

THE
METHODIST REVIEW

QUARTERLY

EDITED BY
GROSS ALEXANDER, S.T.D.

OCTOBER, 1909

PUBLISHED FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH
SMITH & LAMAR, AGENTS
NASHVILLE, TENN.; DALLAS, TEX.; SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
LONDON: ROBERT CULLEY, 25-35 City Road.
TORONTO: WILLIAM BRIGGS, Wesley Buildings, Richmond Street, W.

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VOL. LVIII., No. 4. }
WHOLE No. 204.

OCTOBER, 1909

{ THIRD SERIES.
VOL. XXXV., No. 4.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGING IN CHANGELESS
OLD CHINA.

BY A. P. PARKER.

I.

THAT China is progressing is evidenced by many facts. Dr. Arthur H. Smith has expressed the view that China has made more progress since the Boxer outbreak than any other nation of the world has ever made in the same length of time. And he is right, as the facts herein recited will show.

The evangelization of China is going on apace. The number of converts has increased more than sixfold in eighteen years, and there are now more than two hundred and fifty thousand Christians belonging to the various Protestant Churches in the Empire, with fully that many more adherents, making a Christian population of half a million in China. The character of these Christians compares favorably with that of the Christians in Western lands. The whole country is now accessible to the missionary and the native evangelist.

But besides the direct work of evangelization that is being carried on all over the Empire, in which a large proportion of the four thousand missionaries now in China are engaged, there are other movements in operation which show the general progress and uplift of the people along all lines, religious, social, commer-

JOHN CALVIN: THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

BY BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD.

JOHN CALVIN was born on the tenth of July, 1509, at Noyon, in Picardy. His boyhood was spent under the shadow of the "long, straight-backed" cathedral which dominates his native town. His mother, a woman of notable devoutness, omitted no effort to imbue her son with her own spirit. His father, a successful advocate and shrewd man of affairs, holding both ecclesiastical and civil offices, stood in close relations with the cathedral chapter, and seems to have been impressed with the advantages of a clerical life. At all events, he early devoted his promising son to it. According to the bad custom of the times, a benefice in the cathedral was assigned to the young Calvin at an early age, and to it was afterwards added a neighboring curacy; thus funds were provided for his support. His education was conducted in companionship with the youthful scions of the local noble house of Montmor, and began, therefore, with the training proper to a gentleman. As changing circumstances dictated changes of plan, he was educated, first as a churchman, then as a lawyer, and through all and most abundantly of all as a man of letters. He was an eager student, rapidly and solidly mastering the subjects to which he turned his attention, and earning such admiration from his companions as to be esteemed by them rather a teacher than a fellow-pupil. His youth was as blameless as it was strenuous. It is doubtless legendary, that the censoriousness of his bearing earned for him from his associates the nickname of "The Accusative Case." But serious-minded he undoubtedly was, dominated by a scrupulous piety and schooled in a strict morality which brooked with difficulty immorality in his associates; an open-minded, affectionate young man, of irreproachable life and frank manners; somewhat sensitive, perhaps, but easy to be entreated, and attracting not merely the confidence but the lasting affection of all with whom he came into contact.

At the age of twenty-two this high-minded young man is found established at Paris as a humanist scholar, with his ambition set

upon literary fame. His *début* was made by the publication of an excellent commentary on Seneca's treatise *On Clemency* (April, 1532), in which a remarkable command of the whole mass of classical literature, a fine intelligence, and a serious interest in the higher moralities are conspicuous. A great career as a humanist seemed opening before him, when suddenly he was "converted," and his whole life revolutionized. He had always been not only of an elevated ethical temper, but of a deeply religious spirit; but now the religious motive took complete possession of him and directed all his activities. "Renouncing all other studies," says Beza, "he devoted himself to God." He did not, indeed, cease to be a "man of letters," any more than he ceased to be a man. But all his talents and acquisitions were henceforth dedicated purely to the service of God and his gospel. Instead of annotating classical texts, we find him now writing a Protestant manifesto for the use of his friend Nicholas Cop (November 1, 1533), a detailed study of the state of the soul after death (1534), and, in his enforced retirement at Angoulême (1534), making a beginning at least with a primary treatise on Christian doctrine, designed for the instruction of the people as they came out into the light of the gospel,—which, however, when driven from France, he was destined to publish from his asylum at Basle (spring of 1536), in circumstances which transformed it into "at once an apology, a manifesto, and a confession of faith." It is interesting to observe the change which in the meantime had come over his attitude toward his writings. When he sent forth his commentary on Seneca's treatise—his first and last humanistic work—he was quivering with anxiety for the success of his book; he wanted to know how it was selling, whether it was being talked about, what people thought of it. He was proud of his performance; he was zealous to reap the fruits of his labor; he was eager for his legitimate reward. Only four years have passed, and he issues his first Protestant publication,—it is the immortal *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in its "first state,"—free from all such tremors. He is living at Basle under an assumed name, and is fully content that no one of his acquaintance shall know him for the author of the book which was creating

such a stir in the world. He hears the acclamations with which it was greeted with a certain personal detachment. He has sent it forth not for his own glory, but for the glory of God; he is not seeking his own advantage or renown by it, but the strengthening and the succoring of the saints. His sole joy is that it is doing its work. He has not ceased to be a "man of letters," we repeat; but he has consecrated all his gifts and powers as a "man of letters" without reserve to the service of God and his gospel.

