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CHARACTERS of exalted Christian and intellectual worth, possessing withal distinctive and original traits, constitute an impressive heritage of the Church and the world. The order of events with which they have been connected, and which under divine guidance they have assisted to modify, is of historic value chiefly in proportion as the personal instruments it involves are brought into public view. This is a sufficient reason for putting into permanent record every important reminiscence of men who have made themselves noble examples of public usefulness. They have lived to a good—often to a grand—purpose; and whatever excellence in their spirit and method of life can stimulate and energize others, is the rightful property of those who come later on the stage. It is true of *all* men that “no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself;” and in certain distinctive cases this may be asserted with great emphasis.

The character of him who is the subject of the present memoir had a rare native basis, and was formed by a unique discipline. From the features natural to it, it would have been a marked character whatever impulses had given it direction. It would have given forth a torrent of evil influences had it been formed and swayed by motives wholly worldly and wicked. But early yielding to divine grace, it saved the world from such a disaster; and the heritage we possess in it from the

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opposed it, and hence interpreted the Scriptures in favor of a personal reign of Christ, they should now take heart, put greater trust in God, and, with government, philosophy, and religion as allies, declare that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

ART. V.—THE NICODEMITES OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

PERIODS of great civil commotion are wont to develop at least three classes of characters, each easily distinguished from the others. On the one hand are seen the lovers of novelty or friends of reform, whose motives are not always above the suspicion, whether just or otherwise, that they are not less influenced by their restless instability than by a desire to ameliorate the condition of their fellow-men. On the other, stand the avowed opponents of change, whom native temperament or interest, or both, render averse to any alteration in the existing *regime*: lovers of order, they style themselves; but with them order is a cold, lifeless thing, which denies the possibility or expediency of attempting to introduce any improvement, while it tolerates the slow but sure progress of that degeneration which is innate in every corrupt system. And between the two there is a large and intelligent class of persons who, while they sympathize completely with neither of the extremes, see much that is excellent in each. The veneration for antiquity professed by one side, and the necessity of reform which is the pass-word of the other, are both accepted; and thus these moderates might be mistaken for adherents of either dogma, but for the fact that they neither believe that ancient abuses ought to be maintained at any risk, nor that reforms ought to be purchased at any cost.

As it is in civil, so it is also in those great religious movements, which, if they produce a less immediate and sensible effect upon the external constitution of human society, are far more lasting in their results, and tend ultimately to renovate

the face of the world. The force of conviction operating upon natures originally frank, impulsive, and more inclined to weigh truth than to calculate probabilities of failure, gives rise to examples of rare enthusiastic devotion to what is believed to be the cause of God, of true religion, and of the enfranchisement of the human intellect and heart. These are the men who venture single-handed, or supported only by such auxiliaries as their eloquent appeals have gathered around them, to attack the time-hallowed systems of error which have usurped the places once occupied by truth. They are confronted with a scarcely less determined resolve by those who can conceive of no proof of doctrinal orthodoxy so strong as that derived from prescription, nor any test of heterodoxy more convincing than its opposition to the commonly received notions of the men of past centuries. From the eyes of the men of this latter class the ivy of antiquity, with its dense mantle of green foliage, quite conceals the rents and fissures which run through the old tower in every direction, and threaten to change at any moment that which is so graceful in its proportions into an unsightly ruin. Here again a third party takes a middle ground. While conceding that there is but too much of truth in the pictures which are drawn of the corruptions of the Church and its institutions, and that the need of reform is imperative, and perhaps at first making common cause with the more thoroughly convinced reformers, they are soon appalled at the wide sweep of the movement in which they have embarked. They shudder at the contempt of dignities, at the unsparing assaults upon that which has remained hitherto unquestioned in its supremacy, at the iconoclastic zeal of the reformers. They half suspect that they may have made some mistake in their investigations, when they find that the hearty espousal of their sentiments by men of less timidity is revolutionizing the Church, and, for aught they can see to the contrary, may involve the overthrow of the civil government also. Instead, therefore, of following the impulse of their better natures, they gradually work their way out of the current, which flows on and leaves them but little further advanced than when they first began to move. In spite of conscientious convictions of duty, they relapse into an external or partial conformity with the system which they have often publicly

denounced as erroneous. And they endeavor to satisfy themselves and others with the theory that since the true God can be worshiped acceptably only by those who worship him in spirit, therefore it is only the worship of the heart which is of any great moment; the exterior is unimportant, for the heart may refuse its consent to much to which the body submits through deference to the opinion of the world. It is therefore fool-hardiness needlessly to expose one's life to persecutions, from which a little dissembling will shield. The *offense* of the Gospel is thus done away. So convenient a doctrine has always been, and ever will be, popular in seasons of persecution.

