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JOHN CALVIN.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

TAPPAN HALL ASSOCIATION

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BY

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Tappan Presbyterian Hall Association

Was organized for the purpose of fostering and directing the religious and social life of the Presbyterian students attending the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. It was incorporated by the Legislature of Michigan in October, 1887, and is under the control of eight Trustees, serving for four years each, four of whom are appointed by the Synod of Michigan, and four others by the Session of the Presbyterian Church at Ann Arbor. They must report annually to the Synod. The Association is composed of all members or adherents of the Presbyterian Church who enroll their names and pay annually at least three dollars each for the purposes of the Association. The Annual Meeting is held in Ann Arbor on the second Tuesday of November in each year.

It has three objects under its control :—

1. TAPPAN PRESBYTERIAN HALL.—In November of last year, Mrs. Sackett, of Ann Arbor, very generously presented a very large and valuable corner lot and house in that town, to be used as the social and religious center of this work. The only condition imposed was that the permanent adaptation of the property for this purpose must be made within five years from the date of the gift. The improvements necessary consist of reading and social rooms and a fire-proof library, and will require about \$15,000.00.

2. THE PRESBYTERIAN LECTURESHIP.—This consists of a series of lectures during each winter upon some special feature of Presbyterian history or doctrine with the intent of promoting church intelligence and loyalty. It is also the aim to present, on occasions, the claims and attractions of the Presbyterian ministry. It was established several years ago by the Synod of Michigan, and its wisdom is commended by the fact that since its establishment several other denominations have organized similar lectureships with successful results.

It has thus far, through lack of funds, been compelled to depend very largely upon the gratuitous services of pastors already burdened. It has been transferred to the care of the Association, and requires an endowment of at least \$10,000.00 to command the most valuable and enduring results.

3. THE PRESBYTERIAN TRAINING COURSE.—This is intended to embrace such topics as will train students for intelligent lay activity in their respective churches, and possibly prove to many a serviceable introduction to the theological seminary. The course this year consists of lectures on Monday evening of each week during the semesters of the University, upon the following subjects :

THE ENGLISH BIBLE, BY . . .	HOWARD DUFFIELD, D. D.
CHURCH HISTORY, . . .	REV. J. F. DICKIE,
THE CHURCH, . . .	REV. LOUIS R. FOX.
APPLIED CHRISTIANITY, . .	WALLACE RADCLIFFE, D. D.
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, . . .	REV. J. M. GELSTON.

Switzerland—John Calvin.

BY

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THERE are three fair sisters of the family of the Aryans to whom the continent of Europe has been given in possession. I mean the race of the Latins, of the Teutons, and of the Slavs. I do not name the race of the Celts; because that bright sister seems to find her chief mission in raising up black-haired sons and daughters to intermarry with their well-to-do cousins, even at the expense of Celtic language and Celtic nationality. They have already amalgamated freely with Teutons and with Latins—to the great improvement of them both—and will yet, I doubt not, benefit the Slavs.

Of these three sister races who possess Europe, it still remains to be seen to which one shall belong the greatness of the future. But to the eldest, the Latin, the past at least is secure. Before the supremacy of the Latins, for more than a millennium, in language and literature, in laws and religion, the younger races must bow in admiration. Even as the lofty Alps rise above all other European mountains, so in history the race of the Latins rises above its sister races. And, as among the Alps, there are two peaks, and two only, that transcend by thousands of feet their fellows; the one looking to the south over sunny Italy; the other looking towards the north, over fair France; the so-called Rose mountain and the White mountain; so from the whole multitude of the race of the Latins there rise just two men, far transcending all other Latins; one looking towards the south, the other looking towards the north; one belonging to ancient days, the other to modern; Julius Cæsar and John Calvin.

Whoever will begin, as I have happened to begin in my

preparation of this oration, to ask, Who of Latins is the greatest? will not only have these two rise before his gaze—it may be wholly against his expectation—but also will have forced upon him striking incidents in which these two great lives are amazingly parallel.

Come with me to look upon the two as they enter, each his final field of effort, at the youthful age of twenty-seven.

Yonder, Julius Cæsar, thin, tall, sallow, and not a very well-to-do young lawyer, is entering after long absence the city of Rome!

Here, John Calvin, thin, tall, sallow, and a not very well-to-do young lawyer, preacher also, and author, is entering a hotel in Geneva.

Julius Cæsar, yonder, is the son of a father who has held the office of pretor, and a mother, a strict conservative lady of the old school, intelligent and stately.

Here, John Calvin is the son of a father in the office of procurator, and a mother, a strict conservative lady of the old school, intelligent and beautiful.

Yon Julius Cæsar was early put to school in the then greatest and brightest city of the world, becoming a Greek scholar before he was fourteen.

This John Calvin was early put to school in the then greatest, brightest city of the world, becoming a Greek scholar before he was fourteen.

Yon Julius Cæsar at fourteen years of age, had been appointed a priest of the established religion of his country, with a handsome salary, and no doubt chiefly for the handsome salary.

This John Calvin, at seventeen years of age, had been appointed priest, and had received the tonsure of the established religion of his country, with a handsome salary, and no doubt chiefly for the handsome salary.

Yon Cæsar, before he was twenty, had, by his opposing the oligarchy of senators that ruled his country, and by refusing to put away his wife and take another at their bidding, become in danger of his life and been forced to leave Italy to become a wanderer over Greece and Western Asia.