What we see in Calvin, thus, fundamentally is the "man of letters" as saint. He never contemplated for himself, he never desired, in all his life he never fully acquiesced in, any other vocation. He was by nature, by gifts, by training—by inborn predilection and by acquired capacities alike—a "man of letters"; and he earnestly, perhaps we may even say passionately, wished to dedicate himself as such to God. This was the life which he marked out for himself, from which he was diverted only under compulsion, and which he never in principle abandoned. It was only by "the dreadful imprecation" of Farel that he was constrained to lay aside his cherished plans and enter upon the direct work of the reformation of Geneva (autumn of 1536). And when, after two years of strenuous labor at this uncongenial employment, he was driven from that turbulent city, it came to him only as a release. Once more he settled down at Basle and applied himself to his beloved studies. It required all of Bucer's strategy as well as entreaties to entice him away from his books to an active ministry at Strasburg; and he yielded at last only when it was made clear to him that there would be leisure there for literary labors. That leisure he certainly not so much found as made for himself. His little conventicle of French refugees quickly became under his hand a model church. His lectures at the school attracted ever wider and wider attention. As time passed, he was called much away to conferences and colloquies, where as "the Theologian," as Melancthon admiringly called him, he did important service. But it was at Strasburg that his literary activity as a Protestant man of letters really began. There he transformed his "little book" of religion—the *Institutes* of 1536, which was not much more than an extended catechetical manual—into an

ample treatise on theology (August, 1539). There, too, he inaugurated the series of his epoch-making expositions of Scripture with his noble commentary on Romans (March, 1540). Thence, too, he sent out his beautiful letter to Sadoleto, the most winningly written of all his controversial treatises (September, 1539). There, too, was written that exquisite little popular tract on the Lord's Supper, which was the instruction and consolation of so many hundreds of his perplexed fellow-countrymen (published in 1541). It caused Calvin great perturbation when these fruitful labors were broken in upon by a renewed call to Geneva. It was with the profoundest reluctance that he listened to this call, and he obeyed it only under the stress of the sternest sense of duty. Returning to Geneva was to him going "straight to the cross": he went, as he said, "as a sacrifice slain unto God,"—"bound and fettered to obedience to God." He was not the man to take up a cross and not bear it; and this cross, too, he bore faithfully to the end. But neither was he the man to forget the labor of love to which he had given his heart. Hence the unremitting toil of his pen with which he wore out the days and nights at Geneva; hence the immensity of his literary output, produced in circumstances as unfavorable as any in which a rich literary output was ever produced. Even "on this rack" Calvin remained fundamentally the "man of letters."

It requires fifty-nine quarto volumes to contain the "Works of John Calvin" as collected in the great critical edition of Baum, Cunitz, and Reuss. Astonishing for their mere mass, these "works" are still more astonishing for their quality. They are written in the best Latin of their day, elevated, crisp, energetic, eloquent with the eloquence of an earnest and sober spirit—almost too good Latin, as Joseph Scaliger said, for a theologian; or in a French which was a factor of importance in the creation of a worthy French prose for the discussion of serious themes. The variety of their literary form runs through the whole gamut of earnest discourse, from lofty discussion and pithy comment laden with meaning, to burning exhortation, vehement invective, and biting satire. The whole range of subjects proper to a teacher of fundamental truth, who was also both a churchman

and a statesman, a minute observer of the life of the people, and a student of the forces by which peoples are moved, is treated, and never without that touch of illumination which we call genius.

At the head of the list of his writings stands, of course, his great dogmatic treatise—the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In a very literal sense this book may indeed be called his life-work. It was the first book he published after he had “devoted himself to God,” and thus introduces the series of his works consecrated to the propagation of religion. But from its first appearance in the spring of 1536 to the issue of its definitive edition in 1559—throughout nearly a quarter of a century—Calvin was continually busy with it, revising, expanding, readjusting it, until from a simple little handbook, innocent of constructive principle, it had grown into a bulky but compact and thoroughly organized textbook in theology. The importance to the Protestant cause of the publication of this book can hardly be overstated. It is inadequate praise to describe it, as the Roman Catholic historian, Kampschulte, describes it, as “without doubt the most outstanding and the most influential production in the sphere of dogmatics which the Reformation literature of the sixteenth century presents.” This goes without saying. What demands recognition is that the publication of the *Institutes* was not merely a literary incident but an historical event, big with issues, which have not lost their importance to the present day. By it was given to perplexed, hard-bested Protestantism an adequate positive programme for its Reformation. As even a not very friendly critic is compelled to bear witness, in this book Calvin at last raised banner against banner, and sounded out a ringing *sursum corda* which was heard and responded to wherever men were seeking the new way. “The immense service which the *Institutes* rendered to the ‘Evangelicals,’” expounds this critic—it is M. Buisson in his biography of Sebastien Castellion, and he is thinking particularly of the “Evangelicals” of France though, *mutatis mutandis*, what he says has its application elsewhere too—“was to give a body to their ideas, an expression to their faith.” Protesting against superstitious and materialistic interpretations of doctrine and worship, “their vague aspirations would, undoubtedly, have