The great Reformation of the sixteenth century presents us with signal examples of individuals or entire classes of persons espousing these delusive principles, in greater or less numbers, according to the various countries through which that remarkable awakening spread. They were more numerous where the cruel legislation against heretics warned converts to the "new doctrines" of the fiery trial through which an open profession must compel them to pass. They were fewer where so decided a majority of the population threw off their allegiance to Rome, or the government itself was so favorable to the Reformation, that the prospect of being called to seal the confession of the Gospel with a martyr's death was distant and indistinct. In France, where the theological faculty of the most famous university of Christendom, at the first note of the Reformation, prepared for a sanguinary conflict, and declared that it was absurd to suppose that God had reserved the discovery of what is necessary to the salvation of the faithful to be made by Luther alone; as though Christ had left his spouse, the Church, until now in darkness and the blindness of error; and that such teachings were a denial of the first principles of the faith, an open profession of impiety, an arrogance so extravagant as to need to be repressed by chains, censures, nay, by fire and flames, rather than refuted by argument;* where the courts of justice, with the Parliament at their head, resorted at once to the most severe measures to stifle the nascent reform, and burned men, women, and chil-

* *Determinatio Theologorum Parisiensium super doctrina Lutheriana*, in Bretschneider, *Corpus Reformatorum*. T. i, pp. 366, seq.

dren at slow fires, cunningly devising contrivances for lengthening the lives of the sufferers, that they might protract their agonies; in France, as might have been expected, the number of those who endeavored to avoid prison and the stake by an external compliance with the ordinances of the Roman Catholic religion was very great, and it comprised persons of every grade in social life, from those who were near to the throne to the poorest subjects of the king. The reformers themselves, those brave men who, in defense of the faith which had been implanted in their bosoms by the Holy Ghost, were not slow in exposing themselves to any danger which might await them in the discharge of their duty, denominated these timid and compromising brethren, who had not the courage openly to defend the hope that was in them, *Nicodemites*, after the member of the Sanhedrim who, though he was convinced of the divine mission of Jesus, would come to him for instruction only by night for fear of the Jews. Witnesses as they were of the incalculable mischief which had been inflicted upon the cause that was dearest to their hearts by the weakness of these fearful souls, it must not surprise us to find them denouncing their sin in no measured terms. They warned them of the impending anger of God, of his rejection of all worship which is offered by impure lips, of the ruin in which all shall be involved who continue to defile the service of the Almighty by intermingling with it heathen rites. Farel and Calvin were, as we shall see, peculiarly strenuous in urging upon their converts an entire renunciation of the errors of Romanism. The fatal results of an opposite course were indeed so potent in the examples of a number of prominent personages who had at first declared in favor of a reformation, that there was scarcely an excuse for those who should persist in following in their steps.

Prominent among those who embraced the cause of the Reformation of the Church during the early part of the history of that movement was the Count of Montbrun, William Bricconnet. This singular man, with whose name is linked, in the memory of the student of history, so much of mingled pleasure and sadness, was of high rank and extensive influence. His father, better known as the Cardinal of St. Malo, after serving Louis XI. in the civil administration, had been rewarded

by receiving the abbacy of St. Germain-des-Prés and the archbishopric of Reims; and in virtue of the latter office, he had anointed Louis XII. at his accession. The pope gratified the French monarch by giving the archbishop a cardinal's hat; but Briçonnet the elder, more mindful of his obligations to his king than of his allegiance to the holy see, not only headed the French party in the consistory, but ventured to brave the resentment of the Roman court by joining the council of Pisa, which Louis XII. had caused to be convoked in order to resist the papal encroachments. The younger Briçonnet, born before his father's ordination, was destined to meet with equal favor. Rich benefices were heaped upon him. He was made archdeacon of Reims and of Avignon, then abbot of the same rich foundation of St. Germain which his father had obtained, and finally he entered the episcopate as Bishop of Lodève, whence he was transferred to the see of Meaux, an important town in Brie, nearly thirty miles eastward of Paris, of which Bossuet was, at a later day, bishop. Briçonnet was a man of considerable learning, of singular fondness for the subtleties of a refined mysticism, and of a kind and gentle temper. While at Rome, whither he went as royal ambassador just before entering upon his duties as Bishop of Meaux, he had become more and more convinced of the thorough reform which was needed throughout the whole Church. His first acts in his diocese were those of a reformer. He called upon the ecclesiastics who, neglecting their charges, had been in the habit of spending their time in pleasure at the capital, to return to their pastoral duties. He took steps to initiate a reformation of manners and morals among the clergy. He forbade the Franciscan monks to enter the pulpits of the churches under his supervision. He invited from Paris that remarkable man, Jacques Lefèvre, of Etaples, in Picardy.