This Calvin, before he was twenty-two, had, by his opposing the oligarchy of priests that ruled his country, and by his refusing to put away his dearer than wife, his Christian faith, at their

bidding, become in danger of his life, and been forced to leave France to be a wanderer along the Rhine and over Italy.

Yon Cæsar, when a wanderer, had it said of him by Sulla, the chief of the Roman oligarchy: "This youth will one day overthrow our aristocracy. In this young Cæsar there is many a Marius."

This Calvin, when a wanderer, had it said of him by Erasmus, the chief scholar in the pay of the Roman hierarchy: "I see there [in Calvin] a great plague in the church, ready to break out against the church."

Yon Cæsar, entering Rome at twenty-seven years of age, has not been an idler during his seven years of travel, but has studied well—studied books in Greece and military arts in Asia—and has done some battling already at his own vocation, with pirates and Parthians, his favorite motto being: "There is nothing that can stand against Cæsar!"

This Calvin, entering Geneva at twenty-seven years of age, has not been an idler during his five years of travel, but has studied well—studied books in South France, on the Rhine, and in Italy, and has done some warring already, at his own vocation, with papists and pagans, his frequent text, used over and over: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I do not arbitrarily bring yonder Cæsar, setting himself down in Rome to practice law, into my discourse, which is intended to acquaint you with this John Calvin, setting himself down in Geneva, to practice the Gospel—for Cæsar, as I will now insist, is the alternative of Calvin, and by him as a foil, I present you Calvin that you may the better understand the latter, and make choice between the two as leaders in lofty human ambitions—for they are the representative leaders, not for the past only, but for also this present.

Young men of America, who are asking with that desire which the Spirit of the Creator awakens in every soul, What shall I do for mankind? The choice of to-day is the choice between the two Latins, each the harbinger of a new morning.

Yon Julius Cæsar, twenty-seven years old, in his years of danger from the senate oligarchy, had answered the question, What shall I do for mankind? by saying, "I will defend and establish two of the inalienable rights with which men are endowed; the right of life free from the sword of the oligarchy, and

the right of pursuing in quiet, at least some measure of happiness."

As Mr. Froude says: "Some ordered system of government had to be constructed under which quiet men could live and labor and eat the fruits of their industry." "Such a government was the empire of the Cæsars—a kingdom where peaceful men could work, think and speak as they pleased," provided, Mr. Froude should have added, they did not speak against Cæsar. "Julius Cæsar," Mr. Froude further says, "was a friend of the people." "But Julius Cæsar," as he very wisely adds, "indulged in no enthusiasms for liberty."

Here, then, is the level upon which Cæsar and Mr. Froude and plenty more stand in their thoughts as to what it is worth while for a citizen to do for his fellow men—do what will give them their rights of personal safety and of the pursuit of lower forms of happiness, and indulge in no enthusiasms as to such rights as liberty.

Above this level John Calvin rises as the White Alp above the Alp Rosa, saying: I would shape a government upon the earth which shall be two-fold; the civil to secure men in their personal safety and their pursuit of happiness, as thoroughly and freely as ever did Cæsar's, and to secure men also in liberty; in so far that the government shall not be a monarchy, for, said Calvin, "A monarchy soon degenerates into a tyranny;" nor a pure democracy—for, said Calvin, "Pure democracy easily turns to anarchy;" but a limited democracy, that is, a democracy in which only the best men shall be eligible to the highest offices. Thus Calvin, by civil government, would secure life, civil liberty and the pursuit of mundane happiness.

Then Calvin declared further: I would by the side of the new civil government, shape a new church government, of all people who profess to serve God. And it also shall not be a papal monarchy, nor an high church oligarchy, but a limited democracy, with only such men as are trained and tried eligible to the more important places, the pastorates—but with any good man eligible to the other offices, the elderships and diaconates. This church government, parallel to the civil, shall secure to men, not physical life, civil liberty and pursuit of temporal happiness (though it shall help secure all of these), but its end shall be to secure spiritual life, liberty from the dominion of all vices and super-

stitutions, and the hopeful pursuit of happiness, heavenly and **ever-**lasting.

This was the mind of Calvin—the other was Cæsar's. **Which** of the two young men had the worthier ambition?

But were Calvin's intentions and his ambitions realized?

Before I answer this, which is the remaining subject of **my** discourse, let me dismiss Cæsar, since he has now served **my** purpose of forming a background and a foil by which I might the better illustrate Calvin. But in dismissing him, let me **say**, that his intentions, wholesome intentions they were for men's lower needs, were in large part fulfilled. Beginning with his laws for homesteads, lighter taxes, and punishments of gross crimes, down to the day when his work was completed under Augustus and the Antonines, Cæsar did indeed give the world the fulfillment of his ideal of government, as that which should secure to men their lives and their livelihoods, and his ideal, to-day, is in the best of those monarchs who still find no better name to wear than Kaiser, Czar and Cæsar. I dismiss them and him with this remark: They are well until people become qualified for better; Cæsar is well until men know enough and are good enough to hear and to follow Calvin.

But to speak thus of John Calvin is mere hyperbole, unless I can show that he made his plans actual, made them efficient and sufficient for the need of mankind. Were his plans for erecting two republics ever realized?

