of his faults, as one of the greatest servants of Christ.

In September, 1540, he married Idelette de Buren (a little town in Gueldres), a grave, pious, modest, amiable, and cultivated widow, with three children, whose first husband he had converted from Anabaptism to the orthodox faith. She was in delicate health, but very devoted to him, and satisfied all his desires. He lived with her in perfect harmony nine years, and she bore him three children, all of whom died in infancy. He seldom alludes to her in his correspondence but always in terms of respect and love; and in informing his friend Viret of her departure, he calls her "the best companion, who would cheerfully have shared with me exile and poverty, and followed me unto death; during her life she was to me a faithful assistant in all my labors; she never dissented from my wishes even in the smallest things." Seven years afterwards, in a letter of consolation to a friend (Rev. Richard de Valeville, of Frankfort), he says: "I know from my own experience how painful and burning is the wound which the death of thy wife must have inflicted upon you. How difficult it was for me to become master of my grief. . . . Our chief comfort, after all, is the wonderful providence of God, which overrules our affliction for our spiritual benefit, and separates us from our beloved only to reunite us in his heavenly kingdom." His grief at her death, and at the death of his

children, reveals a hidden spring of domestic affection which is rare in men of his austerity of character and absorption in public duty. He remained a widower the rest of his life.

From the Strasburg period dates also his intimate friendship with Melancthon, which was not broken by death, and is the more remarkable in view of their difference of opinion on the subject of predestination and free-will. He met him at religious conferences with Romanists, at Frankfort (1539), at Worms (1540), and at Regensburg (Ratisbon, 1541), which he attended as delegate from Strasburg. Their correspondence is a noble testimony to the mind and heart of these great men, so widely different in nationality, constitution, and temper—the one as firm as a rock, the other as timid as a child—and yet one in their deepest relation to Christ and his salvation. They represent the higher union of the Lutheran and Reformed, the Teutonic and the Romantic types of Protestantism. This truly Christian friendship was touchingly expressed by Calvin a year after the death of the Preceptor of Germany (1561): “O Philip Melancthon! for it is upon thee that I call, upon thee, who now livest with Christ in God; and art there waiting for us, until we shall also be gathered with thee to that blessed rest! A hundred times, worn out with fatigue and overwhelmed with care, thou didst lay thy head upon my breast, and say, ‘Would to God that I might die here on thy breast!’ And I, a thousand times since then, have earnestly desired that it had been granted us to be together. Certainly thou wouldst have been more valiant to face danger, and stronger to despise hatred, and bolder to disregard false accusations. Thus the wickedness of many would have been restrained, whose audacity of insult was increased by what they call thy weakness.”

“It would be difficult,” says Guizot, “to reconcile truth, piety, and friendship more tenderly.”

CALVIN AGAIN IN GENEVA.

In the meantime, the Genevese had been brought by sad experience to repent of the expulsion of the faithful pastor, and to feel that the Reformed faith and discipline alone could put their commonwealth on a firm and enduring foundation. The magistrate and people united in an urgent and repeated

recall of Calvin. He reluctantly yielded at last, and in September, 1541, after passing a few days with Farel at Neufchatel, he made a triumphal entry into the beautiful city on Lake Lemán. The magistrate provided for him a house and garden near the Cathedral of St. Pierre, broadcloth for a coat, and, in consideration of his generous hospitality to strangers and refugees, an annual salary of five hundred florins, twelve measures of wheat, and two tubs of wine. The rulers of Strasburg, says Beza, stipulated that he should always remain a burgess of their city, and requested him to retain the revenues of a prebend which had been assigned as the salary of his professorship in theology, but they could not persuade him to accept so much as a single farthing.

This second settlement was final. Geneva was now wedded to Calvin, and had to sink or swim with his principles. He continued to labor there without interruption for twenty-three years, till his death, May 27, 1564; fighting a fierce spiritual war against Romanism and superstition, but still more against infidelity and immorality; establishing a model theocracy on the basis of Moses and Christ; preaching and teaching from day to day; writing commentaries, theological and polemical treatises; founding an academy, which in the first year attracted more than eight hundred students, and flourishes to this day; attending the sessions of the consistory and the senate; entertaining and counselling strangers from all parts of the world, and corresponding in every direction. He was, in fact, the spiritual head of the Church and the republic of Geneva, and the leader of the Reformed movement throughout Europe. And yet he lived all the time in the utmost simplicity. It is reported that Cardinal Sadolet, when passing through Geneva *incognito*, and calling on Calvin, was surprised to find him residing, not in an episcopal palace, with a retinue of servants, as he expected, but in a little house, himself opening the door. The story may not be sufficiently authenticated, but it corresponds fully with all we know about his ascetic habits. For years he took but one meal a day. He refused an increase of salary and presents of every description, except for the poor and the refugees, whom he was always ready to aid. He left, besides his library, only about two hundred dollars, which he bequeathed to his younger brother,

Anthony, and his children. When Pope Pius IV. heard of his death, he paid him this high compliment: "The strength of that heretic consisted in this, that money never had the slightest charm for him. If I had such servants, my dominions would extend from sea to sea."