Lefèvre was in himself a host. He well deserved the name of the forerunner of the Reformation; for in 1512, five years before Luther posted his theses on the doors of the cathedral at Wittemberg, he published his Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, which clearly proclaimed the insufficiency of works, and the necessity of faith, as the ground of justification for the sinner. Born in comparative insignificance, he

had raised himself, by his talents and industry, to the very first rank among the instructors of the great Parisian University, whose halls were frequented, as the Venetian ambassador, Marino Giustiniano informed the doge and senate, a few years later, by twenty-five thousand scholars coming from every part of Christendom.* Equally distinguished as a mathematician, as an astronomer, as a critic and biblical student, he had, even while superstitiously rigid in his observance of the prescribed fasts of the Roman Church, and glad to deck the shrines of the saints with flowers, seen, with a prophet's eye, the coming reformation; and his pupil, Farel, reports his significant utterance: "William, the world will be renewed, and you will see it!" But Lefèvre had begun to emerge from his blind devotion to the rites of a corrupt Church, and had turned his vigorous mind to the investigation of matter more closely connected with the Scriptures. He had applied a sound criticism to the traditional accounts of the chief persons spoken of in the New Testament, and had published a treatise to prove that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, and the "woman which was a sinner," were three distinct persons. The Greek Church had always recognized this to be the truth, but the Latin fathers, less skilled in hermeneutics, confounded together the "three Marys," as they were called. The Sorbonne pronounced the doctrine of Lefèvre to be heretical, the Bishop of Paris induced his episcopal brother, Fisher, of Rochester, to write a refutation, and Lefèvre might have fared ill at the hands of the Parliament, which was beginning to proceed against him as a heretic, had not the king, Francis I., been led by his confessor, himself a *moderate* in religion, to forbid any further annoyance of the learned doctor.

Such was the most important man of learning whom Brignonnet invited to his diocese. Then there was the impetuous William Farel, a pupil of Lefèvre, a man whose very name has become a synonym for bold and unflinching courage. Gérard Roussel, another pupil, but of a far more retiring and timid character, was also among those who obeyed the summons to Meaux. Under their supervision the work of reformation rapidly advanced. The pulpits of the diocese, until now

* Relazione di Francia del clarissimo Marino Giustiniano, (A. D. 1535,) in the Relazioni Venete. T. i, p. 149.

rarely entered except for the purpose of calling upon the people to contribute to the wants of the monks, were filled by evangelical clergymen, to whom the people listened with eagerness and amazement; for the Gospel had never been heard from the mouths of their spiritual advisers. Lefèvre the scholar, not only preached, but busied himself in the work of translating the sacred Scriptures into the vernacular, that the people might possess and understand it for themselves. First he published the four Gospels, (1523,) and a few months later the remainder of the New Testament. The effect of the dissemination of this version of the word of God, which formed the basis for the subsequent translation of Robert Olivetanus, so important in the history of the progress of Protestantism in France, was at once visible. The copies were eagerly sought; the poor received the Gospel gratuitously when they could not pay even the small sum demanded, from the liberality of the good bishop. Briçonnet introduced the French Scriptures into the churches of Meaux, where the people listened to the lessons in an intelligible language and were delighted. An autograph letter, recently discovered among the rich treasures of the public library of Geneva, from Lefèvre to his absent pupil, Farel, pictures to us the immediate results of the publication, and the glowing hopes of the reformer. He writes :

Good God, with what joy do I exult when I perceive that the grace of the pure knowledge of Christ has already spread over a good part of Europe; and I hope that Christ is at length about to visit our France with this benediction. You can scarcely imagine with what ardor God is moving the minds of the simple in some places to embrace his Word since the books of the New Testament have been published in French; but you will justly lament that they have not been more widely scattered among the people. Some enemies have endeavored, under cover of the authority of the Parliament, to hinder the work; but our most generous king has become in this matter the defender of the cause of Christ, declaring it to be his will that his kingdom shall hear the word of God without impediment in that tongue which it understands. Now throughout our entire diocese, on feast-days and especially on Sunday, both the Epistle and the Gospel are read to the people in their native tongue, and the parish priest adds a word of exhortation to the Epistle or Gospel, or both at his own discretion.*

* Letter of Lefèvre, dated Meaux, July 6, 1524, in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*. T. xi, (1862,) pp. 212, 213.

While Briçonnet was forwarding the cause of the Reformation by helping Lefèvre to publish and disseminate the Scriptures, he strove to accomplish much by personal efforts. It was while preaching to the people on one occasion that he is said to have uttered a prophetic warning to his hearers: "Even should I, your bishop, change my voice and teaching, beware that you change not with me."