Geneva, which gave John Calvin, as it would have given any other traveler, a shelter in its inn, was a miniature nation. Its civil government nominally was a pure democracy. In reality it very often degenerated into a mob. Its church government was out of existence, the rule of the papal oligarchy having ended.

Furthest from the thought of the young man down in the hotel was it to take up the task of establishing in that strange city his model governments. Furthest was it also from the thought of any body.

Only old William Farel, the royal roaring evangelist, as soon as he heard that John Calvin was in town, said: "There is the very one to organize the government of the Christian Church in Geneva." Farel was sure that he himself could not do this, and so finding out Calvin he fairly compelled the young man to take the place of chief religious leader of the little nation.

Farel found Calvin thinking of a literary life and said :
“Cursed be thy studies if thou dost shun for their sake the work
of God.” As a German writer has pictured it in his rhyme :

“ At Farel’s word, see Calvin quailing
As tho’ God’s hand were him assailing,
He takes the work, tho’ hard its guerdon,
At God’s command he bears the burden.”

Calvin began *not* with the civil government. He was not yet a Genevese citizen, nor did he become so till several years afterwards. He began with the religious government. And whence came his ideas upon it, to which I have already made allusion? To answer this, return and dwell for a little on the ten years of his life just gone by. In comparing Calvin’s outward life with Cæsar’s, I alluded to these ten years as spent in attending school, in opposing tyranny, and in banishment. But now I return to look at these ten years, not in their outward form, but in their development of the inner and real life of Calvin. I would thus have you see how he came into such intense resolve, to establish the church government which he first on the earth did establish.

Exactly ten years before, when Calvin was seventeen, he entered a theological seminary in Paris. In Paris, then already a city of street lights and printing presses and postoffices and a quarter of a million of inhabitants, the battle between New Testament Christianity and the Roman oligarchy had begun. At no time had it ceased to be waged in France, and recently had been handed down from John Wessel to James Lefevre ; from James Lefevre to John Calvin’s cousin, and now it was to go from John Calvin’s cousin (who afterwards translated the Bible into the French) to John Calvin.

When John Calvin was seventeen, James Lefevre and his disciple, William Farel, had just been expelled from Paris ; but they were only nine leagues away, teaching and preaching, Lefevre publishing about that time the first translation of the New Testament into the French language. John Calvin heard of them and felt their influence. That same year the priestly oligarchy of Paris burned a young priest for adopting the new Christianity. This first martyr in Paris was probably seen to die by John Calvin. That year also they strangled for the same offense a young lawyer of Paris.

When Calvin was eighteen they burned a priest of the city for denying that the wafer was the corporeal Christ.

When Calvin was eighteen or nineteen the prime minister of France cried out in a proclamation: "They multiply; they hold secret conventicles; they discuss the Catholic faith with women and with fools; they must be extirpated!"

What shall Calvin do? Well, like many a boy who has thought to be a preacher, when preaching seems to require a martyrdom, Calvin says: "I'll not be a preacher; I'll be a lawyer." So off to law school he goes, to Orleans and Bourges, two cities south of Paris, and it was a good thing thus to go, for Calvin needed to be a lawyer. But he finds that "necessity is laid upon him." He cannot leave off the gospel because told to leave it off by the oligarchy. Back he goes to Paris, at twenty years of age, and from this time, says his friend Beza, he renounced all other pursuits to give himself wholly to God. The slim, sparkling-eyed youth went organizing Bible-classes among students and citizens near his place of lodging—a neighborhood long afterward known as "The little Geneva." Here he studied and battled four years in youthful obscurity, his war-cry in many a sermon, "If God be for us, who can be against us!"

But he was not too obscure or youthful to give to the world a volume of the Latin, "The Clemency" of Seneca, intended, if possible, to win clemency from the government to the persecuted. Nor was he too young or obscure, at twenty-four years of age, to be employed by the rector of the University to write his inaugural address, which Calvin made so Calvinian that both he and the rector had to leave Paris in an exceeding hurry, Calvin being let down from his window by a rope made of the coverings of his bed.

For a year he was here and there in France, hoping to return to Paris, but she became more and more a raving murderess of such as he, and he goes to the Rhine and to Basel, there to publish a book of which I am to speak after a little; thence into Italy to the court of the Duchess Renata, who, like her niece Margaret, was a life-long loving friend of John Calvin. For John Calvin was well liked by kings and queens, when he was not hated by them. From Italy Calvin turns back to Basel to see how his book is prospering, but brings up about his twenty-seventh birthday at the hotel in Geneva. A wanderer three years, thanks to the

Paris oligarchy, a sufferer in soul at least ten years, since he first saw their martyrdom of men who resisted their tyranny!

What more was needed to make Calvin hate an oligarchy in religion and a tyranny in government, controlled by the oligarchy? Oppression makes a wise man mad, and it made John Calvin mad, but there was method in his madness!