THE CLOSE OF HIS LIFE.

His immense labors and midnight studies, the care of all the churches, and bodily infirmities—such as headaches, asthma, fever, gravel—gradually wore out his delicate body. He died in full possession of his mental powers, in the prime of manhood and usefulness, not quite forty-five years of age, leaving his Church in the best order and in the hands of an able and faithful successor, Theodore Beza. Like a patriarch, he assembled first the syndics of Geneva, and afterwards the ministers, around his dying bed, thanked them for their kindness and devotion, asked humbly their pardon for occasional outbursts of violence and wrath, and affected them to tears by words of wisdom and counsel to persevere in the pure doctrine and discipline of Christ. It was a sublime scene, worthily described by Beza, and well represented by a painter's skill.

The Reformer died with the setting sun. "Thus," says Beza, "God withdrew into heaven that most brilliant light, which was a lamp of the Church. In the following night and day there was immense grief and lamentation in the whole city; for the republic had lost its wisest citizen, the Church its faithful shepherd, the academy an incomparable teacher—all lamented the departure of their common father and best comforter next to God. A multitude of citizens streamed to the death-chamber, and could scarcely be separated from the corpse. Among them, also, were several foreigners, as the distinguished English ambassador to France, who had come to Geneva to make the acquaintance of the celebrated man. On the Lord's day, in the afternoon, the remains were carried to the common graveyard on Plainpalnis, followed by all the patricians, pastors, professors, and teachers, and nearly the whole city, in sincere mourning."

Calvin expressly forbade the erection of any monument over his grave. The stranger asks in vain even for the spot which covers his mortal remains in the cemetery of Geneva. Like Moses, he was buried out of the reach of idolatry. The Re-

formed Churches of both hemispheres are his monument, more enduring than marble. On the third tercentenary of his death (1864), his friends in Geneva, aided by gifts from foreign lands, erected to his memory the *Salle de la Réformation*—a noble building, founded on the principles of the Evangelical Alliance, and dedicated to the preaching of the pure gospel and the advocacy of every good cause.

CALVIN'S PERSONAL CHARACTER.

Calvin was of middle, or rather small stature (like David and Paul), of feeble health, courteous, kind, grave, and dignified in deportment. He had a meagre and emaciated frame, a thin, pale, finely-chiseled face, a well-formed mouth, a long pointed beard, black hair, a prominent nose, a lofty forehead, and flaming eyes. He was modest, plain, and scrupulously neat in dress, orderly and methodical in all his habits, temperate and even abstemious, allowing himself scarcely nourishment and sleep enough for vigorous work. His physical tent barely covered the mighty spirit within. Conscience and logic, a commanding mind and will, shone through the thin veil of mortality.

How different Luther and Zwingli, with their strong animal foundation and their abundance of flesh and blood! Calvin seemed to be all bone and nerve. Beza says he looked in death almost the same as alive in sleep.

His intellectual endowments were of a very high order. He had not the originating power of genius, at least not to the same extent as Luther, but a constructive, systematizing, and organizing talent as important and useful as genius itself. He was not a speculative or intuitive philosopher, but a consummate logician and dialectician. He did not cut the stones from the quarry—this was done before him by Luther and Zwingli—but he gave them shape and polish, and erected a cathedral of ideas with the skill of a master architect. His precocity and constancy are marvelous. He did not grow before the public, like Luther and Melancthon, and pass through contradictions and retractations, but when a mere youth of twenty-six he appeared fully armed, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, and never changed his views on doctrine or discipline. He had an extraordinary and well-stored memory, a profound, acute, and penetrating intellect, a clear, sound, and

almost unerring judgment, a perfect mastery over the Latin and French tongues. His Latin is as easy and elegant, and certainly as nervous and forcible, as Cicero's, yet free from the pedantic and affected purism of a Bembo and Castalio. He is one of the fathers of modern French, as Luther is the father of modern German. His eloquence is logic set on fire by intense conviction. His Preface to the "Institutes," addressed to the King of France, is reckoned as one of the three immortal prefaces in literature (to which only that of President De Thou to his French History and that of Casaubon to Polybius can be compared); and his "Institutes" themselves, as has been well said, are "in truth, a continuous oration, in which the stream of discussion rolls onward with an impetuous current, yet always keeps within its defined channel."