issued in nothing in the Church or out of it." What they needed, and what the *Institutes* did for them, was the disengagement of a principle "from this vortex of ideas," and the development of its consequences. "Such a book," continues M. Buisson, "is equally removed from a pamphlet of Ulrich von Hutten, from the satire of Erasmus, from the popular preaching, mystical and violent, of Luther: it is a work of a theologian in the most learned sense of the term, a religious work undoubtedly, penetrated with an ethical inspiration, but before all, a work of organization and concentration, a code of doctrine for the minister, an arsenal of arguments for simple believers: it is the *Summa* of Reformed Christianity." "The author's concernment is far more to bring out the logical force and the moral power of his own doctrine than to descant on the weak points of the opposing doctrine. What holds his attention is not the past but the future,—it is the reconstruction of the Church." What wonder, then, that it has retained its influence through all succeeding time? As the first adequate statement of the positive programme of the Reformation movement, the *Institutes* lies at the foundation of the whole development of Protestant theology, and has left an impress on evangelical thought which is ineffaceable. After three centuries and a half, it retains its unquestioned preëminence as the greatest and most influential of all dogmatic treatises. "There," said Albrecht Ritschl, pointing to it—"There is the masterpiece of Protestant theology."

Second only to the service he rendered by his *Institutes* was the service Calvin rendered by his expositions of Scripture. These fill more than thirty volumes of his collected works, thus constituting the larger part of his total literary product. They cover the whole of the New Testament except 2 and 3 John and the Apocalypse, and the whole of the Old Testament except the Solomonic and some of the Historical books. It was doubtless in part to his humanistic training that he owed the acute philological sense and the unerring feeling for language which characterize all his expositions. A recent writer who has made a special study of Calvin's Humanism, at least, remarks: "In his sober grammatico-historical method, in the stress he laid on the nat-

ural sense of the text, by the side of his deep religious understanding of it—in his renunciation of the current allegorizing, in his felicitous, skillful dealing with difficult passages, the humanistically trained master is manifest, pouring the new wine into new bottles.” Calvin was, however, a born exegete, and adds to his technical equipment of philological knowledge and trained skill in the interpretation of texts, a clear and penetrating intelligence, remarkable intellectual sympathy, incorruptible honesty, unusual historical perception, and an incomparable insight into the progress of thought, while the whole is illuminated by his profound religious comprehension. His expositions of Scripture were accordingly a wholly new phenomenon, and introduced a new exegesis—the modern exegesis. He stands out in the history of biblical study as, what Diestel, for example, proclaims him, “the creator of genuine exegesis.” The authority which his comments immediately acquired was immense—they “opened the Scriptures” as the Scriptures never had been opened before. Richard Hooker —“the judicious Hooker”—remarks that in the controversies of his own time, “the sense of Scripture which Calvin alloweth” was of more weight than if “ten thousand Augustines, Jeromes, Chrysostoms, Cyprians were brought forward.” Nor have they lost their value even to-day. Alone of the commentaries of their age the most scientific of modern expositors still find their profit in consulting them. As Professor A. J. Baumgartner, who has set himself to investigate the quality of Calvin’s Hebrew learning (which he finds quite adequate), puts it, after remarking on Calvin’s “astounding, multiplied, almost superhuman activity” in his work of biblical interpretation: “And—a most remarkable thing—this work has never grown old; these commentaries whose durable merit and high value men of the most diverse tendencies have signalized,—these commentaries remain to us even to-day, an astonishingly rich, almost inexhaustible mine of profound thoughts, of solid and often ingenious interpretation, of wholesome exposition, and at the same time of profound erudition.”

The Reformation was the greatest revolution of thought which the human spirit has wrought since the introduction of Christianity: and controversy is the very essence of revolutions. Of

course Calvin's whole life, which was passed in the thick of things, was a continuous controversy; and directly controversial treatises necessarily form a considerable part of his literary output. We have already been taught, indeed, that his fundamental aim was constructive, not destructive: he wished to rebuild the Church on its true foundations, not to destroy its edifice. But, like certain earlier rebuilders of the Holy City, he needed to work with the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other. Probably no more effective controversialist ever wrote. "The number of Calvin's polemical treatises," remarks an unfriendly critic, "is large; and they are all masterpieces in their kind." At the head of them, in time as well as in attractiveness, stands his famous *Letter to Cardinal Sadoletto*, written in his exile at Strasburg for the protection from an insidious foe of the Church which had cast him out. Courteous, even gentle and deferential in tone, and yet cogent, conclusive, in effect, it perfectly exemplifies the precept of *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*. Others are, no doubt, set in a different key. The critic we have just quoted (E. F. Bähler) tells of the one he thinks "the harshest and bitterest of all," the *Defense Against the Calumnies of Peter Caroli*. "The letter to Sadoletto," he remarks, "was certainly written in a good hour; the contrary must be said of the present book. From the point of view of literary history, the *Defense*, no doubt, merits unrestricted praise. The elegant, crisp style, the skill with which the author not only casts a moral shadow upon his opponent, but brands him as an unsavory person not to be taken seriously, while over all is poured the most sovereign disdain, brings to the reader of this book, now almost four hundred years old, such æsthetic pleasure that it is only with difficulty that he recalls himself to righteous indignation over the gross unfairness and open untruthfulness which the author permits himself against Caroli." No doubt Calvin often spoke in harsh terms of his opponents; they were harsh things they were seeking for him; and the contest in which he was engaged was not a sparring match for the amusement of the onlookers. Nor need it be asserted that he was infallible; though "even his enemies will admit," as even Mark Pattison allows, "that he knows not how to decorate or disguise