I have other means to tell what was under the hat which John Calvin wore into Geneva; better even than this recital of his hardships. It is his book, "The Institutes," published at Basel the year before, when he was twenty-six. This book, which afterward grew to eighty chapters, had then only six. Of the six, while five were on individual religion, entitled "Law," "Faith," "Prayer," "Sacraments" and "Christian Liberty," only the sixth was on "Church and State." But this sixth, both then and even when the book grew to eighty chapters, was nearly one-half of the whole treatise. In the edition of the book published by the Presbyterian Board in Philadelphia, church and state take up, out of 1,100 pages, about 500! Here we have presented us the Calvin who enters Geneva, his mission not, as some suppose, to puncture the brains of men with five points of speculative theology, polished to the fineness of that cambric needle about which the schoolmen debated whether it would hold more than one thousand angels standing upon it at one time without crowding! For the so-called Five Points are are neither Calvin nor Calvinism. They are five points in the theology of the Reformation, in Luther's as well as in Calvin's, in Paul's as well as in Augustine's, five points which Calvin whetted somewhat, but which it remained for some second-rate Holland theologians to whet to scholastic fineness, because Arminius, as they thought, was blunting them. But the deliverances of Dort, which magnify the five points, are not Calvin, nor are they Calvinism, any more than the Five Points of New York City are New York City. The Five Points of New York City are a solid and good part of the city, if they are not made nauseous by those who dwell upon them. The so-called five points of Calvinism—God's predestination, God's propitiation, God's leaving men to depravity, God's irresistible grace and God's gift of perseverance, are a good and solid part of the divine City of Truth until quarrelsome black crows of theologians dwell upon them, brood over them, make their nests on them, only to obscure and defile them.

These five points, however, are not Calvinism.

Calvin never talked of five points—at least not as regards theology. The fact is, however—and this is for the ladies—Calvin did have five points in his opinions on one subject. I will whisper them, for they are the only pure and genuine five points of Calvin. They are the five points Calvin wanted in the woman he would take as his wife. I quote them from a letter which Calvin wrote when he was twenty-nine years old:

“Always keep in mind what I seek to find in her. . . . This only is the beauty that allures me—If she is chaste [first point]. If not too nice or fastidious [second point]. If economical [third point]. If patient [fourth point]. If there is hope that she will be interested about my health [in other words, if she will love him—fifth point]. These are the five points of Calvin! The only five points of Calvin I know of.

Calvinism was never expanded into five points. It had three points. These are the three points which Calvin took with him into Geneva. These, which I will now name, constitute Calvin's trident, which he waved over the land and over the sea! *First*—All people ought to be Christians. With this point of his trident Calvin antagonized the Devil. *Second*—All Christians ought to be Reformed. With this point Calvin antagonized the pope. *Third*—All Reformed ought to be Republican. With this point Calvin antagonized the tyrants, and this is the reason why Calvinism has been hated and lied about by tyrants and papists and by the Devil and the Devil's children ever since!

The Calvin who enters Geneva first sets about making all Christians Reformed. He will reform them not into a papal monarchy nor a high-church oligarchy, but into a strong self-governing, though limited democracy. This was not in Calvin's mind the *first* thing. The first thing was to make all men Christian. But seeing that already there were Christians in Geneva, the first work for him was to reform them as God's kingdom. Luther's church was very properly not called the Reformed, but the Protestant, the Evangelic, or the Lutheran, for Luther saw the governing of the church snatched from Rome only to be usurped by each little prince who said, now that the pope has gone, *he* was pope and bishop—and each petty German prince *was* pope and bishop, and has been to this day. Luther gave reformed belief

to half christendom. It remained for Calvin to give reformed government.

At twenty-seven years of age and two months, Calvin entered Geneva. At twenty-seven years of age and four months he, with Farel, proposed a creed to the city. It was an epitome of Calvin's Institutes. The people, almost too eagerly, repeated it as theirs; and like the Florentines, fifty years earlier, solemnly elected Christ to reign over their city. The Genevan people, all in a day, became church-members and communicants!

Calvin's creed was not very long or very difficult. Indeed, what is an interesting fact now, it was considered by many altogether too lax. Calvin was even charged with rejecting the Trinity because he would not put in his creed the Athanasian refinements. Calvin at the very start had to prove that he was orthodox—which fact may comfort us here, should we ever be obliged to establish *our* orthodoxy.

Calvin, when he formed his church, was not thinking of orthodoxy so much as of common morality. He said that he was tortured and consumed to see the immoral taking the Lord's Supper. He cared nothing that his people were orthodox if they were not good. He cared nothing for his church members growing enthusiastic over his sermons—and they did grow very enthusiastic—unless they minded his sermons. He was tortured and consumed to see them grossly vicious and yet taking the Lord's Supper. He felt that he was responsible, if he let them practice a blind hypocrisy. He solemnly resolved he would open their eyes.

It was the second Easter Sunday after his arrival (Calvin being now twenty-eight years old) when there rang out the great city bell, called the Clemency, and this time it was clemency to the souls of men. The citizens crowded into the cathedral. In the pulpit stands the young man with long and pointed brown beard, with bright and unembarrassed look, full of decision. He speaks. He defines church membership. He tells them that they have been false to it. Till they promise to leave off their immoralities he cannot and will not give them the Lord's Supper. In this his devoted associates sustain him. In defiance of the preacher, out rattled many a sword from its scabbard, for these people had come to look upon a share in the communion as a free American looks upon his share in the ballot-box. Threats rose up, but Calvin's

friends stood firm. Instead of force the malcontents turned to the law, and that so successfully that within twenty-four hours Calvin and his fellow-preachers were ordered out of the country. And for no crime, save simply for refusing certain people the Lord's Supper. Was there not need for a Reformed Christianity? Calvin went out of Geneva, and went cheerfully. "Then, and by that means," he said afterwards, "was I set at liberty." Calvin knew that he was right and the State was wrong. As Guizot says, "A passion held sway in Calvin's heart and was his guiding star in the permanent organization of the church. It was the profound distinction between the religious and the civil community."