But the bright prospect opening before the eyes of French reformers was destined soon to be turned into cloud and darkness. The monks whom Briçonnet had offended proved themselves terrible antagonists. They called upon the Parisian University and Parliament to interpose; and the bishop, who at first had given tokens of courage, and had ventured to denounce the doctors of theology as Pharisees and false prophets, at length wavered and trembled before the storm he had raised. Three years (1523-1525) witnessed the gradual but sure progress of his apostasy from the profession of his convictions. Beginning with the mere withdrawal of his permission accorded to "the evangelical doctors," as they were called; to preach within his diocese, he ended by presiding over a synod of his own clergy, in which the reading of the works of Luther was prohibited upon pain of excommunication, and by giving a public sanction to the abuses against which he had so loudly protested. The rapid advance of his conformity with the requisitions of the Papal Church was doubtless owing not a little to fresh complaints against his orthodoxy, and a summons to appear before an inquisitorial commission appointed by the Parliament, which, however, he succeeded in satisfying in respect to his future, if not as to his past course.

Meanwhile, although himself the instrument of persecution in the hands of the fanatical portion of the French clergy,* it is probable that Briçonnet still retained his early sentiments. Such, at least, was the belief of the reformers, who pointed to

* The cotemporary chronicle recently published by the French Historical Society, under the title of "*Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, sous le règne de François Ier*," (p. 284,) under date of April 14, 1526, records the sentence of a poor wool-carder of Meaux, who, for having denied the efficacy of holy water, the utility of prayers for the dead, the propriety of worshipping images, etc., was condemned to seven years' imprisonment in the prisons of the Bishop of Meaux, and to be fed on bread and water.

him as to a signal instance of the fatal results of tampering with the truth, and attempting to reconcile an inward conviction of the truth with an external conformity with erroneous practices. Nor need we wonder at the solemn earnestness with which they employed this example of worse than Nicodemite timidity, to deter the feeble among the early confessors of a purer Christianity from so pernicious and soul-destroying a delusion as that which had involved Briçonnet in ruin. It is true that the "evangelical doctors" of Meaux, who, at the prelate's invitation, had come to preach the Gospel in his episcopal residence, although dispersed, were not all silent. The weakness that denied Farel a shelter in the vicinity of Paris was the occasion of his going back to preach in his native Dauphiny, and then carrying the word of life to Montbelliard, and to Neuchâtel, Geneva, and so many other towns in French Switzerland. Nor did the common people of Meaux and its vicinity, who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth by the instrumentality of the bishop, share in the cowardly denial of that truth. Obedient rather to his own exhortation addressed to them when nothing seemed less likely to be realized than a prognostication of his fall, while "he changed his voice and teaching," they had obtained too strong a faith in the truths proclaimed to them not to "refuse to change with him." And yet the cause of Protestantism in France was deprived of a spectacle which it needed in that period of its infancy, of a man of high rank in Church and State, and possessing the intimacy and confidence of the king and of his sister Margaret, at a later date Queen of Navarre, forsaking all these advantages and exposing himself, not to mere persecution, but to a martyr's death in attestation of his faith. What might not have been the beneficial results for France, it has been well remarked, of the death at the stake of a Bishop of Lodève and Meaux, Count of Montbrun, and successful negotiator for the king of France? But while thousands of poor wool-carders and other despised artisans sealed their confession with their blood, this titled prelate preferred to veil his true sentiments under a hypocritical conformity, and the cause of Protestantism throughout the world has felt the disastrous results of his sad want of resolution up to the present day.

While Bishop Briçonnet furnishes us an instance of a Nicode-

mite timidity, amounting in effect to absolute apostasy, the history of two of his assistants at Meaux presents to us a less distinct, and therefore perhaps more dangerous type of the same delusion. The aged Lefèvre, the forerunner of the Reformation, like him who came to herald the coming of our Saviour, was by no means "a reed shaken by the wind," and yet he lacked the inflexible courage of the Baptist. His contemplative soul was wearied with the continuous conflicts in which the determined athlete must engage. Rescued from his persecutors, as a learned man, by the interposition of Francis I., he obtained the quiet post of librarian of the royal collection of books at the castle of Blois, on the Loire. Even here we find him "somewhat annoyed" by his enemies, as Queen Margaret of Navarre informs us in one of her letters, which Prof. Génin has printed from the original in the Imperial Library;* and she readily obtained permission to take the venerable doctor with her to Nérac, where, cherished and loved by the king of Navarre and herself, he passed away the few remaining years of his pilgrimage. His mind was, however, not at rest even in these unmolested retreats. An affecting incident is told of his last hours. While sitting at the royal table, a few days before his death, Lefèvre was observed to weep, whereupon Queen Margaret complained of the sadness of one whose society she had sought for her own diversion, and asked the occasion of his sorrow. "How can I minister to the joy of others, who am myself the greatest sinner upon earth?" was Lefèvre's mournful and unexpected response. Pressed to explain himself, the old man, after admitting that through a long life he had maintained exemplary morality of conduct, exclaimed in words frequently interrupted by sobs: "How shall I be able to stand at God's tribunal, who have taught others the purity of the Gospel? Thousands have suffered and died in defense of the doctrine in which I instructed them; and I, unfaithful shepherd that I am, after reaching so advanced an age, when I ought to love nothing less than life, or rather to desire death, have basely avoided the martyr's crown, and betrayed the cause of my God!" The queen and the other persons who were present administered such consolation to the pious Lefèvre as they could find, and