a fact." Between the suavity of the *Letter to Sadoletto* and the furiousness of the *Defense Against Caroli*, a long list of controversial writings of very varying manners range themselves. A frankness of speech characterizes them which never balks at calling a spade a spade; we meet in them with depreciatory, even defamatory, epithets which jar sadly on our modern sensibilities. These are faults not of the man, but of the times: as we are reminded by M. Lenient, the historian of French satire, of all figures of rhetoric euphemism was the least in use in the sixteenth century. But none of Calvin's controversial tracts fails to be informed from beginning to end with a loftiness of purpose, to be conducted with a seriousness and directness of argument, and to be filled with a solid instruction, such as raise them far above the plane of mere partisan wrangle and give them a place among the permanent possessions of the Church.

Fault was found with him in his own day,—as, for example, by Castellion,—for permitting himself the use of satire in religious debate. This was not merely a result of native temperament with him, but a matter of deliberate and reasoned choice. Of course he had nothing in common with the mere mockers of the time—des Périers, Marot, Rabelais—whose levity was almost as abominable to him as their coarseness. Satire to him was a weapon, not an amusement. The proper way to deal with folly, he thought, was to laugh at it. The superstitions in which the world had been so long entangled were foolish as truly as wicked; and how could it be, he demanded, that in speaking of things so ridiculous, so intrinsically funny, we should not laugh at them "with wide-open mouth"? Of course this laugh was not the laugh of pure amusement; and as it gained in earnestness it naturally lost in lightness of touch. It was a rapier in Calvin's hands, and its use was to pierce and cut. And how well he uses it! The Sorbonne, for example, issued a series of *Articles*, declaring the orthodox doctrine on the points disputed by the Protestants. Calvin republishes these *Articles*, and subjoins to each of them a quite innocent-looking "Proof," conceived perfectly in the Sorbonnic manner, but issuing in each case in a hopeless *reductio ad absurdum*. Thus: "It is proved, moreover, that vows are obligatory from their

being dispensed and loosed: the Pope could not dispense vows were it not for the power of the keys, and hence it follows that they bind the conscience,"—truly as fine a specimen of *lucus a non lucendo* as one will find in a day's search. It is only rarely that the mask is dropped a moment and a glimpse given of the mocking eyes behind,—as thus: "But that our masters, when congregated in one body, are the Church, is proved from this, that they are very like the ark of Noah—since they form a herd of all sorts of beasts." The matter is indeed in general so subtly managed that perhaps the "Antidote," which in each instance follows on the "Proof" was not altogether unnecessary. There is no such subtlety in what is, perhaps, the best known of Calvin's satirical pieces,—his *Admonition, Showing the Advantage which Christendom Might Derive from an Inventory of Relics*. Here we have a simple, straightforward enumeration of the relics exposed in various churches for the veneration of the people. The effect is produced by the incongruity, which grows more and more monstrous, of the reduplication of these relics. "Everybody knows that the inhabitants of Tholouse think that they have got six of the bodies of the apostles. Now, let us attend to those who have had two or three bodies. For Andrew has another body at Malfi, Philip and James the Less have each another body at the Church of the Holy Apostles, and Simeon and Jude, in like manner, at the Church of St. Peter. Bartholomew has also another in the church dedicated to him at Rome. So here are six who each have two bodies, and also, by way of a supernumerary, Bartholomew's skin is shown at Pisa. Matthias, however, surpasses all the rest, for he has a second body at Rome, in the church of the elder Mary, and a third one at Treves. Besides, he has another head, and another arm, existing separately by themselves. There are also fragments of Andrew existing at different places, and quite sufficient to make up half a body." And so on endlessly; and of course monotonously—which, however, is part of the calculated effect. As M. Lenient remarks, "his pitiless calculations give to a mathematical operation all the piquancy of a *bon mot*, and the irony of numbers destroys the credit of the most respected pilgrimages." It is, however, in such a tract as the *Excuse of the*

Nicodemites that Calvin's satire is found at its best, as he rails at those weak Protestants who were too timid to declare themselves. "His pen," says M. Lenient, "was never more light or incisive. Moralist and painter after the fashion of La Bruyère, he amuses himself sketching all these profiles of effeminate Christians, with their slacknesses, their compromises of conscience, their calculations of selfishness, and indifferent lukewarmness." Literature this all is, doubtless, and good literature; and by virtue of it "Calvinistic satire"—Calvin, Beza, and Viret were its first masters—has a recognized place in the history of French satire. But it is not primarily or chiefly literature, and it had its part to play among the moral and religious forces which Calvin liberated for the accomplishment of his reforming work.