Calvin deserves, perhaps, not so much more credit than others, for he was not living like Luther under the shadow of a good elector Frederic, or like Cranmer of a bad king Harry. Calvin was living under the shade of the Alps, and no other earth-born object rose above him. Less wonder, then, that he would not suffer that the church, in her spiritual affairs, should be subject to any but Almighty God.

Calvin's exile was in every particular fitted to fix him firmly in his resolve on a Reformed church or none. He went on foot, tired, drenched with rain, till he reached Zürich, where he laid before the pastors fourteen points between himself and Geneva. They were on the Church's right of excluding members and ordaining preachers, celebrating the Lord's Supper and singing psalms. And the Zürich men agreed with Calvin that a man should not be made either a communicant or a preacher by act of legislature—that psalms ought to be sung and communions held as often as the church wanted. And some good Zürich brothers walked or rode with Calvin all the way back to Geneva, in order to bring her people to see this. But Geneva would not let them even step inside her gates.

There was nothing left for Calvin but to go to some city where he might find Frenchmen among whom to labor. He went to Strassburg and soon was pastor of 1500 French exiles in that German city. There Calvin had leisure to think over church organization. Also he went three years in succession, by appointment of the government of Strassburg to try, with others, to patch up the whole breach between Popery and Protestantism. With Melancthon and Calvin on one side, and Cardinal

Contarini and a host of Roman bishops and doctors on the other side, and plenty of princes and ambassadors on both sides, there were great assemblies, first in Frankfort when Calvin was thirty years old; second, in Hagenau and Worms, when he was thirty-one, and third, in Regensburg, when he was thirty-two. And Calvin was no small factor on the side of the Protestants. He was popularly known as "The Theologian." He summed up his motive in the work thus engaged in, in this sentence written while at Worms: "I am here at Worms for the purpose of serving, with whatever small ability God has given me, the Church of Christ."

From Regensburg he wrote: "Contarini (the papal cardinal) wishes to subdue us, but without shedding our blood." "So far as I can understand, if we are ready to be satisfied with a half-Christ, we shall easily be able to come to an agreement."

And then in the winding up of this attempt at a joint church government for Papists and Protestants (in which Calvin never believed) he says, "It seems like a dream that the emperor and so many princes, ambassadors and counsellors should have spent five whole months in consulting, considering, parleying, giving opinions, debating, and resolving to do just nothing at all."

One thing, however, was done. Three years of opportunity were given Calvin to mature church government with all the light there was then in the world.

Forthwith came a summons back to Geneva. So vicious and disorderly had things grown that even the mob cried, "Let us recall the man who will preserve our faith, our morals, and our liberties." The city government sent deputies begging his return. And Calvin, not with much buoyancy, for he saw what terrible work he would have the rest of his life, returned. He went, he said, bowing and chaining his soul, presenting his heart a sacrifice offered to the Lord.

Calvin's recall began a self-governing church. He was able to establish such laws as the following: Henceforth pastors should be nominated by those who were pastors already, to be approved by the people. [The civil government to have a veto.] Twelve lay elders were to be nominated by the civil government—to be approved by both people and pastors. [Calvin, it will be seen, did not leave out the State altogether.] The pastors and elders were to form the church government. Boards

of deacons were to assist. And Calvin meant that they all should do something. Pastors should each preach every week-day and twice on Sabbath. They should lead in prayer, in part after prepared forms. They should catechize the children every Sunday at noonday. They should see that the people sang the psalms. The elders should visit every household once each year, rebuke private faults in private, and bring public offences before the church government.

And Calvin saw that the work assigned was done by them. The records show that persons were disciplined for drunkenness, debauchery, entering gambling and drinking halls, singing licentious songs, reading licentious tales, wearing immodest dress, dancing immodest dances, playing cards, swearing, and acting low plays. Not for one year, nor by spasms, but year after year, Calvin enforced this church discipline and constitution, till John Knox said, "It is the most perfect school of Christ that was ever on earth since apostolic days!"

Think not that John Calvin set up his new republic on such hard soil without toil, without battle. Cæsar himself never fought harder battles. Calvin battled with the inertia of his elders, of his fellow presbyters and pastors—for William Farel was gone to another city—with the meddling of the politicians, and the hate of the vicious. But he stood a warrior, potent as Cæsar, wise and skillful.

Calvin was thirty-two when he came back to Geneva, just as Cæsar was thirty-two when he first took public office, and, like Cæsar, from that time till the day of his death, he never was out from under fire.

Let me carry you past the thousand details of his struggle for right church government, and for its spread (and it did spread to many lands) down to one closing battle. It was when Calvin was forty-four years old. On September 3d, 1553, the city bell tolled as it tolled fifteen years before. Again it was a day for the Lord's Supper. Again the crowd came, and with them a citizen who had been excommunicated for immorality, but who had got an order of the city government to Calvin to reverse the excommunication.

Calvin stands at the table. The bread and the wine are there. He will give them to the worthy but not to the offender, nor to any of his boon companions, who are there in disorderly fashion.

"As for me," cries Calvin, after he has closed his sermon, "as for me, so long as God shall leave me here, since He has given me authority and I have received it of Him, I will employ it whatever betide. And I will guide myself by my Master's rule, which is true, clear and well known. As we are about to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, if any one who has been debarred by the Consistory shall approach this table, though it cost me my life, I will show myself such as I ought to be!"