* *Lettres de Marguerite d'Angoulême.* T. i, pp. 279, 280.

shortly afterward he died, relying on the forgiveness of his Maker, leaving his library to his disciple, Gérard Roussel, and the rest of his scanty property to the poor. The truth of this story, which rests upon the authority of Hubert Thomas, counselor of state and secretary of the elector palatine, has been discredited by Bayle in his *Critical Dictionary*, and after him by Tabaraud in the *Biographie Universelle*, and more lately by Haag, in his great work on French Protestant Biography. All rest their rejection of the story chiefly upon the entire silence of the reformers, who might well be expected to notice so suggestive an occurrence, were it indeed authentic. But in this instance, as in so many others, it has been proved how unreliable are all such arguments. With singular good fortune, M. Jules Bonnet has, within a few months, discovered among the unexplored treasures of the Genevese public library a minute, in the handwriting of the reformer Farel, which demonstrates the truth of the circumstances described by Hubert Thomas. He writes:

Our master, Jacques Lefèvre, of Etaples, when suffering from the disease by which he died, was for some days so greatly terrified by the judgment of God that he cried out that his fate was sealed, saying that he was eternally lost, because he had not openly professed the truth of God. This complaint he continued to utter day and night. When Gérard Roussel admonished him to be of good courage and trust in Christ, he answered, "I am condemned; I have concealed the truth which I ought to have professed and openly borne witness to." It was a fearful sight to see so pious an old man so distressed in mind and overwhelmed by so great a dread of the judgment of God. At length, however, freed from his fears, he began to entertain a good hope in Christ.*

The faithful and intrepid reformer of Neufchatel was no sooner informed of the gloom that had attended the last hours of his former master than he wrote, as he tells us, to one of those who with him had once sat at the feet of the sage of

* "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis noster, laborans morbo quo decessit, per aliquot dies ita perterritus fuit iudicio Dei, ut actum de se vociferaret, dicens se æternum periisse, quod veritatem Dei non aperte professus fuerit, idque dies noctesque vociferando querebatur; et cum a Gerardo Rufo admoneretur ut bono esset animo, Christo quoque fideret, is respondit: Nos damnati sumus, veritatem celavimus quam profiteri et testari palam debebamus. Horrendum erat tam pium senem ita angere animo et tanto horrore iudicii Dei concuti; licet tandem liberatus bene sperare cœperit ac perrexerit de Christo."—Published for the first time in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*. T. xi, (1862,) pp. 214, 215.

Etaples. This was Michael d'Arande, who, although a Protestant at heart, had remained in the Roman Church, and was now Bishop of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, in Dauphiny. What Farel would write under such circumstances we may easily infer from our knowledge of the character and history of that faithful servant of God, although he thought it important only to preserve the reply of the bishop to his admonitory letter. The Bishop of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux begins with a picture of the terror which the reading of Farel's announcement of Lefèvre's death had wrought on his entire inner man. He acknowledges that he hears the voice of Jesus Christ himself exhorting him to courage, so justly that he can answer nothing, but must own himself altogether guilty. And the poor man, a bishop of an important diocese, closes by solemnly adjuring the exile and reformer, by the same Lord Jesus, to help him by continual prayer on his behalf, and meanwhile not to desist from ever soliciting him by exhortations, in order that at length he may be able to extricate himself from the deep mire, in which he finds no firm foundation on which his foot may rest. And then, as if remembering that there was danger in committing to paper the record of his internal disquietude, the prelate concludes with the remark that the bearer will give him other details, and will salute him, in the name of that Being without whose assistance all effort is of no avail.* Such a letter depicts, more plainly than could any mere description, the fearful abyss of doubt, remorse, and conscious weakness into which many a well-disposed, but irresolute man plunged, and remained in a life-long misery, continually hoping and praying that the Almighty, by some extraordinary interposition, could impart the necessary strength and courage to enable the poor victim to rescue himself. It was more in

* We extract the greater part of this remarkable epistle: "Vix puto transitum pii illius senis Stapulensis tam vehementer animum tuum percelluisse quam me totum perterruerunt literæ tuæ et piæ et Christianæ, dum eas lectitarem, non solum stilo quodam humano, sed gladio etiam Spiritus spiritum atque animam proscindentes ac pertrahentes, præsertim cum depingunt mihi ac proponunt Christum Jesum ita me confortantem ac mecum tam juste expostulantem, ut nihil omnino mihi relinquatur aliud quod opponam nisi quod me modis omnibus rerum ac convictum illi dedam. Quare ne te diutius impediam, rogo te atque obtestor per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum ut me continuis vestris precibus adjuvetis, atque interim vestris exhortationibus semper sollicitare non desistatis, *quo tandem ex hoc profundo limo in quo non est substantia erigi queam.*"

sadness and pity than in anger that those undaunted men who had sacrificed native land, possessions, the prospect of preferment in Church and State, even the security of life itself, and had acquired nerve by the sacrifice, looked upon such instances of pusillanimity.