Perhaps enough has been said to suggest how Calvin fulfilled his function as reformer by his literary labors. There were, of course, other forms of his literary product which have not been mentioned—creeds and catechisms, Church ordinances and forms of worship, popular tracts and academic consilia. We need not stop to speak of them particularly. Of one other product of his literary activity, however, a special word seems demanded. Calvin was the great letter-writer of the Reformation age. About four thousand of his letters have come down to us, some of them almost of the dimensions of treatises, many of them practically theological tractates, but many of them also of the most intimate character in which he pours out his heart. In these letters we see the real Calvin, the man of profound religious convictions and rich religious life, of high purpose and noble strenuousness, of full and freely flowing human affections and sympathies. In them he rebukes rulers and instructs statesmen, and strengthens and comforts saints. Never a perplexed pastor but has from him a word of encouragement and counsel; never a martyr but has from him a word of heartening and consolation. Perhaps no friend ever more affectionately leaned on his friends; certainly no friend ever gave himself more ungrudgingly to his friends. Had he written these letters alone, Calvin would take his place among the great Christians and the great Christian leaders of the world.

It is time, however, that we reminded ourselves that Calvin's work as a reformer is not summed up in his literary activities. A "man of letters" he was fundamentally; and a "man of letters" he remained in principle all his life. But he was something more than a "man of letters." This was his chosen sphere of service; and he counted it a cross to be compelled to expend his energies through other channels. But this cross was laid upon him, and he took it up and bore it. And the work which he did under the cross was such that had we no single word from his pen, he would still hold his rank among the greatest of the Reformers. We call him "the Reformer of Geneva." But in reforming Geneva he set forces at work which have been world-wide in their operation and are active still to-day. Were we to attempt to characterize in a phrase the peculiarity of his work as a reformer, perhaps we could not do better than to say it was the work of an idealist become a practical man of affairs. He did not lack the power to wait, to make adjustments, to advance by slow and tentative steps. He showed himself able to work with any material, to make the best of compromises, to abide patiently the coming of fitting opportunities. The ends which he set before himself as reformer he attained only in the last years of his strenuous life. But he was incapable of abandoning his ideals, of acquiescing in half measures, of drifting with the tide. Therefore his whole life in Geneva was a conflict. But in the end he made Geneva the wonder of the world, and infused into the Reformed Churches a spirit which made them not only invincible in the face of their foes, but in active ferment that has changed the face of the world. Thus this "man of letters," entering into life with his ideals, was "the means," to adopt the words of a critic whose sympathy with those ideals leaves much to be desired, "of concentrating in that narrow corner" of the world "a moral force which saved the Reformation"; or rather, to put it at its full effect, which "saved Europe." "It may be doubted," as the same critic—Mark Pattison—exclaims in extorted admiration, "if all history can furnish another instance of such a victory of moral force."

When Calvin came to Geneva, he tells us himself, he found the gospel preached there, but no Church established. "When I first

came to this Church," he says, "there was as good as nothing here—*il n'y avoit quasi comme rien*. There was preaching, and that was all." He would have found much the same state of things everywhere else in the Protestant world. The "Church" in the early Protestant conception was constituted by the preaching of the Word and the right administration of the sacraments: the correction of the morals of the community was the concern not of the Church but of the civil power. As a recent historian—Professor Karl Rieker—rather flippantly expresses it: "Luther, when he had preached and sowed the seed of the Word, left to the Holy Spirit the care of producing the fruit, while with his friend Philip he peacefully drank his glass of Wittenberg beer." Calvin could not take this view of the matter. "Whatever others may hold," he observed, "we cannot think so narrowly of our office that when preaching is done our task is fulfilled, and we may take our rest." In his view the mark of a true Church is not merely that the gospel is preached in it, but that it is "followed." For him the Church is the "communion of saints," and it is incumbent upon it to see to it that it is what it professes to be. From the first he therefore set himself strenuously to attain this end, and the instrument which he sought to employ to attain it was, briefly—Church discipline. It comes to us with a surprise which is almost a shock to learn that we owe to Calvin all that is involved, for the purity and welfare of the Church, in the exercise of Church discipline. But that is the simple truth, and so sharp was the conflict by which the innovation won a place for itself, and so important did the principle seem, that it became the mark of the Reformed Churches that they made "discipline" one of the fundamental criteria of the true Church. Moreover, the application of this principle carried Calvin very far, and, indeed, in its outworking gave the world through him the principle of a free Church in a free State. It is ultimately to him, therefore, that the Church owes its emancipation from the State, and to him goes back that great battle-cry which has since fired the hearts of many saints in many crises in many lands: "The Crown Rights of King Jesus in his Church."