He surpassed all other Reformers (except Beza) in classical culture and social refinement. He was a patrician by education and taste, and felt more at ease among scholars and men of high rank than among the common people. Yet he was quite free from aristocratic pride, loved simplicity, despised all ostentation and display, and esteemed every man according to his real worth.

History furnishes, perhaps, no example of a man who with so little personal popularity had such influence upon the people, and who with such natural timidity and bashfulness combined such strength and control over his age and future generations. Constitutionally a retiring scholar and a man of thought, he became providentially a mighty man of action and an organizer of churches.

His moral and religious character is impressed with a certain majesty which keeps the admirer at a respectful distance. He has often been compared to an old Roman Censor or Stoic: but he resembles much more a Hebrew Prophet. Severe against others, he was far more severe against himself, and was always guided by a sense of duty. Fear of God, purity of motive, spotless integrity, single devotion to truth and duty, unswerving fidelity, sincere humility are the prominent traits of his character. Soaring high above the earth, he was absorbed in God—who alone is great—and looked down upon man as a fleeting shadow. The glory of the Lord and the reformation of the Church constituted the single passion of his life. His

appropriate symbol was a hand offering the sacrifice of a bleeding heart to God.

It must be admitted that this kind of greatness, while it commands our admiration and respect, does not of itself secure our affection and love. There is a censoriousness and austerity about Calvin and his creed which repelled many good men, even among his contemporaries. He looked more to the holiness than to the love of God. His piety bears more the stamp of the Old Testament than that of the New. He represents the majesty and severity of the law rather than the sweetness and loveliness of the gospel, the obedience of a servant of Jehovah rather than the joyfulness of a child of our heavenly Father.

Yet even this must be qualified. He sympathized with the spirit of David and Paul as much as with the spirit of Moses and Elijah, and had the strongest sense of the freedom of the gospel salvation. Moreover, behind his cold marble frame there was beating a noble, loving, and faithful heart, which attracted and retained to the last the friendship of such eminent servants of God as Farel, Viret, Beza, Bucer, Bullinger, Knox, and Melanchthon. "He obtained," says Guizot, "the devoted affection of the best men and the esteem of all without ever seeking to please them." John Knox, his senior in years, sat at his feet as a humble pupil, and esteemed him the greatest man after the Apostles. Farel, in his old age, hastened on foot from Neufchatel to Geneva to take leave of his sick friend, and desired to die in his place. Beza, who lived sixteen years on terms of personal intimacy with him, revered and loved him as a father. And even Melanchthon wished to repose and to die on his bosom. His familiar correspondence shows him in the most favorable light, and is a sufficient refutation of all the calumnies and slanders of his enemies.

He lacked the good-nature, the genial humor, the German *Gemüthlichkeit*, the overflowing humanity of Luther, who for this reason will always be more popular with the masses; but he surpassed him in culture, refinement, consistency, and moral self-control. Both were equally unselfish and unworldly. Both were headstrong and will-strong; but Calvin was more open to argument and less obstinate. Both had, like St. Paul, a fiery and violent temper, which was the propelling force in their hard work, and fierce battles with the Pope and the devil.

Hegel says somewhere, that "nothing great can be done without passion." It is only men of intense convictions and fearless courage that make deep and lasting impressions upon others. But temper is a force of nature which must be controlled by reason and regulated by justice and charity. Luther came down like a thunder-storm upon his opponents, and used the crushing sledge-hammer indiscriminately against Eck, Cochläus, Henry VIII., Erasmus, the Sacramentarians, and Zwinglians; while Calvin wielded the sharp sword of irony, wit, scorn, and contempt in defense of truth, but never from personal hatred and revenge. "Even a dog barks," he says, "when his master is attacked; how could I be silent when the honor of my Lord is assailed?" He confessed, however, in a letter to Bucer and on his death-bed, that he found it difficult to tame "the wild beast" of his wrath, and humbly asked forgiveness for his weakness. He had no children to write to, and to play with around the Christmas tree, like Luther, but he appears to better advantage in his relations with men and women. He treated them, even the much younger Beza, as equals, overlooked minor differences, and when he corrected their faults he expected the same manly frankness from them in return; while Luther, growing more irritable and overbearing with advancing years, made even Melancthon tremble and fear. But we should charitably remember that the faults of these truly great and good men were only the long shadows of their extraordinary virtues.