It must not be supposed, however, that the Nicodemites, in refusing to come forth boldly as the advocates of the new doctrines, and thus to become exposed to the fury of persecution, resigned themselves with a blind devotion to all the abuses which were rife in the papal Church. On the contrary, many of those who assumed this character were distinguished for the incipient reforms which they nurtured in their neighborhood, and not infrequently they were thus the instruments of accomplishing much good. But by the inconsistent course which they adopted, while they alienated the affections of the decided Protestants, they no less surely forfeited the confidence of the opposite party, who refused to view them as other than disguised enemies. Such was the case with Gérard Roussel, Rufi, or Rufus, to whom we have already referred as one of the most prominent among Lefèvre's disciples. Gérard Roussel, a fine scholar and preacher, after having entered into orders, had been invited to Meaux, where the bishop had made him canon and treasurer of the cathedral. When the more decided reformers had found themselves obliged to leave Meaux, in order to enjoy the privilege of expressing their views openly, Roussel remained; for we find in a document recently discovered in the archives of the Roman Catholic Seminary of that city,* that as late as the early months of 1525 he was accused before the chapter of possessing papers containing matters defamatory of the pope, from which a placard had been concocted and posted upon the walls of the church. At the same time he was called to account for neglecting to repeat the Ave Maria in the service, to the great scandal of the people. In his defense, Roussel maintained that the Lord's Prayer was quite as efficacious as the "angelic salutation" on which so much stress was laid, and that the bishop alone was competent to reprove him if he had offended. When, however, Briçonnet had completed his renunciation of the reforms which he had

* Printed in the Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français. T. x, (1861,) pp. 219-221.

himself inaugurated, Gérard Roussel found it necessary to abandon the neighborhood of Paris; and we hear of him, a little subsequently, within the dominions of the king and queen of Navarre, whose chaplain he became. Seven or eight years later, indeed, when the disposition of Francis I. seems temporarily favorable, he is one of the "evangelical preachers," in company with Courault and Berthault, whom Margaret brings to Paris, to preach lenten discourses in the churches of the capital before the king and court. But the attempt to convert the court failed, and Roussel returned to Navarre. The queen made him successively Abbot of Clairac and Bishop of Oléron. The latter of these dignities he retained until his death. In his own diocese he set the example of a faithful shepherd. Contrasting his piety with the worldliness of the majority of the French bishops of that age, even that apostate and bitter enemy of the Reformation, Florimond de Remond, is compelled to admit that his life was apparently one of unusual sanctity. The pack of dogs and hounds was superseded by a host of poor; his horses and brilliant attendants by a troop of children whom he supported while they pursued their studies.* Yet the malice of the monks, whose licentiousness and covetousness he severely reprimanded, was not disarmed by the purity of his morals and life. Gérard Roussel fell a victim to the fanaticism of one De Maytie, who, entering a church in which the eloquent bishop was declaiming against the excessive multiplication of feast days, drew from beneath his mantle an ax, which he had brought with him for the purpose, and overthrew the pulpit. Roussel soon afterward died from the effects of his fall, expressing, it is said, upon his death-bed the same regrets which had disquieted that of his master Lefèvre; nor is the statement unworthy of credit. His murderer, on the other hand, was acquitted by the parliament of Bordeaux, before which he had been arraigned,† on the ground that the act which occasioned the death of so dangerous a

* Porro quia Rufus ille singularis alicujus sanctitatis speciem in moribus et vita externa præ se ferebat, ut qui loco canum et vertagorum, pauperum catenam; et pro equis ac satellitio, multos pueros et literarum studiis destinatos aleret, etc.—Florimond de Remond, *Historia de ortu, progressu, et ruina hæreseon*, l. vii, c. 3, Lat. ed. of Cologne, 1614.

† Haag, *La France Protestante*, s. v. Gérard Roussel; Gaillard, *Histoire de François Ier.* T. vi, p. 418.

heretic as the Bishop of Oléron, if not meritorious, was at most a venial offense.