Censorship of manners and morals was not introduced by Cal-

vin into Geneva. Such a censorship, often of the most petty and galling kind, was the immemorial practice not only of Geneva but of all other similarly constituted towns. It was part of the recognized police regulations of the times. Calvin's sole relation to this censorship was through his influence—he never bore civil office or exercised civil authority in Geneva, and, indeed, acquired the rights of citizenship there only late in life—gradually to bring some order and rationality into its exercise. What Calvin introduced—and it was so revolutionary with respect both to the State and to the Church that it required eighteen years of bitter struggle before it was established—was distinctively *Church* discipline. The principles on which he proceeded were already laid down in the first edition of his *Institutes* (spring of 1536). And when he came to Geneva in the autumn of 1536 he lost no time in seeking to put them into practice. Already at the opening of 1537 we find a document drawn up by him in the name of the ministers of Geneva before the Council, in which the whole new conception is briefly outlined. This great charter of the Church's liberties—for it is as truly such as the *Magna Charta* is the charter of British rights—opens with these simple and direct words: "It is certain that a Church cannot be said to be well ordered and governed unless the Holy Supper of our Lord is frequently celebrated and attended in it, and that with such good regulation that no one would dare to present himself at it except with piety and deep reverence. And it is therefore necessary for the Church to maintain in its integrity the discipline of excommunication, by which those should be corrected who are unwilling to yield themselves amiably and in all obedience to the holy Word of God." In the body of the document the matter is argued, and three things are proposed: First, that it be ascertained at the outset who of the inhabitants of the town wished "to avow themselves of the Church of Jesus Christ." For this, it is suggested that a brief and comprehensive Confession of Faith be prepared, and "all the inhabitants of your town" be required to "make confession and render reason of their faith, that it may be ascertained which accord with the Gospel, and which prefer to be of the kingdom of the Pope rather than of Jesus Christ." Secondly, that a catechism be pre-

pared, and the children be diligently instructed in the elements of the faith. And thirdly, that provision be made by the appointment of "certain persons of good life and good repute among all the faithful, and likewise of constancy of spirit and not open to corruption," who should keep watch over the conduct of the Church members, advise with them, admonish them, and in obstinate cases bring them to the attention of the ministers, when, if they still prove unamenable, they are "to be held as rejected from the company of Christians," and "as a sign of this, rejected from the communion of the Lord's Supper, and denounced to the rest of the faithful as not to be companied with familiarly." By this programme Calvin became nothing less than the creator of the Protestant Church. The particular points to be emphasized in it are two. It is purely *Church* discipline which is contemplated, with none other but spiritual penalties. And the Church is for this purpose especially discriminated from the body of the people—the State—and a wedge is thus driven in between Church and State which was bound to separate the one from the other.

In claiming for the Church this discipline, Calvin, naturally, had no wish in any way to infringe upon the police regulations of the civil authorities. They continued, in their own sphere, to command his approval and coöperation. He has the clearest conception of the limits within which the discipline of the Church must keep itself, and expressly declares that it is confined absolutely to the spiritual penalty of excommunication. But he just as expressly suggests that the State, on its own part, might well take cognizance of spiritual offenses; and even invokes the aid of the civil magistrate in support of the authority of the Church. "This," he says to the Council, after outlining his scheme for the appointment of lay helpers—in effect elders—in the exercise of discipline,—“this seems to us a good way to introduce excommunication into our Church, and to maintain it in its entirety. And beyond this correction the Church cannot proceed. But if there are any so insolent and abandoned to all perversity that they only laugh at being excommunicated, and do not mind living and dying in such a condition of rejection, it will be for you to consider how long you will endure and leave unpunished such contempt and

such mockery of God and his gospel." This is not requiring the State to execute the Church's decrees: the Church executes her own decrees, and its extremest penalty is excommunication. It is only recognizing that the State as well as the Church may take account of spiritual offenses. And particularly it is declaring that while the Church by her own sanctions protects her own altars, it is the part of the State by its own sanctions to sustain the Church in protecting its altars. Calvin has not risen to the conception of the complete mutual independence of Church and State: his view still includes the conception of an "established Church." But the "established Church" which he pleads for is a Church absolutely autonomous in its own spiritual sphere. In asking this he was asking for something new in the Protestant world, and something in which lay the promise and potency of all the freedom which has come to the Reformed Churches since.

Of course Calvin did not get what he asked for in 1537. Nor did he get it when he returned from his banishment in 1541. But he never lost it from sight; he never ceased to contend for it; he was always ready to suffer for its assertion and defense; and at last he won it. The spiritual liberties which he demanded for the Church in 1536, for the assertion of which he was banished in 1538, for the establishment of which he ceaselessly struggled from 1541, he measurably attained at length in 1555. In the fruits of that great victory we have all had our part. And every Church in Protestant Christendom which enjoys to-day any liberty whatever, in performing its functions as a Church of Jesus Christ, owes it all to John Calvin. It was he who first asserted this liberty in his early manhood,—he was only twenty-seven years of age when he presented his programme to the Council; it was he who first gained it in a lifelong struggle against a determined opposition; it was he who taught his followers to value it above life itself, and to secure it to their successors with the outpouring of their blood. And thus Calvin's great figure rises before us as not only in a true sense the creator of the Protestant Church, but the author of all the freedom it exercises in its spiritual sphere.