Calvin is sometimes censured for never alluding to the paradise of nature by which he was surrounded on the lovely shores of Lake Lemman, in sight of the lofty Alps that pierce the skies in silent adoration of their Maker. But we look in vain for descriptions of natural scenery in the whole literature of the sixteenth century; and the proper appreciation of the beauties of Switzerland, as well as of other countries, is of more recent date. Calvin had no special organ nor time for the enjoyment of the beautiful either in nature or in art, but he appreciated poetry and music. Guizot says: "Although Calvin was devoted to the severe simplicity of evangelical worship, he did not overlook the inherent love of mankind for poetry and art. He himself had a taste for music, and knew its power. He feared that, in a religious service limited to preaching and

prayer only, the congregation, having nothing else to do than to play the part of audience, would remain cold and inattentive. For this reason he attached great importance to the introduction and promotion of the practice of Psalm-singing in public worship. 'If the singing,' he said, 'is such as befits the reverence which we ought to feel when we sing before God and the angels, it is an ornament which bestows grace and dignity upon our worship; and it is an excellent method of kindling the heart, and making it burn with great ardor in prayer. But we must at all times take heed lest the ear should be more attentive to the harmony of the sound than the soul to the hidden meaning of the word.' With this pious warning, he strongly urged the study of singing and its adaptation to public worship." He insisted on the introduction of congregational singing in Geneva, and wrote himself a few poetic versions of the Psalms, and a hymn of praise to Christ (only recently discovered and published), which are worthy of Clement Marot, and reveal an unexpected vein of poetic fervor and tenderness. The following specimen must suffice:

- " I greet thee, who my sure Redeemer art,
 My only trust, and Saviour of my heart!
 Who so much toil and woe
 And pain didst undergo,
 For my poor, worthless sake;
 We pray thee, from our hearts,
 All idle griefs and smarts
 And foolish cares to take.
- " Thou art the true and perfect gentleness,
 No harshness hast thou, and no bitterness:
 Make us to taste and prove,
 Make us adore and love,
 The sweet grace found in thee;
 With longing to abide
 Ever at thy dear side,
 In thy sweet unity.
- " Poor, banished exiles, wretched sons of Eve,
 Full of all sorrows, unto thee we grieve;
 To thee we bring our sighs,
 Our groanings, and our cries:
 Thy pity, Lord, we crave;
 We take the sinner's place,
 And pray thee, of thy grace,
 To pardon and to save."

TRIBUTES TO CALVIN.

I add some estimates of Calvin's character, which represent very different stand-points.

Beza, who knew Calvin best, and watched at his death-bed, concludes his biography with these words :

"Having been an observer of Calvin's life for sixteen years, I may with perfect right testify that we have in this man a most beautiful example of a truly Christian life and death, which it is easy to calumniate but difficult to imitate."

Bungener, a pastor of the national Church of Geneva and author of several historical works, says :

"Let us not give him praise which he would not have accepted. God alone creates; a man is great only because God thinks fit to accomplish great things by his instrumentality. Never did any great man understand this better than Calvin. It cost him no effort to refer all the glory to God; nothing indicates that he was ever tempted to appropriate to himself the smallest portion of it. Luther, in many a passage, complacently dwells on the thought that a pretty monk, as he says, has so well made the Pope to tremble, and so well stirred the whole world. Calvin will never say any such thing; he never even seems to say it, even in the deepest recesses of his heart; every where you perceive the man, who applies to all things—to the smallest as to the greatest—the idea that it is God who does all and is all. Read again, from this point of view, the very pages in which he appeared to you the haughtiest and most despotic, and see if, even there, he is any thing other than the workman, referring all, and in all sincerity, to his Master. * * * But the man, in spite of all his faults, has not the less remained one of the fairest types of faith, of earnest piety, of devotedness, and of courage. Amid' modern laxity, there is no character of whom the contemplation is more instructive; for there is no man of whom it has been said with greater justice, in the words of an apostle, '*he endured as seeing him who is invisible.*'"

Jules Michelet, the French historian, remarks :

"Among the martyrs, with whom Calvin constantly conversed in spirit, he became a martyr himself; he felt and lived like a man before whom the whole earth disappears, and who tunes his last Psalm, his whole eye fixed upon the eye of God, because he knows that on the following morning he may have to ascend the stake."