In the case of Gérard Roussel, as in that of most of the other representatives of this class, there is so little of true candor and so much dissimulation, so little bold reformatory zeal and so much mysticism,* that abundant room has been left for discussion as to the position which ought to be assigned to him in the world-wide conflict of the sixteenth century. M. Tabaraud, in the *Biographie Universelle*, maintained, from a Roman Catholic point of view, his substantial orthodoxy; while the vast majority of Protestant writers claim him as a sincere but timid adherent of the Reformation. This diversity of opinion in itself demonstrates the falseness of his position. Yet we cannot doubt that he was at heart an enemy of the system to which an excess of worldly prudence led him to conform in many particulars. That such was the opinion of the great French and Swiss reformers is evident from the fact, for which Florimond de Remond vouches,† that it was against him especially that Calvin directed his work against the Nicodemites. And the same unfriendly authority calls Roussel the first person clothed in a Catholic habit who, in opposition to the consent of the Church in all ages, publicly gave the eucharist under both forms to communicants. He tells us that Roussel, in order to attract the people, generally employed the vulgar tongue in his prayers; and he confirms his proofs of the heterodoxy of the bishop, by relating that his vicar, a man of the same stamp, as soon as his superior was killed, “threw aside the cowl, married a wife, and became a minister of the Gospel.”

We ought here to delineate the course of that worthy patron of the learned and defender of the oppressed, Queen Margaret of Navarre herself; but to give even a sketch of her life would occupy far greater space than we can afford at present. Her eventful career constitutes a subject well worthy of separate treatment; the contrasts and inconsistencies of her character are too marked to be treated satisfactorily within the compass of a few lines. A woman whose purity of life placed her above reproach or suspicion, she was yet the author of tales whose

* Prof. Schmidt, the eminent historian and theologian of Strasburg, has made Roussel, as the type of the mystics, the subject of an able monograph.

† *Historia de ortu, progressu, et ruina hæreseon*, l. c.

tone can only be excused in consideration of the license of the age and court in which she lived. One of the earliest friends of the Reformation, which she furthered by the composition of her "Mirror of a Sinful Soul" not less than by her intercession on behalf of its professors, she never completely renounced her connection with the Roman Church; and, if we could credit the statements of that gossippy writer Brantôme, practiced superstitious rites even in her old age. Meanwhile, we know that she gave an asylum and entertainment in her court to some of the most dangerous of the sect of the Libertines, whose pestilent doctrines had infected so many liberal minds in France and the Low Countries. Indignant at an attack upon them which seemed to reflect upon herself, she signified to the Genevese reformer her dissatisfaction with his course, whereupon he answered in the courtly and yet faithful letter of April 28, 1545,* a single sentence of which sufficiently justifies his motives: "A dog barks when he sees his master assailed; I should be a very coward, if, seeing the truth of God thus attacked, I were mute and spoke not a word."

We have already referred to the Latin treatise against the Nicodemites, in the shape of two letters, the second of which is addressed to Gérard Roussel, published by Calvin for the first time in 1537.† But the temptations to dissimulation were so strong, and there were so many that fell victims to the snares which were laid in France for those who were timid, that the same writer deemed it advisable, fifteen years later, to collect and publish in the French language four popular discourses which he had delivered at Geneva, under the title of "Four Sermons treating of Matters very useful for our Times." A perusal of this treatise, while it will convince any reader of its appropriateness to meet the end which the author has in view, will also reveal the difficulties encountered by the timid disciple in France, and the subterfuges which suggested themselves as furnishing a ready means for their avoidance. In the first sermon, from the text, "Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips," (Psa. xvi, 4.)

* *Lettres Françaises de Calvin, recueillies par Jules Bonnet.* T. i, p. 111 *seq.*

† *Epistolæ duæ: prima de fugiendis impiorum illicitis sacris et puritate Christianæ religionis; secunda de Christiani hominis officio in sacerdotiis papalis ecclesiæ vel administrandis vel abjiciendis.*

the reformer enjoined the partakers of the same blessed faith with himself to flee from all external idolatry. He exhibited in clearest terms the guilt of those who consented to the mass under the pretext that it is but a disguise of the Lord's supper, by comparing it to the calves which Jeroboam set up at Dan and Bethel, in the name of the Lord who had brought Israel up out from Egypt. He answered those who excused themselves on the ground that the magistrates alone had the power to reform what was corrupt, by insisting that the private individual is responsible for the purity of his own body and soul, not for that of the streets and temples. He reproves with deserved severity the hypocrisy of those who, "after attending the mass throughout the year, at Easter seek out some secluded chapel, where a semi-christian monk celebrates for them a bastard supper of the Lord, from which all intention of the adoration of the Host is banished, and where both the bread and the wine are dispensed to all the participants." Some, he tells us, do not avoid the rite of baptism as performed in the churches, because they assert that there is no manifest idolatry connected with it; others go to the churches, but watch their opportunity that they may not be present at the mass, just as if the incense offered to idols, the prayers for the intercession of some saint, and the hymn "Salve Regina," were not quite as blasphemous. The author here pertinently recalls the fact that the very ground on which most of the early Christian martyrs suffered death, was their refusal to offer perfume or incense to idols. And yet to those who still remain in perplexity in respect to their duty, no clearer rule for their guidance can be given than the ample directions of the Word of God. Those who ask more are compared to men who, on being exhorted to modesty of dress and accouterment, would have the preacher cut out their stockings and sew their shoes. In the second sermon, exhorting to the endurance of persecution for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, Calvin enforces his teachings by a memorable example of fortitude. "A young man who lived here with us, having been arrested in the city of Tournay, was condemned to be beheaded if he recanted, and to be burned alive if he persisted in his sentiments. When asked what he wished to do, he simply answered, 'He who will give me grace to die patiently for his name, will doubtless give me grace to endure