It is impossible to linger here on the relations of this great exploit of Calvin's, even to point out its rooting in his fundamen-

tal religious conceptions, or its issue in the creation of a spirit in his followers to the efflorescence of which this modern world of ours owes its free institutions. We cannot even stop to indicate other important claims he has upon our reverence. We say nothing here, for example, of Calvin the preacher,—the “man of the Word” as Doumergue calls him, pronouncing him as such greater than he was as “man of action” or “man of thought,” as both of which he was very great,—who for twenty-five years stood in the pulpit of Geneva, preaching sometimes daily, sometimes twice a day, a word the echoes of which were heard to the confines of Europe. We say nothing, again, of his reorganization of the worship of the Reformed Churches, and particularly of his gift to them of the service of song: for the Reformed Churches did not sing until Calvin taught them to do it. There are many who think that he did few things greater or more far-reaching in their influence than the making of the Psalter,—that Psalter of which twenty-five editions were published in the first year of its existence, and sixty-two more in the next four years; which was translated or transused into nearly every language of Europe; and which wrought itself into the very flesh and bone of the struggling saints throughout all the “killing times” of Protestant history. The activities of Calvin were too varied and multiplex, his influence in numerous directions too enormous, to lend themselves to rapid enumeration. We can pause further only to say a necessary word of that system of divine truth which, by his winning restatement and powerful advocacy of it, he has stamped with his name, and with his eye upon which a Roman Catholic writer of our day—Canon William Barry—pronounces Calvin “undoubtedly the greatest of Protestant divines, and, perhaps, after St. Augustine, the most persistently followed by his disciples of any western writer on theology.”

It has become very much the custom of modern historians to insist that Calvin's was not an original but only a systematizing genius. Thus, for example, Reinhold Seeberg remarks: “His was an acute and delicate but not a creative mind.” “As a dogmatist, he furnished no new ideas; but with the most delicate sense of perception he arranged the dogmatic ideas at hand in accordance with their essential character and their historical de-

velopment." "He possessed the wonderful talent of comprehending any given body of religious ideas in its most delicate refinements and giving appropriate expression to the results of his investigations." Accordingly, he did not leave behind him "uncoined gold, like Luther," or "questionable coinage, like Melancthon," but good gold well minted—and in this lies the explanation of the greatness of his influence as a theologian. The contention may very easily be overpressed. But at its basis there lies the perception of a very important fact; perhaps we may say the most important fact in the premises.

Calvin was a thoroughly independent student of Scripture, and brought forth from that treasure-house things not only old but new; and if it was not given to him to recover for the world so revolutionizing a doctrine as that of Justification by Faith alone, the contributions of his fertile thought to doctrinal advance were neither few nor unimportant. He made an epoch in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity: by his insistence on "self-existence" as a proper attribute of Son and Spirit as well as of the Father, he drove out the lingering elements of Subordinationism, and secured to the Church a deepened consciousness of the coequality of the Divine Persons. He introduced the presentation of the work of Christ under the rubrics of the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King. He created the whole discipline of Christian Ethics. But above all he gave to the Church the entire doctrine of the Work of the Holy Spirit, profoundly conceived and wrought out in its details, with its fruitful distinctions of common and efficacious grace, of noëtic, aisthetic, and thelematic effects,—a gift, we venture to think, so great, so pregnant with benefit to the Church as fairly to give him a place by the side of Augustine and Anselm and Luther, as the Theologian of the Holy Spirit, as they were respectively the Theologian of Grace, of the Atonement, and of Justification.

Nevertheless, despite such contributions—contributions of the first order—to theological advance, it is quite true,—and it is a truth deserving the strongest emphasis,—that the system of doctrine which Calvin taught, and by his powerful commendation of which his greatest work for the world was wrought, was not pe-

cular to himself, was in no sense new,—was, in point of fact, just “the Gospel” common to him and all the Reformers, on the ground of which they spoke of themselves as “Evangelicals,” and by the recovery of which was wrought out the revolution which we call the Reformation. Calvin did not originate this system of truth; as “a man of the second generation” he inherited it, and his greatest significance as a religious teacher is that by his exact and delicate sense of doctrinal values and relations and his genius for systematic construction, he was able, as none other was, to cast this common doctrinal treasure of the Reformation into a well-compacted, logically unassailable, and religiously inspiring whole. In this sense it is as systematizer that he makes his greatest demand on our admiration and gratitude. It was he who gave the Evangelical movement a theology.

The system of doctrine taught by Calvin is just the Augustinianism common to the whole body of the Reformers—for the Reformation was, as from the spiritual point of view a great revival of religion, so from the theological point of view a great revival of Augustinianism. And this Augustinianism is taught by him not as an independent discovery of his own, but fundamentally as he learned it from Luther, whose fertile conceptions he completely assimilated, and most directly and in much detail from Martin Bucer into whose practical, ethical point of view he perfectly entered. Many of the very forms of statement most characteristic of Calvin—on such topics as Predestination Faith, the stages of Salvation, the Church, the Sacraments—only reproduce, though of course with that clearness and religious depth peculiar to Calvin, the precise teachings of Bucer, who was above all others, accordingly, Calvin’s master in theology. Of course he does not take these ideas over from Bucer and repeat them by rote. They have become his own and issue afresh from him with a new exactness and delicacy of appreciation, in themselves and in their relations, with a new development of implications, and especially with a new richness of religious content. For the prime characteristic of Calvin as a theologian is precisely the practical interest which governs his entire thought and the religious profundity which suffuses it all. It was not the head

but the heart which made him a theologian, and it is not the head but the heart which he primarily addresses in his theology.