He begins the communion service. There is a rush forward by the disorderly. He covers the bread and the wine, saying: "These hands you may crush, these arms you may lop off, my life you may take, my blood is yours, you may shed it, but you shall never force me to give holy things to the profane, and dishonor the table of my God."

There is quiet. The disorderly are struck with panic and fall back. Says Beza, who was present, "The sacred ordinance was celebrated with a profound silence under a solemn awe, as if the Deity himself had been present among them."

Thus, John Calvin, Rome in his front (and of course he was accused of resembling Rome in his taking upon him authority), and with Riot in his rear, quailed not, but upheld his cause. This battle for true church discipline, in which he was so triumphant, reminds me of that battle of Cæsar, which historians declare was the greatest battle this world ever saw. It was when Cæsar besieged Vercingetorix and sixty thousand Gauls in the town of Alesia, himself having fifty thousand veterans. The Gaul sent fiery messages through the land, till two hundred and fifty thousand warrior Gauls came into the rear of Cæsar, besieging him in turn. But Cæsar entrenched himself, so as not to release in the least his hold on the besieged town. Then he turned and scattered the new hosts which had come to swallow him up. Here, Froude says: "Here was accomplished the most daring feat in the military annals of mankind." But this was another just as daring a feat, though not with confused noise nor garments rolled in blood. John Calvin, while attacking Rome, because she domineered hatefully over men, was himself attacked by so-called free religion. And, without relaxing for one instant his onset upon Rome, he discomfited utterly the tribes of the libertines, his staunch Presbyterian phalanxes, with banners all waving, emerging unbroken out of the struggle!

If Calvin in blessing mankind with a better church government, found Rome in front and riot in the rear—in blessing mankind with better civil government, he had tyrants in front and licentiousness in rear. Geneva, when Calvin came, was often under mob rule. Feudalism had been cast off. Judge Lynchism rose up to take its place. Calvin hated anarchy as he hated tyranny. He sought upon his return to give Geneva a limited democracy. The young man of thirty-four took *this* course. He kept himself out of office; he persuaded the people to give up their right of voting directly on every exciting question, and to vote only twice a year in the spring and in the fall. (Whence came, I suppose our spring and fall elections). He also secured the placing of the government chiefly in the hands of twenty-four men, eight elected by the people directly, the other sixteen by a committee or council of two hundred, named by the government already in office. This combined the government of the best, with the government of the many. It is precisely what Calvin has done for church government. In each Presbytery or Synod, half the members, namely the elders, are chosen by the people, any man in the membership being eligible. The other half, the ministers, are admitted after certain tests, by those already in office.

Were it not better for every State and for the United States, if our constitution contained more of the foresight of John Calvin and less of the levelling spirit of Thomas Paine? Why should it be possible for some fellow who has happened upon a bonanza in Colorado or Nevada to enter forthwith the United States Senate (provided only he be thirty years old). Why not demand that he first have achieved certain public distinctions, first have filled acceptably certain offices. John Calvin's joining government by the best (deciding the best by careful tests) with government of the many, should yet commend itself to the American nation.

John Calvin did not believe that William Krüeger from a New Jersey brewery, who this week announces himself a candidate for the United States Senate, should be equally eligible to that high office with an Ex-President Hayes or an Ex-President Cleveland. John Calvin's plan of government was accepted by Geneva, and with it a code of laws which he drew up when thirty-four years old. Nor were these laws even revised till after Calvin was dead. They touched every subject that Calvin thought on,

fire departments, city police, fortifications, and the like, and may still be seen in Calvin's own handwriting.

Calvin was a wise lawyer, a just legislator; yet right here in his relation to the State, Calvin has incurred the greatest odium. It is just as undeserved as the odium excited against his name by false views of his theology. Calvin obtained hate just as you may obtain hate within six days, by favoring in your city the suppression of vice immediately by law to a degree beyond what the sentiment of the great body of your neighbors approve.

Calvin as a citizen—not at all as a church-member—as a citizen, Calvin helped to put to death such men as Gruet and Servetus. It was through laws founded on the same principle with laws now which punish profane swearing, or put a citizen into the penitentiary for publishing obscene books, an imprisonment which the libertine of to-day denounces just as he denounces John Calvin.

There is a certain personal liberty which is violated by such laws. There is a certain personal liberty violated when a publisher in London is punished (as has happened within a week) for publishing a novel of Zola. What is to decide whether personal liberty is to give way for the common voice? Nothing can decide but the divinely inspired wisdom of mankind. Some cry "Away with legislation on morals!" I answer, you cannot then punish stealing any more than swearing, slander any more than blasphemy. There is no fixed line in legislation on one side of which you trespass on private rights—on the other, not. In government we have in greater or less degree absorbed men's private rights.

Calvin's struggle came from his insisting on men giving up sensual license and license to attack every law and belief which other people cherished. Those whom Calvin helped punish for blasphemy were members of a party which called itself the Spiritual Libertines, which hated Calvin for his putting down sensuality, as he did put it down, punishing the worst forms with loss of life.

When Calvin was thirty-seven years old he helped put to death a citizen called Gruet. Here is part of his sentence as read on the scaffold: "He had insulted religion: he had written blasphemous and obscene verses, and defended the grossest licentiousness. He had threatened the government."