Ernest Renan, once educated for the Romish priesthood, then a skeptic, with all his abhorrence of Calvin's creed, pays the following striking tribute to his character :

"Calvin was one of those absolute men, cast complete in one mould, who is taken in wholly at a single glance—one letter, one action suffices for a judg-

ment of him. There were no folds in that inflexible soul, which never knew doubt or hesitation. . . . Careless of wealth, of titles, of honors, indifferent to pomp, modest in his life, apparently humble, sacrificing everything to the desire of making others like himself, I hardly know of a man, save Ignatius Loyola, who could match him in these terrible transports. . . . It is surprising that a man who appears to us in his life and writings so unsympathetic, should have been the centre of an immense movement in his generation, and that this harsh and severe tone should have exerted so great an influence on the minds of his contemporaries. How was it, for example, that one of the most distinguished women of her time, Renée, of France, in her court at Ferrara, surrounded by the flower of European wits, was captivated by that stern master, and by him drawn into a course that must have been so thickly strewn with thorns? This kind of austere seduction is exercised by those only who work with real conviction. Lacking that vivid, deep, sympathetic ardor which was one of the secrets of Luther's success, lacking the charm, the perilous, languishing tenderness of Francis of Sales, Calvin succeeded, in an age and in a country which called for a reaction towards Christianity, simply because he was **THE MOST CHRISTIAN MAN OF HIS GENERATION.**"

Guizot, a very competent judge of historical and moral greatness, thus concludes his biography:

"Calvin is great by reason of his marvelous powers, his lasting labors, and the moral height and purity of his character. . . . Earnest in faith, pure in motive, austere in his life, and mighty in his works, Calvin is one of those who deserve their great fame. Three centuries separate us from him, but it is impossible to examine his character and history without feeling, if not affection and sympathy, at least profound respect and admiration for one of the great reformers of Europe and of the great Christians of France."

Prof. Kahnis, of Leipzig, whose personal and theological sympathies are with Luther, nevertheless asserts the moral superiority of Calvin above the other Reformers:

"The fear of God was the soul of his piety, the rock-like certainty of his election before the foundation of the world was his power, and the doing of the will of God his single aim, which he pursued with trembling and fear. . . . No other reformer has so well demonstrated the truth of Christ's word, that in the kingdom of God, dominion is service. No other had such an energy of self-sacrifice, such an irrefragable conscientiousness in the greatest as well as the smallest things, such a disciplined power. This man, whose dying body was only held together by the will flaming from his eyes, had a majesty of character which commanded the veneration of his contemporaries."

Prof. Dorner, of Berlin, the first among the theologians of the age, distinguished by profound learning, penetrating thought, rare catholicity of spirit, and nice sense of justice and discrimination, says, in his *History of Protestant Theology*:

“Calvin was equally great in intellect and character, lovely in social life, full of tender sympathy and faithfulness to friends, yielding and forgiving towards personal offenses, but inexorably severe when he saw the honor of God obstinately and malignantly attacked. He combined French fire and practical good sense with German depth and soberness. He moved as freely in the world of ideas as in the business of Church Government. He was an architectonic genius in science and practical life, always with an eye to the holiness and majesty of God.”

Prof. G. T. Fisher, of Yale College, New Haven, in his recent *History of the Reformation*, gives the following fair and impartial estimate of Calvin :

“When we look at his extraordinary intellect, at his culture—which opponents like Bossuet have been forced to commend—at the invincible energy which made him endure with more than stoical fortitude infirmities of body under which most men would have sunk, and to perform, in the midst of them, an incredible amount of mental labor ; when we see him, a scholar naturally fond of seclusion, physically timid, and recoiling from notoriety and strife, abjuring the career that was most to his taste, and plunging, with a single-hearted, disinterested zeal and an indomitable will, into a hard, protracted contest ; and when we follow his steps and see what things he effected, we cannot deny him the attributes of greatness. . . . His last days were of a piece with his life. His whole course has been compared by Vinet to the growth of one rind of a tree from another, or to a chain of logical sequences. He was endued with a marvelous power of understanding, although the imagination and sentiments were less roundly developed. His systematic spirit fitted him to be the founder of an enduring school of thought. In this characteristic he may be compared with Aquinas. He has been appropriately styled the Aristotle of the Reformation. He was a perfectly honest man. He subjected his will to the eternal rule of right, as far as he could discover it. His motives were pure. He felt that God was near him, and sacrificed everything to obey the direction of Providence. The fear of God ruled in his soul ; not a slavish fear, but a principle such as animated the prophets of the Old Covenant. The combination of his qualities was such that he could not fail to attract profound admiration and reverence from one class of minds, and excite intense antipathy in another. There is no one of the Reformers who is spoken of, at this late day, with so much personal feeling, either of regard or aversion. But whoever studies his life and writings, especially the few passages in which he lets us into his confidence and appears to invite our sympathy, will acquire a growing sense of his intellectual and moral greatness, and a tender consideration for his errors.”