He takes his start, of course, from God, knowledge of whom and obedience to whom he declares the sum of human wisdom. But this God he conceives as righteous love,—Lord as well as Father, of course, but Father as well as Lord; whose will is, of course, the *prima causa rerum* (for is he not God?), but whose will also it will be our joy as well as our wisdom to embrace (for is he not our Father?). It was that we might know ourselves to be wholly in the hands of this God of perfect righteousness and goodness—not in those of men, whether ourselves or some other men—that he was so earnest for the doctrine of predestination: which is nothing more than the declaration of the supreme dominion of God. It was that our eternal felicity might hang wholly on God's mighty love—and not on our sinful weakness—that he was so zealous for the doctrine of election: which is nothing more than the ascription of our entire salvation to God. As he contemplated the majesty of this Sovereign Father of men, his whole being bowed in reverence before him, and his whole heart burned with zeal for his glory. As he remembered that this great God has become in his own Son the redeemer of sinners, he passionately gave himself to the proclamation of the glory of his grace. Into his hands he committed himself without reserve: his whole spirit panted to be in all its movement subjected to his government,—or, to be more specific, to the “leading of his Spirit.” All that was good in him, all the good he hoped might be formed in him, he ascribed to the almighty working of this Divine Spirit. The “glory of God alone,”—the “leading of the Spirit” (or, as a bright young French student of his thought has lately expressed it, *la maîtrise*, the “mastery,” the control, of the Spirit),—became thus the twin principles of his whole thought and life. Or, rather, the double expression of the one principle; for—since all that God does, he does by his Spirit—the two are at bottom one.

Here we have the secret of Calvin's greatness and the source of his strength unveiled to us. No man ever had a profounder sense of God than he; no man ever more unreservedly surrendered

himself to the Divine direction. "We cannot better characterize the fundamental disposition of Calvin the man and the reformer," writes a recent German student of his life,—Bernhard Bess,— "than in the words of the Psalm: 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' After that virtuoso in religion of ancient Israel, no one has spoken of the majesty of God and the insignificance of man with such feeling and truth as Calvin. The appearance which Luther's expressions often give, as if God exists merely for man's sake, never is given by Calvin. God is for him the almighty will which lies behind all that comes to pass. What comes to pass in the world serves no doubt man, the Church, and salvation; but this is not its ultimate end, but the revelation of the glory and the honor of God." If there is anything that will make a man great, surely it is placing himself unreservedly at the disposal of God and seeking not only to do nothing but God's will, but to do all God's will. This is what Calvin did, and it is because he did this that he was so great.

He was, of course, not without his weaknesses. He had no doubt a high temper, though to do him justice we must take the term in all its senses. He did not in all things rise superior to the best opinion of his age. We have seen, for example, that he was in full accord with his time in its extension of the cognizance of the civil courts to spiritual offenses; and it was by the consent of his mind to this universal conviction of the day that he was implicated in that unhappy occurrence—the execution of Servetus. But to do him justice here we must learn to speak both of his connection with that occurrence and of Servetus himself in quite other terms than the reckless language with which a modern writer of repute speaks when he calls Calvin "the author of the great crime of the age—the murder of the heroic Servetus." Servetus, that "fool of genius," as a recent writer, not without insight, characterizes him, was anything but an heroic figure. The "crime" of his "murder," unfortunately, had scores of fellows in that age, in which life was lightly valued, and it was agreed on all hands that grave heresy and gross blasphemy were capital offenses in well-organized states. And Servetus was condemned and executed by a tribunal of which Calvin was not a member,

with which he possessed little influence, and which rejected his petition against the unnecessary cruelty of the penalty inflicted.

“There are people,” remarks Paul Wernle, who is certainly under the influence of no glamour for Calvin or Calvinism,—“There are people who have been told at school that Servetus was burned through Calvin’s fault, and are therefore done with this man. They ought to remember that had they lived at the time, they would in all probability have joined in burning him. It is not so easy to be done with the man who was the most luminous and penetrating theologian of his time and the source from which flowed that *power* which Protestantism showed in Scotland, France, England, Holland. We are all glad, no doubt, that we did not live under his rod; but who knows what we would all be, had not this divine ardor possessed him? Concentrated, well-directed enthusiasm—that is his essence; it was himself, first of all, whom he consumed in his zeal; his rule at Geneva was no more rigorous than the heroism was glorious with which he compacted half the Protestantism of Europe into a power which nothing could break. Calvin was in very truth the soul of the battling and conquering Reformed world; it was he who fought on the battlefields of the Huguenots and the Dutch, and in the hosts of the Puritans. In scarcely another of the Reformers is there to be seen such thoroughness, absoluteness. And yet what moderation, what real dread of every kind of excess; with what deference and tact did he know how to speak to the great! If you would know the man, how he lived with and for God and the world, read first of all in the *Institutes* the section *On the Life of the Christian Man*. It is the portrait of himself. And then for his religious individuality add the sections *On Justification* and *On Predestination*, where will be found what is most profound, most moving in his life of faith.”

Such a man was John Calvin; and such was the work he did for God and His Kingdom on earth. Adolf Harnack has said that between Paul the Apostle and Luther the Reformer, Augustine was the greatest man God gave His Church. We may surely add that from Luther the Reformer to our day God has given His Church no greater man than John Calvin.

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