When Calvin was forty-four he helped put to death Servetus. It was the day when political strife was the hottest, when the licentious element were fearing that they would have to yield because so many Christian exiles were flocking to Geneva to be with Calvin; and when they were stirring conspiracies. It was at this time Servetus came to Geneva. Such a historian as Guizot believes he came as an ally of the seditious party. But neither he nor they, says Guizot, knew the resolute Calvin. He helped secure the arrest of Servetus, his trial and his execution. It was largely for the blasphemy which Calvin thus names in his account of one of his interviews with Servetus. He says: "I prayed him to implore the forgiveness of God, whom he had so awfully blasphemed, seeking to annihilate the threefold personality, and calling it a three-headed hell-hound."

Servetus died for blasphemy. Calvin favored his death, though he tried hard to have it by the sword and not by fire. On this I have to say that if you can defend the State of Michigan for fining a profane swearer five dollars for blasphemy, I can defend Geneva and Calvin for punishing Servetus for blasphemy. The admissible question as to the punishment of Servetus is, whether the penalty was not beyond proportion, whether he ought not to have been let off with imprisonment and fine. Calvin wanted lighter punishment. Why did the government not give it? The answer may be found in the fact that within two years the party of Servetus attempted by violence to destroy the government. There was open riot, many killed, the party of the Libertines beaten, their bodies, some of them, beheaded, and others banished. It was because of this known danger that the government proceeded with severity against Servetus. The life of the best modeled nation on the earth was struck at. People are not very patient—no not even the great American people—when struck at by assassins. Geneva struck back! The result proves that she did not strike in vain. This rebellion (of 1555), quelled once, was quelled forever. And Geneva became a model miniature nation.

Fellow citizens: Calvin went to an extreme in punishing license of tongue and pen. Are not we at the opposite extreme? Are not we in need of revising our views? Must government let everybody print anything he will? Must government carry every slander in its mails which anybody utters? Must govern-

ment allow placards and papers as vile as anybody can imagine? Must we, the people who wish to be temperate, decent, chaste, and wish our children to be so, let the dogma of personal liberty make us slaves to the vicious? Have we not rights under government not only to life, but to liberty from the domination of the vicious and to the pursuit of such happiness as consists in having things quiet and decent about us?

Calvin as a citizen, in everything except the severity of his punishments, which belonged to a day when hanging was the penalty for petty larceny, in everything beside deserves the praise of the citizens of the American republic.

Fifteen years since I was in attendance upon a service in a chapel adjoining the cathedral where John Calvin preached. The chapel was there also in John Calvin's day, and was used by him and by John Knox. It holds two or three hundred persons. Above is an arched stone ceiling, around are grotesque carvings, while here and there is a little gallery, a narrow window, or a niche for a statue.

That day was opened a service for English-speaking strangers, its leader the worthy Scotch historian, Dr. Alexander Mitchell; and before his sermon he spoke these words, which I copied afterward by his permission from his manuscript:

"It was in this very room," he said, "that exiles from Great Britain were allowed in peace to develope those forms of church government, worship, and doctrine to which descendents of theirs upon both sides of the Atlantic substantially adhere. * * * Here were first boldly taught those principles of constitutional government which are now universally adopted by the Anglo-Saxon race." And the leader, I say, of even John Knox in all this was John Calvin, who was first in church, the Reformed and enduring Church—first in State, the Republican and modern State—and who I also affirm will yet be first in France, in the hearts of his fellow countrymen!

But, after all, the first and last point of Calvinism was to make men Christians, and strong Christians. Calvin had no new method for this. He knew only Paul's method, to take heed to his doctrine and to take heed to himself. He preached—how he preached!—for years, every day in the year, and not dry essays, but sympathetic, serious, varied, impassioned appeals to conscience and mind and heart.

You might think that Calvin was wholly a preacher, to read his existing sermons, and to hear of his sermons which have passed out of existence. But only till you read Calvin's letters. There are no letters, to one who is well acquainted with his history, that equal the letters of Calvin. In company with Calvin's letters, you enter the presence of princes—of Edward and Elizabeth, of England; of James, of Scotland; of Gustavus, of Sweden; of Casimir, of Poland; of the German princes; of Navarre, to whom he even sent money raised by his own efforts—think of that: John Calvin sending a king money!

Better than princes; you will meet also heroes and sages. Luther and Melancthon, Knox and Coligny.

Better than heroes and sages; you will enter the congregations of the faithful, Waldenses and Swiss; German and Poles; English and Swedes; French and outcasts.

No man was ever more nearly ecumenical than Calvin, who declared to Cranmer that he would cross ten seas to attend an evangelical ecumenical assembly to bind Christian hearts into one.

Better, shall I say, than heroes and sages, you will enter with Calvin's letters into the presence of so many sweet Christian women, princesses and plain wives and mothers, and Calvin knew the Christian heart of each so as to help them keep close to Christ all their lives.

But better than all, with Calvin's letters you will go into the cell of the martyr, as by the dim light of the grated windows, the five martyrs of Lyons read these words of Calvin: "Since it pleases God to employ you to the death in maintaining his quarrel; He will strengthen your hands to the fight and will not suffer a single drop of your blood to be spent in vain!" Thus in Calvin's letters are not alone the sweet notes of peace, but the sound of the battle, the voice of the trumpet and the shouting."