the fire.'” The third and fourth sermons exhibit the duty of prizing the privilege of being in the Church of God, and of exposing one’s self to toil and privation in order to obtain liberty to worship God purely. To those who refuse to leave a land in which they have no opportunity to worship God as their consciences dictate, under pretext of the duty they owe to their natural prince, there is an easy answer. There is not one of them who would hesitate to abandon his native place if he were in lack of food, or if he could multiply in a foreign land the property he now possesses. The author meets with boldness the objections which avarice and ambition and love of ease raise against forsaking schemes of emolument and preferment, or of undisturbed quiet, and then adds: “It is strange that many think they can shut our mouths if we do not assign them a position and means of living while serving God. ‘My condition,’ say they, ‘is such and such in my country; if I leave it, what will become of me, or how shall I be fed?’ As if God had ordained those who preach the Gospel stewards, to give accommodation to all in his states, and to furnish to each, according to his quality, board and wages. . . . The evil is, that they wish to keep their entire possessions, and cannot suffer to be curtailed in honors or riches, nor to be deprived of their ease and delights; that is to say, they cannot bow their neck and bend to bear Jesus Christ.”

Such were the attempts of the great Genevese reformer to remove one of the most serious obstacles in the way of the progress of Protestantism in France; that is to say, the reluctance of those who were more or less fully convinced intellectually of the truths of the Gospel, to confess their belief openly and suffer in attestation of it. His zeal was naturally displeasing to those who felt but little inclination to expose themselves to loss of property, honor, and life. Strong objections were raised against the decided position which he had assumed, and the reformer was compelled not only to justify himself in an “Apology,” written in 1545—that is, seven years before the publication of the sermons just referred to—but to obtain the opinion of the other reformers of Switzerland and Germany, to whom his opponents had also appealed. His letters to Luther and Melancthon, and the response of Melancthon, have been preserved. All breathe a spirit of cordial sympathy

and esteem, in spite of differences on minor points. Bucer, Peter Martyr, and Melanchthon, all coincided in the views respecting the necessity of that open profession of the Gospel on which Calvin insisted. Melanchthon, it is true, made greater concessions than the Genevese reformer approved; but all agreed, as we are informed by Theodore de Bèze, that one cannot serve two masters.* This general unanimity encouraged Calvin to publish the sermons to which we have glanced, as well as to make great private exertion to reclaim individuals of distinction, such as François Daniel and Louis du Chemin, who still refused to forsake their external connection with the Church of Rome. Nor were these labors fruitless, for Theodore de Bèze assures us that "these writings were the cause of great blessing, since many now came to a determination to devote themselves wholly to God, who had hitherto been asleep in their uncleanness."

ART. VI.—OUR ANTIPODES.

The History of New South Wales. With an Account of Van Diemen's Land, [Tasmania,] New Zealand, Port Philip, [Victoria,] Moreton Bay, and other Australian Settlements. Comprising a complete view of the Progress and Prospects of Gold Mining in Australia. The whole Compiled from Official and other Authentic and Original Sources. By RODERICK FLANIGAN, member of the Australian Literary Institute, and of the Philosophical Society of New South Wales. 2 vols. 8vo. London: Sampson Low, Son, & Co. 1862.

The Three Colonies of Australia: New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia; their Pastures, Copper Mines, and Gold Fields. By SAMUEL SIDNEY, author of "The Australian Hand-Book," etc. 1 vol. 12mo. New York: C. M. Saxton, Barker & Co. 1860.

Land, Labor, and Gold; or, Two Years in Victoria. With Visits to Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. By WILLIAM HOWITT. 2 vols. 12mo. Boston; Ticknor & Fields. 1855.

British Enterprise Beyond the Seas: or, The Planting of Our Colonies. By J. H. FYFE, author of "The Triumph of Invention and Discovery." 1 vol. 12mo. London: T. Nelson & Sons. 1863.

* Bèze, *Histoire Ecclesiastique des Eglises Réformées de France*, (ed. of Lille.) T. i, p. 31. See also Henry, *Life of Calvin*, ii, pp. 7-14 and App.; and Calvin's Letters, (Eng. ed. of Jules Bonnet,) i, pp. 434 *seq.*, 440-447.