One might well think of Calvin, as teaching only by tongue and by letter epistle, till you come on his books. He wrote a library of books! Books on Christian doctrine and duties; books on work and on worship. He edited the entire Bible, and wrote a commentary on every book of the Bible, excepting Revelation. As the Presbyterian Review says, in a recent number: "The greatest dogmatic writer of the Reformation is also its greatest exegete"—twelve words which sum up well what John Calvin did in literature.

Beza besought Calvin, when on his death bed, to cease his writing. "Would you," replied he, "that the Lord when he comes should find me idle!" What teaching, save the Apostolic, has insured to making men strong, like the teaching of John Calvin!

Yet when all is said, a great man is greater than anything he does. Greater than Calvin's doing, was Calvin's self. He took heed to himself. Greater than his making men Christian by his formal teaching, was his being himself a Christian, a man in every relation of life, whom men trusted, whom women and men loved, a wise, true gentleman, friend, brother.

John Calvin, a hard and stern and cold spirit, as so many have said? Never! True, he was not hail-fellow-well-met, to slap one upon the back, like Martin Luther. His manners were such rather as please the refined and princely. His spirit, too, was princely. He had a heart like David's which crucified every jealous and petty feeling, which won hearts and held them so that they loved him with a love surpassing the love of women. See the three mighty men of this David—Farel, Beza, Knox. They would not only die for Calvin, if need were; they would live and work *under* Calvin, which was more to the purpose! Farel, at seventy-five years of age, traveled half across Switzerland to give Calvin one parting caress. Beza held the dying Calvin in his arms—Knox honored Calvin as his father, though Calvin was younger than he.

I know no man in any generation since Jesus, that so linked friends to him, as did John Calvin. They would do anything for him. To them he was not the righteous man, for whom scarcely one would die, but the good man, for whom they would dare to die. It was because John Calvin loved! From his first letter to a comrade, when he cries: "O friend, dearer to me than life!" down to his last words concerning Melancthon, when he says: "O Philip Melancthon! a hundred times worn out with fatigue and overwhelmed with care, thou has laid thy head upon my heart—now thou art in the bosom of Christ, and in peace dost expect me." From beginning to end Calvin was a *lover* of his friends.

Calvin loved as a father. To a friend who was happy in an infant son, he wrote: "I am sorry I cannot be half a day by your side to wait for a smile, even at the penalty of bearing with frowns or with tears." Is this the *cold* Calvin, willing to wait half a day

to see a baby laugh? He says of his own child : "*I* had a boy, —*God* took him."

He loved as a husband. He believed in married life so well that, at times, he was as much engaged in giving his friends good wives, as in giving France and Germany good doctrines ! He was a judge of good looks in ladies, and of everything good in them. He says to an old bachelor friend : "I build marriages for you in the air." When he laid his own wife in the grave, he wrote : "I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life, of one who would not only have been the willing sharer of my poverty, but of my death. She was the faithful helper of my ministry."

Calvin a cold man ! Yes ! If the lack of fulsome, fondling and gushing gibber be coldness. But, if a calm, Christ-like devotion, which never falls below a comforting, genial temperature, is warmth, then Calvin is a perennial summer. Calvin *warms* me when I meet him as son and brother, husband and father. When I find him periling himself in the pest-house, amid the plague-stricken of Basel; as he goes alone to the hovels of the Genevese poor ; as he is at pains to buy a coat for a boy who comes coatless to his house, and to write the boy's friends concerning him; as I see him exercising all his wisdom to make his little means pay his household expenses and his liberal almsgiving ! He warms me as I find him not too grave to play with the magistrates of Geneva a kind of Calvinistic billiards, each one seeing how near to the edge of a path he can slide a bunch of keys without throwing them on the floor. Calvin warms me as I see him sharing his table with daily guests—though he did not own the house, or a foot of land, and when he died, died worth just \$225—having refused to draw his salary during his last illness.

Calvin a distant or cold spirit ! Nay! he revived everybody, neighbor, friend, Christian, while they opened their souls to him as the blossom opens to the sun.

At fifty-five years died the great Latin of ancient days, stricken by the hands of men, such as Brutus, whom he has cherished! Cæsar died thus, because he had lived upon so low a level of regard for his fellow men. And when Cæsar was dead, his shrewd adherent, Antony, by artful appeals, stirred the populace to mourn his dying, and, in their fury, to even devote the Forum and its furniture to a funeral pile, on which was

burned all that was left of Cæsar! So Cæsar went down, like the sun on the sand of the Sahara, scorching and blackening.

How different Calvin, who also died at fifty-five! Finishing his work in the same number of years as Cæsar, Calvin lay upon his couch, and the rulers of the republic came and asked his last counsels, and listened reverently to his last testimony, and took leave with clasped hands, tears streaming down their cheeks, as like children these grave magistrates parted from Calvin as their father!

So, also, his fellow-pastors took their leave. And then, as the deep anguish quenched his life, the whole republic—rulers and clergy, University and people—bore him to the cemetery, and laid him, as he had requested, under the level sod, not to be vexed with stone or other monument. There, as of Moses' sepulchre, no man knoweth of Calvin's sepulchre until this day.

So John Calvin's sun set on this world as the sun goes down on the verdure of Switzerland's meadows, warming and cheering, to rise again on each new to-morrow, cheering and warming the earth still, and as long as sun and moon shall endure, throughout all generations.